



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

Nebraska 21st Century  
Community Learning  
Centers





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The contents of this Annual Evaluation Report are available online at  
<http://www.education.ne.gov/21stcclc/ProgramEvaluation/EvaluationReport2020-2021.pdf>.

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All photos of students and staff featured in this publication were taken during Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) programs or professional development events. Students pictured attend Nebraska 21st CCLC programs located in Auburn, Bayard, Beatrice, Broken Bow, Cedar Bluffs, Chadron, Columbus, Cozad, Crete, Fremont, Gordon-Rushville, Kearney, Lexington, Lincoln, Loup City, Lyons-Decatur, Madison, Minatare, Nebraska City, Norfolk, North Platte, Oakland-Craig, Ogallala, Omaha, O'Neill, Oshkosh, Schuyler, Scottsbluff, Walthill, Wood River and York.

# Overview of 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 21st CCLC initiative was authorized under Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended, which moved the administration of the 21st CCLC program to state departments of education. The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) administers these grants to offer students a broad array of services, programs, and activities aligned to the school day that occur during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session such as afterschool, out-of-school days (full days during the school year when school is not in session), or summer.

The 21st CCLC programs are required to establish and maintain a partnership with at least one community-based organization or other public or private entity. Programs are also required to identify a site-level management team that includes the building principal, project director, site supervisor, and others identified by the site. These teams conduct regular meetings and are responsible for shared decision-making, reviewing evaluation data and developing action plans for continuous improvement.

**Nebraska's 21st CCLCs create an afterschool environment focused on three overarching goals: 1) improving overall student academic success; 2) increasing positive behavior and social**

**interactions; and 3) increasing active and meaningful family and community engagement.** 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 Learners, technology education programs, programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy, drug and violence prevention programs, and counseling programs, among other services. The programming offered in a 21st CCLC should be aligned to the school day and in collaboration with other federal and state initiatives.

21st CCLC project directors were instrumental in the development of a document that identifies the intersection between NDE's six tenets of AQuESTT, Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow, and the Nebraska 21st CCLC program. This document articulates the many initiatives and activities that support Student Success and Access and Teaching and Learning, the two domains of AQuESTT—a comprehensive system that is designed to ensure the success of all Nebraska students (see Appendix). This resource allows 21st CCLC project directors to effectively engage in conversations at the school and district level related to continuous school improvement and provides them with specific examples of afterschool program activities that align to program, school and district improvement goals. Examples of afterschool program indicators that support AQuESTT include diverse,



prepared program staff, a system that supports students' transitions from grade to grade and across levels, engagement of families and the community in schools and programs, additional learning time, college and career readiness activities, ongoing data collection and analysis, and ongoing professional development for program leaders and staff.

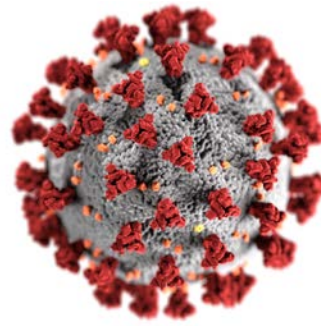
In 2020-2021, grant awards totaled **\$7.2 million** to benefit students in 150 sites in 40 Nebraska communities.

Beginning in 2003-2004, NDE has conducted an annual grant competition to award five-year 21st CCLC federal grants for out-of-school time programming. These 21st CCLC grant dollars are leveraged with other federal, state, and partner/local fiscal support to operate quality afterschool and summer programs. Typically there are two types of competitive grants available (first-time grants and continuation grants). First-time grants were 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% of the amount of the grantee's first-time grant) were awarded to quality 21st CCLC programs with level funding for a five-year grant period, and were available only to school buildings, which have successfully implemented 21st CCLC programming for five years. All data in this report were derived from these grantees. With the continued uncertainties and challenges as the pandemic continued and the difficulties to begin new programs under these circumstances, the state-level management team determined that the February 1, 2021 competition would be available only to eligible Continuation Grant applicants.

Grantees began reporting partner/local fiscal support in 2013-14. Reports include the amount expended and/or the value of volunteer time and/or donated/discounted goods or services for the school year and, where applicable, summer program. Funding sources include other federal or state funding, community-based or faith-



based organization support, parent fees, as well as other sources of funding. Although Nebraska grantees have many commonalities, it is apparent in the collection of this data from nearly 150 sites that there also are many differences, which makes it difficult to compare data. For example, resources to operate a small rural elementary site may be quite different from those needed in a large urban middle school site. Some sites offer summer programming, but others do not. Some sites serve over 300 students daily, while others average less than 40. Some sites were provided a wide range of unique partner/community supports, which are difficult to combine for statewide analysis. In addition, many components of a program were difficult to quantify, which resulted in too many variables to yield reliable conclusions. The state-level management team continues to review national data as well as methodologies used by other states in their quest to determine the average cost per student attending a Nebraska 21st CCLC program.



## COVID-19 IMPACT ON 21ST CCLCS

This report reflects the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Nebraska 21st CCLC program.

- Only a handful of sites provided in-person programming during the summer of 2020.
- Safety protocols and local restrictions on attendance directly impacted afterschool programs during the 2020-21 school year. Some districts adopted virtual school or a hybrid model where cohorts of students attended in-person only on designated days.
- The majority of Nebraska school districts implemented policies that did not allow parents to enter the building at pick-up time.
- In most districts, community partners were not allowed inside buildings.
- Programs faced higher than usual staff turnover rates and experienced difficulty hiring qualified staff.

Despite these challenges, many 21st CCLCs implemented innovative practices and developed creative virtual strategies to stay connected to students, families and community partners.

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# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

21st CCLC project directors work with school building principals, community leaders, and representatives of statewide organizations to identify partners whose goals align to those of the program. Mutually beneficial relationships are then established resulting in a wide variety of interesting and unique learning experiences for children and



youth. Partners supporting the work of a Nebraska 21st CCLC program might include Nebraska 4-H Extension, Beyond School Bells, local libraries, organizations committed to the health and well-being of members of the community, arts organizations, the local community college, or groups committed to preserving and ensuring an appreciation of the environment.

Examples of program support provided by partners include:

- Staff professional development
- Volunteer staffing
- Curriculum development
- Donation of specialty materials for implementation of a club or activity
- Exposure and exploration of potential careers
- Preparation for a successful college experience
- Civic engagement and service-learning opportunities.

Partnerships between 21st CCLC programs and postsecondary institutions across the state are mutually beneficial for both K-12 students and students participating in college coursework. Among the many benefits of these partnerships is the experience it provides future teachers who gain valuable teaching experience in afterschool programs while receiving support and college credit. These mutually beneficial partnerships exist across the state, making postsecondary institutions valuable partners in the design and implementation of many quality 21st CCLC programs.



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Examples of potential benefits for children and youth attending 21st CCLC programs include:

- Relationships with college students who serve as mentors and role models
- Expanded learning opportunities for 21st CCLC attendees as college students share their interests and passions in the afterschool setting
- Opportunity to learn about the college experience and see college as an option for the future.

Examples of potential benefits for college students include:

- Opportunity for future teachers to gain real-world, practical experience while working with students in an educational setting

- Opportunity for receiving valuable experience while meeting course requirements and earning college credit
- Opportunity for part-time employment as paid staff in an afterschool program
- Leadership development
- Opportunity to serve as role models for youth in their communities.

During the summer of 2020 and the 2020-21 school year, community partners were not typically allowed inside school buildings due to COVID-19 restrictions and local protocols. Since 21st CCLC programs rely on their partners to bring unique and engaging clubs to students, these opportunities were limited during this reporting period.



# 21ST CCLC PARTNER SPOTLIGHT ORGANIZATIONS



In an effort to identify and grow partnerships between 21st CCLC educators and potential partners, the 21st CCLC Partner Spotlight initiative began in February 2017. The 21st CCLC Partner Spotlight is a feature that highlights the work of organizations committed to partnering with afterschool and summer programs across the state of Nebraska. Featured partners have demonstrated a commitment to working with program leaders and staff to identify ways to accomplish identified goals bringing unique and engaging learning opportunities to students afterschool and in the summer.

The NDE Whole Child Initiative was added as a Partner Spotlight Organization during this reporting period.



Detailed information about all 21st CCLC Partner Spotlight Organizations is available at:

<https://www.education.ne.gov/21stcclc/partner-spotlight/>

## **21st CCLC Rural Advisory Committee**

The 21st CCLC Rural Advisory Committee was formed in August 2017 to discuss issues relevant to rural Nebraska programs and provide recommendations to the state-level management team. Committee members include representatives from eight rural communities, large and small, including programs serving students across all grade-levels and located across all regions of the state. The group meets as needed to discuss topics such as updates to the evaluation and continuous improvement system, professional development needs, and program sustainability through partnering.



## Technical Assistance and Professional Development

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak in spring 2020, technical assistance and professional development options were modified to reflect the unique needs of program leaders and staff in their continuous improvement process.

Ongoing support for program leaders led by the state-level management team included:

- Monthly Update newsletter which includes upcoming deadlines and professional development resources and opportunities
- Grant management monthly technical assistance Zoom meetings
- Required Project Director Annual

Meeting held September 20, 2020 via Zoom

- Monthly Zoom meetings for new directors in both new and already existing programs
- Targeted support for programs with specific needs, including virtual visits
- Required Grant management/evaluation summer regional meetings via Zoom
- My21stCCLC, a secure website for program directors that includes content focused on Evaluation, Grant Management, Partnerships and Program Support
- 21st CCLC public website.

In the fall of 2020, 21st CCLC Project Directors reported their anticipated



professional development plans for the 2020-21 school year by designating local, regional, statewide, and national offerings, primarily offered online due to COVID-19. This information was reported as part of the annual CIP Meeting Summary Report and allowed program leaders to describe offerings for the program leadership, staff, and training aligned to the program's CIP annual improvement goal. This process of articulating local professional development plans allowed program leaders and staff to determine their own learning needs, identify available resources, and allowed the state-level management team to support programs by providing webinars, in-person training, and online resources aligned to those identified needs.



Support was also provided to 21st CCLC programs in their efforts to align activities to NDE initiatives, including the Nebraska State Board of Education Position Statement on Quality Expanded Learning Opportunities, adopted October 8, 2017.

### **Public Outreach**

In the spring of 2020, the state-level management team and Lincoln CLC external CIP facilitator presented information to a national audience during the virtual National Afterschool Association Conference. The breakout session title was "Building a Continuous Quality Improvement Process", in which the team explained Nebraska's CIP process and support provided for its implementation.

In addition, on July 29, 2020 the state-level management team and a building principal and project director from the Norfolk 21st CCLC program provided a breakout session titled "In-Person or Remote, We Got This!" at Administrators' Days. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference was delivered virtually.

### **StayConnected**

In an effort to provide ongoing learning opportunities between annual conferences, the StayConnected webinar series began in February 2020. The series originally offered sessions monthly, then shifted to weekly offerings May-December, 2020 in response to increased and changing needs for staff professional development due to the pandemic. Beginning January 2021 the series shifted to bi-monthly with sessions led by







community partners, including Partner Spotlight Organizations and targeted resources needed for virtual teaching and learning including adapted afterschool curriculum. Examples of topics addressed include

- Virtual Field Trips: Bringing the World to Your Students led by Peter Brunette, Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium, 6-4-20;
- Support for the Wellbeing of the Whole Child led by Jessie Coffey, NDE, 8-20-20;
- Use of Space in Afterschool Settings During COVID, led by a panel of experienced 21st CCLC directors, 12-3-20; and

- A COVID-19 Discussion led by Dr. Mark Rupp, UNMC, 5-17-21.

In order to increase opportunities for viewing, all webinars were recorded and links provided via the StayConnected website.

### GetConnected Nebraska Afterschool Conference

The format for the annual statewide conference was changed to a virtual three-day event conducted on September 30-October 2, 2020 and made possible by funding from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

Throughout the three-day virtual conference, the following occurred:

- 12,126 website page views
- 344 participants from 162 cities in 6 countries
- 21 virtual exhibits showcasing Partner Spotlight organizations received 380 page views
- 54 live and recorded sessions focused on six conference themes
- 6 wellness and social activities
- Audiobook for all attendees and support for implementing a virtual book club



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Youth Marketplace with 10 Nebraska youth-led business providers.

Because the conference utilized an online platform, we were able to bring messages to attendees from nationally and locally recognized keynote speakers and organizations. These speakers included:

Jodi Grant, Executive Director,  
Afterschool Alliance  
Gwynn Hughes, Senior Program Officer,  
Mott Foundation  
Dr. Christine Cunningham, Professor of  
Practice of Education and Engineering,  
Penn State University



Carol O'Donnell and Katherine  
Blanchard, Smithsonian Science  
Education Center  
Dr. Vann Price, Director of Equity,  
Diversity and Inclusion, Lincoln Public  
Schools  
Dr. Kathleen Lodl, University of  
Nebraska 4-H Extension  
Carrie Gottschalk, Engagement Zone  
Coordinator, Nebraska Extension  
Lindsay Rogers, Fish and Wildlife  
Education Administrator, Nebraska  
Game and Parks Commission

Detailed information about the conference including recordings of selected sessions are available on the 21st CCLC website.  
<https://www.education.ne.gov/21stcclc/2020-virtual-conference/>

Conference Sponsors included Verizon, StemNext Opportunity Fund, Mizzen by Mott, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and the Nebraska Environmental Trust. Organizing Sponsors included Nebraska 21st CCLC, Beyond School Bells, Click2SciencePD, Nebraska Extension, and the Nebraska Department of Education.

### **Participation in National Initiatives**

In 2019 the Nebraska 21st CCLC program received \$49,000 in Title IV, Part A ESSA Statewide funds to participate in a statewide pilot research project with the Harvard Graduate School of Education EASEL Lab. These funds supported the professional development, training and materials to implement Harvard Kernels, an evidence-based SEL curriculum, in





participating urban and rural 21st CCLC afterschool and summer programs. Due to school closures beginning in March, 2020 the project paused until late September, 2020 when an online version of the pilot was restarted with fifteen 21st CCLC sites. Due to COVID-19 restrictions and protocols that affected implementation, we received a one-year no-cost extension to implement the pilot through August 2021. In February 2021 additional funding was provided by ESSER II to continue the pilot through the 2022-23 school year.

An additional opportunity to participate in another national initiative was the NASA STEM Design Challenge Program which included a two-day online training for teachers in January 2021. Due to COVID-19, there was only one Nebraska 21st CCLC site that participated. As part of the project, students connected virtually to a NASA scientist/engineer. The NASA Nebraska Space Grant generously provided financial support so that participating students and their parents

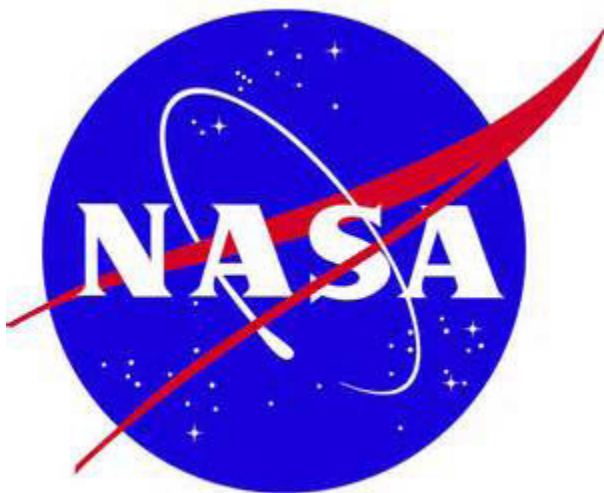
could visit the Air and Space Museum in Ashland before completing their project in May 2021.

### 21st CCLC Programming

The typical 21st CCLC afterschool schedule offers an intentionally planned program aligned to the three overarching goals of the program:

1. Improve overall student academic success
2. Increase positive behavior and social interactions
3. Increase active and meaningful family and community engagement.

Program schedules include time for academic support including optional homework help, a healthy meal or snack, time for physical activity, and enriching, hands-on clubs and activities. COVID-19 required adaptations to all program components including in-person and virtual programming, established schedules, staffing, family and community partner engagement in the program, and other important program elements.



## HOMEWORK AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT

The majority of Nebraska 21st CCLC programs offer time for homework assistance and/or other activities that address the identified academic needs of students. These activities are provided daily and are planned as a result of



ongoing communication with classroom teachers. When the pandemic caused schools to close during the spring of 2020, many 21st CCLC programs shifted to providing online learning opportunities with staff providing packets of learning materials for students to complete at home.

## HEALTHY MEAL OR SNACK

Each 21st CCLC site participated in applicable USDA nutrition programs in order to provide students with a healthy meal or snack each day. Students were sometimes involved in planning, growing, and preparing these meals/snacks as part of their regular afterschool and



summer learning activities. Once the pandemic caused schools to close during the spring of 2020, many afterschool program leaders and staff provided support for meal pick-up to meet the ongoing nutritional needs of families served in the program.

## ENRICHMENT AND CLUBS

The heart of the 21st CCLC program is the time provided for students to engage in hands-on, enrichment activities, allowing them opportunities to discover and explore topics of interest. These clubs and activities provide students with additional time to learn about topics that are not typically taught during the school day or allow for more in-depth exploration and application of skills learned during the school day.

Examples of clubs/enrichment activities offered in Nebraska 21st CCLC programs, or through online venues, included:

- Art/music
- College/career readiness
- Cooking
- Dance
- Exploration of STEM (integrated science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) topics
- Fitness
- Literacy
- Nutrition/wellness
- Outdoor education
- Social emotional development
- Technology





# Evaluation Plan and Activities





The evaluation plan for 2020-2021 continued to be based upon a continuous improvement model as 21st CCLC sites used data to set goals, develop action plans, implement those plans and evaluate progress towards goals. Sites utilized data from the self-assessment, teacher surveys, parent surveys, student surveys, afterschool staff surveys and community partner surveys. In addition, data were collected on student attendance and student demographics including free/reduced lunch rate, English Learner status and special education status. Some sites had external observations and/or monitoring visits to consider as part of their planning.

As part of the continuous improvement model, all sites were required to hold Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) meetings in the fall semester of 2020. Attendance at those meetings was required for the building principal, site

director and other members of the management team including the external facilitator (if contracted by the site). At the CIP meeting, sites reviewed data from 2019-2020 and developed their action plans for the 2020-2021 school year. Action plans were submitted to the state-level management team for review.

For 21st CCLC programs, external facilitators help facilitate the continuous improvement process. External facilitators led the teams through the self-assessment process, participated in management team meetings, provided guidance for the evaluation process, and facilitated the continuous improvement meeting. While recommended, external facilitators are required only for first year programs.

Teacher surveys were collected for two purposes: 1) to fulfill the requirements for federal reporting; 2) to provide feedback to the programs on the progress of students enrolled within the 21st CCLCs. Surveys were administered in spring of 2021 and were collected on all students who had attended the program.

Parent surveys were disseminated in the spring of 2021 to parents of students who were attendees in the program. While not federally required, parent surveys provide information on the quality of the program, as well as levels of parent engagement with the program and school system. Parent surveys were administered digitally or with paper copies. Multiple languages were available.





All K-12th grade students were given the opportunity to provide feedback via online surveys administered at their respective 21st CCLC sites. The versions for each age group varied in the number of items asked and some of the content. The surveys for grades 3rd-12th originated from Kings County Executives (2015) and have been normed and validated for the school age afterschool population.

An afterschool staff survey was administered during the 2020-2021 school year. The purpose of the staff survey is to inform the management team on strengths and challenges, collect feedback on professional development offerings, and to provide a statewide snapshot of the Nebraska afterschool workforce. The staff survey focused on

reasons for working in the field of afterschool, confidence in skills/abilities needed to work in the program, relationships with students, and professional development. The survey asked staff to provide open-ended feedback on the strengths of the program as well as areas that need improvement. The afterschool staff survey is administered via Qualtrics, an online survey platform.

For the fifth year, the community partner survey was sent to partners identified by each 21st CCLC site who had contributed to the site in some manner either during the summer, school year or both. The survey items were designed to measure strength of community partner relationships, capacity of the partner to



provide supports, relationships with students and families, strengths of the programs, and to inform programs on any possible improvements that could be made.

## NEBRASKA AFTERSCHOOL QUALITY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (NAQCIS)

The Nebraska Afterschool Quality and Continuous Improvement System (NAQCIS) Self-Assessment (Johnson, et al., 2019) was completed by all sites in the fall of 2020. In addition, sites in years 2 and 4 of their grant cycle had an

external observation of their program completed by evaluation team members from UNMC.

NAQCIS (Johnson, et al., 2019) was developed and piloted from the summer of 2018 through the spring of 2019. NAQCIS is purposely aligned with quality framework indicators adopted by the Nebraska State Board of Education and includes a self-assessment, external observation tool with a corresponding feedback form and a monitoring form. In addition to completing an annual self-assessment, each 21st CCLC site has two external observations and one monitoring visit within a five-year grant cycle. External observations are conducted by the external evaluation team from UNMC. Trained evaluators observe programs in years 2 and 4 of their grant cycle with each observed program receiving feedback on overall program components in addition to specific feedback on 1-2 clubs/activities selected by the program. Feedback is provided to sites within 1-2 weeks of the observation. The monitoring visit occurs during year 3 of the grant cycle and is conducted by NDE personnel.



## EVALUATION OUTCOMES

For this reporting period, outcomes are reported for quality (both external observations and self-assessment), teacher, parent and student feedback, afterschool staff feedback, community partner feedback, and demographics of those served by the program.







## Nebraska Afterschool Quality & Continuous Improvement System (NAQCIS)

	Self-Assessment (Fall)	Surveys (Spring)	Federal APR (Each Term)	External Observation (Year 2, Year 4)	Monitoring Visit (Year 3)
Administration with sound management and well-developed systems					
College/career awareness and readiness					
Community-school partnerships and resource sharing					
Diverse, prepared staff including certificated educators					
Engaged learning					
Family engagement					
Intentional programming aligned with the school day program					
Ongoing assessment and improvement					
Participation, access and support during transitions					
Safety, health and wellness					



## QUALITY

**Rationale:** Quality matters in afterschool programs for student safety, social emotional development, academic growth, and engagement with programming. Quality practices are aligned with the 21st CCLC goals and the Nebraska State Board of Education quality framework.

## STUDENT OUTCOMES

Student outcomes are based on afterschool program attendance, school day attendance and survey results from students, teachers and parents.

**Rationale:** Many student outcomes, including school day attendance,



engagement with the school and peers and academic achievement have a positive relationship with attending afterschool programming (Afterschool Alliance, 2017).

**Attendance:** Regular school day attendance is critical for school achievement. National research on students who attended 21st CCLCs on a regular basis found that they had improved math and reading grades, homework completion, class participation and behavior in class (U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

**Belonging:** Research on student belonging at school indicates increased positive outcomes for health, well-being, mental

health, and academics when compared to students who feel less a sense of belonging with school (Juvonen, 2006).

**Social Emotional Well-being:** Social and emotional well-being includes having friends, feeling accepted, persevering through difficult tasks, self-regulation and having appropriate peer and adult interactions.

## PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Parent engagement outcomes are derived from parent and teacher surveys and program highlights.



**Rationale:** When parents are engaged in their student's education, increased school success and student outcomes, as well as improved attendance, result Roche (2017); Weiss, Lopez, Caspe (2018); Wood, Bauman, Rudo & Dimock (2017). 21st CCLC sites make parent engagement a priority component of their programming.

Parent surveys were completed by over 5100 parents. Parents recognized the quality of the programs and the support provided by centers for afterschool supervision and support with their student(s) academics. Overall, the sites were rated very positively and





seen as a valued resource for communities.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Community partnership outcomes are based on community partner surveys, self-assessment data and program highlights.

**Rationale:** Community partnerships enhance programs in a number of ways: providing programming, resources, training and/or time, and financially

supporting the program. Finding and maintaining community partners is essential to program success and sustainability.

### Partner surveys

Despite the pandemic restrictions and limitations on community partners' participation in programs during the 2020-2021 school year, 300 community partner surveys were completed. The survey responses indicated strong commitment to programs and a belief that partnering with 21st CLCC programs was mutually beneficial.

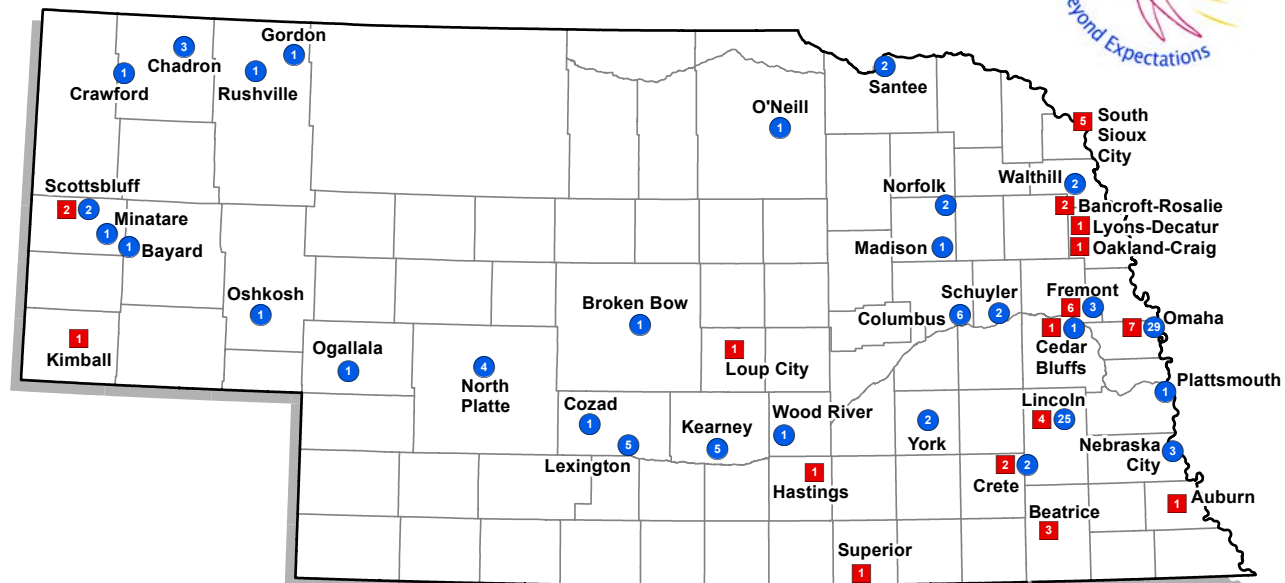


# Who Attended 21st CCLC?





## Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Centers 2020–2021 School Year



- Currently Funded by 21st CCLC First-Time Grant (Years 1-5)
- Currently Funded by 21st CCLC Continuation Grant (Year 6 and beyond)

Number in symbol indicates the number of sites

Information Source: Nebraska 21st CCLC Office (Updated 05/20)

Statewide, Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Center, served students at 150 Nebraska public schools during the 2020-2021 year. All nonpublic and home-schooled students that reside within the attendance area of the qualified public school building site were eligible to attend.

As noted on the map, 39 sites are within their first five years while 111 were on continuation funding. 21st CCLCs served both rural and urban students in 34 communities.

“School Year” is defined as programming offered afterschool for less than 4 hours.

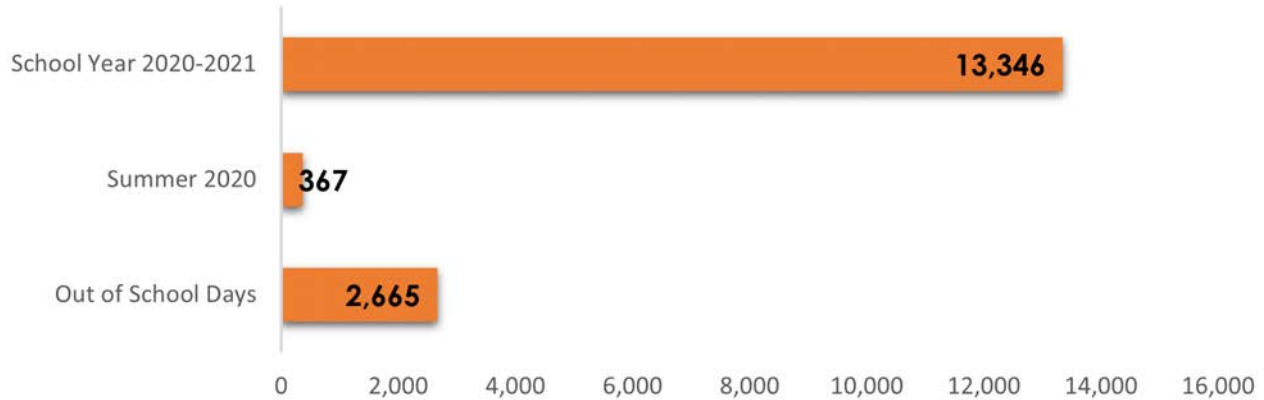
“Summer” includes programs funded by 21st CCLC operating 4 or more hours during summer break. “Out of School” refers to programming offered for 4 or more hours during the school year (early release days, holiday breaks).

Prior to the pandemic, a “regular attender” was defined as a student who attended 30 days or more. However, for 2020-2021 the decision was made by the state-level management team to include all students due to inconsistent and varied patterns of in-person schooling and in-person afterschool programming. Additionally, due to COVID-19 restrictions, some sites were not allowed to serve the numbers





Over 13,000 students attended one day or more. The number of attenders is less than is typical and speaks to the impact of the COVID19 pandemic on programming.



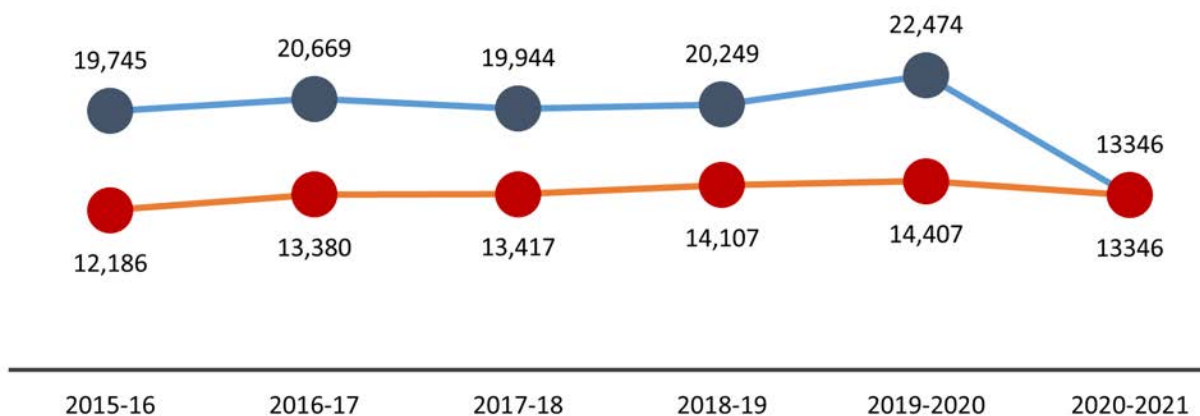
of students they had served in previous years. **Therefore, attendance numbers reflect the restrictions and changes due to a pandemic and should NOT be seen as a sign of decreased appetite or need for afterschool programming.**

To ensure 21st CCLC programs serve high-need students who could benefit the most from the programming provided, the demographics of afterschool students are required to reflect the school day demographics at each site (within a margin of 5%). Factors include free/reduced lunch participation, race/ethnicity percentages, English Learner status,

#### Demographics of Students Attending 21st CCLC Programs.

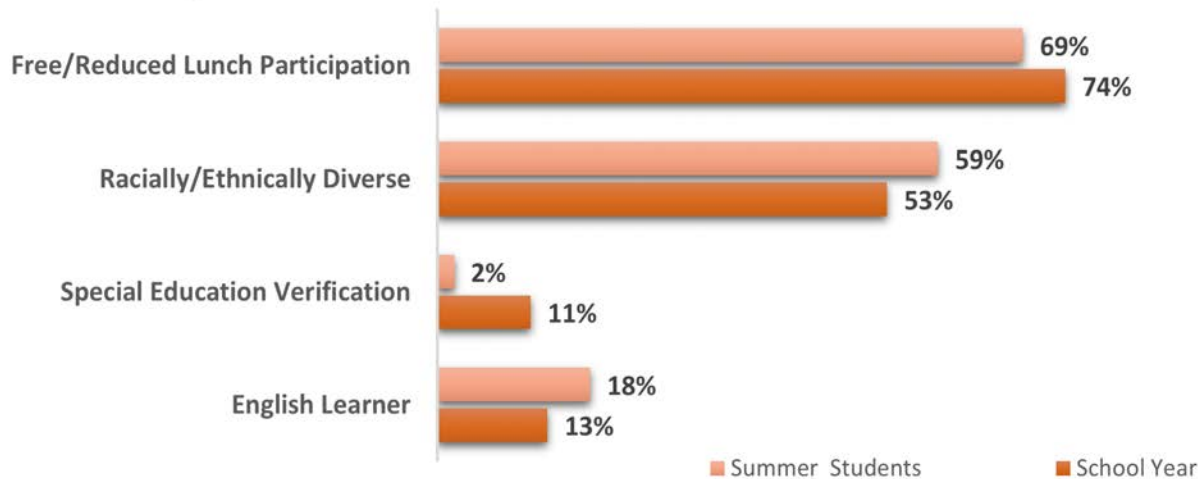
Over 13,000 students attended 21st CCLC sites in 2020-2021.

Numbers were impacted by COVID19 restrictions.



## Nebraska 21st CCLCs served a high percentage of students participating in free/reduced lunch.

Programs serve many students with diverse backgrounds and learning needs.



and special education verification. For 2020-2021, all student demographic and statewide assessment data were obtained and imported directly from the Nebraska Department of Education based on district reporting. As shown above,



programs in Nebraska served students with diverse needs at a rate higher than most statewide percentages, particularly students participating in free/reduced lunch, English Learner students, and students receiving special education. Most students (64%) served by 21st CCLC sites were in the elementary grades (K-5) while 21 percent were served by middle schools and 14% by high school programs. **Of those students, 74% participated in free/reduced lunch and 11% received special education services.**

Programs varied in demographics depending on whether they were urban or rural. In 2020-2021, 65 sites were considered urban and 85 were rural. Urban programs had higher percentages of students that were racially/ethnically diverse (66% vs. 44%) and participating



in the free/reduced lunch program (78% vs. 66%). Urban programs served more students with IEPs (20%) and more students designated as English Learners (15%), than rural programs with only 4% of students on IEPs and 11% English Learners in rural programs.

The NDE has stressed the importance of decreasing the rates of chronic absenteeism. To this extent, the state-level management team decided to examine attendance rates for 21st CCLC students who were regular attenders. The results of that analysis indicated 21st

CCLC attenders missed fewer school days on average when compared to ALL Nebraska students and Nebraska students attending schools with 40% or greater free/reduced lunch percentage. All 21st CCLC sites are required to have at least a 40% free/reduced lunch rate so the comparison to those students is most comparable. There were some differences depending on type of program attended. Students in urban settings (Omaha and Lincoln) were absent more days (M=11.14 days) than students attending rural programs (M=7.27 days).

2020-21 School Day Attendance	Number of Days		
	Attended	Absent	Total
All Nebraska Students	158.24	13.85	172.09
All Nebraska 40% FRL	157.60	16.82	174.42
Statewide 21 <sup>st</sup> CCLC Regular Attenders	176.20	11.57	187.77





# Program Quality



Program quality was assessed through two components of the NAQCIS system, the self-assessment and the external observation. All sites were required to complete the self-assessment in the fall of 2020. Sites in years 2 and 4 of their grant cycles were required to have an on-site, external observation completed by the UNMC evaluation team during the 2020-2021 school year.



The **NAQCIS Self-Assessment (Johnson, et al, 2019)** was completed by the site-level management team with team members reaching consensus on the items and agreeing to a rating. Ratings are based on a rubric and help sites to determine if items should be scored as emerging, emerging plus, maturing, maturing plus or excelling. Teams rated their programs on the following components; 1) Administration with sound management and well-developed systems, 2) Diverse, prepared staff including certificated teachers, 3) Relationships and interactions, 4) Professional development, 5) Intentional programming aligned with school day and engaged learning, 6) Behavior management, 7) Family engagement , 8) Community-School partnerships and resource sharing, 9) Ongoing assessment and improvement, and 10) Safety, health and wellness.

The **NAQCIS Site Observation (Johnson, et al, 2019)** was completed by an external evaluation team member(s) and provided feedback on two specific clubs/activities selected by the site. The same rating system as the self-assessment was used for the observations with items scoring as emerging, emerging plus, maturing, maturing plus, or excelling. Due to COVID-19, observations were recorded and were approximately 90 minutes in length. Videos (N=187) were uploaded to the BOX and then scored by an evaluation team member.



**Nebraska Sites' NAQCIS Self-Assessment  
Self-Ratings  
2020-2021**

<b>Administration</b>					
	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Emerging +</b>	<b>Maturing</b>	<b>Maturing +</b>	<b>Excelling</b>
2019-2020	3%	2%	6.49%	8.81%	79.60%
2020-2021	0%	0%	4.76%	21.09%	74.15%
<b>Diverse, prepared staff</b>					
2019-2020	3.45%	8%	17.72%	24.01%	46.81%
2020-2021	0%	1.35%	16.22%	42.57%	39.86%
<b>Relationships &amp; Interactions</b>					
2019-2020	.35%	3.51%	16.28%	36.51%	43.35%
2020-2021	0%	.68%	12.84%	43.92%	42.57%
<b>Professional Development</b>					
2019-2020	6.29%	10.14%	18.29%	22.86%	42.42%
2020-2021	2.03%	9.46%	20.95%	37.16%	30.41%
<b>Intentional Programming aligned with the school day</b>					
2019-2020	3.11%	7.40%	18.98%	25.56%	44.95%
2020-2021	.68%	2.70%	19.59%	45.27%	31.76%
<b>Behavior Management</b>					
2019-2020	9.69%	9.18%	20.92%	26.63%	33.57%
2020-2021	2.03%	1.35%	22.97%	48.65%	25%
<b>Family Engagement</b>					
2019-2020	17.63%	10.79%	16.55%	19.43%	35.61%
2020-2021	4.05%	16.89%	30.41%	33.78%	14.86%
<b>Community School Partnerships</b>					
2019-2020	9.57%	8%	16%	19.71%	46.71%
2020-2021	2.03%	6.08%	22.97%	36.49%	32.43%
<b>Ongoing Assessment and Improvement</b>					
2019-2020	9.43%	6.57%	14.57%	15.57%	53.86%
2020-2021	2.70%	3.38%	20.95%	37.16%	35.81%
<b>Safety, Health &amp; Wellness</b>					
2019-2020	1.70%	2.84%	12.63%	19.43%	63.41%
2020-2021	.68%	2.03%	9.46%	25.68%	62.16%



# NAQCIS SELF-ASSESSMENT

**In 2020-2021, 148 sites completed their annual NAQCIS Self- Assessment.**

The **NAQCIS Self-Assessment** was designed to be completed by a site-level management team with knowledge and understanding about the goals and daily operations of the program. Members of the team have different roles and may bring different perspectives based on those roles. In order to complete the self-assessment, members of the management team observed the program within two weeks of the meeting, considered evidence to support their ratings and came to consensus on the status of their program across the multiple categories.

As the self-ratings indicate, site level management teams viewed most aspects of their programs as demonstrating at least maturing levels of quality while continuing to acknowledge that other aspects could use further development and/or improvement. Relationships continue to be a strength of programs and were a highlight for many sites.

**Across all areas of the self-assessment, fewer than 5% of sites rated themselves as being in the “emerging” category demonstrating a statewide strength in that programs are beyond implementing beginning level quality practices.**

Family engagement and community partnerships were areas identified by sites as needing additional resources and/or efforts to increase both. However, many sites noted the impact of COVID-19 on establishing new partnerships and with allowing parents and/or outside



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partners into their programs. Even with pivoting to online learning and sending packets home, sites had obstacles in meeting program goals in these areas.

## NAQCIS EXTERNAL OBSERVATIONS

External observations were completed during the 2020-2021 year on programs that were in either year 2 or 4 of their 5-year grant cycle. An observation cycle included a pre-observation interview with the site director, collection of artifacts and materials to support the observation including daily schedules, parent communication materials, and/or activity/lesson plans for the clubs/activities being observed. Due to COVID-19, pre-observation interviews were conducted via phone or Zoom. The observations were then recorded for approximately 90 minutes. Videos were uploaded to a secure dropbox and then scored by an evaluation team member. Each video-taped observation session focused on 2-3 activities/clubs chosen by the program, therefore, no overall scores were provided to sites. Within 2 weeks a feedback call/Zoom session was held with the program to go over what was observed, the scores and any recommendations for the program. It was also a time for the program to ask questions or to provide additional information to the evaluation team member.

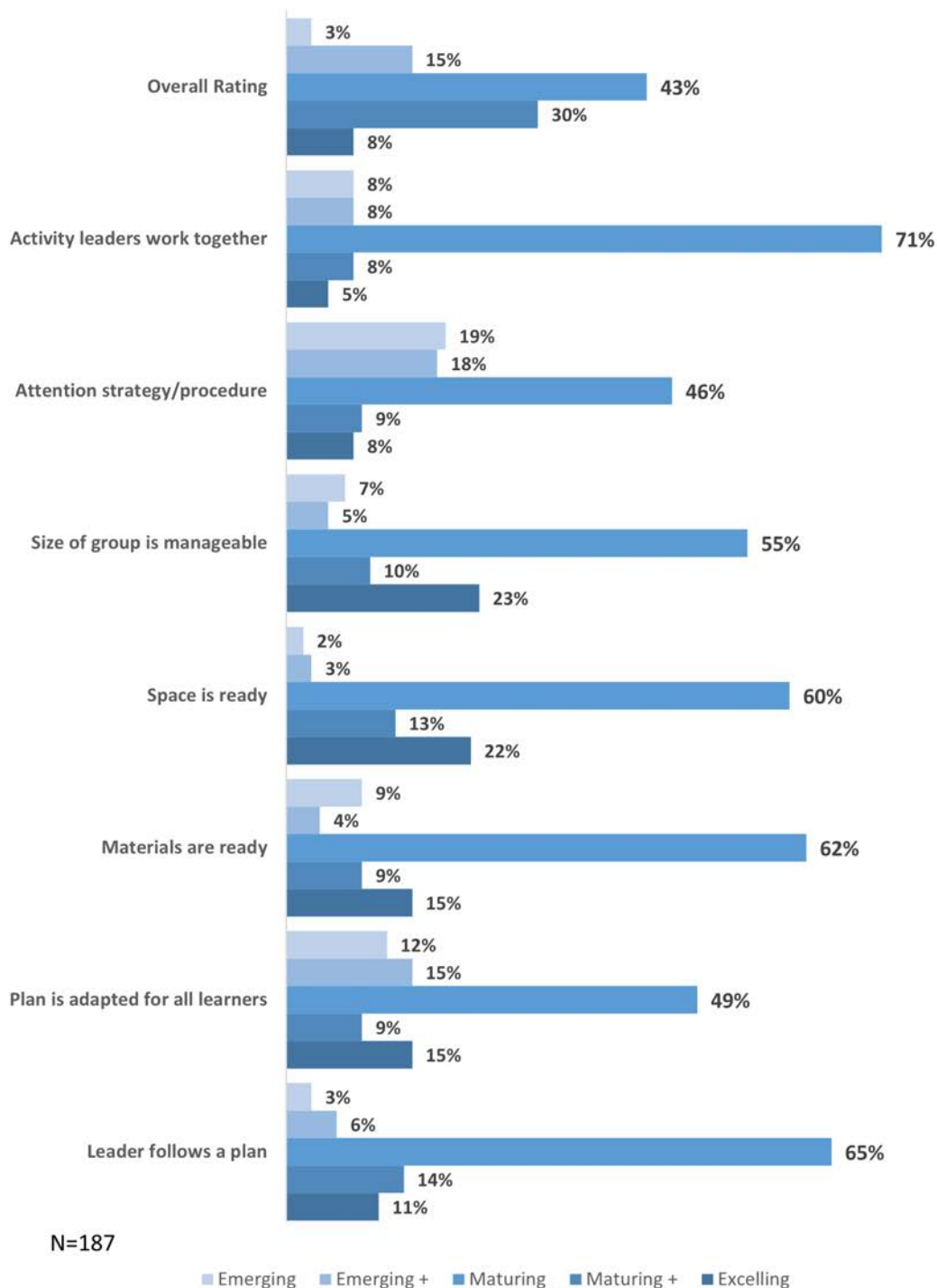
## ACTIVITY AND CLUB OBSERVATIONS (N=187)

Sites selected activities/clubs for the evaluation team members to observe and provide feedback on preparation, student response, and instructional and engagement practices. Each club/activity was video-taped for a minimum of 20 minutes in order to provide in-depth feedback and recommendations. Activity lessons/plans were requested to be sent with the observation video. Site directors were given the flexibility to select what they wanted observed and to receive feedback on. It was not a requirement to select only exemplar clubs, as the purpose of evaluation is two-fold—to provide information on overall quality and to promote data utilization and continuous improvement. As a result, some activities were selected because they were new in development and/or needed suggestions for improvement.

Engagement of students in activities continues to be a goal for 21st CCLC programs as the more engaged a student is the more likely they are to continue attending the afterschool program and the less frequent behavior management issues become a factor. Students engaged in an activity will interact with each other, the materials, and the instructor.



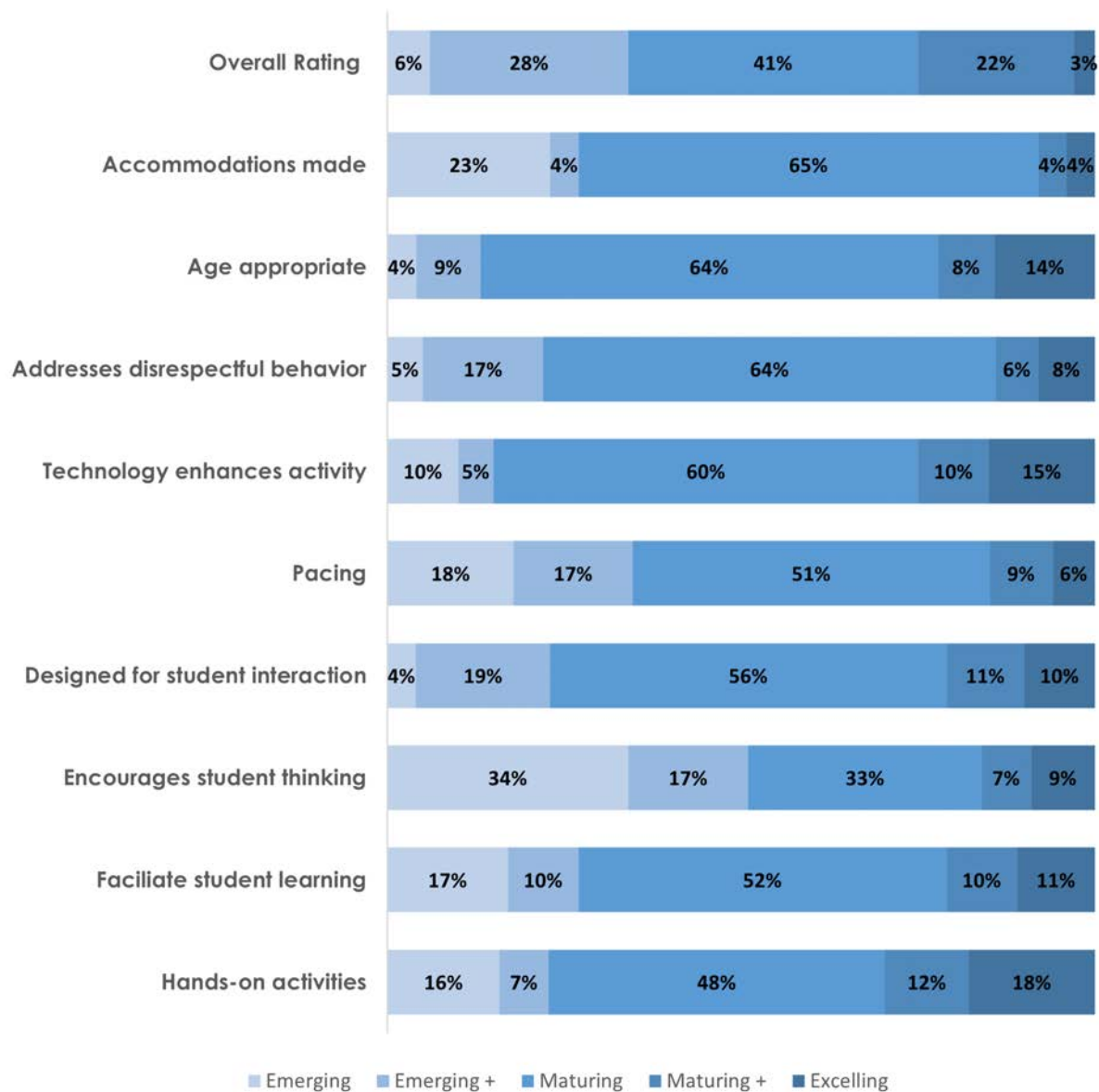
**Observations found the majority of clubs/activities were well-organized with space and materials ready for the students.**





**The majority of activities observed encouraged student interactions and engagement by being hands-on.**

Pacing and encouraging student thinking are areas to improve.



Clubs/activities observed covered all age ranges and multiple areas of interest and programming.

Data from observations (N=187) indicated activities had good planning and preparation prior to students attending



with **81% of the activities attaining an overall rating of maturing or higher.**

Areas needing improvement included activities being adapted to meet the needs of all learners participating and for programs to use a consistent attention strategy or procedure.

Student engagement (e.g., interacting with each other and club leaders, interest

in activity and learning) is one area to improve. Observations found that 24% of the clubs/activities observed were in the emerging and emerging plus categories. Growth in activities that promote student learning and require students to demonstrate skills would enhance the offerings of afterschool programs.





# Survey Outcomes





## SURVEY RETURN RATES

Survey	Respondents	Return Rate
Teacher	7279	61%
Parent	5109	38%
K-2 Student	2487	59%
3rd-5th Student	2498	57%
6th-12th Student	1600	34%
Community Partner	300	51%
Afterschool Staff	590	NA

## PARENT SURVEY OUTCOMES (N=5,109; 38% RETURN RATE)

The parent survey was provided to parents of all students who were attenders during the 2020-2021 school year. The survey was designed to provide a snapshot of program quality, experiences of the student and reasons

for enrolling their student in the program. Parents were asked to rate the following items on a 1 to 4 scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree).



**Parents rated the 21st CCLC program positively across all areas.**  
 Survey results over the past three years have a similar pattern.



Parents (N=5,109) gave the programs high ratings across all items. In particular, they viewed the program as a benefit to their child, that staff care about their child and that their child enjoys the activities of the program. Parents also viewed the programs as safe places for their child to be and that their child was able to have friends within the program.

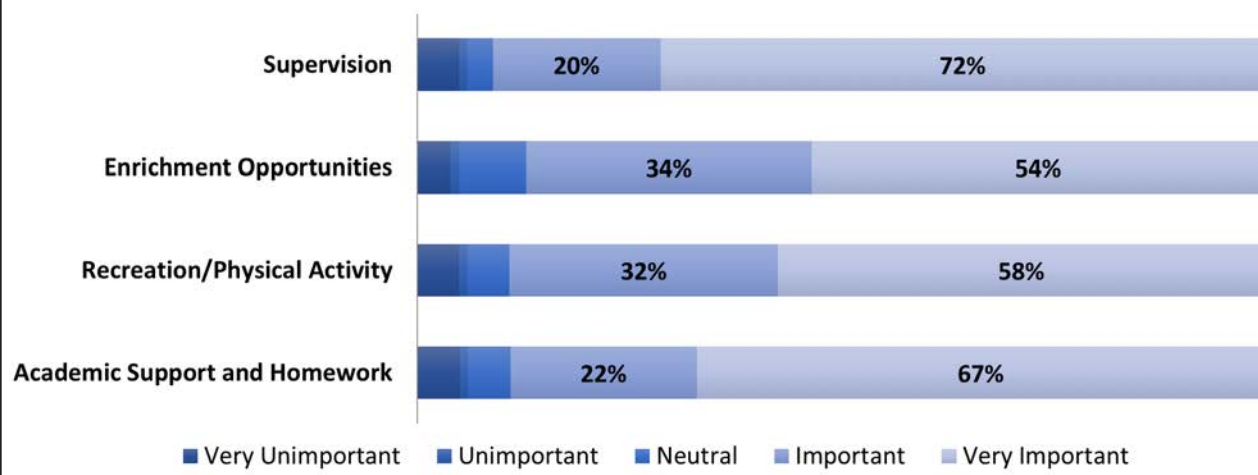
Parents were asked why they enrolled their students in 21st CCLC programming. They rated each component as being very unimportant, unimportant, neutral, important or very important. Supervision had the most parents (92%) rate it as important or very important, but all of the components were rated as important

or very important by at least 87% of the parents.



## Supervision continues to be rated as the most important reason for parents needing afterschool programming.

Several parents reported the necessity of an afterschool program to keep employment.



All parents who completed the satisfaction survey had the opportunity to answer the open-ended question, **“Thinking about your experience with the afterschool program, what are some ways we could best provide support/resources to you as you support your child’s learning?”** Despite this

“Keeping programs after school like this are very important for kids socially and mentally. I hope they keep this around for all elementary schools for years to come.”

---parents of 21st CCLC student

request for constructive critique and suggestions, many of the respondents chose to comment on things that were going well or that they liked about the afterschool program. Those who did make suggestions for improvements, additional resources, or expressed areas of concern typically commented on the program’s communication, the learning/activity opportunities, the staff, and/or opportunities for families to be engaged. Details on each of these topics are described below.

**Many parents shared generally positive sentiments.** Many parents indicated they were satisfied with and appreciated the program; the only feedback they wanted to share was to thank the program, give accolades, and to recommend the programs keep doing what they are doing. Parents said they appreciated that their children had the opportunity to get





academic support, develop social skills and play with friends, and were able to participate in enrichment opportunities they would otherwise never experience. Some parents commented that having a safe and enriching place for their children to go after school hours was critical for working and/or otherwise time-stretched parents.

**Parents indicated their children enjoy the program.** Not only did parents have positive things to say about the program, they also relayed the positive comments from their children. Several parents noted the afterschool program is their child's "favorite" part of the day and the children reportedly like the activities and the people (staff and peers). Comments



indicating children do not want to be picked up at the end of the day and/or otherwise wish to spend more time with the afterschool program were common.

Not all parents are receiving the level of communication from the program they would prefer. Many parents noted that they do not know what is happening during the afterschool program. They requested regular newsletters, emails or bulletins to let them know what clubs and activities would be offered and so they could stay apprised of basic program updates. Some also asked for more personalized communication, noting that they have a difficult time reaching anyone at the program if they need to pick up a child early or otherwise need to speak with program staff. A small number of parents reported situations where they were not informed when there was an incident involving their children (for things like accidents or peer disagreements) and others indicated they only ever heard from staff when it was to discuss their child's problem behaviors but wanted to hear some positive news as well.

Other parents, however, reported high-quality communication from the afterschool program. These parents said they appreciate the newsletters, text communication, and emails they receive. Some also specifically noted that any concerns they or program staff had were easily shared and quickly addressed.

**Parents would like to see more activities offered during the afterschool programs, but most would prefer the focus stay**



**on homework help and completion.** The majority of comments on programming revolved around academics and homework help. Many parents specifically noted this support as important for their children and/or made positive comments about the homework help their children receive during the afterschool program. Recommendations to further strengthen the homework help component of the program included having programs provide more support in the content of/understanding the homework (e.g., “one-on-one” tutoring) and/or more structure and oversight to ensure their child’s homework is completed each day. Increased communication with both the school-day staff members and the parents as it relates to homework was also requested by several survey respondents.

Parents also asked for specific programs to be added and/or increased in frequency. Often these were academic programs (e.g., STEM, computer-based learning opportunities, reading) or social/cultural learning (e.g., second languages, cultural diversity, social-emotional skills). Several parents also suggested more sports and movement activities (e.g., structured sports teams, martial arts), there was a small subset of parents who felt the academic offerings were already overwhelming and wanted to see these active and/or social opportunities replace the academic focus. There were also a handful of parents of older children who noted a lack of engaging opportunities for their children and/or commented that their children expressed more boredom in recent years compared to when they were younger.



Parents indicated some staff would benefit from professional development. Again, most of the comments about staff were praise; parents noted how much their children loved certain staff members or how well directors and other leadership staff were able to handle difficult situations. There were, however, also several comments indicating concern that some staff members were too young and/or inexperienced to deal with student behaviors or escalated situations. Some parents noted concerns with bullying, inappropriate language, lack of structure, inconsistency of rule enforcement, and/or disengaged staff. Some parents reported staff did not handle their child's behaviors or special needs well (and/or did not communicate well with the parents to help resolve the situation) and other parents felt their compliant children were being treated unfairly because the staff could not control a few children with behavior concerns.

Some parents would like to be more engaged with their afterschool programs. Several survey respondents noted wanting to be able to come into the buildings and observe the afterschool programs and/or attend a parent's night so they can get a better sense of "what goes on behind the doors" of the program. Others were hoping to see more structured opportunities for family-focused (e.g., parents and students together) activities. And lastly, a few parents requested parent education and parent-to-parent community-building resources. Due to COVID-19 protocols, parents were not always able to



participate at levels they had prior to the pandemic.

Parents also had a few other suggestions. Several parents requested that the program be available more often, like on Fridays, on early release/out of school days, during the summer, and/or for extended hours (e.g., beyond 5:00). A small number commented on the lack of local options for the middle and high school students and wished the programs served these older children. Other less common comments included recommendations about the food/snacks available, concerns about transportation, issues with financial aspects of the program (e.g., the cost of fee-based programs or issues with the invoicing process), or child-specific requests.





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### Parents are aware that Covid-19 has impacted the afterschool programs.

A new theme in this year's responses were specific comments on the impact Covid-19 had on the programming. Many parents noted that the quality of programming, the diversity of options, the quality of staff and/or safety protocols had decreased over the last two years. Most were quick to recognize that these were not the fault of the program but acknowledged that factors outside the program's control did negatively impact the afterschool program. On the other hand, several parents commented on how well their program handled pandemic-related struggles and appreciated that they were able to stay open for the students.

Others noted that some of the pandemic-response changes worked well for their children (e.g., kits that went home with students during remote learning) and requested these changes remain post-pandemic.



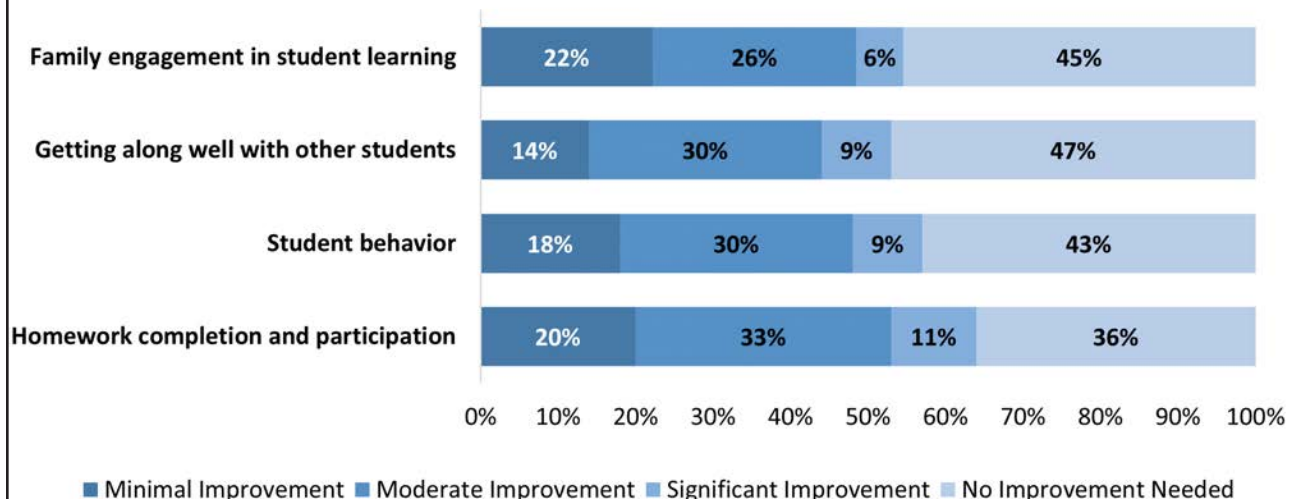
**Summary.** Overall, comments were more positive than negative. Parents who offered suggestions/criticism often couched those comments between compliments or qualified them with statements indicating they were overall satisfied with the program. Those with ideas for improvement to the program identified a preference for a focus on homework completion, additional academic, social, and physical activities, and more parental engagement opportunities. Some also identified a need to improve communication between the program and parents and to offer professional development so staff can learn the skills necessary to navigate difficult situations. Balancing the comments indicating there was room for improvement on communication, activities, or staffing, etc., were the many comments expressing satisfaction or amazement at the quality of those same issues.

## TEACHER SURVEY OUTCOMES (N=7,279; 61% RETURN RATE)

To fulfill one of the federal APR requirements, classroom teachers rated individual students on their performance both academically and behaviorally. Behaviorally the items focused on student motivation, homework completion, participation, and relationships with



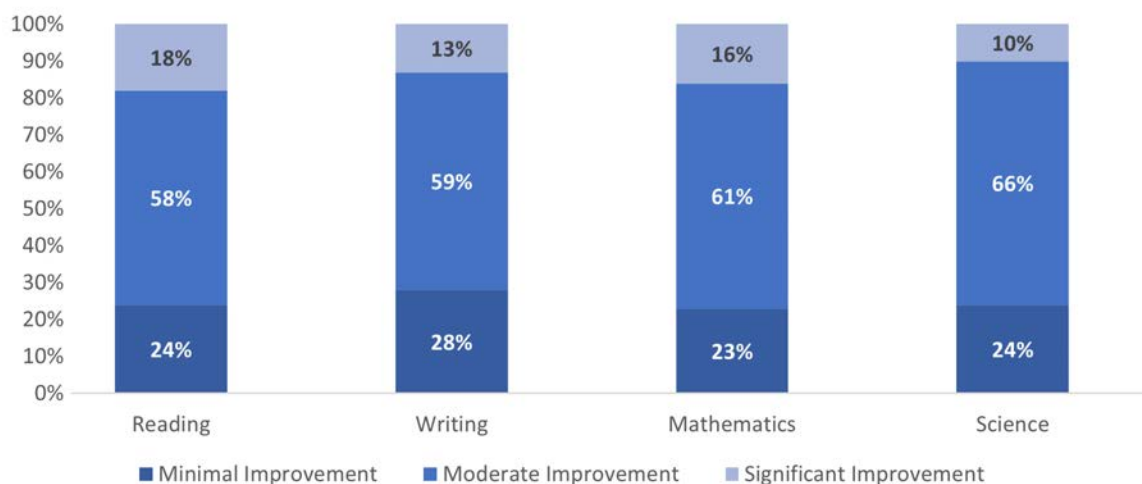
**Homework completion and participation improved the most across the year with 42% demonstrating moderate to significant improvement.**



others. To assess student behavior as it relates to academic achievement, school day classroom teachers reported perceived change (if any) from fall to spring. Items focused on motivation,

completion of assignments and positive relationships in and out of school, which are associated with positive academic outcomes.

**For the third year, students demonstrated the most growth in mathematics with 75% demonstrating moderate to significant improvement from fall to spring.**



Teachers rated students' academic performance relative to state standards in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Teachers rated student performance based on observations of each student's performance in their classroom, district and/or classroom assessment data, and professional judgment to identify whether students showed minimal, moderate, or significant improvement for each academic area.

In addition to growth across the school year, teachers rated students' current academic performance as being below, on or above grade level. Teacher ratings were collected in lieu of grades and/or standardized assessment scores/state assessment scores. For the third year in a row, **teachers rated student performance the highest for science with only 16% falling below grade level.** However, for both reading and writing, 31% of students were rated as performing below grade level. One recommendation could be for

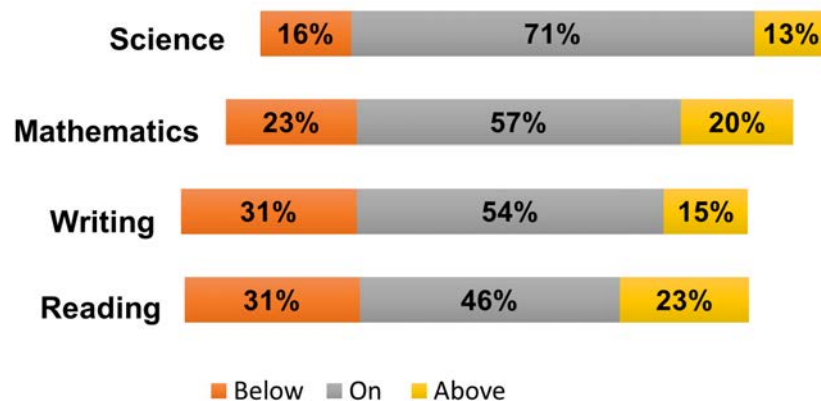
programs to work on literacy aspects more throughout the afterschool program, particularly for students who struggle in the classroom.

Teachers had an opportunity to "provide any comments concerning the impact of the afterschool program on this student." Many teachers used this space to identify specific strengths and areas for improvement for each student. They also commented on the social, behavioral, and academic benefits they saw when their students participated in the afterschool programs.

Many students reportedly grew socially because of their afterschool experiences. Teachers shared stories of how their students were more engaged with their peers, learned leadership skills, and made new friends in their afterschool programs. Improved student emotional wellbeing, especially given the ongoing

### For the third consecutive year, student performance was the highest in science.

Reading had the most students perform above grade level.





stressors of the pandemic, was also seen as a benefit of the 21st CCLC programs. Teachers noted their students excelling in relationship building and interpersonal skills, sometimes doing things that were “so unlike” what the child typically did prior to the afterschool program.

Safe, structured time afterschool improved student behavior. Teachers reported several students benefited from having a safe place to go where they had peers and adults who cared for them. The routine, stability, and consistency in expectations between school and afterschool staff, plus the specific strategies afterschool staff taught students, resulted in better social-emotional control and decreased behavioral issues. Overall attitude and engagement also reportedly increased because of participation in afterschool programs.

Teachers noted advances in academics, specifically homework completion, when students attended the afterschool program. Many teachers reported their students were more likely to understand and complete homework when they attended the program, and they often specifically credited the afterschool programs for these successes. However, several teachers also noted they still have students struggling with not turning in homework or turning in homework late even though they supposedly worked on it during the afterschool program. Teachers also reported noticing that the programs were reinforcing academic skills taught in the classroom and/or saw specific



advances in their students’ reading and math skills.

Teachers appreciated the afterschool program and expressed interest in partnering with programs to continue student successes. Many teachers used the survey as an opportunity to thank the afterschool programs for working with their students and explicitly linked success the students were having in class with the program’s work with the student after school. Comments about how much fun the students reported the clubs were and/or how “impressed” the teachers were with the content being offered during afterschool programs were common.

Teachers also commented on areas where some students were still

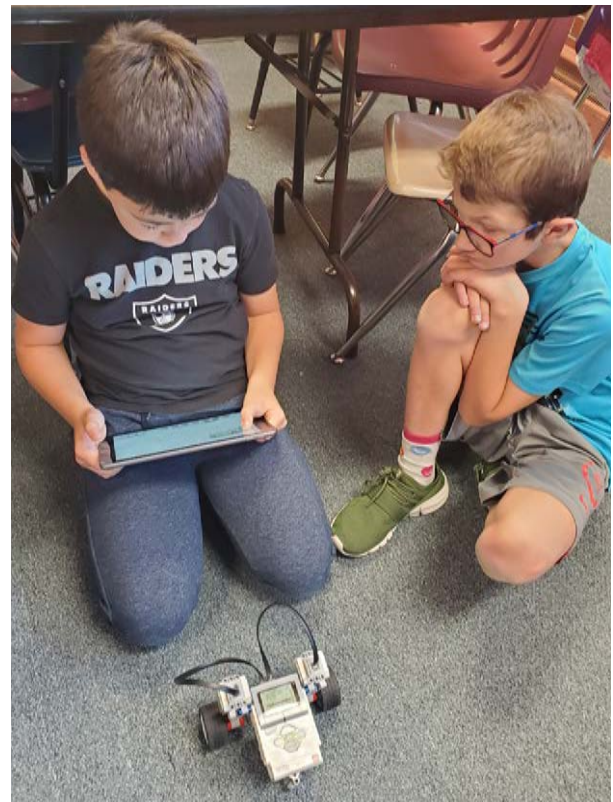
struggling. Several reported that they would like to see specific interventions (e.g., focus on homework completion, structured strategies to address behaviors) from the afterschool staff to help these students succeed. A few noted they were already in touch with the afterschool staff to align goals and expectations between school and afterschool programming and others indicated they would be happy to help if program staff ever reached out for that kind of student-level support.

Students reportedly speak highly of the programs and enjoy attending. Many teacher comments specifically noted how much their students look forward to attending the afterschool program each day. Students regularly tell their school day teachers how much fun they have in afterschool programming and brag about the exciting and interesting things they are learning/doing. Teachers also reported several students were advertising the clubs to their peers, encouraging classmates to ask their own parents if they could participate as well.

High school teachers noted slightly different benefits and struggles for their students related to the afterschool programs. Only a fraction of high school teachers answered the open-ended question. These teachers typically described the older students in general terms (e.g., “doing well” or “bright and engaged”) and did not often articulate progress the student demonstrated over the year and/or if their participation in the afterschool programs had any

impact on the student. Those who did comment on the program noted it often helped students socially, allowing them to advocate for themselves in social situations, develop leadership skills, and “come out of [their] shells.” Academic successes, like internships and advances in comprehension of school-day topics, were also noted.

High school teachers also identified continuing struggles some students had and identified areas the afterschool program could target to see more improvements in the school day. Inconsistent attendance was a common explanation for student struggles, as was missing or incomplete homework. Several teachers noted it would be (or



was, for the students who did complete homework at the afterschool program) helpful for school day success if the student had structured homework time during the afterschool program. Some underperforming students, their teachers reported, struggled with attention and engagement, but teachers did not identify how the program could or did help address this concern.

**Summary.** Overall, comments were balanced between student successes that the afterschool programs supported, and child-specific areas students still needed to work on. Generally, teachers acknowledged that students liked the afterschool programs and that they advanced the students’ social, behavioral, and academic skills. Teachers appreciated the afterschool programs and

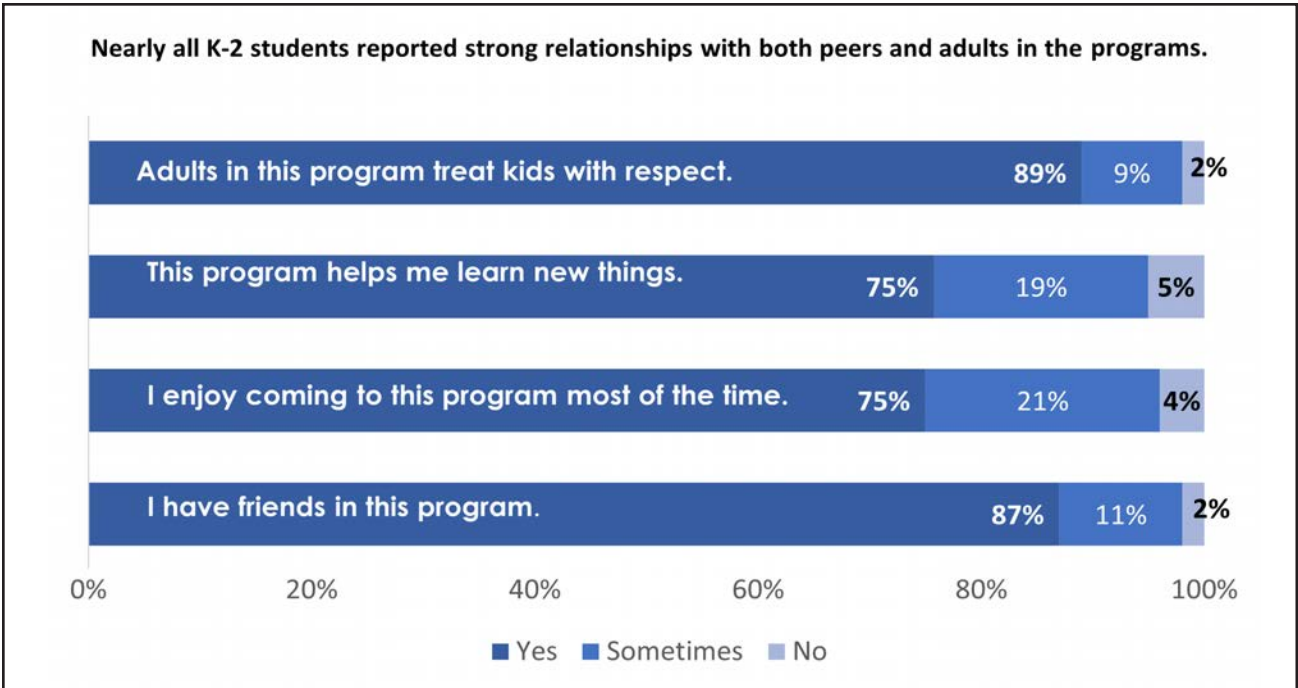
were willing to partner with afterschool staff to continue supporting students.

# STUDENT SURVEY OUTCOMES

K-2 (N=2487, 59% return rate)  
Grades 3-5 (N=2498, 57% return rate)  
Grades 6-12 (N=1600, 34% return rate)

All K-12 students who attended even once during the year were given the opportunity to provide feedback and complete age-appropriate surveys. All student surveys were online and linked to both program and student ID numbers.

K-2 students completed a four-item survey on their experiences in 21st CLCC sites.





K-2 student responses indicate positive relationships with peers and staff. Additionally, students reported that they learn new things and enjoy coming to the program, both key components for student engagement.

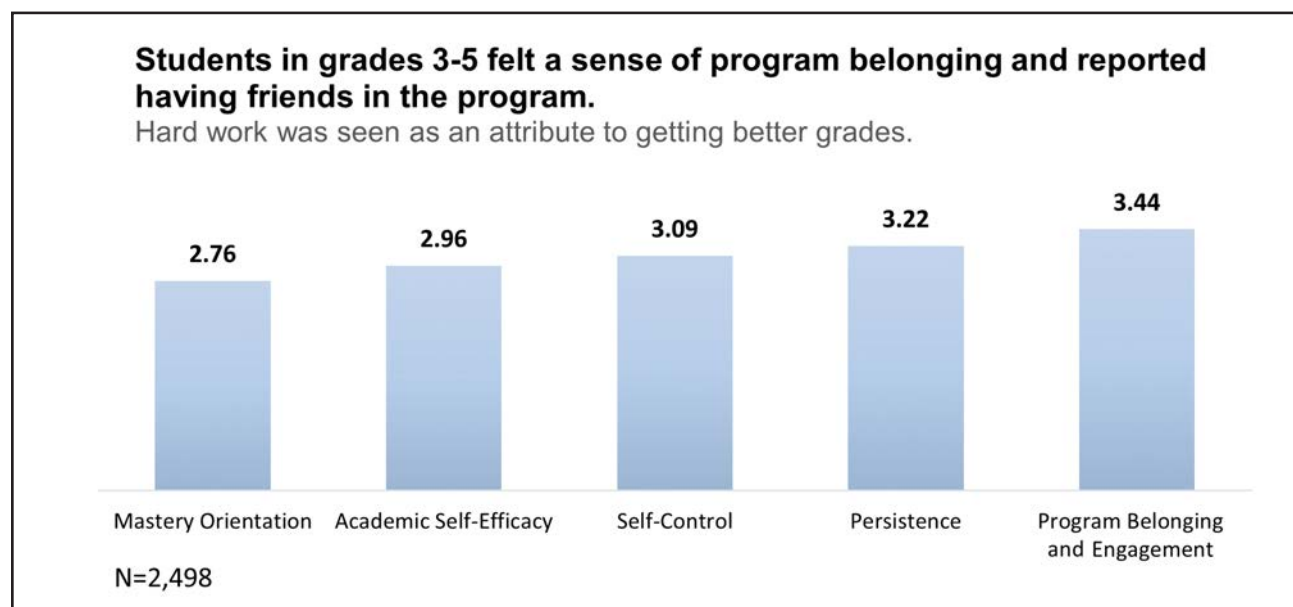
## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Students in grades 3rd-12th completed versions of the **student survey** (Youth Development Executives of King County, 2015). The survey asked questions across several areas pertaining to each student personally, and then in regard to the impact of the program they had attended. Students were asked to rate each item on a four-point scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree and 4=Strongly

Agree). Domain means were calculated at the statewide level.

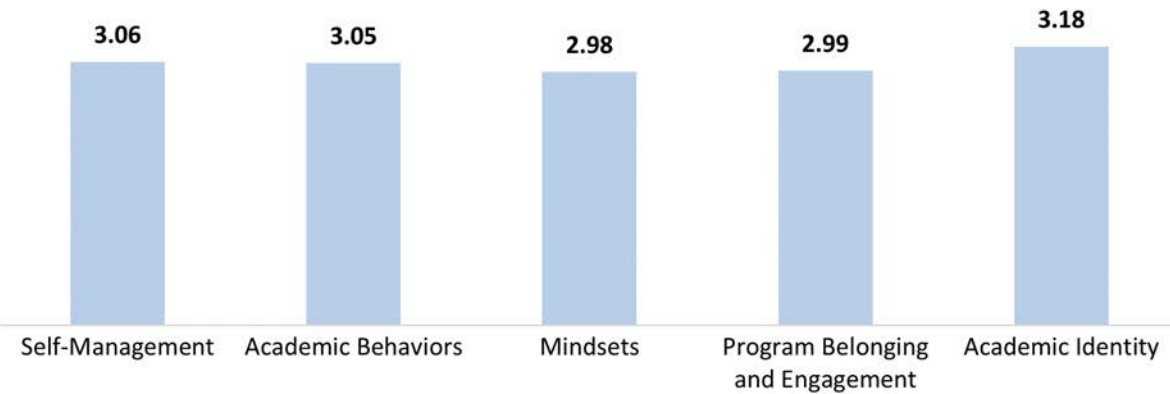
For 3rd-5th grade students (N=2,498) the highest ratings were for the **Program Belonging and Engagement** (M=3.44). Items under this domain ask about having friends (M=3.56), enjoying the program and adults respect towards students (M=3.63). Students reported they could “learn the things taught at school” (M=3.46) and they work hard to “complete school work” (M=3.40). **Mastery Orientation** continued to be the lowest rated domain with students having less confidence in their ability to “do my schoolwork because I enjoy it” (M=2.55).

For 6th-12th grade students (N=1,600), **Academic Identity** had the highest average for the sixth consecutive year. Students reported that getting a college education is important (M=3.32) which corresponds to students’ recognition



**While 6th-12th grade students were committed to earning good grades, feeling like they were part of a program was also important.**

N=1600



about the importance of grades as the item **“Getting good grades is one of my main goals”** (M=3.33) was rated positively. Lower rated items were in the domain of **Mindsets** with the lowest rated item being “I stay focused on my work even when it’s boring” (M=2.74). Students reported that the program has helped them develop self-regulation skills (i.e., making better choices, learning patience, handling stress) in addition to providing academic supports and a supportive environment.

## SUMMARY OF STUDENT SURVEY DATA

Across all age groups, program belonging and engagement continues to be rated very positively. As students advance through the grades, academic identity and

future planning becomes more prominent as the focus is on grades, college and career fields. Across sites, students enjoy coming to the program most of the time, have friends in the program, learn new things and feel respected by the adults working in the programs. Students report 21st CCLC programs are helping them develop and improve their self-regulation skills including both emotional and behavioral regulation.

## AFTERSCHOOL STAFF SURVEY OUTCOMES

In 2020-2021 afterschool staff had the opportunity to complete an afterschool staff survey developed by the evaluation team. A total of 590 staff members, including site supervisors and program directors completed the survey with



80% of respondents working as staff members, 12% site supervisors and 7% program directors.

Statewide, afterschool programming is implemented and delivered primarily by those identifying as female (82%). Demographics reported indicate a diverse workforce for afterschool programs with 70% White, 17% Hispanic/Latino, 7% Black/African American, 2% Native American / American Indian, and 1% Asian with 2% preferring not to answer. Ages of staff tended to be younger with 67% of staff being age 30 or younger, 17% were between the ages of 31-49, 12% were between the ages of 50-64 and 2% were 65 or older.



For some 21st CCLC programs, the majority of afterschool staff are college students, so turnover is expected as they graduate. For education majors, 21st CCLCs provide a training ground for working with students of diverse ages, backgrounds and abilities. Partnerships between 21st CCLC programs and postsecondary institutions across the state are mutually beneficial for both K-12 students and students participating in college coursework.

For program staff, 78% reported attending at least some postsecondary education with 40% attaining a degree or certificate post high school. Of the staff working in the programs, 21% hold bachelor's degrees, and 8% have a Master's degree. A high percentage of those with some college credits are students currently enrolled in Nebraska colleges and universities and working in the program. **Additionally, 11% of the workforce were current high school students.**

**Turnover in afterschool programs is an issue as seventy-seven percent of staff have worked in the afterschool program three years or fewer.** Another 11% have worked in the program for 4-6 years and 5% have been in the program for 7 years or longer. Top reasons for leaving were graduation, relocation and retirement, all personal reasons unrelated to the afterschool programming.

Afterschool staff see their work as valuable and a chance to connect with students as evidenced by positive feedback on the survey from



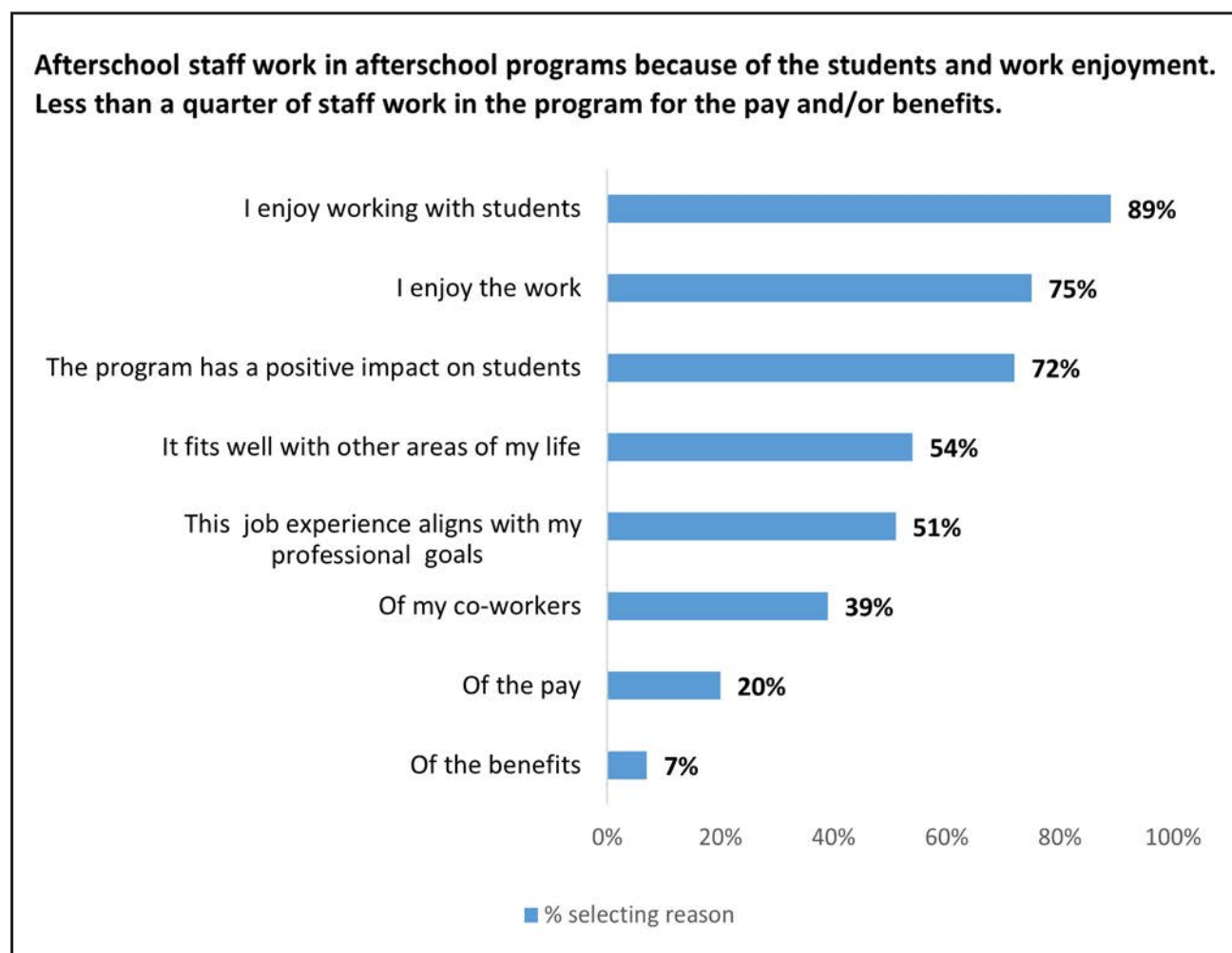


those working with students. Several commented on the impact they can see on students and how the program engages them in something outside of school. A couple of staff comments are shown below and reflect others from the survey.

**"I really enjoy working for the afterschool program and watching kids start with us and grow over the years. It's awesome to see them come back each year and participate in our program. It's good for the students socially since it makes**

**them engage with students they might not socialize with normally. I also think it's a great program to get kids who may not do sports at least be involved in something."**

**"I'm a Family/Neighborhood Engagement coordinator for our CLCs and I find this position (and many others) to be an important component when looking at growth within our programs. I hope our roles continue to be looked at as professional and essential positions in the education world."**

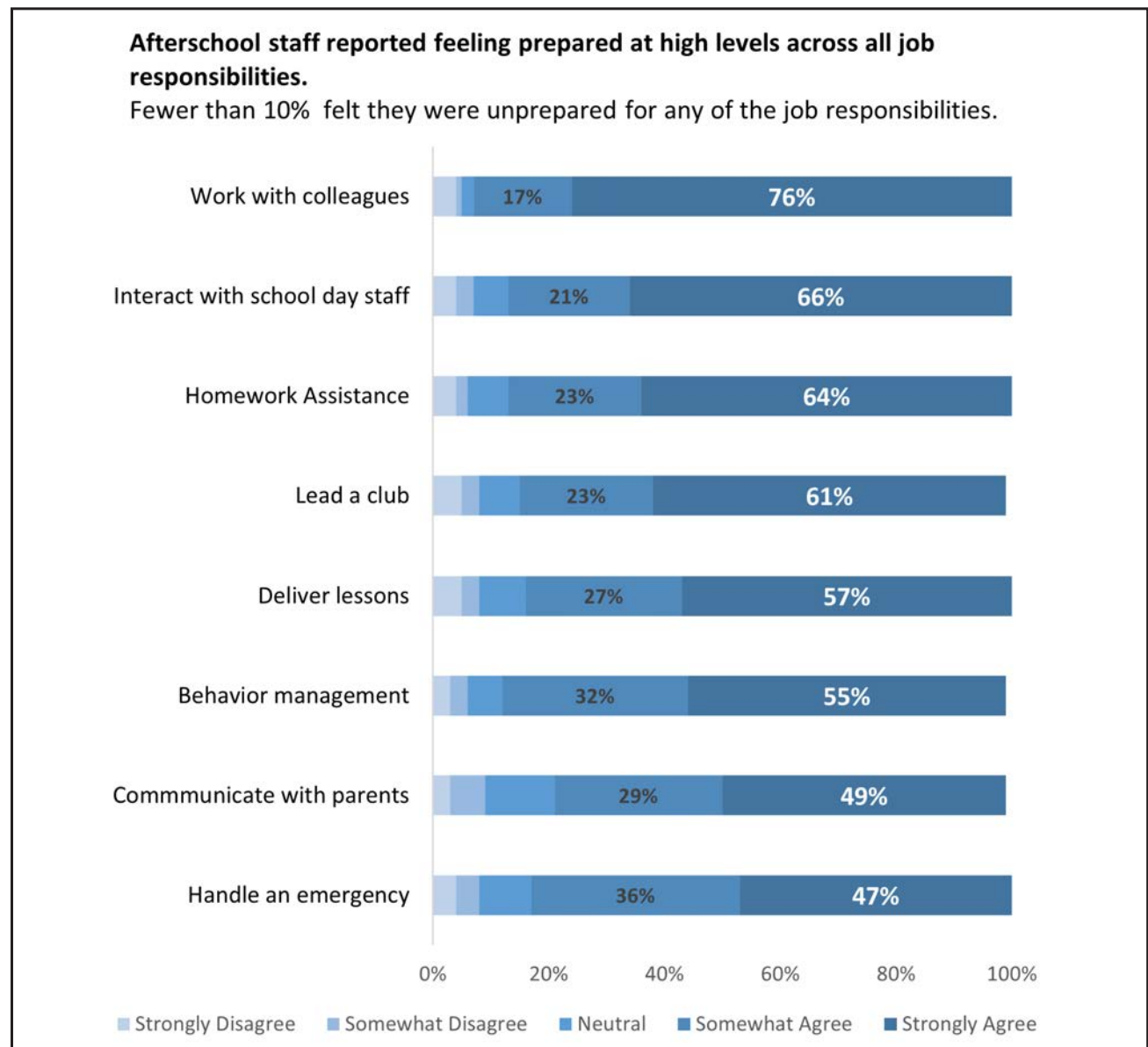


# AFTERSCHOOL STAFF PREPARATION AND CONFIDENCE

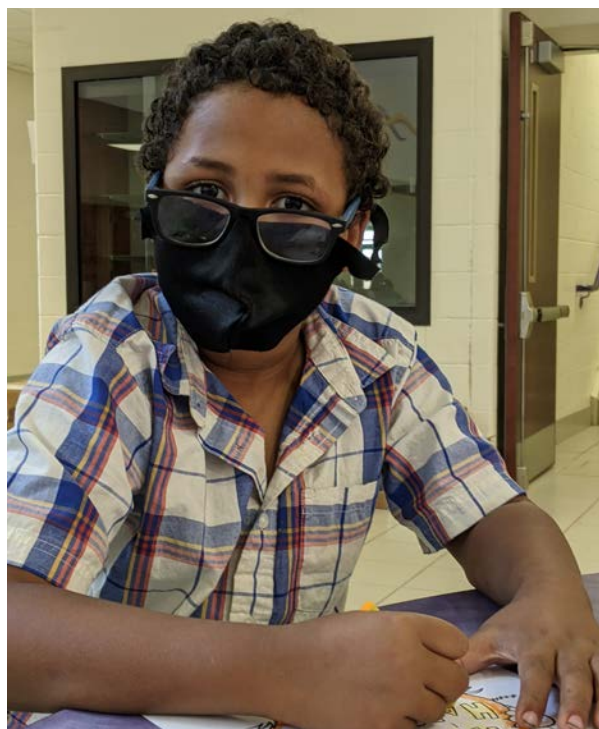
Respondents were asked to rate their levels of preparation for performing many

of the job responsibilities involved in an afterschool program, from delivering lessons to managing student behavior to handling an emergency.

Overall, afterschool staff felt prepared to implement and deliver required programming. Staff felt prepared to work with others (93%), lead a club



(84%), interact with school staff (87%), help with homework (87%), and address student behavior (87%). While not a concern, staff were less comfortable communicating with parents. One area needing some improvement was in handling emergencies, as not all staff felt prepared. Professional development and training around safety was one of the most frequently requested items for professional development, indicating a need for all staff to be trained. It is possible that all staff were trained at the beginning of the school year, but staff hired after the beginning of the school year did not receive the same level of safety training as part of the orientation process. Embedding safety training within the orientation process and throughout the year would benefit all sites.



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

When asked about future professional development, for the first time since administering the afterschool staff survey, more respondents preferred combination of in-person and online training (34%). Preferences for other modes of delivery were more than in-person training (32%) and completely online training (14%) while 20% had no preference. The most frequent obstacles to receiving and/or completing professional development continued to be schedules and time. Other obstacles mentioned included no trainers, being in a rural location, and COVID-19.





Afterschool staff and leadership provided input as to which topics would be of most interest and most useful for future training and/or professional development. Interestingly, when asked about future training the following topics emerged: behavior management/social emotional development, mental health, safety procedures, technology, relationship building, leadership/professionalism, and new programming ideas.

## COLLABORATION & COMMUNITY PARTNER SURVEY OUTCOMES

Engaging community partners is one key in building a sustainable afterschool program. 21st CCLC programs are required to have at least one community partner, but most sites have multiple partners providing a variety of resources including providing additional funding, materials, programming, and volunteers. Without statewide and local partnerships, the programs would be unable to deliver the array of diverse programming.

To better understand the collaboration with community partners, a partnership survey was developed in 2016-2017 and was disseminated to community partners designated by each site through an online platform. The multi-item, online survey asked questions about communication, collaboration, relationships, capacity

for giving and training needs and asked for open-ended feedback. A total of 300 community partners completed the survey for the 2020-2021 school year. COVID19 did impact how community partners were able to serve sites as some sites did not allow community partners to be physically on-site.

Responding partners included community-based organizations (43%), faith-based organizations (2%), local school districts (11%), local businesses (3%), universities and colleges (9%), Extension office (9%), arts/creative arts organizations (9%), museums/zoos (1%), and public libraries (4%) with another 9% falling into the “other” category and were mainly non-profit organizations.



**96%** of community partners believe the work of their organization is aligned with the goals of Nebraska 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC sites.

The number of contact hours varied with 60% of the partners reporting that they provided 21 or more hours in a year, 17% reporting they provided 11-20 hours, 19% provided 6-10 hours, 13% provided 1-5 hours and the remaining partners did not provide contact hours during the school year. Far fewer community partners provided contact hours during the summer (39% reporting summer hours) and the contact hours were fewer, with 23 partners reporting 1-5 hours, 27 reporting 6-10 hours, 9 reporting 11-20 hours, and 45 reporting 21 or more contact hours. As stated in the introduction, very few programs provided summer programming during summer 2020 due to the pandemic.

### Communication

When asked about communication, **94% responded that communication with the site was timely and responsive at least most of the time** with 64% reporting that the communication was always timely and responsive. Eighty-three percent responded that they received adequate information on individual student needs and/or the needs of groups of students at least most of the time. Communication between sites and community partners

and among partner organizations continues to be a strength statewide as 91% percent reporting knowing some or all of the other partners involved in the afterschool program.

## ALIGNMENT OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION AND 21ST CCLC SITE

**As in previous years, nearly all (93%) of the partners believed their organization's work was aligned to the school's goals for their students.** On a scale of 0-100, partners (n=264) rated the strength of



their relationship with the afterschool program with the mean score being in the mid-high to high range ( $M=84.00$ ,  $sd=18$ ). A majority of the partners (57%) indicated they have had a lot or a great deal of opportunity to develop relationships with students/families, a positive sign given the pandemic and the limited amount of time partners were allowed in sites.

Community partners collaborate with 21st CCLC sites for several reasons. Most of the partners see it as a benefit

to students (89%), a way to provide experiences for students (76%), and that the partner has shared goals with the 21st CCLC site (74%). Seventy-three percent reported the partnership meets a need/goal for their organization and seventy-one percent of the partners responded that they “definitely” understood the vision, mission, and goals of the 21st CCLC program and 98% said they have a clear understanding of and have fulfilled their agreement with the 21st CCLC afterschool program.





When asked to share strengths of the programs, partners identified several. **Common strengths were commitment to programming and students, strong relationships with students and parents, providing engaging programming and opportunities, engaged staff committed**

**to quality and excellent communication.**

A recurring theme continues to be strength of interactions and relationships across partners, students, parents, and other staff. Below are some of the responses provided by community partners.

“They were very flexible with our program so that we could hold programming during the pandemic to ensure the safety of their students, staff, and still accomplish club goals. This was done by having a hybrid club where we provided a virtual facilitator, and they provided a staff member to assist in the room.”

“Great communication and willingness to work with my schedule. They all care so much about the students and how to enrich their activities. With this being a year of COVID they have done amazing with cleaning and making sure students and staff are safe.”

“It is very well organized. There are fun activities for the students and there is always good attendance. It is very beneficial for students to get their school work done because some of the students don’t have the best family life to have the support. Students build a connection with other students and get along fairly well. Staff is very personable with the students.”

“Our afterschool program provides a place for all children to explore new areas of interest and grow as learners. Their staff is caring and seeks to see the positive strengths of each child.”



In addition to strengths, partners were asked to provide suggestions for improvement including increased frequency and clarity of communication, space for programming, having more students, continued staff development for both the partners and afterschool staff, and increased pay for staff members.

# Summary of Key Findings

1. The pandemic impacted all parts of 21st CCLC including programming, parent engagement and evaluation, however, programs delivered high quality programming as evidenced by both the external observations and self-assessment.
2. Parents value the program as an important resource in the community for providing supervision, homework assistance, and enrichment afterschool for their student(s).
3. Students across all age levels felt a sense of belonging and most reported having friends in the program.
4. Students reported developing more coping and social emotional skills due to the afterschool program.
5. Afterschool staff reported needing additional training in safety procedures, behavior management and mental health.
6. Strong relationships were noted by every single stakeholder group – students, parents, teachers and community partners.
7. Programs continued to serve students most in need of the afterschool programs.



# Recommendations and Future Plans

1. Consider how to provide effective professional development using a hybrid approach recommended by staff members.
2. Provide guidance on the new GPRAs to sites on both collection and utilization of the data.
3. Evaluate the impact of summer programming on student outcomes, community engagement and staff satisfaction.
4. Continue to align with other state initiatives in order to provide cohesive and comprehensive programming using current infrastructures.





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# Appendix

21st CCLC Quality Framework aligned to the Nebraska State Board of Education Position Statement on Quality Expanded Learning Opportunities, Adopted October 8, 2017.

Intersection of the Six Tenets of AQuESTT and Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program.

The online version of the Nebraska 21st CCLC 2020-2021 Annual Report

is posted at <http://www.education.ne.gov/21stcclc/ProgramEvaluation/EvaluationReport2020-21.pdf> and includes the following survey instruments referenced in this report:

- Teacher Survey
- Parent Survey
- K-2 Student Survey
- 3rd-5th Grade Student Survey
- 6th-12th Grade Student Survey
- 21st CCLC Partner Survey





For more information, please visit: [www.education.ne.gov/21stCCLC](http://www.education.ne.gov/21stCCLC)



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**Nebraska State Board Position Statement  
Expanded Learning Opportunities  
Adopted October 6, 2017**

The Nebraska State Board of Education believes that in order to help prepare future generations of Nebraska youth for success in life, Nebraska's schools, families and communities must work together to provide multiple opportunities for healthy growth, development and academic success.

The Nebraska State Board of Education recognizes that the traditional school calendar does not fit all students' needs. The typical school day may not provide adequate time for students needing additional educational and enrichment opportunities in order to experience academic success; particularly students who are limited English proficient, live in poverty, or those who may start the school year learning below their grade level. Quality Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) programs build on, support, and enhance learning during times when students are not in school (before and after school, weekends, and summer) and are, therefore, a critical component of Nebraska's educational landscape and one that should be intentionally supported and developed in communities across our state.

Quality expanded learning principles include the following:

- Administration with sound management and well-developed systems
- College/career awareness and readiness
- Community-school partnerships and resource sharing
- Diverse, prepared staff including certificated educators
- Engaged learning
- Family engagement
- Intentional programming aligned with the school day program
- Ongoing assessment and improvement
- Participation, access and support during transitions
- Safety, health and wellness

The Board, therefore, encourages Nebraska school district partnerships with community stakeholders to adopt a vision for quality expanded learning opportunities.

# Intersection of the Six Tenets of *AQuESTT* and Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program



## STUDENT SUCCESS AND ACCESS



### Positive Partnerships, Relationships and Student Success

21st CCLC programs are implemented through a strong foundation of positive partnerships between formal and informal educators, families, community organizations, and local businesses. Through these partnerships, students are provided with hands-on, enriching learning opportunities afterschool, on non-school days, and during the summer that are aligned to, and reinforce school day learning objectives.

#### 21st CCLC program indicators:

- Local, regional, and state-wide partnerships bring unique learning opportunities to students
- Student voice and choice leads to more engagement and deeper learning
- Alternative space for learning meets diverse student needs and interests
- Interactions between school day and afterschool educators, families, community partners, and local businesses enhance student learning
- Diverse, prepared staff form relationships with students and families across calendar years
- Variety of leadership, partnerships, and service learning opportunities support positive youth development



### Transitions

21st CCLC programs provide students with transitional support from school year to school year, and during the summer. Because students are provided with opportunities to attend programs each school year, and the summers in-between, students are intentionally provided with support during key transitional periods. Program staff, school day staff, older students, families, and community members work together to provide orientation, mentoring, and programming that prepares students for the next phase of their educational experience.

#### 21st CCLC program indicators:

- Continuity of program staff who remain with students from school year to school year and during the summer
- Experiences that develop skills needed for successful transitions (e.g., entering kindergarten, across grades, across buildings)
- Orientation and mentoring opportunities across all grade levels and throughout the summer
- Assistance for families as they support children and youth transitions



### Educational Opportunities and Access

21st CCLC programs provide students who may benefit from additional educational support time to learn outside the regular school day through engagement in student-centered opportunities aligned to school day learning objectives. Through partnerships with formal educators, families, and community organizations, students are allowed unique opportunities for community engagement, college and career exploration, homework support, activities that promote physical well-being, and social emotional development.

#### 21st CCLC program indicators:

- Collaboration through regular communication between school day and afterschool educators
- Opportunity to learn in a different way through expanded, student-centered learning projects
- Application of skills learned during the school day through integrated projects
- Additional learning time and support
- Students allowed a voice in program planning and choice of activities offered, which can lead to a more engaged learner

# TEACHING AND LEARNING



## College and Career Ready

21st CCLC programs provide time outside of the regular school day for students to connect in meaningful ways with local business and industry, colleges, school day educators, and program staff to develop interests and skills for future success.

21st CCLC program indicators:

- Collaborations with colleges and universities to develop interest in and awareness of postsecondary educational opportunities
- Collaborations with local businesses to develop interests and skills necessary for future careers
- Provide activities that develop career ready skills such as collaboration, communication, problem solving, critical thinking, and creativity
- Provide activities that align to relevant career pathways



## Assessment

21st CCLC programs employ sound data collection and management practices focused on the Continuous Improvement Process. Frequent formal and informal assessments (both internal and external) allow program staff to know students not only as learners but as individuals. Assessments provide regular feedback on program quality from students, school day partners, and families for ongoing program improvement.

21st CCLC program indicators:

- Focus on continuous improvement
- Data contributes to knowing the whole child
- Data collection opportunities allow feedback from formal and informal educators, students, families to guide program improvement
- Data used to guide ongoing staff professional development
- Data collected informs not only 21st CCLC program staff, but also school day educators in knowing students and families more holistically



## Educator Effectiveness

21st CCLC programs employ both formal and informal educators who partner to provide additional learning time for students who may benefit from added educational supports. Ongoing professional development is provided to develop skills, knowledge, and support to grow positive relationships with students, families, and community partners. The overall diversity of staff reflects the cultures of families attending the school and serve as models and mentors for students.

21st CCLC program indicators:

- Professional development supports planning and implementing student-centered, experiential learning opportunities
- Ongoing shared professional development (e.g., school day staff, afterschool staff, volunteers, community partners)
- Support to develop quality relationships with students for more engaged learning
- Leadership development of both program staff and students
- Continuity in program staff, volunteers, and community partners across school years and during the summer promotes high program quality



\*21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) support quality expanded learning opportunities when students are not in school (afterschool, summer, and days when school is not in session). The Nebraska Department of Education administers this federally funded, competitive grant program authorized under Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. **For more information about Nebraska's 21st CCLC program, visit [www.education.ne.gov/21stcclc](http://www.education.ne.gov/21stcclc).**

10/21/2015





Nebraska  
21st Century  
Community  
Learning Centers

✧  
Soaring Beyond Expectations