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Washington 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program Evaluation

2015–16 Program Year

MAKING RESEARCH **RELEVANT**

FEBRUARY 2019

Samantha Sniegowski | Neil Naftzger | Amanda Sutter
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Executive Summary

Grantee, Center, and Participant Characteristics

During the 2015–16 program year, there were 133 centers associated with 47 active 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) grantees that served 15,509 youth in Grades K–12, of whom 9,736 were regular attendees. Generally, the domain of Washington 21st CCLC grantees and centers operating during the 2015–16 reporting period were largely similar to prior years in terms of organizational and operational characteristics:

- Nearly all programming took placed in school-based locations.
- Almost all Washington centers were offering academic enrichment activities.
- Centers in Washington continue seem to be transitioning to serving students primarily in the elementary grade levels.
- More students were attending more frequently.
- More low-income students were attending the program than in the past.

Recommendation: It is important to understand the contextual aspects such as new policies and communication efforts that might have contributed to shifts in when programs operated, the degree to which programs are providing services to adult family members, and the population of students being served. Additionally, exploring why more students attend programs more frequently would be an interesting topic. The evaluation team recommends that Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) consider how changes to their request for proposal process, specifically, how changes to grantee requirements might affect the populations served. This is also important for the evaluation team to consider in its impact analysis results relative to prior years.

Quality Afterschool Practice Implementation

We found that most site coordinators and staff reported leading indicators of high-quality programs. We observed the following findings:

- Staff working in Washington 21st CCLC programs reported supportive and collaborative program climates.
- Most sites meet at least monthly to discuss improvements to program quality.
- There is generally clear language and expectations around organizational mission, as well as policies and procedures.

- Site coordinators and staff described the implementation of practices associated with intentional program design and delivery by their staff as being frequent and that programs were functioning at a high level in terms of creating learning environments that were safe and supportive.
- Sites typically communicate with families once or twice per semester as well as adopt several different strategies to establish meaningful linkages with the school day.

Recommendations: Examine performance on the leading indicators by cutting the data in various ways. For example, how might performance on the Instructional Practices domain vary based on the grade levels being served? How much variation exists within and across centers in terms of the adoption of high-quality instructional practice, and how can this information be communicated to centers in a way to support program improvement efforts without penalizing individual centers or staff? Answering such questions could give OSPI more information to better target program improvement efforts.

Reflections From the Field: A Summary of Case Studies

Several themes surfaced from staff members, families, and students. Staff members feel that the programs have expanded the learning environment for students by providing students with opportunities to grow their academic and socioemotional skills, by offering a broad array of activities in which students are interested, and by enlisting the help of community partners who are experts in content.

Staff members work hard to recruit and retain students in their program by using a variety of strategies. Staff from the 21st CCLC work with school staff to target students who most need support and make themselves visible at school events. Staff members work to retain students in the program by implementing practices that are known to provide them with key developmental experiences, such as opportunities to reflect on what they are doing, practice leadership skills, and make authentic choices. Access to these key development experiences can be related to higher levels of student interest and engagement. Staff also work to ensure adaptions are made for English language learner (ELL) students and students with special needs by providing additional support and peer learning opportunities.

Families reported the programs have helped students to grow peer relationships, increase academic curiosity, and improve social-emotional skills. Families feel very connected to the program through consistent communication and family events. Programs also provide services, such as ELL or parenting classes, to further connect with and support families.

Students see positive changes in themselves. They reported having new interests, an improved attitude, and new friends because of participation. Many students recognize that without these programs, they would more likely be at home watching TV or playing video games instead of continuing to learn new things. Students appreciate the number of activities offered and the ability to connect with peers outside of school.

A challenge that programs face is retention. As students get older, other activities, such as sports, can lead to lower rates of retention. For summer programs, attendance is an issue because families tend to go on vacation. Staff members face challenges when working with the school to obtain space and resources. There can be a lot of tension when it comes to delegating space to the program.

Recommendations: Several recommendations emerged from these findings. First, OSPI should create opportunities for 21st century sites to connect with and learn from one another on a more regular basis, even something as simple as a quarterly conference call or webinar. A second recommendation is to work on building relationships with school staff and program staff, such as inviting more staff to monthly check-ins with principals or including staff in schoolwide e-mails. Finally, if retention is an issue, then OSPI could provide more program flexibility or alternatives. In terms of flexibility, allow certain students to miss a day of the program if they are involved in an outside sport. Programs may want to consider implementing a sport one day a week or creating a new STEM activity to satisfy the needs of their students.

Youth Program Experiences and Social-Emotional Learning Outcomes

Most youth respondents on the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey expressed having a positive, engaging, and supportive experience when attending programming. In addition, most responding youth indicated the 21st CCLC program they attended had helped them to improve academically and with social and emotional skills. We found a similar trend in relation to youth-reported program impact in the area of self-management. In this case, 38% of youth indicated that they had been impacted in a positive way in this area from participation in the program.

The evaluation team also explored youth change over time on functioning on youth skills and beliefs. The American Institutes for Research (AIR) hypothesized that youth with the most room for improvement during the 2014–15 program year would show more growth than those who already performed well. The findings support this hypothesis.

Finally, the evaluation team explored whether youth functioning on survey scales was related to a series of school-related outcomes obtained from the data warehouses maintained by OSPI. AIR hypothesized that higher scale scores were related to a variety of positive school-related outcomes, thereby empirically demonstrating the potential connection between what is measured on the survey and the types of academic-related outcomes sought by the 21st CCLC program. The proposed hypothesis was largely supported by the findings. This promising finding suggests that what is being measured on the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey is relevant to youth functioning in other contexts as hypothesized.

Recommendations: Explore the connection between quality practice and social and emotional competencies and skills as measured on the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey. Evaluation results from the past 3 years demonstrate that the program has a positive effect on a variety of youth outcomes. Rather than continuing to explore program impact through a traditional impact analysis, it might be more appropriate to invest time and effort into exploring how the program affects the beliefs, skills, and knowledge found in the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey and how program quality influences these outcomes. Answering these questions could ensure a pathway from program quality; to changes in youth beliefs, skills, and knowledge; to school-related outcomes. Understanding how this pathway works and where it fails to produce the desired results could help make the tweaks and adjustments needed to optimize the outcomes derived from the 21st CCLC system.

Youth Academic Outcomes

Generally, findings from the outcome analyses conducted in relation to the 2015–16 project period indicated positive findings across each of the direct program outcomes examined, replicating many of the findings identified during earlier programming periods.

- For students who had "room to grow" in the direct program outcomes of Interpersonal Skills, Positive Mindsets, and Self-Management, higher levels of participation in the 21st CCLC program (defined by 60 days or more) had a positive significant impact on the growth students made in these areas between 2014–15 and 2015–16.
- For students who had "room to grow" on the Academic Identity scale, higher levels of participation in the 21st CCLC program (defined by 60 days or more) did not have a significant impact on the growth students made in academic identity.
- For students who had "room to grow" in any of the four direct program outcomes described above, higher levels of participation in the 21st CCLC program (defined by 60 days or more)

did have a significant impact on the reduction of school-day absences between 2014–15 and 2015–16.

- Growth on the Academic Identity, Interpersonal Skills, Positive Mindsets, and Self-Management scales did not function as a mediator between program participation and school-day absences, but program participation directly affects school-day absences (reduction).

The results related to school-related outcomes were mixed and divergent from what we have seen in the past, although these results may be due to selection bias issues (see Chapter 5).

- There was a statistically significant, negative impact of 21st CCLC on reading achievement for students who attended at 30+ days and 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program.
- There was a statistically significant, negative impact of 21st CCLC on math achievement for students who attended at 30+ days and 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program.
- There was a statistically significant, positive impact of 21st CCLC on cumulative grade point average for students attending at 30+ days and 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program.
- There was no significant impact on the percentage of credits earned for both students attending at 30+ days and 60+ days.
- There was a statistically significant, positive impact of 21st CCLC on disciplinary incidents for students attending at 30+ days and 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program, meaning those participating in the program had more disciplinary incidents than those who did not.
- For school-day absences, there was no significant impact for students attending at 30+ days. However, there was a significant, negative impact for students attending 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program. This finding indicates that students who attended the program for 60 days or more had fewer school day absences than those who did not attend programming.

Recommendations: The evaluation team recommends continuing to use the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey to measure direct program outcomes and for consideration in a longitudinal study. Additionally, when conducting impact analyses on the school-related outcomes, the evaluation team recommends testing for additional sources of selection bias by

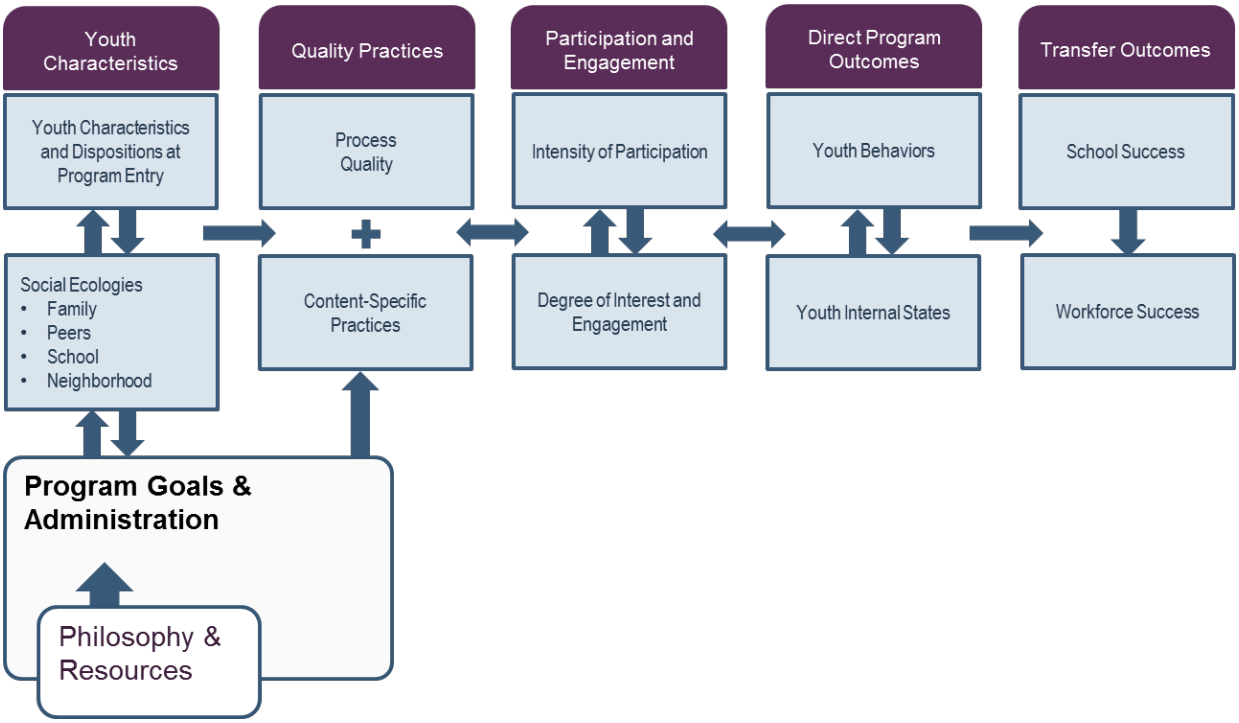
running an analysis comparing high and low attenders. This process eliminates the selection bias of 21st CCLC attendees versus nonattendees; rather, it focuses on the difference between students who attend more and less frequently. Finally, we recommend reexamining the impact on school-related outcomes after the new standardized tests have had more time to mature and programs have had more opportunities to adapt to the needs of students as required by common core standards.

Introduction

For more than a decade, 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) in the state of Washington have provided afterschool and expanded learning programming to enhance the academic well-being of students in high-poverty communities.

Researchers have explored how youth benefit from participation in high-quality afterschool programs (Auger, Pierce, & Vandell, 2013; Durlak, Weissberg, & Pachan, 2010; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Vandell, Reisner, & Pierce, 2007). Based on this work, AIR has created a conceptual framework that outlines the key elements that must exist for afterschool programs to have an impact. This conceptual framework, outlined in Exhibit 1, guides the approach we take to carry out the statewide evaluation of the 21st CCLC program in Washington.

Exhibit 1. A Conceptual Framework for How Afterschool Programs Can Have an Impact on Youth Participants



The framework starts with the youth themselves and how they are influenced and supported by the environments in which they live and go to school. Past programming experiences, relationships with peers and teachers, the level of interest in programming topics and content, expectations regarding program experience, and the level of choice in attending all have a

bearing on how youth will engage in and experience 21st CCLC programming (Durlak, Mahoney, Bohnert, & Parente, 2010). Typically, we rely on two primary sources of information to explore youth characteristics at program entry and their levels of interest and motivation to participate in 21st CCLC programming: (a) reports by school-day teachers on how youth are faring in the school-day classroom and (b) information provided by youth themselves via youth surveys.

After considering the predispositions and contextual factors influencing youth before they even enter a program, there are several factors that influence the experiences youth have once they are in the program. First, programs must be of high quality to have an impact. Generally, there are two categories of quality: process quality and content-specific practices. Process quality refers to the adoption of practices and approaches to service delivery that result in the creation of a developmentally appropriate setting for youth, where participants feel safe and supported and there are opportunities to form meaningful relationships, experience belonging, and be an active participant in their own learning and development. These practices are universal because they apply to any type of youth programming, regardless of content, approach, grade level, or setting.

Content-specific program practices intentionally cultivate a specific set of skills, beliefs, or knowledge. Often, such practices closely align with the direct outcomes a program is seeking to cultivate in participating youth. For example, content-specific practices include specific approaches to cultivating literacy skills, formal curricula for social and emotional learning, or methods of teaching technology skills. Content-specific practices adopted by 21st CCLC grantees are remarkably diverse. We employ two approaches to collect information about content-specific practices: (a) reports directly by site coordinators on the types of approaches being used to develop content-specific skills and (b) data on youth participation in specific type of activities with a specific content focus.

Of course, for youth to benefit from programming, they need to attend programming, ideally at high frequencies across multiple years and in a variety of different types of activity. Being present in the program is not enough, however, to ensure youth will benefit from activities. Youth need to experience engagement and interest during their activities to develop the beliefs, skills, and knowledge that can help them in school and beyond. In theory, the extent to which programs effectively adopt both practices related to process quality and content-specific practices should heavily influence the degree of engagement and interest youth experience while participating in 21st CCLC programming.

Once youth are engaged and participating, it is expected that they will begin to develop key skills, beliefs, and knowledge based on their participation in program activities. These features are termed direct program outcomes in the conceptual framework outlined in Exhibit 1. Based on AIR's research into 21st CCLC programs during the past decade, direct program outcomes fall into two categories: (a) academic knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors and (b) social and emotional skills and competencies. These types of skills, beliefs, and knowledge are the most immediate outcomes that can emerge from participation in high-quality afterschool programs. That is, youth's growth and development across these outcomes happens within the confines of the program and often can be observed directly by the staff leading afterschool activities.

Finally, the skills, beliefs, and knowledge youth develop through participation in high-quality 21st CCLC programming may be used in other settings outside of the program to drive achievement and success in school and the workplace. This is commonly referred to as transfer. These outcomes are typically measured by 21st CCLC programs by connecting participation data with school-related data available at the state or local level.

Evaluation Questions

AIR's evaluation explores how well out-of-school time sites in the Washington 21st CCLC program implemented research-supported best practices and approaches, and it highlights the impact of 21st CCLC participation on youth academic and behavioral outcomes using data sources that coincide with the conceptual framework.

Specifically, AIR designed the evaluation to answer the following questions:

1. What were the primary characteristics associated with the grants and centers funded by 21st CCLC and the student population served by the program? (Chapter 1)
2. To what extent was there evidence that centers funded by 21st CCLC implement research-supported practices related to quality afterschool programming? (Chapters 2 and 3)
3. What does youth completion of the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey indicate both about youth experiences in programming and youth functioning on social and emotional skills and competencies and noncognitive factors? (Chapter 4)
4. To what extent is there evidence that students participating in services and activities funded by 21st CCLC demonstrated better performance on youth outcomes compared with similar students not participating in the program? (Chapter 5)

The findings for each evaluation question are detailed in their corresponding chapter(s). Appendix A describes technical information: data sources, analyses, and methodologies.

Chapter 1. Characteristics of Grantees, Centers, and Participants

One hallmark of the 21st CCLC program is the wide diversity (a) of organizations involved in the provision of 21st CCLC programming, (b) of approaches to the way programs deliver services and activities, and (c) in the nature of the student population served. This chapter outlines the primary characteristics associated with grantees and centers funded by 21st CCLC and the student population served by the program in relation to the 2015–16 programming period.

Findings

During the 2015–16 program year, there were 133 centers associated with 47 active 21st CCLC grantees that served 15,509 youth in Grades K–12, of whom 9,736 were regular attendees. Generally, the domain of Washington 21st CCLC grantees and centers operating during the 2015–16 reporting period were similar to prior years in terms of organizational and operational characteristics:

- Nearly all programming took place in school-based locations.
- Almost all Washington centers offered academic enrichment activities.
- Centers in Washington continue to appear to be transitioning to serving students primarily in the elementary grade levels.
- More students attended more frequently.
- More low-income students attended the program than in years past.

Some of these trends are not inconsequential. The goal of 21st CCLC programs is to reach low-income and at-risk youth and their families. It is apparent in the data from the 2015–16 program year that programs reach more of these families than they have in the past.

It is also important to note that changes in the grade levels served (as well as changes in the number of overall students served) across years could be a direct result of the funding cycles operating within the state. As large cohorts of programs shift out of and into their 5-year grant cycles, the number of centers serving students also changed.

Finally, it is also important to note the fact that **students attended programming during 2015–16 on a more frequent basis (nearly 10% attending 120 days or more) than in prior years**. Past research shows that the more frequently a young person attends afterschool programming, the more his or her outcomes improve. The federal 21st CCLC program uses 30, 60, and 90 days as

the benchmarks for which they hold their programs accountable. Research supports these figures, showing that young people can demonstrate improved outcomes after 30 days, but those who participate 60 days or more tend to have even greater outcomes (Chaput, Little, & Weiss, 2004; Kauh, 2011; Naftzger et al., 2013).

Recommendations

It is important to understand the contextual aspects such as new policies and communication efforts that might have contributed to shifts in when programs operated, the degree to which programs provide services to adult family members, and the population of students being served. Additionally, exploring why more students attend programs more frequently would be an interesting topic. The evaluation team recommends that OSPI examines changes made to their request for proposal process and how requirements affect the populations served. This topic is important for the evaluation team to consider in its impact analysis results relative to prior years.

Grantee Characteristics

OSPI is responsible for distributing the 21st CCLC funds it receives from the U.S. Department of Education through a competitive bidding process that results in awarding new grants to entities that propose to operate centers in high-poverty communities. Grants active during the 2015–16 programming period were initially awarded in 2012 (*n* = 13), 2013 (*n* = 10), 2014 (*n* = 19), and 2015 (*n* = 5). (There were no grants with an award date in 2011.) The term *grantee* in this report refers to an entity that applied for and received a 21st CCLC grant from OSPI and serves as the fiscal agent for the grant in question. This section considers elements examined only at the grant level, notably grantee maturity, organization type, and first-year award amounts.

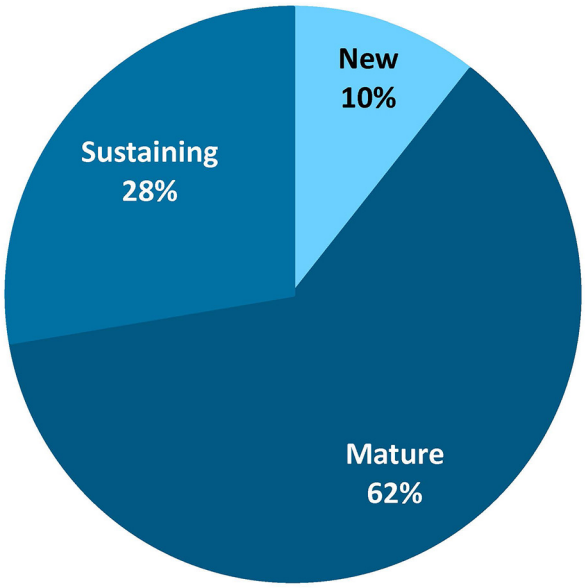
Grantee Maturity

The evaluation team examined grantee maturity to investigate the hypothesis that, because of their experience, mature centers have found ways to provide higher quality services, adapt more readily to budget reductions, and establish plans to sustain the programs after the grant funding ends. We classified Washington grantees into three possible maturity categories:

1. New—grantees in their first year of 21st CCLC funding
2. Mature—grantees not in their first year and not in their last year of funding
3. Sustaining—grantees in their last year of 21st CCLC funding

Exhibit 2 shows the percentage of grantees that exist in each of the thee maturity categories. During the 2015–16 programming period, of the 47 Washington state grantees, 10% were new, 28% were sustaining, and 62% were mature.

Exhibit 2. Percentage of Centers Labeled New, Sustaining, and Mature



Note. OSPI awarded grants for a 5-year period.
Source. OSPI records.

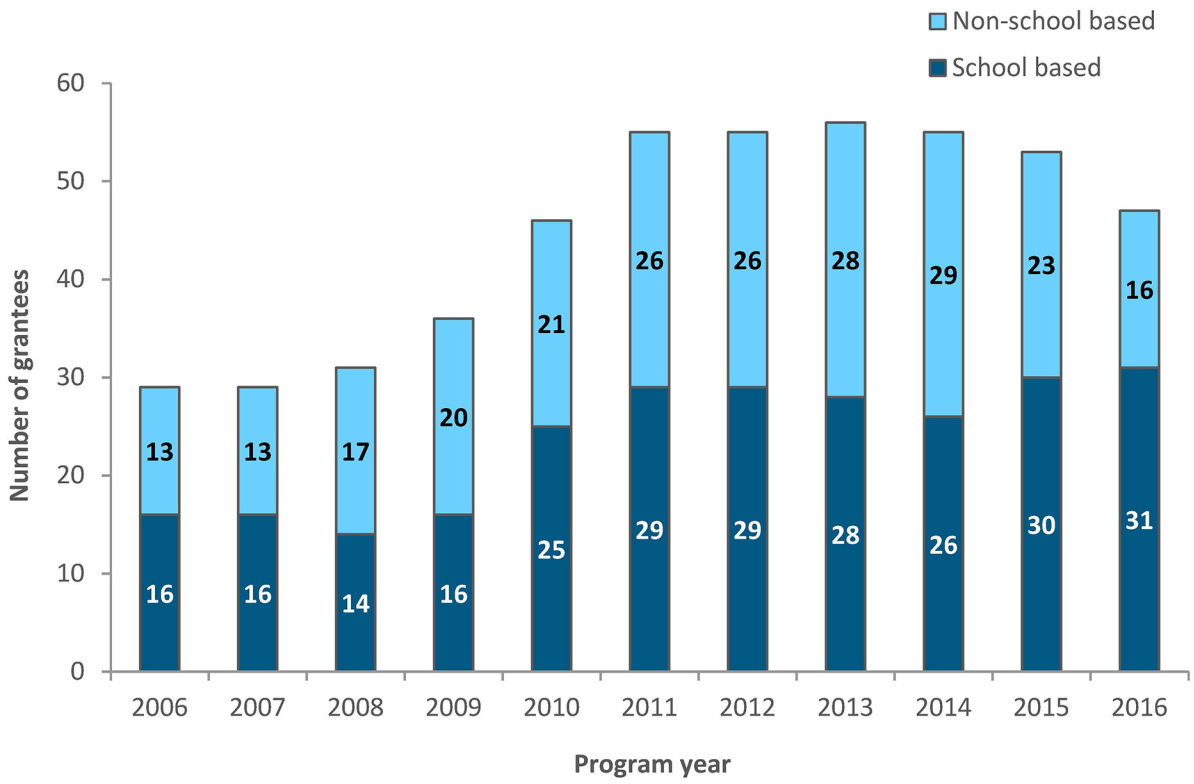
Grantee Organization Type

As established in the authorizing legislation for 21st CCLC, several types of grantee agencies may administer programs. The most relevant distinction is whether the grantee organization is a school-based entity. School-based organizations (SBOs) include districts, charter schools, and private schools. Non–school-based organizations (NSBOs) include, among other entities, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, health-based organizations, and park districts. SBOs and NSBOs can look different in their staffing models, how they recruit and enroll youth in their program, and how they communicate with the school day.

Of the 21st CCLC grantees funded by Washington, SBOs and NSBOs have historically been represented roughly equally since the state-administered program began. However, this trend began to change in the 2014–15 programming period (Exhibit 3). During the most recent

programming period (2015–16), the majority of grantees were funded through school-based entities.

Exhibit 3. Number of School-Based and Non–School-based *Grantees* by Year



Source. OSPI records.

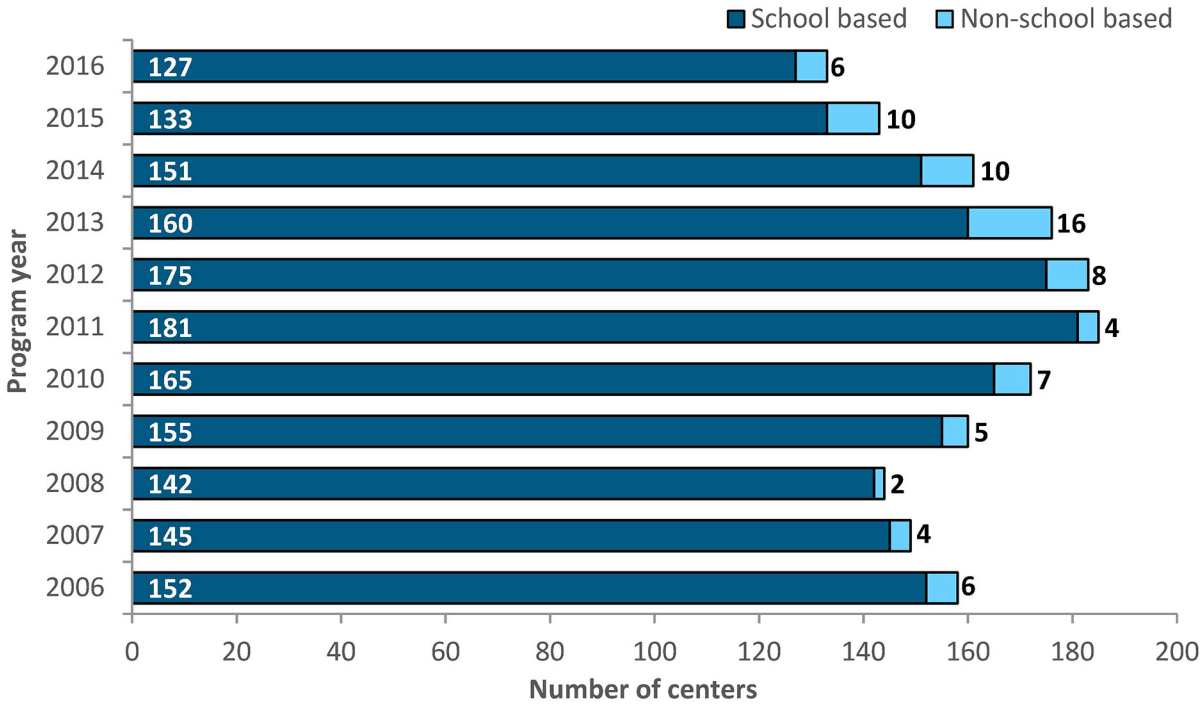
Center Characteristics

In this report, we use the term *center* to refer to the physical location where 21st CCLC–funded services and activities take place. Centers are characterized by defined hours of operation, have dedicated staff members, and usually have site coordinator positions. Each 21st CCLC grantee in Washington has at least one center; many grantees have more than one center. During the 2015–16 programming period, a total of 133 centers provided 21st CCLC–funded activities and services.

Center Organization Type

Like grantees, centers are classified as either school based or non–school based (Exhibit 4). During the 2015–16 programming period, most of Washington's 133 centers were located in schools.

Exhibit 4. Number of School-based and Non–School-based *Centers* by Year

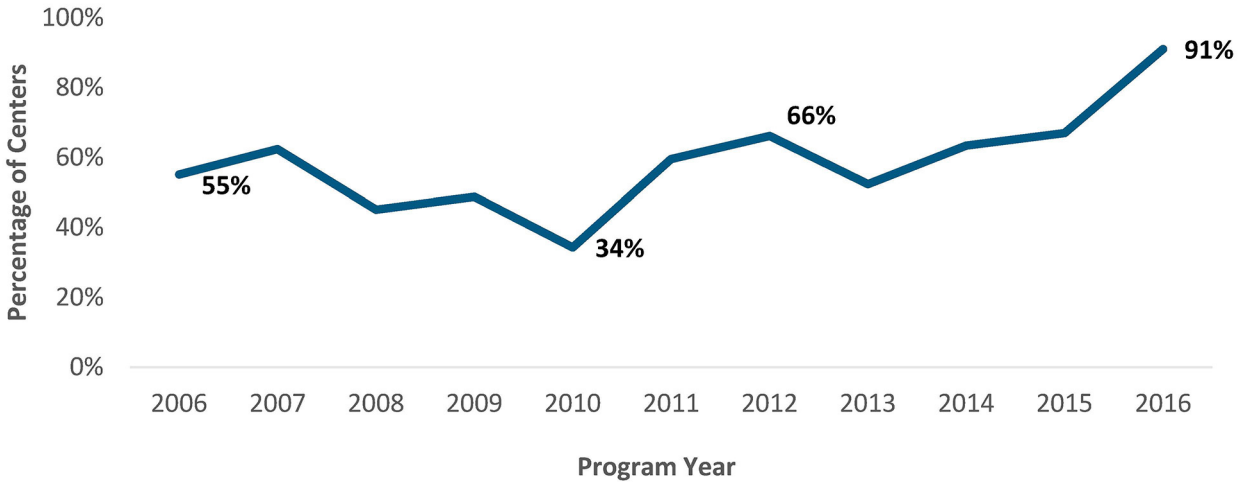


Source. Continuation reports.

Summer and School Year Operations

The number of 21st CCLC centers in Washington that offered summer programming increased from previous years likely as a result of the policy shift that all funded projects must offer summer programming (Exhibit 5). For most programs, this resulted in almost five additional weeks of programming (Exhibit 6). During 2015–16, 121 of Washington's centers (91%) offered summer programming.

Exhibit 5. Percentage of Centers Offering Summer Programming, 2006–2016



Source. Continuation reports.

Washington centers operated on average 32 weeks in the school year; if they held summer programming, this added another 4.8 weeks.

Exhibit 6. Program Operations by Summer and School Year

Program Operations	Summer (*N* = 121)	School Year (*N* = 133)
Programming hours per week	18.7	12.6
Program days per week	4.7	4.5
Program weeks per school year	4.8	32.3

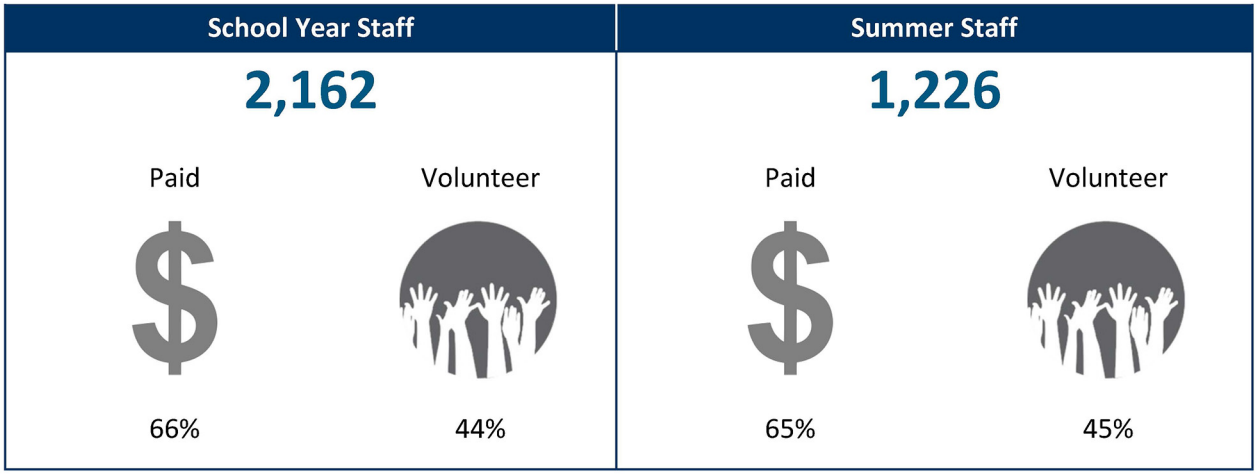
Source. Continuation reports.

Center Staffing

The quality of center staffing is crucial to the success of afterschool programming (Vandell et al., 2004), and many of the program improvement approaches used in the field emphasize the importance of staff for creating positive developmental settings for youth. The success of afterschool programs is critically dependent on students forming personal connections with the staff—especially for programs serving older students, in which a much wider spectrum of activities and options is available to youth (Eccles & Gootman, 2002).

Traditionally, Washington 21st CCLC programs have employed a variety of staff, including academic teachers, nonacademic teachers, college and high school students, counselors, paraprofessionals from the school day, and other program staff with a wide spectrum of backgrounds and training. Exhibit 7 shows the number of staff who are paid and volunteer during the school year and during the summer. Approximately 65% of staff working in both school year and summer programming were paid.

Exhibit 7. Number of School Year and Summer Staff



Source. Continuation reports.

Center Activities

The staff working at a given 21st CCLC program and the activities offered to students attending it are critical elements in how youth experience and potentially benefit from their participation in 21st CCLC. Nationally, the goal of the 21st CCLC program is to provide academic and nonacademic enrichment programs that reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students. This overarching charge is broad and encompasses a host of different types of activities. All centers offer parent involvement activities but are much less apt to offer career or job skills training activities to families (Exhibit 8). Most centers offer reading, math, science, and enrichment activities for students.

Exhibit 8. Activities Offered to Students and Families

Student Activities				Family Activities		
Reading	Math	Science	Enrichment	Parent Involvement	Family Literacy	Career or Job Skills Training
						
95%	97%	89%	99%	100%	83%	20%

Source. Continuation reports.

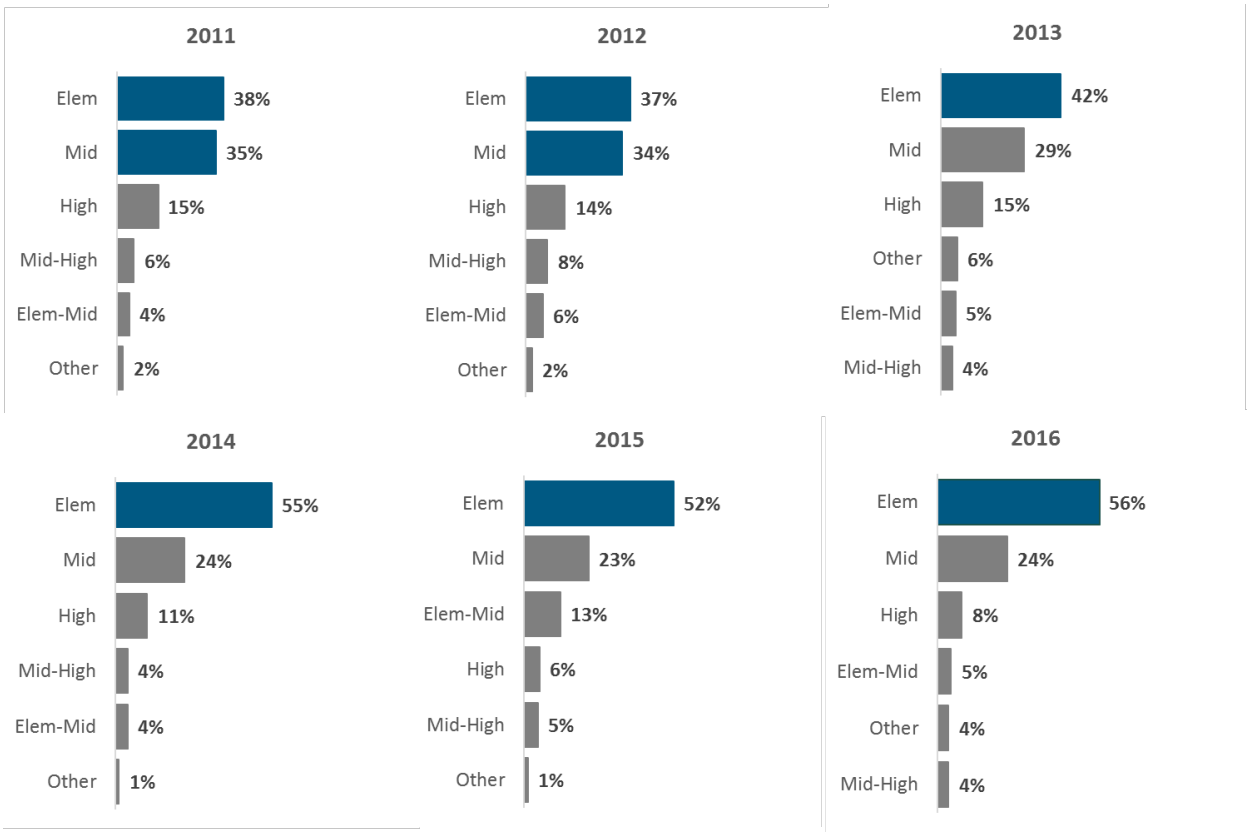
Grade Level Served

Using student-level data about the grade level of students attending a program, 21st CCLC programs were classified as follows:

- Elementary only—centers serving students up to Grade 6
- Elementary/middle school—centers serving students up to Grade 8
- Middle school only—centers serving students in Grades 5–8
- Middle/high school—centers serving students in Grades 6–12
- High school only—centers serving students in Grades 9–12
- Other—centers that did not fit into one of the other five categories

Exhibit 9 demonstrates that a greater percentage of centers served elementary-school-age youth than we have seen in years past, rising from 38% in 2011 to 52% and 56% in 2015 and 2016, respectively. During the programming period ending in 2016, the majority of centers in Washington served elementary school students exclusively; 56% of all centers are classified as elementary only.

Exhibit 9. Percentage of Centers Serving Different Age Groups by Year, 2011–2016



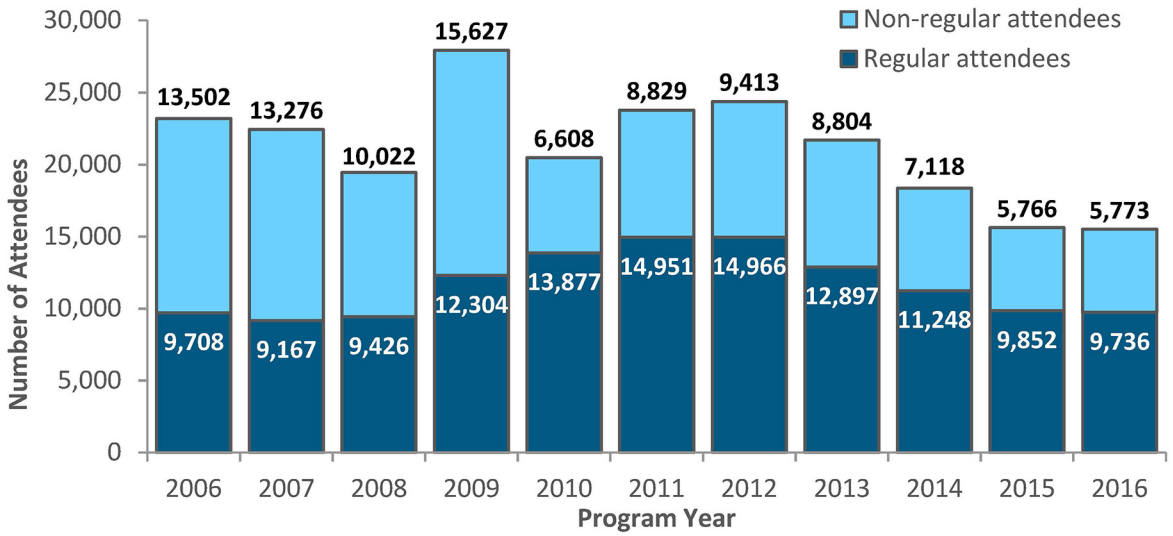
Note. We did not report data from the 2006–2010 program years in this figure to maximize readability.
Source. Washington Attendee Module & Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS).

Student Participation

It has often been said that "youth vote with their feet." This trend is apparent when examining attendance levels within each program. Program attendance is an intermediate outcome indicator that reflects the potential breadth and depth of exposure to afterschool programming. We consider attendance in terms of (a) the total number of students who participated in the center's programming throughout the course of the year and (b) the frequency and intensity with which students attended programming when it was offered. The total number of students who participated is used as a measure of the breadth of a center's reach, whereas the frequency and intensity can be construed as a measure of how successful the center was in retaining students in center-provided services and activities. Exhibit 10 shows the number of attendees across program years. The percentage of regular attendees is consistent across the 2011–2016 program periods. Of the 15,509 students served during the

2015–16 program year, 63% were regular attendees (students who attended a total of 30 days or more during the reporting period).

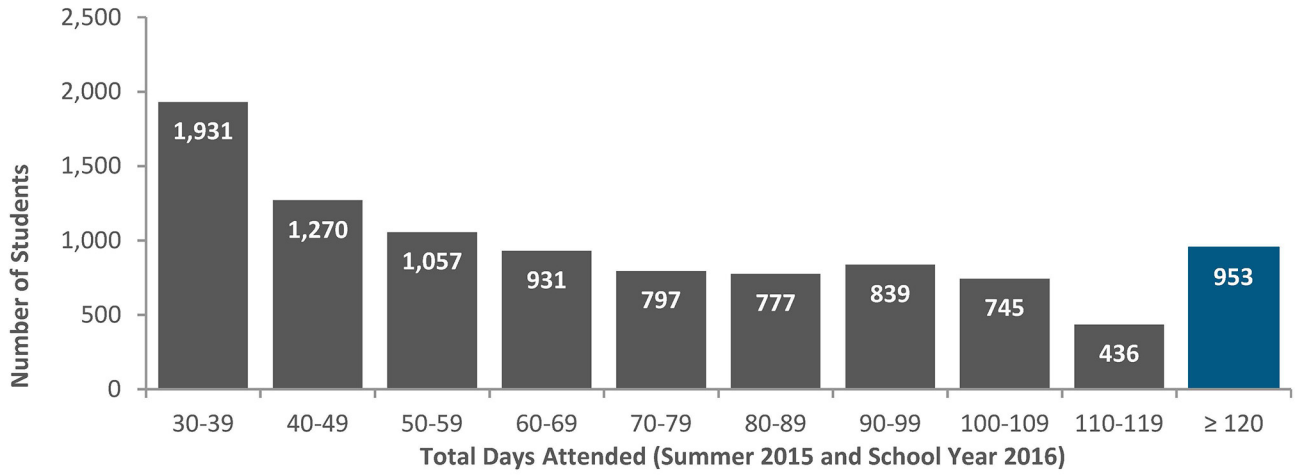
Exhibit 10. Number of Regular Versus Non-Regular Attendees by Program Year



Note. The decline in attendance between 2009 and 2010 is representative of a policy change adopted by OSPI, which increased the number of days a student would need to attend to be counted as a participant (5 days of attendance). Subsequent declines in overall attendance are perhaps due to the decline in the number of grantees and centers awarded.
Source. Washington Attendee Module.

Exhibit 11 shows that the number of students attending 21st CCLC programming declined steadily with each increasing 10-day attendance band, except for the more than 120 days attendance band, which increased to 953 students. Approximately 20% of regular attendees participated in 21st CCLC programming for 30 to 39 days.

Exhibit 11. Number of Students by Attendance Band

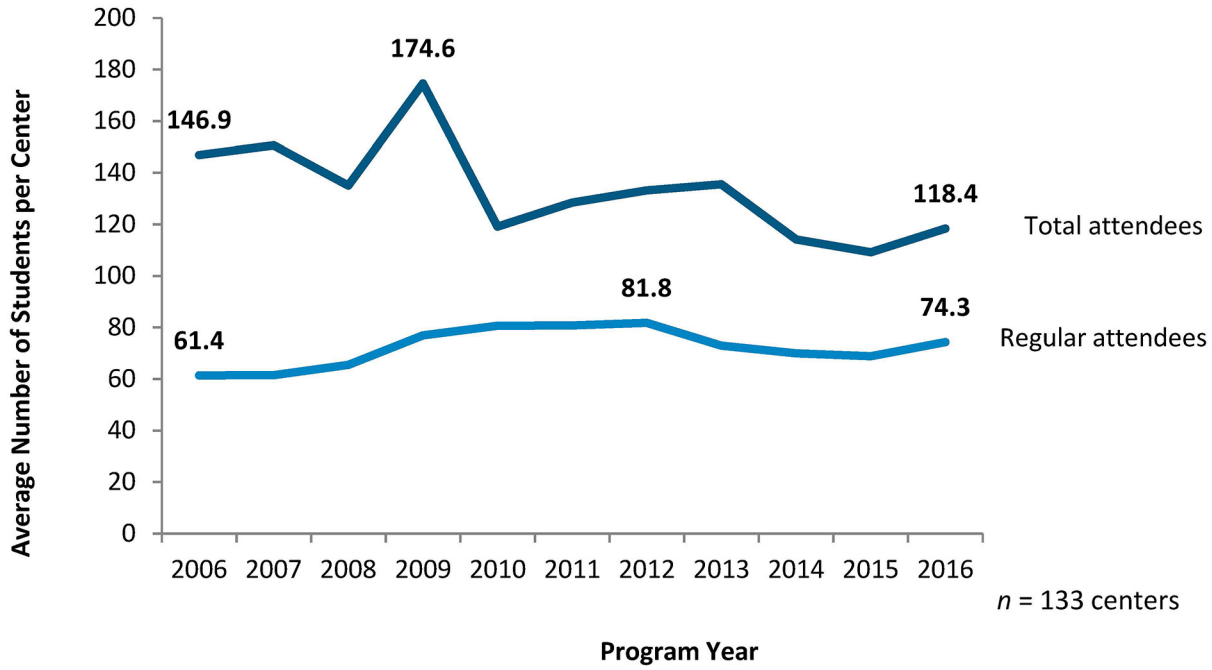


Source. Washington Attendee Module.

Overall, the mean school year attendance for regular attendees was 51.2 days in 2016, with a median of 42 days. For summer, the mean attendance for regular attendees was 14.7 days, with a median of 15 days.

On average, each 21st CCLC center in Washington had approximately 118 total students and 74 regular attendees during 2016. There was a slight increase in total attendance and regular attendance from 2015 to 2016 (see Exhibit 12).

Exhibit 12. Average Number of Total Attendees and Regular Attendees per Center by Year, 2006–2016

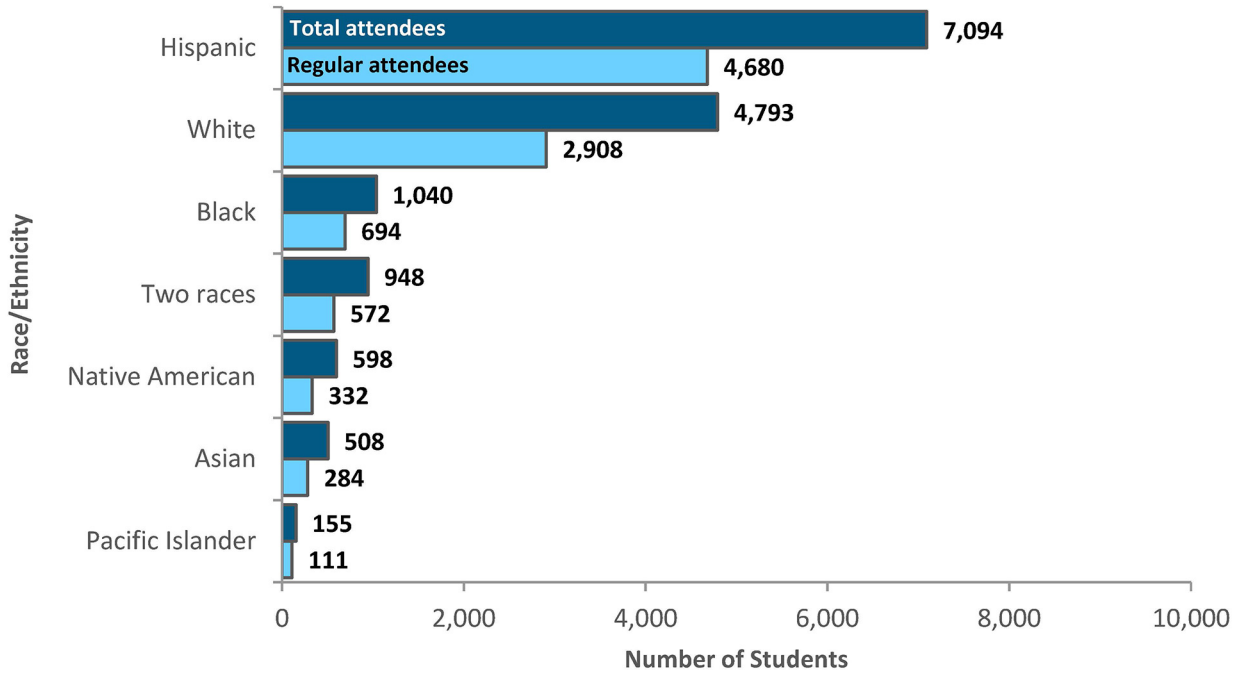


Source. Washington Attendee Module.

Approximately 49% of all regular attendees were identified as Hispanic and 30% of regular attendees identified as White. Exhibit 13 outlines the racial/ethnic backgrounds of 21st CCLC attendees in Washington.[1]

[1] Please note that the data represented in Exhibits 13 through 16 are inclusive only of students we could match in the CEDARS data system (*n* = 15,136; 98%).

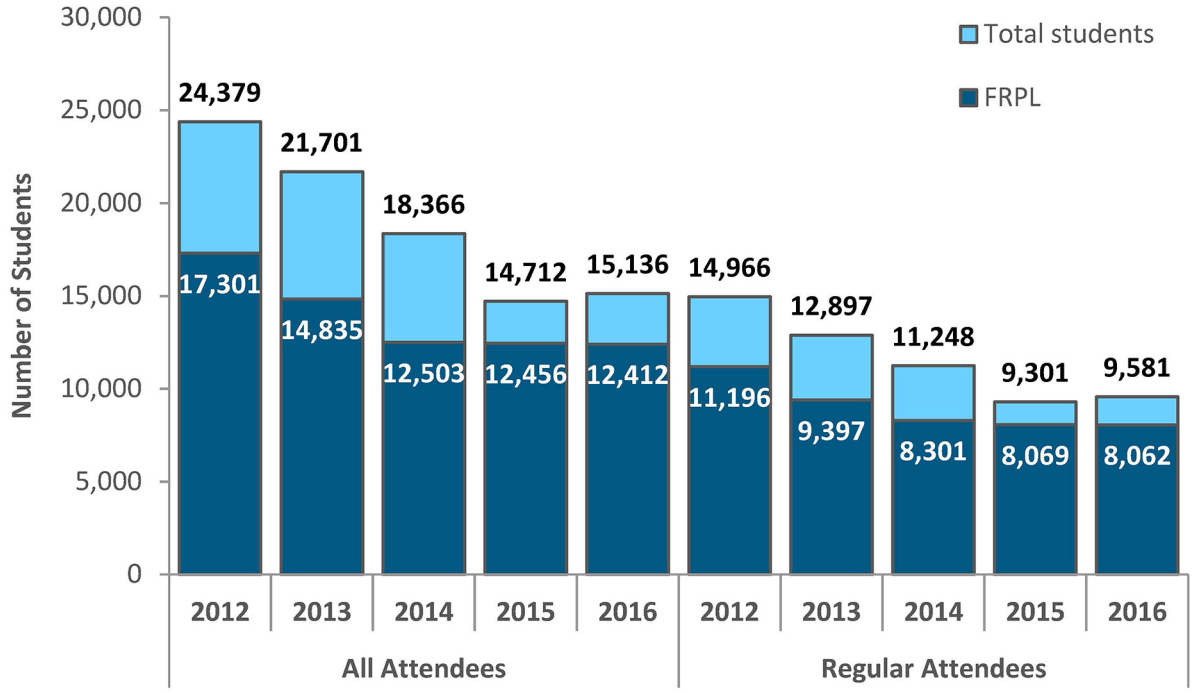
Exhibit 13. Number of Total Attendees and Regular Attendees by Race/Ethnic Category for the 2015–16 Program Year



Source. Washington Attendee Module and CEDARS.

The 21st CCLC program is specifically designed to provide afterschool activities and services to students living in high-poverty communities. Typically, states rely on student eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch as the metric to assess how well states and grantees are reaching this target population. The number of attendees eligible for free or reduced-price lunch is shown in Exhibit 14. Roughly 82% of all attendees and 84% of regular attendees were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch during the 2015–16 programming period. This value decreased slightly from the previous year (85% of all attendees and 87% of regular attendees) but still signals an approximate 10% increase from prior years.

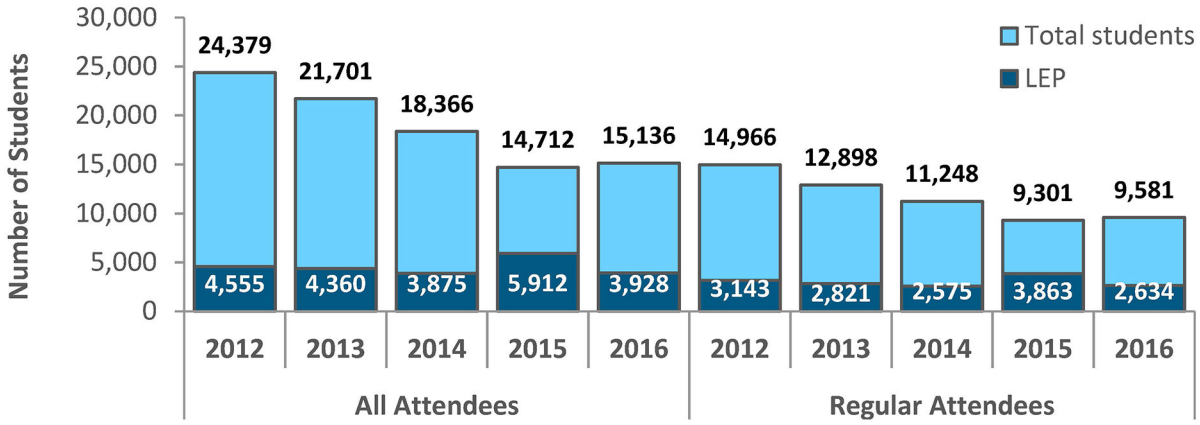
Exhibit 14. Number of All Attendees and Regular Attendees Receiving Free or Reduced-Priced Lunch by Year, 2012–2016



Note. FRPL = free or reduced-price lunch. We do not show the number of students whose FRPL status was unknown. We removed program year data for 2006–2011 from this figure to maximize readability.
Source. Washington Attendee Module and CEDARS.

In addition to free or reduced-price lunch eligibility, information about the student population served by 21st CCLC recorded in CEDARS includes students designated as being limited English proficient (LEP) and/or as having special needs. Although the number of students overall has declined, we still see that students in the target populations are being served. As shown in Exhibit 15, the number of LEP students decreased by approximately 15% after 2014. During 2015–16, 26% of all participants and 27% of regular attendees were LEP students.

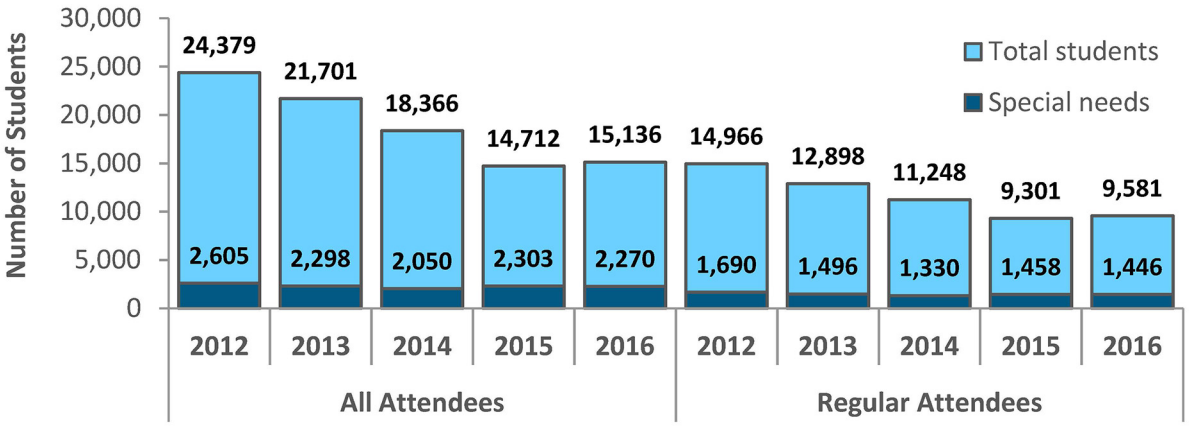
Exhibit 15. Number of All Attendees and Regular Attendees Receiving Free or Reduced-Priced Lunch by Year, 2012–2016



Note. We do not show the number of students whose LEP status was unknown. We removed program year data for 2006–2011 from this figure to maximize readability.
Source. Washington Attendee Module and CEDARS.

Exhibit 16 shows the total number of attendees, the total number of regular attendees, and the number of attendees who have special needs. The number of students with special needs decreased by only 1% after 2014 for both groups. During 2015–16, 15% of all attendees and 15% of regular attendees had a special need of some sort.

Exhibit 16. Number of All Attendees and Regular Attendees Classified as Special Needs, 2012–2016



Note. We do not show the number of students whose special needs status was unknown. We removed program year data for 2006–2011 from this figure to maximize readability.
Source. Washington Attendee Module and CEDARS.

Enrollment Policies and Recruitment Approaches

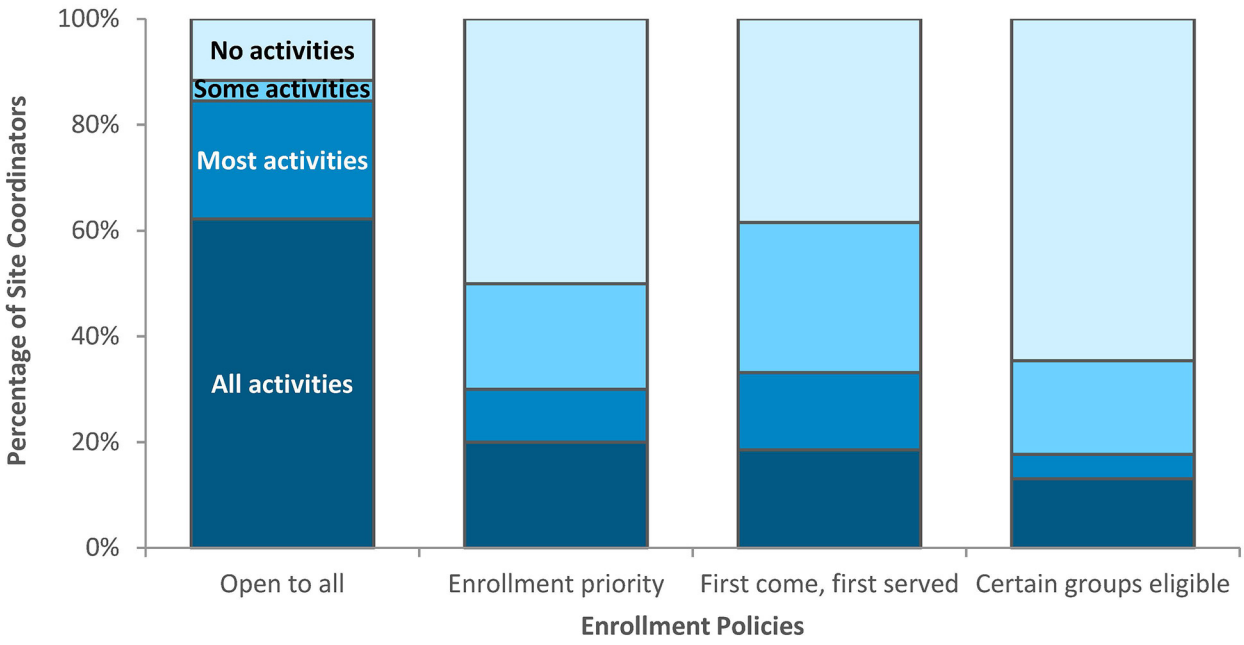
Enrollment policies and recruitment practices may have a substantial bearing on program design and delivery. For example, a program that targets a relatively small number of students with high academic needs and proposes to provide them with intensive support in one-on-one and small-group settings will have different strategies for recruitment and enrollment than a program that aims to serve as many students as possible and provide those students with a rich array of academic and nonacademic enrichment activities. The evaluation team asked questions related to each of these areas on the site coordinator survey administered in spring 2016.

In terms of enrollment policies, we asked site coordinators to indicate the degree to which the activities provided at their site were as follows:

- Open to all students who want to participate
- Based on giving enrollment priority to certain groups of students
- Only able to support limited enrollment and therefore filled on a first-come, first-served basis
- Restricted in that only certain groups of students are eligible to participate

Exhibit 17 shows the responses from survey respondents. Sixty-two percent of responding site coordinators indicated that all the activities provided at their site were open to all students who wanted to participate. Another 22% of respondents indicated that most of their activities were open to all students.

Exhibit 17. Site Coordinator Survey Responses to Program Enrollment Policies



Source. Site coordinator survey.

In contrast, only 13% of centers in 2015–16 indicated that all the activities provided at their site were restricted (i.e., only certain groups of students were eligible to participate). Five percent of centers indicated that most of the activities they provided were restricted.

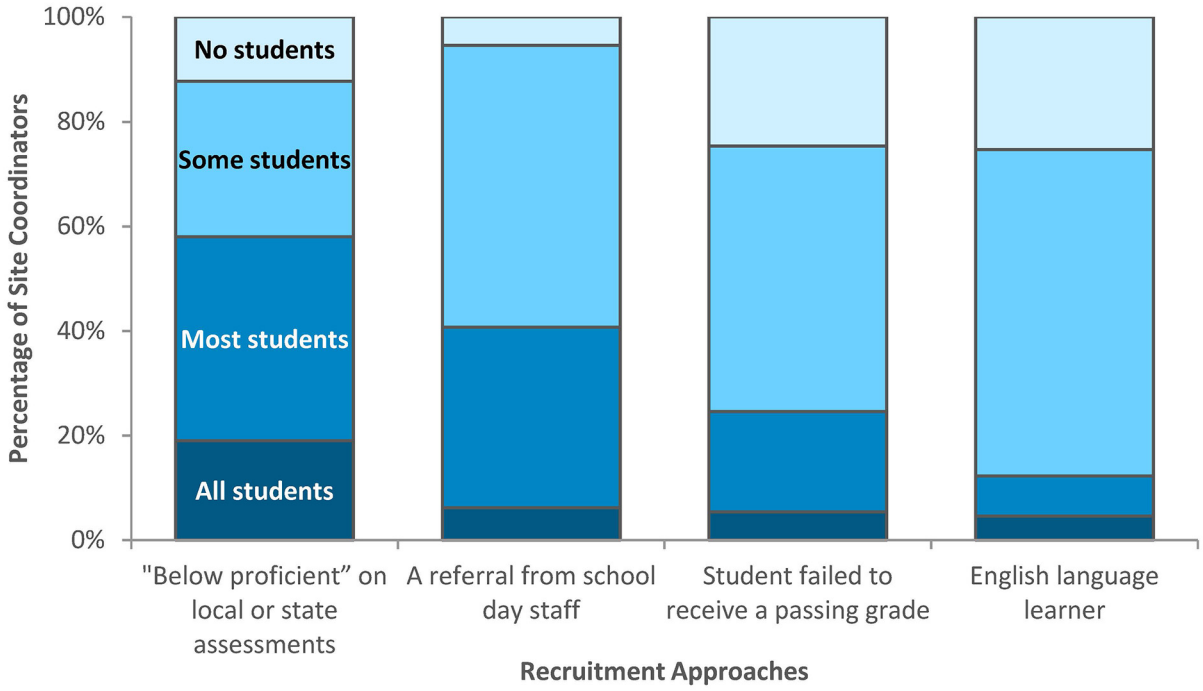
In terms of recruitment approaches, the evaluation team asked site coordinators a series of questions regarding the extent to which students served at their site were recruited for enrollment in the program based on the following:

- The student scored "below proficient" on local or state assessments
- A referral from school-day staff because the student needed additional assistance in reading or mathematics
- The student failed to receive a passing grade during a preceding grading period
- The student's status as an English language learner

Exhibit 18 outlines students' academic and behavioral tendencies by percentage. These data show the general makeup of the participants at the centers. Approximately 58% of responding

site coordinators indicated that all or most of the students were recruited into the program, because they had scored "below proficient" on local or state assessments.

Exhibit 18. Site Coordinator Survey Responses to Recruitment Strategies



Source. Site coordinator survey.

Chapter 2. Implementation of Quality Afterschool Practice

A primary goal of the statewide evaluation was to provide 21st CCLC grantees with data to inform program improvement efforts regarding their implementation of research-supported best practices. AIR, the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality, and OSPI worked collaboratively to define a series of leading indicators predicated on data collected as part of the statewide evaluation. The leading indicators intend to enhance existing information and data available to 21st CCLC grantees regarding how they fare in the adoption of program strategies and approaches associated with high-quality afterschool programming.

Findings

Organizational Practices

Organizational policies and practices are an important component of implementing a quality afterschool program and often serve as the foundation upon which all other quality practices rest. Practices related to continuous quality improvement and leadership and management remained consistent with the following findings we have seen in the past:

- Most staff reported supportive and collaborative program climates. They also cited that having adequate time to plan and to focus on individual student needs are areas they struggle with.
- Both site coordinators and staff reported that they have frequent internal communication regarding program planning, setting goals and reviewing progress, and providing feedback to colleagues on their practice.
- Most centers reported that they have qualified staff working in their programs who have established relationships with youth, that they are committed to staff development and program improvement, and that they solicit feedback regarding the program.

Instructional Practices

Of all the leading indicators, those within the Instructional Practices domain could be considered of greatest importance in ensuring high-quality programming because the point of service is where youth experience programming and arguably receive the most benefit. Site coordinators and staff reported the following findings:

- Site coordinators and staff reported that they are either frequently or always leading activities that support student growth and development in reading or math by providing activities that are well-planned, tied to specific learning goals, build skills across multiple

sessions, and promote skill building and mastery of state standards. Staff were more likely than site coordinators to report they carry out these practices "always."

- Point-of-service quality remains consistent to years past: Programs are doing very well in providing safe and support environments on a consistent basis for the students who attend their program. As expected, there is room for improvement in consistently providing interesting and engaging opportunities that allow students to be active participants in their own learning.
- Youth-centered policies and practices declined in the percentage of programs that consistently incorporate youth interests, build multiple skills, and allow students to have an influence on both the setting and activities of the program and the structure and policy of the organization.

Partnership Practices

Of the indicators represented in the Partnership Practices domain, the evaluation team believes that the School Context indicator is of greatest import for ensuring high-quality 21st CCLC programming aligned with the goal of supporting student growth and development in reading and mathematics. As with most indicators highlighted thus far in the report, the following are areas of strength and opportunities for growth:

- Site coordinators reported having frequent communication with family members of the students they serve but could improve upon how often they send information home about how students are progressing and encouraging family members to participate in center-provided programming directed at adult learning.
- Site coordinators reported facilitating links to the school day by aligning program to school day curriculum, helping students with their homework, regularly communicating with school day staff and other school personnel, and monitoring student progress as most often used strategies. The least common strategy was hiring regular school-day teachers as staff to work in the program.
- Similarly, staff reported participating in efforts to align to the school day by knowing what academic content is being covered in the school day and linking program to that content, monitoring student progress, and communicating with school personnel.
- Both site coordinators and staff reported using student data to inform how the adjust their program throughout the year; however, more staff reported not having access to these data than did site coordinators.

- Most programs consistently adopt policies and practices supportive of family engagement by addressing barriers to participation and by building links with family and the community.

Recommendations

Examine performance on the leading indicators by cutting the data in various ways. Investigate the following questions:

- How might performance on the Instructional Practices domain vary based on the grade levels being served?
- How much variation exists within and across centers in terms of the adoption of high-quality instructional practice?
- How can this information be communicated to centers in a way to support program improvement efforts without penalizing individual centers or staff?

Answering these questions could give OSPI more information to better target program improvement efforts. Additionally, a table of all Leading Indicators can be found in Appendix B. This table might assist OSPI in making additional policy and practice decisions.

Overview of Leading Indicators

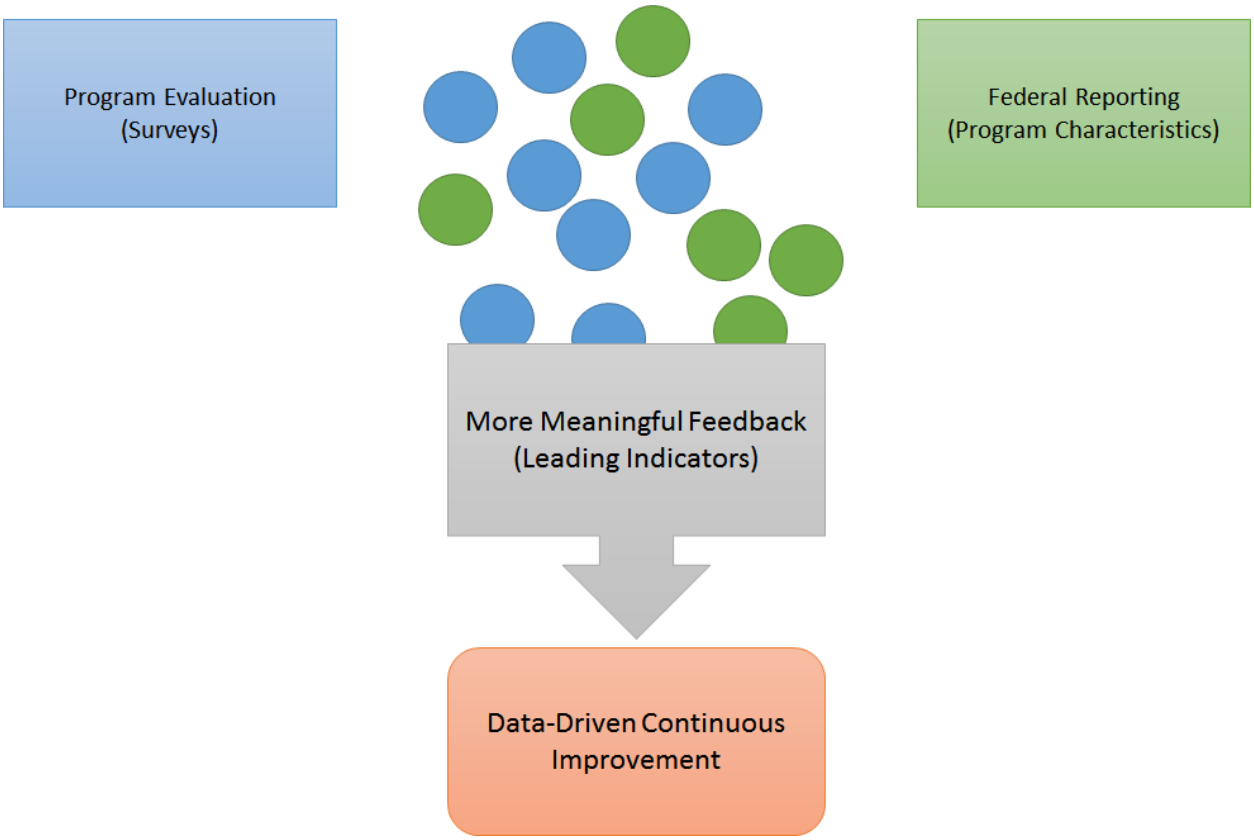
As noted, the leading indicators intend to enhance existing information and data available to 21st CCLC grantees regarding how they fare in the adoption of program strategies and approaches associated with high-quality afterschool programming. Specifically, the evaluation team designed the leading indicator system to do the following:

- Summarize data collected as part of the statewide evaluation in terms of how well the grantee and its respective centers are adopting research-supported best practices.
- Allow grantees to compare their level of performance on leading indicators with similar programs and statewide averages.
- Facilitate internal discussions about areas of program design and delivery that may warrant additional attention from a program improvement perspective.

The leading indicator system primarily focuses on quality program implementation as opposed to youth or program outcomes. It is designed to provide existing data and program evaluation data back to programs regarding the adoption of research-supported practices so programs can identify strengths and weaknesses and reflect on areas of program design and delivery in need of further growth and development. Exhibit 19 provides an overall depiction of the intention, purpose, and process of the leading indicator system. Theoretically, more consistent

implementation of research-supported best practices will support the attainment of desired youth outcomes.

Exhibit 19. Leading Indicator Data Flow for Continuous Program Quality Improvement



Selected Leading Indicators

The seven adopted leading indicators are organized into the following three overarching domains or sets of practices:

1. *Organizational Practices*, focused on practices that occur among staff and management;
2. *Instructional Practices*, focused on practices that occur at the point of service, where staff and youth directly interact; and
3. *Partnership Practices*, focused on practices related to coordinating and aligning afterschool programming and activities with the regular school day, family, and community contexts.

The evaluation team also included some data on youth outcomes in the leading indicator reports; however, this chapter will not address information on youth outcome indicators. Exhibit 20 lists the leading indicators within each of these first three sets of practices.

Exhibit 20. Leading Indicator Practice Domains

1. Organizational Practices	
Leading Indicator 1.1	Continuous Improvement
Leading Indicator 1.2	Leadership and Management
2. Instructional Practices	
Leading Indicator 2.1	Instructional Quality (Content)
Leading Indicator 2.2	Instructional Quality (Processes)
3. Partnership Practices	
Leading Indicator 3.1	Family Engagement
Leading Indicator 3.2	School Context
Leading Indicator 3.3	Community Context

Although we draw these measures from the research literature, the evidence base linking performance on these measures with the achievement of desired student outcomes is limited. In addition, we base many of the measures on self-reported data and perceptions of program implementation provided by 21st CCLC staff. As such, readers should treat results with caution and not use them to draw definitive conclusions about the quality, approaches, and practices adopted by centers during 2015–16 operating period. Technical details regarding data sources, analyses, and methods can be found in Appendix A.

Organization of Leading Indicators Chapter

We organize this chapter first by the three broad contexts. Within each context, we summarize data associated with each leading indicator (for Washington centers overall). We used the following two primary approaches to summarizing state-level leading indicator data:

- **Scaled items.** Many questions on the site coordinator and staff surveys are part of a series of questions designed to assess an underlying construct or concept and result in a single scale score summarizing performance on aspects of a leading indicator (e.g., practices that support linkages to the school day). Site coordinator scale scores represent responses from

one site coordinator, and center scale scores represent the average of scale scores for all staff respondents associated with a given center.

- **Descriptive items.** Other leading indicators are based on data that are not appropriate for the type of scale construction just described. For example, program objectives are stand-alone items that do not necessarily contribute to an underlying construct or concept. We summarize items of this type descriptively.

Organizational Practices

Leading indicators within the Organizational Practices domain examine internal communication and collaboration among program staff. Organizational practices that support staff in reflecting on and continually improving program quality are key components of effective youth development programs (Birmingham, Pechman, Russell, & Mielke, 2005; Glisson, 2007; Smith, 2007). Programs characterized by a supportive and collaborative climate permit staff to engage in self-reflective practice to improve overall program quality. Self-reflective practice is more likely to lead to high-quality program sessions that provide youth with positive and meaningful experiences. Two leading indicators fall under the Organizational Practices domain: (a) Continuous Improvement, which is assessed by scales measuring program climate and internal communication and collaboration, and (b) Leadership and Management.

Leading Indicator 1.1: Continuous Improvement

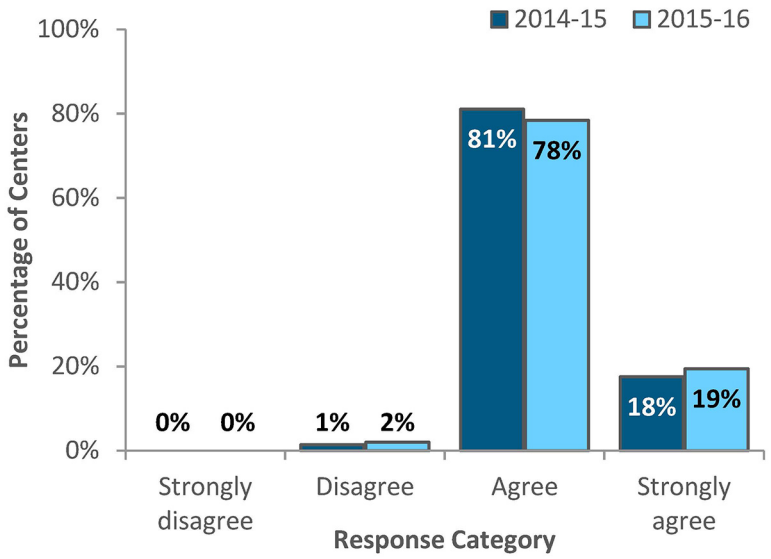
The evaluation team calculated three scale scores for this indicator to summarize the following aspects of continuous improvement:

- **Program Climate:** The extent to which program staff report that a supportive and collaborative climate exists within the program (from the staff survey)
- **Internal Communication—Site Coordinator:** How frequently site coordinators engage in practices that support internal staff communication and collaboration (from the site coordinator survey)
- **Internal Communication—Staff:** How frequently staff engage in internal communication and collaboration (from the staff survey)

Program Climate

As Exhibit 21 shows, 80% of centers had a mean climate scale score that fell within the agree range of the scale, suggesting that most staff reported supportive, collaborative program climates. In addition, approximately 20% of centers replied "strongly agree." The sidebar on the right displays the questions from the Program Climate section of the employee survey.

Exhibit 21. Staff Reports of Program Climate



Source. Staff survey (810 responses from 143 centers in 2015 and 774 responses from 133 centers in 2016).

During the 2015–16 program year, staff were most likely to disagree with the statement that they had *adequate time to plan activities*. This finding has been cited annually as an area of disagreement since the 2010–11 program year. Consistent with the 2014–15 program year, most staff responded "disagree" or "strongly disagree" to the prompt, "There is adequate time to focus on individual student needs within the program time frame."

PROGRAM CLIMATE

Scale scores for program climate are based on the following questions:

PROMPT: Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following:

- There is adequate time to focus on individual student needs within the program time frame.
- The program staff has shared control over the content.
- The staff is encouraged to try new and innovative approaches.
- Instructional collaboration among program staff is encouraged and supported.
- Staff are provided with training in current research on best practices in afterschool programs.
- Staff participate fully in program decision making.
- There is adequate time to plan individual activity sessions.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Scores of internal communication included staff and site coordinator responses to the following survey question:

PROMPT: How often do you engage in the following tasks with other staff working in the program?

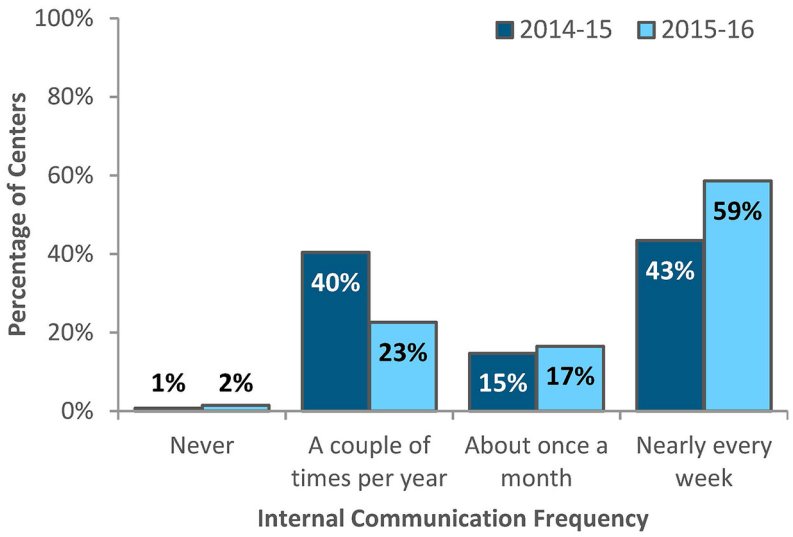
- Conduct program planning based on a review of program data with other staff.
- Use data to set program improvement goals with other staff.
- Discuss progress on meeting program improvement goals with other staff.
- Observe other afterschool staff delivering programming in order to provide feedback on their practice.
- Conduct program planning with other staff in order to meet specific learning goals in coordinated ways across multiple activities.

The trend in the data suggests that implementation of these practices continues to be difficult. In these instances, OSPI can better support afterschool staff in several ways. For example, OSPI can modify future requests for proposal to require that programs build in time for session planning or offer and support staff participation in trainings targeting adoption of research-supported practices. It also might be worth examining staffing models and student-to-staff ratios to make sure afterschool staff members are best able to support students.

Internal Communication

On the Internal Communication portion of the survey, staff answered questions about planning, data use, and observations. Exhibit 22 shows the percentage of site coordinators who replied in each category. In 2015–16, 59% of centers had site coordinators who reported internal communication taking place nearly every week. This is up by 16% from the previous year.

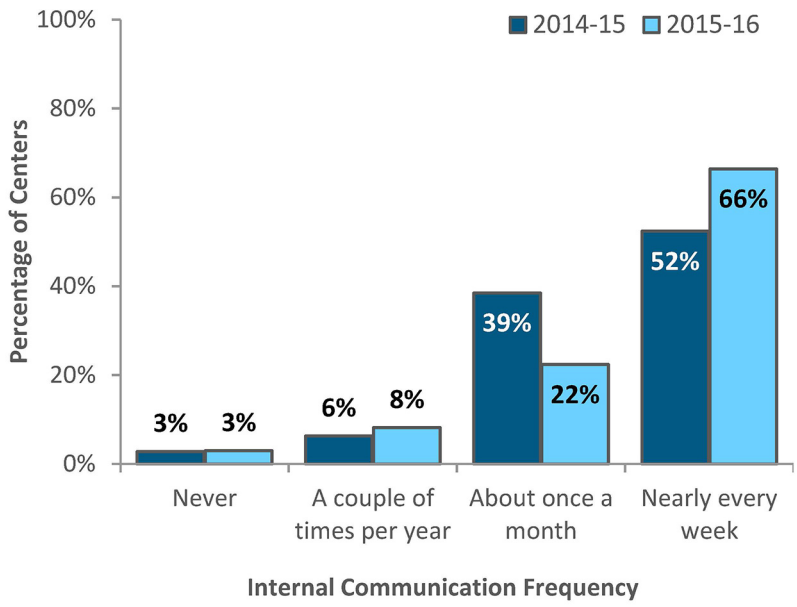
Exhibit 22. Site Coordinator Reports of Internal Communication



Source. Site coordinator survey (153 responses from 143 centers in 2015 and 136 responses from 133 centers in 2016).

Exhibit 23 shows the responses from staff members. Similarly, the majority of centers (66%) had staff survey respondents who also reported internal communication taking place nearly every week, which increased from the previous year.

Exhibit 23. Staff Reports of Internal Communication



Source. Staff survey (798 responses from 143 centers in 2015 and 774 responses from 133 centers in 2016).

While most responses to the prompts were "nearly every week" from both site coordinators and staff, there is some discrepancy on the second most frequently selected response. These results may suggest that staff members are slightly more likely to engage with one another in the types of internal communication assessed by the scale as opposed to engaging in internal collaboration with their site coordinators.

In 2015–16, staff reported that the following internal communication activities were the least frequently implemented:

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Scores of internal communication included staff and site coordinator responses to the following survey question:

PROMPT: How often do you engage in the following tasks with other staff working in the program?

- Conduct program planning based on a review of program data with other staff.
- Use data to set program improvement goals with other staff.
- Discuss progress on meeting program improvement goals with other staff.
- Observe other afterschool staff delivering programming in order to provide feedback on their practice.
- Conduct program planning with other staff in order to meet specific learning goals in coordinated ways across multiple activities.

- Observe other afterschool staff delivering programming in order to provide feedback on their practice.
- Participate in training and professional development with other staff on how to better serve youth.
- Discuss research-based instructional practices with other staff.

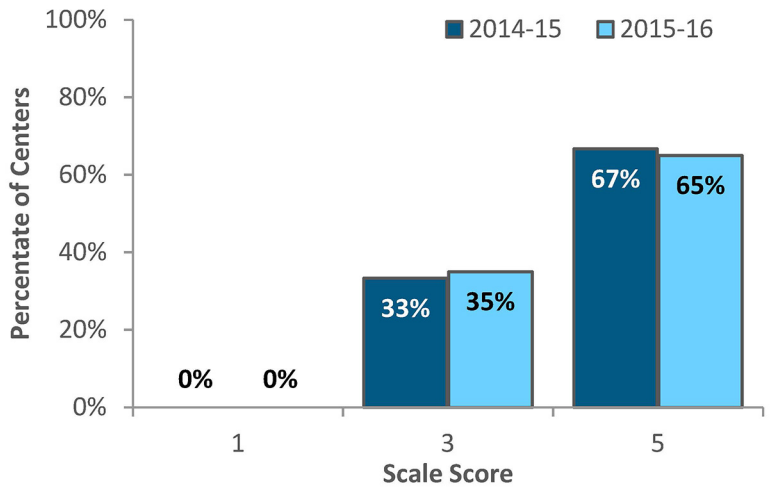
All three of these activities were noted as areas that were least implemented during 2014–15. Observing other afterschool staff has been an area for improvement since 2010–11. These findings are noteworthy because OSPI mandates that all 21st CCLC programs in Washington participate in a quality improvement process [the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI)] as a requirement of their funding, and observation of other afterschool staff is central to this process. It is possible that these activities are being carried out at the site coordinator or project director level and are not cascading down to direct service staff.

Leading Indicator 1.2: Leadership and Management

This leading indicator captures the degree to which the program has taken steps to hire qualified staff, promote staff development, support program improvement, and solicit feedback. Some of these areas overlap with previously identified indicators in the Organizational Practices domain, but the data presented in relation to this indicator directly represent how the program believes it is doing in carrying out leadership and management tasks. This indicator uses data obtained from Form B of the YPQA. Form B uses a 3-point rating scale to assign scores to a given element (1, 3, and 5). However, unlike Form A, the 3-point rating scale was found to be viable for YPQA Form B scales.

We asked staff a series of questions regarding staff availability and longevity with the center, qualifications, staff development, and ongoing program improvement. Exhibit 24 shows the percentage of centers that received a score of 1, 3, or 5 in 2014–15 and 2015–16. The majority of centers received a score of 5 in both 2014–15 and 2015–16.

Exhibit 24. Center-Level Scores for Leadership and Management



Source. YPQA Form B (from 138 centers in 2015 and 127 centers in 2016).

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

YPQA FORM B Leadership and Management Scales

- Staff availability and longevity with the organization support youth-staff relationships.
- Staff qualifications support a positive youth development focus.
- Organization promotes staff development.
- Organization is committed to ongoing program improvement.
- Organization solicits feedback.

These results seem to suggest that most staff reported that leadership and management practices within the center support youth–staff relationships and a positive development focus, promote staff development, and are committed to ongoing program improvement.

Instructional Practices

Leading indicators in the Instructional Practices domain focus on the practices and approaches adopted by frontline staff to design and deliver activity sessions that intentionally support youth skill building and mastery that align with the center's objectives and principles of youth development. A strong connection exists between the leading indicators in the Instructional Practices domain and components of the YPQI program improvement process. For example, the YPQI process assesses and supports staff practices at the point of service related to creating safe, supportive, interactive, and engaging environments. Effective afterschool programs commonly provide activities that were sequenced, involve active forms of learning, and focus on cultivating particular skills (Durlak & Weissberg, 2007), which highlights the importance of intentional program design. The two leading indicators in the Instructional Practices domain are Instructional Quality (Content) and Instructional Quality (Processes).

Leading Indicator 2.1: Instructional Quality (Content)

This leading indicator captures the degree to which the time spent on activities corresponds to program objectives as identified by site coordinators and how intentionally they designed and delivered activities. We used both descriptive and Rasch scaling approaches (see Appendix A) in relation to these data. We calculated two separate metrics to describe aspects of this indicator, which are as follows:

- **Intentionality in Program Design—Site Coordinator Survey:** The frequency with which staff engage in practices that indicate intentionality in activity and session design for the delivery of activities meant to support student growth and development in reading and mathematics
- **Intentionality in Program Design—Staff Survey:** The frequency with which staff engage in practices that indicate intentionality in activity and session design for the delivery of activities meant to support student growth and development

PROGRAM DESIGN

Scale scores for intentionality in program design included staff and site coordinator responses to the following survey questions:

PROMPT: How often do staff lead activities that are especially meant to support student growth and development in reading or mathematics and provide program activities that are...

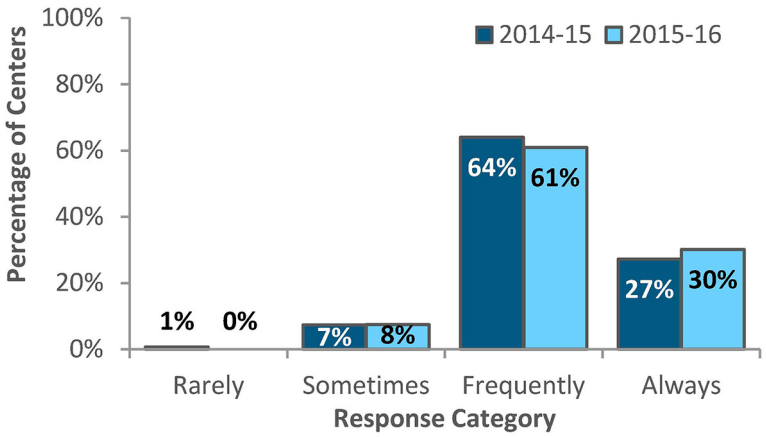
- Based on written plans for the session, assignments, and projects?
- Well planned in advance?
- Tied to specific learning goals?
- Meant to build upon skills cultivated in a prior activity or session?
- Explicitly meant to promote skill building and mastery in relation to one or more state standards?

Intentionality in Program Design

As previously noted, a growing body of research suggests that program outcomes in the form of enhanced student academic achievement outcomes are realized by simply paying attention to how programming is delivered—specifically, whether programming is delivered in developmentally appropriate settings grounded in core principles of youth development (Birmingham et al., 2005; Durlak & Weissberg, 2007). In addition to youth development principles, afterschool programs are more likely to attain desired student academic outcomes if staff members responsible for planning the content of sessions incorporate certain practices and strategies into their planning efforts. Both the site coordinator and staff surveys asked a series of questions about intentional program design.

We asked site coordinators to indicate how frequently the staff who lead activities to support skill building in reading or mathematics engaged in the previously discussed practices (Exhibit 25). Ninety-one percent of centers had site coordinators who reported frequently or always implementing program design strategies.

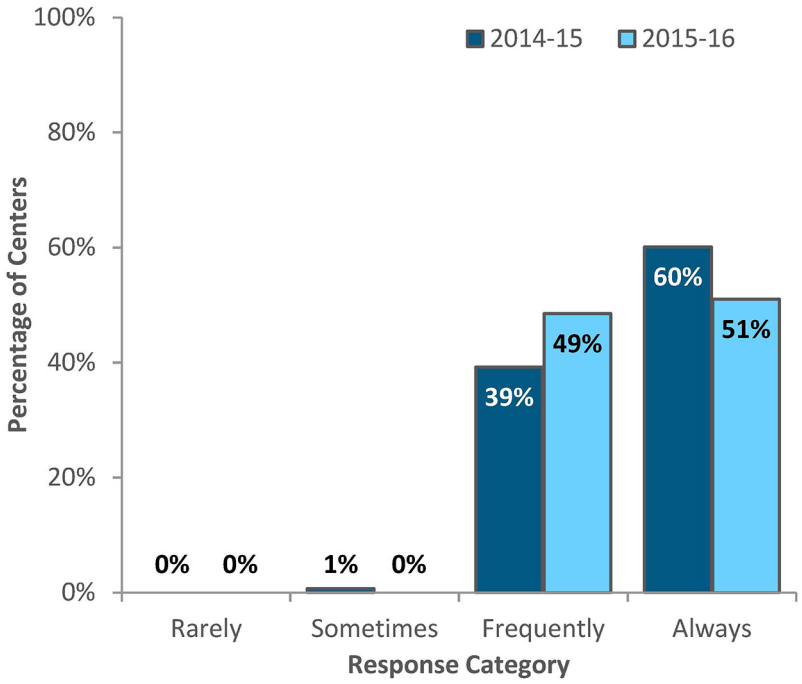
Exhibit 25. Site Coordinator Responses to Questions About Program Design



Source. Site coordinator survey (153 responses from 143 centers in 2015 and 136 responses from 133 centers in 2016).

Staff were asked how frequently they engaged in these practices. The majority of centers had staff who describe themselves as always adopting practices related to program design and delivery. Some differences between site coordinator and staff responses to the survey questions may be associated with the fact that staff who are not responsible for leading activities that support skill building and mastery in reading and mathematics also completed surveys and were included in the analysis (Exhibit 26). These results indicate that staff were more likely to report engaging in practices related to intentional program design than were site coordinators.

Exhibit 26. Staff Responses to Questions About Program Design



Source. Staff survey (798 responses from 143 centers in 2015 and 774 responses from 133 centers in 2016).

Fifty-one of centers had a mean staff scale score on the intentionality in program design scale that fell within the always portion of the scale.

PROGRAM DESIGN, CONTINUED

Scale scores for intentionality in program design included staff and site coordinator responses to the following survey questions:

PROMPT: How often do staff lead activities that are especially meant to support student growth and development in reading or mathematics and provide program activities that are...

- Explicitly meant to address a specific developmental domain (e.g., cognitive, social, emotional, civic, physical)?
- Structured to respond to youth feedback on what the content or format of the activity should be?
- Informed by the express interests, preferences, or satisfaction of participating youth?

Leading Indicator 2.2: Instructional Quality (Processes)

This leading indicator captures the processes and practices in which staff members engage that are consistent with high-quality instruction and core youth development principles, with an emphasis on providing developmentally appropriate activities at the point of service (see the conceptual framework noted in Exhibit 1). Conceptually, many of the practices associated with this indicator relate to the concepts embedded in YPQA. We calculated the following scale scores to assess aspects of this leading indicator:

- **Point-of-Service Quality—YPQA Form A:** The extent to which program staff provide supports and opportunities to create safe, supportive, interactive, and engaging settings for participating youth
- **Youth-Centered Policies and Practices—YPQA Form B:** The extent to which the program adopts youth-centered policies and practices conducive to a supportive learning environment

Point-of-Service Quality

This leading indicator is composed of scales measuring safety, supportive environment, interaction, and engagement. The data outlined in this section display both self-assessment and external assessment data obtained by scoring the YPQA Form A or School-Age PQA observational tool. We calibrated scores using Many Facet Rasch Measurement approaches and adjusted them to account for the bias introduced by the type of assessor (i.e., external or self-assessment) and the type of activity observed (i.e., enrichment, tutoring and homework help, or recreation). The goal in making these adjustments was to eliminate the systematic impact on scores that may be related to the type of assessment done (external or self-assessment) and the type of activity observed.

These analyses have shown that although the YPQA uses a 3-point scale (1, 3, and 5), the tool appears to function more reliably in relation to the 21st CCLC context in Washington if 1 and 3 scores are collapsed into a single category. In this sense, although YPQA scores are typically reported using the 1, 3, and 5 scale associated with the tool, in Exhibits 27 and 28, we report results using the collapsed 1 and 3 score categories (still room for improvement) and the 5 category (functioning near optimal).

According to the survey results, most respondents indicated the program provides a safe environment for students (Exhibit 27). Most programs also offer a supportive environment on a consistent basis. Exhibit 28 shows the survey results for interaction and engagement scales; survey respondents indicated there is room for improvement on these measures.

POINT-OF-SERVICE QUALITY

YPQA FORM A
Safe Environment Scales

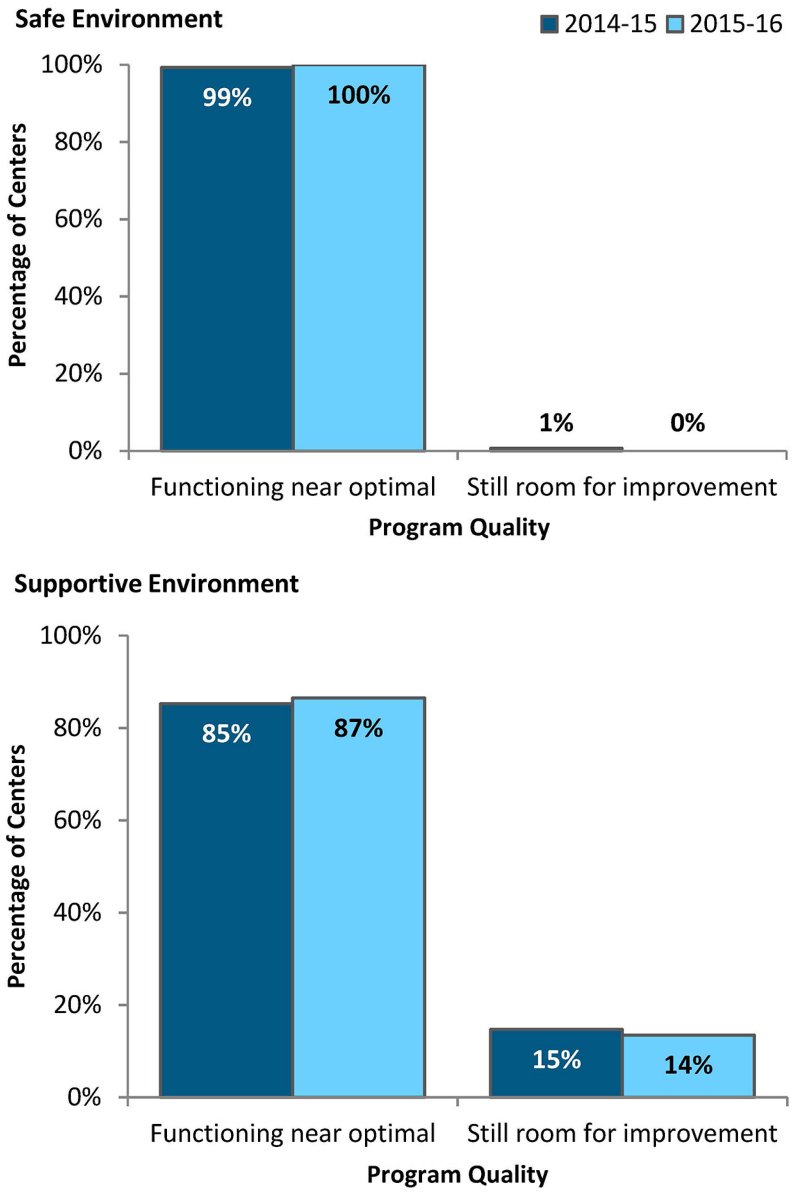
- Emotional Safety
- Healthy Environment
- Emergency Preparedness
- Accommodating Environment
- Nourishment

Supportive Environment Scales

- Warm Welcome
- Session Flow
- Active Engagement
- Skill-Building
- Encouragement
- Reframing Conflict

These findings are not surprising, as many programs often have a more difficult time consistently implementing quality practices related to interaction and engagement.

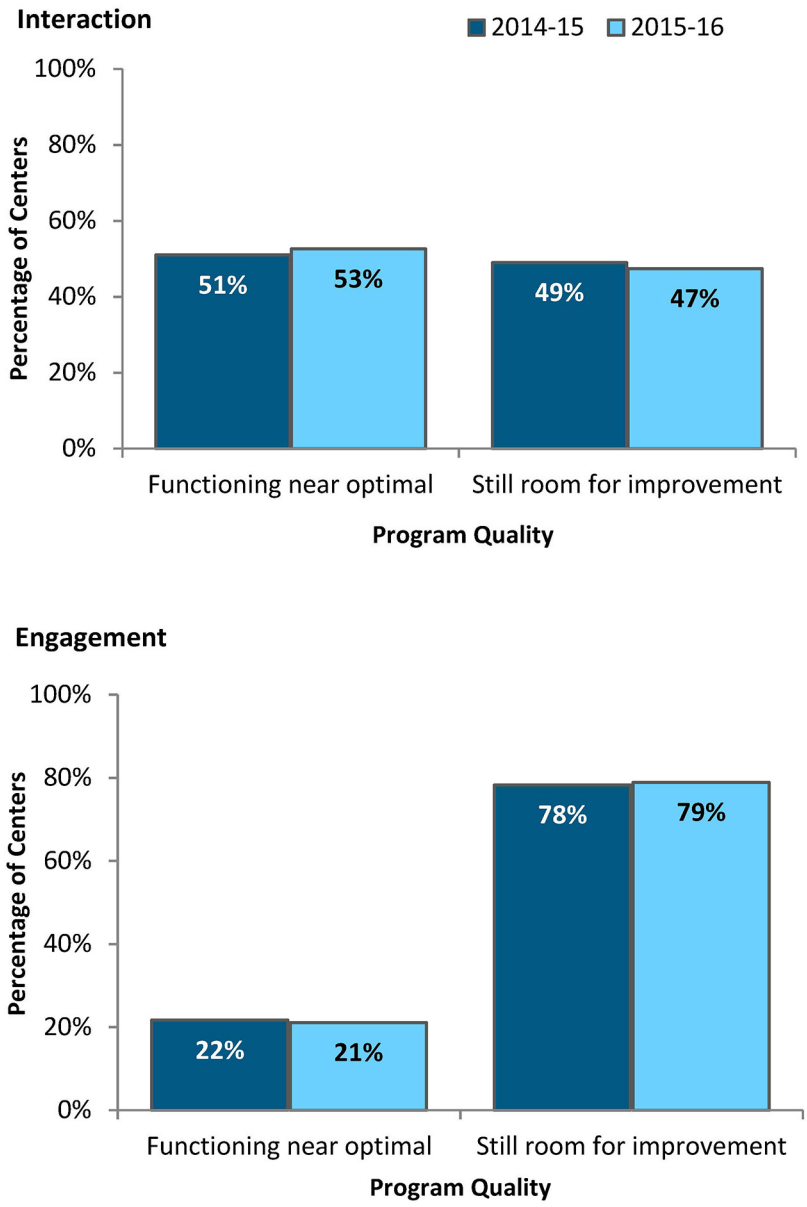
Exhibit 27. Center-Level Functioning on Safe Environment and Supportive Environment



Source. YPQA Form A (from 143 centers in 2015 and 133 centers in 2016).

Centers had room for improvement in both the interaction and engagement domains across both program years, with a larger percentage of centers needing improvement in the engagement domain.

Exhibit 28. Center-Level Functioning on Interaction and Engagement



Source. YPQA Form A (from 143 centers in 2015 and 133 centers in 2016).

POINT-OF-SERVICE QUALITY

YPQA FORM A
Interaction Scales

- Belonging
- Collaboration
- Leadership
- Adult Partners

Engagement Scales

- Planning
- Choice
- Reflection

YOUTH-CENTERED POLICIES AND PRACTICES

YPQA FORM B Youth-Centered Policies and Practices Scales

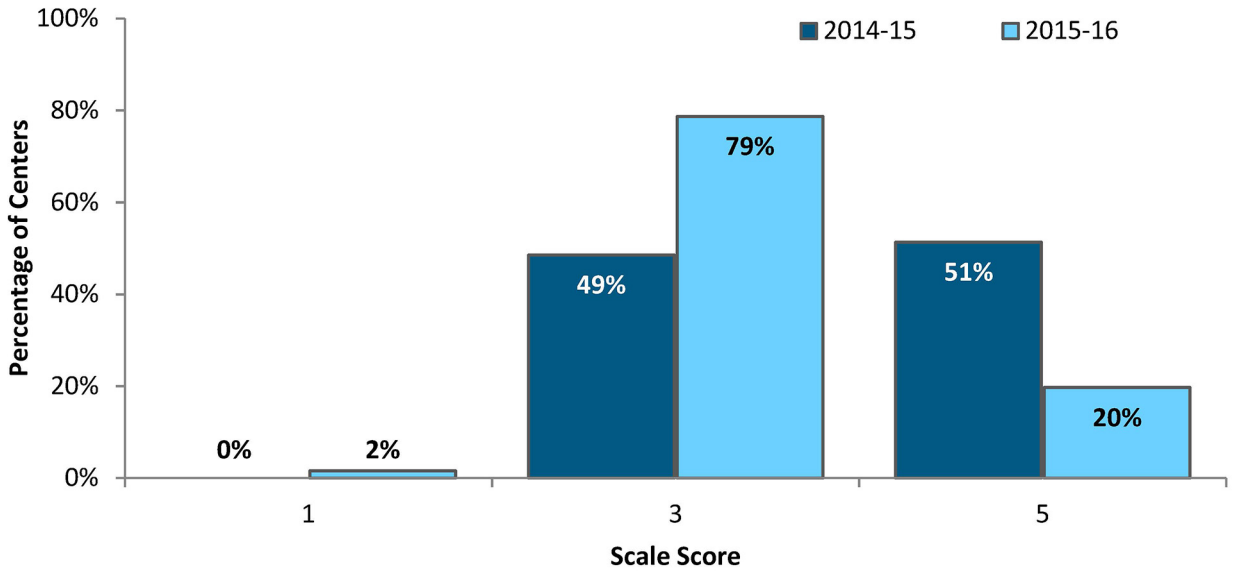
- Programs tap youth interests and build multiple skills.
- Youth have an influence on the setting and activities in the organization.
- Youth have an influence on the structure and policy of the organization.

Youth-Centered Policies and Practices

This leading indicator captures the degree to which the program adopts youth-centered policies and practices conducive to a supportive learning environment. The data presented in relation to this indicator are based on data obtained from YPQA Form B. We asked staff a series of questions about the program's relevance to youth interests and skills, as well as youth's influence on the setting, activities, structure, and policy of the center. Like Form A, Form B uses a 3-point rating scale to assign scores to a given element (1, 3, and 5). However, unlike Form A, the 3-point rating scale was found to be viable for YPQA Form B scales, so the findings reported in Exhibit 29 uses the 1, 3, and 5 convention, with a 5 indicating more consistent application of the practice.

Overall, all or nearly all the responses were in the 3-point or 5-point category (Exhibit 29). This finding signals a decrease in the percentage of centers who fell within the 5-point category from the previous program year. These data indicate that some centers reported that programs tap youth interests; build multiple skills; and involve youth in the settings, activities, structure, and policy of the program, but that there is room for improvement for those who report implementing these practices less consistently.

Exhibit 29. Center-Level Scores on Youth-Centered Policies and Practices



Source. YPQA Form B (from 138 centers in 2015 and 127 centers in 2016).

Partnership Practices

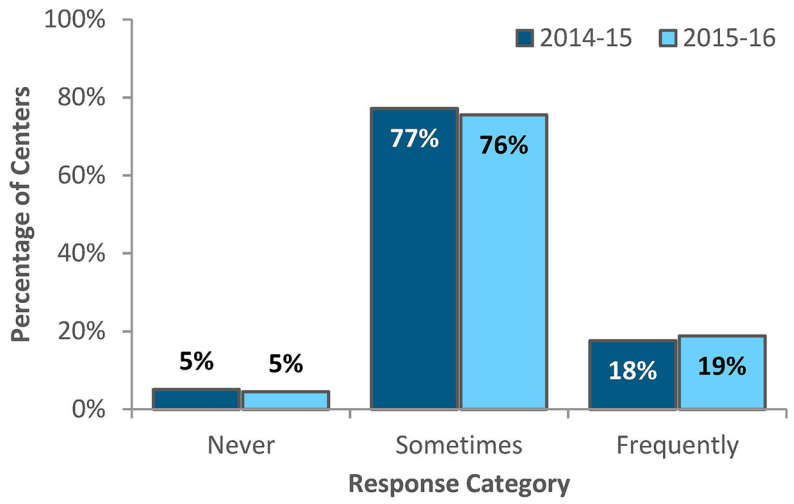
The Partnership Practices domain focuses on relationships between the 21st CCLC program and contexts external to the program that significantly impact the success of the program. Community partners, families, and schools play an important role in 21st CCLC programs by expanding program activities, facilitating program sustainability, and providing important information about student needs. Three leading indicators are associated with the Partnership Practices domain: Family Engagement, School Context, and Community Context.

Indicator 3.1: Family Engagement

Engaging families in programming and providing family learning events is an important component of 21st CCLC programs. Programs may engage families by communicating with them about center programming and events, collaborating to enhance their child's educational success, and providing family literacy or social events. Survey questions on the site coordinator survey measured the center's approaches to family communication.

Exhibit 30 shows the frequency of respondents who answered never, sometimes, or frequently to the family engagement prompts. In 2014–15 and 2015–16, 90% of respondents indicated "sometimes" or "frequently"; these results show that programs communicate with families once or twice a semester.

Exhibit 30. Site Coordinator Responses to Questions About Family Engagement



Source. Site coordinator survey (153 responses from 143 centers in 2015 and 136 responses from 133 centers in 2016).

The least common family communication strategies included sending information home about how the student is

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Scale scores for family engagement included:

PROMPT: How often do you...

- Send materials about program offerings home to parents or adult family members?
- Send information home about how the student is progressing in the program?
- Hold events or meetings to which parents or adult family members are invited?
- Have conversations with parents or adult family members on the phone?
- Meet with one or more parents or adult family members?
- Ask for input from parents or adult family members on what and how activities should be provided?
- Encourage parents or adult family members to participate in center-provided programming meant to support their acquisition of knowledge or skills?
- Encourage parents or adult family members to participate in center-provided programming with their children?

progressing in the program and encouraging family members to participate in center-provided programming directed at adult learning. The former finding is not surprising given the difficulty associated with providing individual progress reports on specific students. However, the latter finding is more surprising considering that all programs are required to offer services to the family members of students who participate in the program. There might be an opportunity to do more outreach to parents or adult family members regarding the services offered by the program that are directed toward adult learning.

Indicator 3.2: School Context

This leading indicator captures the degree to which 21st CCLC staff members align the design and delivery of programming to the school day and individual student needs. These practices are particularly important to 21st CCLC program quality, given the explicit goal of supporting low-performing students' growth in reading and mathematics. The evaluation team scored the data reported for this leading indicator with Rasch-created scale scores, in which higher scores indicate higher performance or endorsement on a given scale. We calculated the following scale scores for this indicator:

- **Linkages to the School Day—Site Coordinator Survey:** The extent to which the site coordinator reports taking steps to establish links to the school day and use student data to inform programming
- **Linkages to the School Day—Staff Survey:** The extent to which program staff report taking steps to establish links to the school day and use student data to inform programming
- **Data Use—Site Coordinator Survey:** The extent to which the site coordinator reports the program using student data to inform programming
- **Data Use—Staff Survey:** The extent to which program staff report taking steps to use student data to inform programming

Linkages to the School Day

It is important to note that the items for Linkages to the School Day scales on the site coordinator and staff surveys were quite different. On the site coordinator survey, we designed items to ask about the specific strategies adopted by the program to establish meaningful links to the school day. We asked site coordinators to indicate whether the strategy described in a given item was a "major strategy," a "minor strategy," or "not a strategy" to support links with the school day. In contrast, the staff survey asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with a series of items regarding their knowledge of school-day practices, student

SCHOOL CONTEXT: LINKAGES TO THE SCHOOL DAY

Scale scores included the following:

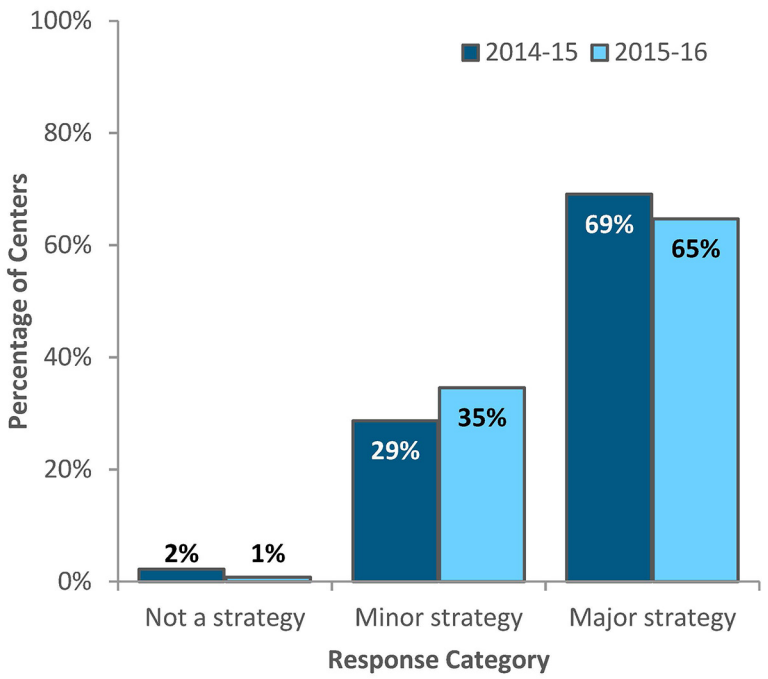
PROMPT: What strategies are used to link the program to the regular school day?

- Align programming to school-day curriculum and standards.
- Help with homework.
- Hire regular school-day teachers.
- Use student assessment or grades to inform programming.
- Meet face-to-face with school-day staff regularly.
- Communicate electronically with school-day staff regularly.
- Communicate electronically with principals and other school-day administrative staff regularly.
- Monitor students' academic performance on district- or building-level assessments across the school year regularly, and use this information to inform activity provision.
- Ensure that activities are informed by and meant to support schoolwide improvement targets related to student performance.

academic needs, use of student data to inform programming, and communication with school-day staff to better support the design and delivery of afterschool programming.

The responses to the prompt about strategies used to link programming to the school day are shown in Exhibit 31. Nearly all site coordinators responded that the strategies were a minor or major strategy. This finding suggests programs adopted multiple strategies during these periods. According to the survey results, the least frequently adopted strategy was "hiring regular school-day teachers." The most commonly used strategy was "helping with homework."

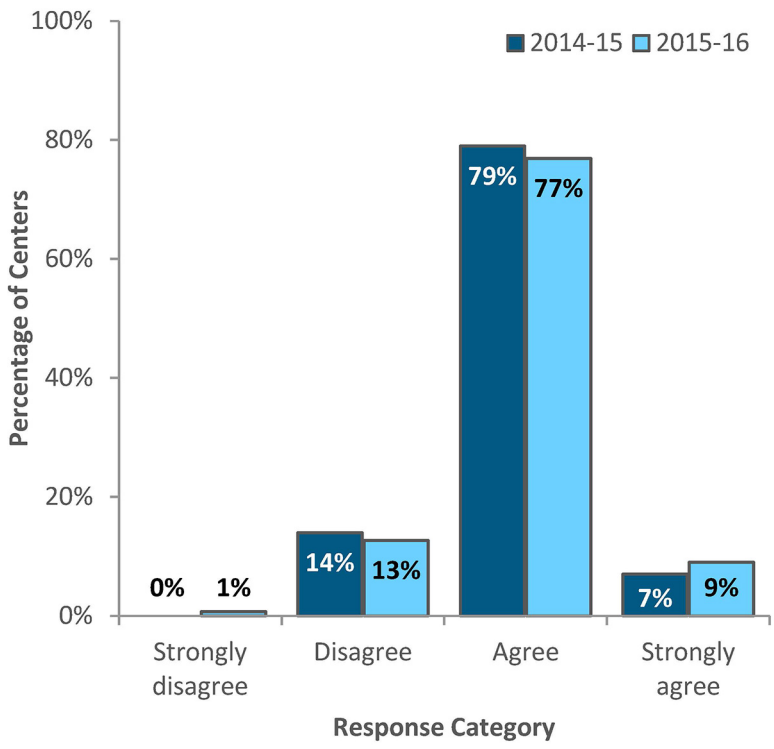
Exhibit 31. Site Coordinator Responses to Questions About Linkages to the School Day



Source. Site coordinator survey (153 responses from 143 centers in 2015 and 136 responses from 133 centers in 2016).

Responses to the survey suggest that, on average, most staff who seek to connect afterschool programing with school-day content have a good sense of both student academic needs and school-day curriculum or instruction (Exhibit 32). It is important to note when reviewing staff survey results that staff taking the survey could indicate whether a given item was not related to their role in the program. In this sense, survey responses likely reflect those staff responsible for the delivery of academic content and who perceived there to be value in connecting their practice to what was happening during the school day.

Exhibit 32. Staff Responses to Questions About Linkages to the School Day



Source. Staff survey (798 responses from 143 centers in 2015 and 774 responses from 133 centers in 2016).

SCHOOL CONTEXT: LINKAGES TO THE SCHOOL DAY

PROMPT: Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding linkages to the school day:

- On a week-to-week basis, I know what academic content will be covered during the school day with the students they work with in the afterschool program.
- I coordinate the content of the afterschool activities they provide with my students' school-day homework.
- I know who to contact at their students' day school if they have a question about their progress or status.
- The activities I provide in the afterschool program are tied to specific learning goals that are related to the school-day curriculum.
- I use student assessment data to provide different types of instruction to students attending their afterschool activities based on their ability level.
- I monitor students' academic performance on district- or building-level assessments across the school year and use this information to inform activities they provide.
- I help manage a formal three-way communication system that links parents, program, and day school information.
- I participate in regular, joint staff meetings for afterschool and regular school-day staff where steps to further establish linkages between the school day and afterschool are discussed.
- I meet regularly with school-day staff not working in the afterschool program to review the academic progress of individual students.
- I participate in parent-teacher conferences to provide information about how individual students are faring in the afterschool program.

SCHOOL CONTEXT: DATA USE

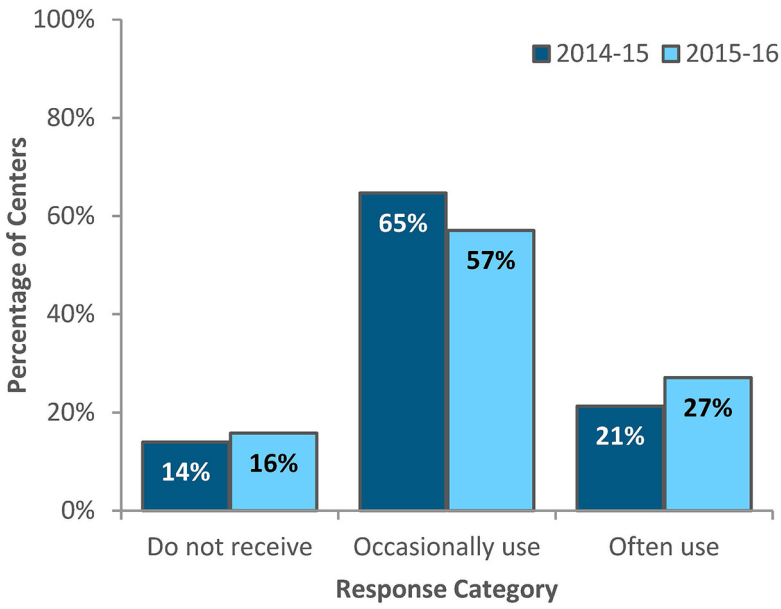
Questions appearing on the site coordinator and staff surveys included the following:

PROMPT: Please indicate whether you [program staff] receive each of the following, and to what extent you [program staff] use it in planning for the activities you provide:

- Individualized education plans
- Students' state assessment scores
- Students' scores on district- or building-level assessments
- Students' grades
- Teacher-provided student progress reports

The site coordinator and staff surveys included questions regarding the extent to which staff had access to and made use of student data. Exhibit 33 shows the data use results of the site coordinator survey. Most respondents indicated they occasionally use the strategies. This number is down slightly from 2014–15, as more site coordinators reported using these data more often.

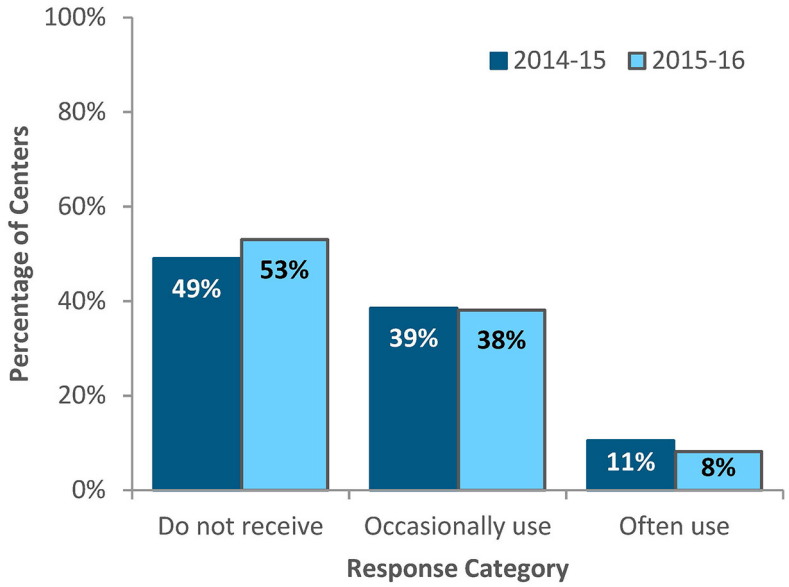
Exhibit 33. Site Coordinator Responses to Questions About Data Use



Source. Site coordinator survey (153 responses from 143 centers in 2015 and 136 responses from 133 centers in 2016).

The responses to survey items related to the use of student data to inform programming indicated that these practices were the less likely to be used as a strategy by staff to intentionally link programming to the school day (see Exhibit 34). This finding is common among 21st CCLC evaluations conducted by the evaluation team. Generally, we could investigate how programs use student data and where there are opportunities to identify and share best practices with the field more broadly.

Exhibit 34. Staff Responses to Questions About Data Use



Source. Staff survey (798 responses from 143 centers in 2015 and 774 responses from 133 centers in 2016).

SCHOOL CONTEXT: DATA USE

Questions appearing on the site coordinator and staff surveys included the following:

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- Individualized education plans
- Students' state assessment scores
- Students' scores on district- or building-level assessments
- Students' grades
- Teacher-provided student progress reports

Indicator 3.3: Community Context

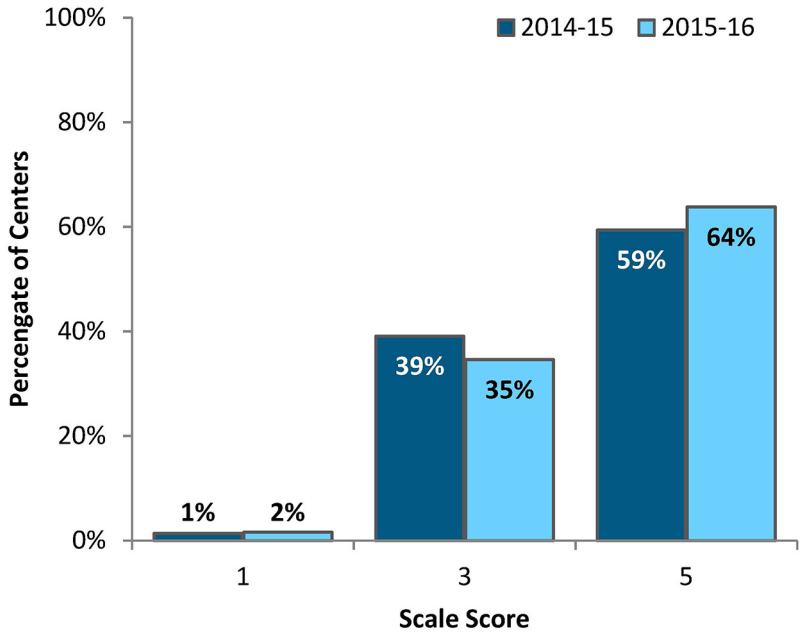
Encouraging partnerships between schools and community organizations is an important component of the national 21st CCLC programs. We define a partner as any organization other than the grantee that actively contributes to a 21st CCLC–funded program to help programs meet their goals and objectives. Partners may play a variety of roles in supporting a 21st CCLC–funded program. For example, partners may provide programming and staff, provide physical space and facilities, and facilitate fundraising efforts. In many instances, partners can play a critical role in providing activities and services in which the grantee lacks expertise or training to enhance the variety of learning opportunities available to youth. From a quality perspective, mutually beneficial partnerships are most effective when staff from the partner organization work directly with youth and are involved in regular program processes related to staff orientation, training, evaluation, feedback, and professional development.

The leading indicator for community context captures the degree to which partners associated with the center are actively involved in planning, decision making, evaluating, and supporting program operations. We calculated the following metric to describe aspects of this indicator:

- **Family and Community—YPQA Form B:** The extent to which the program adopts policies and practices supportive of family and community engagement

Like other scores on YPQA Form B, centers were classified as falling in the 1, 3, or 5 response category. Higher scores indicate greater adoption of the practices in question. Exhibit 35 shows the percentage of respondents who answered 1, 3, or 5 in 2014–15 and 2015–16.

Exhibit 35. Center-Level Scores on Family and Community



Source. YPQA Form B (from 138 centers).

COMMUNITY CONTEXT: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

YPQA FORM B Family and Community Scale

- Barriers to participation are addressed.
- The program builds linkages with families.
- The program builds linkages with the community.

Chapter 3. Reflections From the Field

To gain a better understanding of the practices underpinning grantee success in providing high-quality programs, AIR partnered with OSPI to identify high-performing programs based on the creation of a data dashboard, which identified high-performing centers, and conducted site visits to gather information on what is contributing to their success. This chapter presents the best practices from the high-performing sites. See Appendix A for more details regarding the methodology used for site visit selection and for data analysis.

AIR conducted site visits at six centers representing six geographically and demographically diverse programs, which included interviews and focus group with various staff members. Although the findings in this report are presented in aggregate, each participating center received a center-level summary report. These reports are included in Appendix C.

Program and Site	Grantee
Liberty Elementary (afterschool)	Washington Alliance for Better Schools—Cohort 11
Amistad Elementary (afterschool)	Education School District 123—Cohort 9
Allen Elementary (summer)	Burlington-Edison School District—Cohort 11
McCarver Elementary (afterschool)	Peace Community Center—Cohort 10
Toppenish Safe Haven (afterschool)	Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic—Cohort 9
Garrison Middle School (summer)	Walla Walla Public Schools—Cohort 10

Findings

Several themes surfaced from staff members, families, and students. Staff members reported that the programs have provided an expanded learning environment for students by providing students with opportunities to grow their academic and socioemotional skills, by offering a broad array of activities in which students are interested, and often by enlisting the help of community partners who are experts in content.

Staff members work hard to recruit and retain students in their program. They use a variety of strategies to recruit students in their programs, such as working with school staff to target students who most need support and making themselves visible at school events. Staff members work to retain students in the program by implementing practices that are known to provide them with key developmental experiences, such as opportunities to reflect on what they are doing, to practice leadership skills, and to make authentic choices. Access to these key development experiences can be related to higher levels of student interest and engagement. Staff also work to ensure adaptions are made for ELL students and those students with special needs by providing additional support and peer learning opportunities.

Families think the programs have improved students' outcomes in growing peer relationships, increasing academic curiosity, and improving social-emotional skills. Families feel very connected to the program through consistent communication and family events. Programs also provide services, such as ELL or parenting classes, to further connect with and support families.

Students see positive changes in themselves. They reported having new interests, an improved attitude, and gaining new friends because of participation. Many students recognize that without these programs, they would more likely be at home watching TV or playing video games instead of continuing to learn new things. Students appreciate the number of activities offered and the ability to connect with peers outside of school.

Some challenges that programs face include issues around retention. As students get older, other activities outside the program, such as sports, can lead to lower rates of retention. For summer programs, attendance is also an issue because families tend to go on vacation. Noted challenges that staff members face are issues around working with the school to obtain space and resources. There can be a lot of tension when it comes to delegating space to the program.

Recommendations

Several recommendations emerged from these findings. First, programs should create opportunities for 21st century sites connect with and learn from one another on a more regular basis, even something as simple as a quarterly conference call or webinar. A second recommendation is to work on building up relationships with school staff and program staff, such as inviting more staff to monthly check-ins with principals or being included in schoolwide e-mails. Finally, if retention is an issue, then programs should provide more program flexibility or alternatives. In terms of flexibility, allow certain students to miss a day of program if they are involved in outside sport. In contrast, programs may want to consider implementing a sport one day a week or creating a new STEM activity to satisfy the needs of their students.

Staff Member Insight

"There's a bigger picture, looking at outcomes where students are in a pipeline second grade through college, that our students will have the opportunities to become everything that they want to be. Ultimately, to come back, and work in this community, and help build this community."

Staff Member Insight

"Once they can manage their own emotions, I think you can go to things like team building."

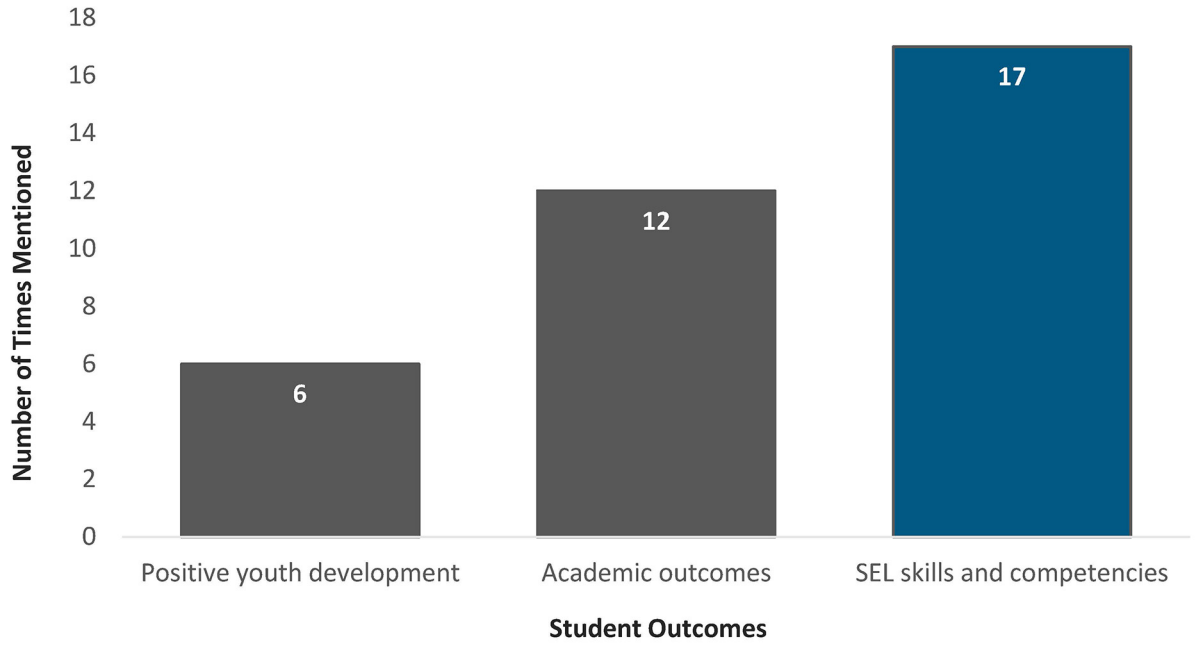
Outcomes for Students

These 21st CCLC programs work to ensure that students have opportunities to make gains in social-emotional and academic outcomes. This section provides an overview of students' outcomes targeted by the programs, as well as the family's, students', and staff's expectations for those outcomes.

Desired Student Outcomes

For many staff members, academic and social-emotional outcomes are at the top of the list of desired program outcomes (Exhibit 36). Many staff members want students not only to improve a single test score but also to love learning and become more academically engaged. Staff members also wanted students to have more confidence in themselves, to self-regulate, and to improve their relationships with their peers. Some programs wanted students to become healthier, in terms of better diet and exercise. Staff members also wanted the programs to provide students with a safe alternative afterschool activity.

Exhibit 36. Top Student Outcomes Named by Staff



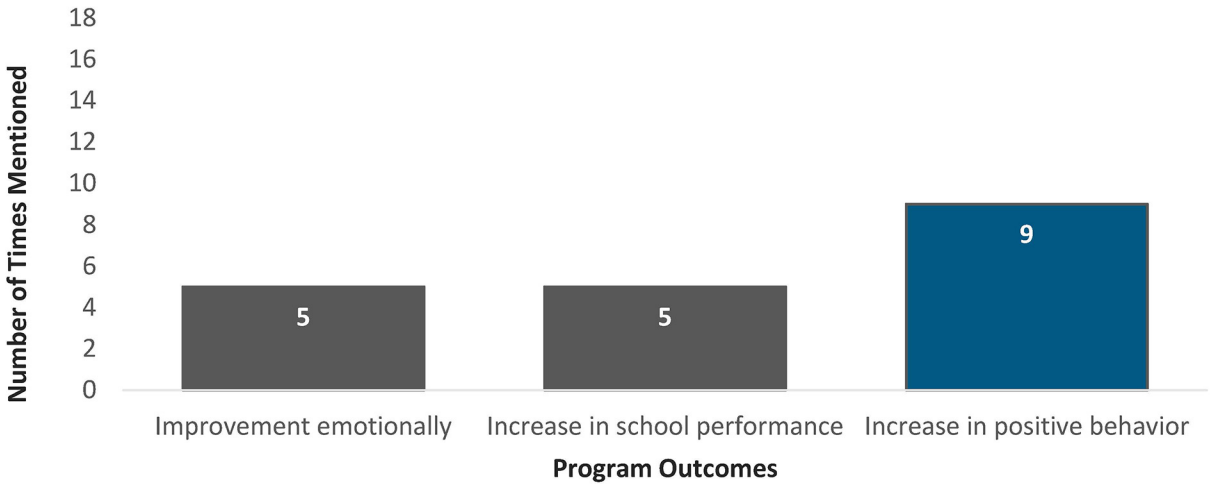
Family Expectations of the Programs

Families had a variety of expectations from the programs regarding how they would impact outcomes for their students. Families believed the programs would give students an academic advantage, provide help with homework, and build relationships with their peers. Families see that, in some programs, students are learning basic foundations of more difficult concepts. In one program, students are learning how to become more effective researchers by learning how to ask questions and to take their learning a step beyond the classroom. Most families saw these programs as a safe place for their children to be after school.

Social-Emotional Outcomes

Staff members feel that students have improved their social-emotional outcomes. They see that students have gained confidence in themselves, improved behavior, and maintained strong peer relationships. Staff members have seen an increase in positive student behavior, such students learning how to self-manage and track their progress, as well as building confidence in their own self and voice (Exhibit 37).

Exhibit 37. Top Program Outcomes for Students According to Staff Members



Student Insight

"I like to spend time here with my friends. This program made me make new friends and respect others."

Student Insight

"I became nicer. I've been respecting others. I learn not to fight with others. I learn not to flip over tables."

Students have gained more social-emotional competencies from being a part of these programs. Students feel they gained more patience. Students have built better relationships with peers because of teamwork in the programs. Students have learned that actions have consequences and to respect their peers and adults in the school. Staff members worked hard to ensure that students identify their emotions and have strategies to deal with emotions that may cause conflict with other students. Staff members also helped students own their emotions and allowed them to take time out from an activity if needed.

Families have seen positive social-emotional outcomes in their children. The programs are helping the students cope with things that can be difficult, such as peer disputes. Families also see that students have gained relationships with their peers and staff members.

The list below demonstrates parent feedback on social-emotional outcomes:

- "He trusts an adult other than his parents who will tell him that he should do something."

- "Because they get to stay here after school, they're becoming more confident."
- "For us, she's made more friends. She's gotten to know a lot more of her fellow classmates better than she normally would if she was just in regular school."
- "She was always a little shy to start. I think she's gotten way more social."

Academic Outcomes

Staff members feel that there has been consistent academic improvement for students involved in the programs. Programs track students test scores, typically in math and reading. Most program staff reported that their students' test scores have improved. In one program, 83.7% of students who regularly attended increased or maintained their scores in the reading, and 85.5% of regularly attending students increased or maintained their scores in mathematics. Students believe that these programs offer new opportunities to learn and help develop their academic skill set.

Student Insight

"Here you get more hands-on learning."

In addition to providing time for homework, the programs expand students' learning outside of the classroom. Families feel that these programs are developing students into deeper thinkers and providing students with a space to learn. Families appreciate that the students are completing their homework on a more regular schedule than before. Families see the impact on their students from increased academic scores to piquing their curiosity outside of the classroom, and students show an interest to expand their knowledge by asking questions and exploring.

Parent Feedback

"The program has expanded his curiosity, and he spends a lot of time quizzing me now."

The list below demonstrates parent-provided feedback regarding academic outcomes:

- "When they get home, all homework is finished. Everything's done, they don't have to worry about anything, but it opens their mind."
- "My kids are so smart and so open to learning, that they have gotten so much more out of the program than I thought they would because of what they teach them."
- "She's always complaining about she's bored around the house and doing the little things, playing computer games. But now, she's reading books."

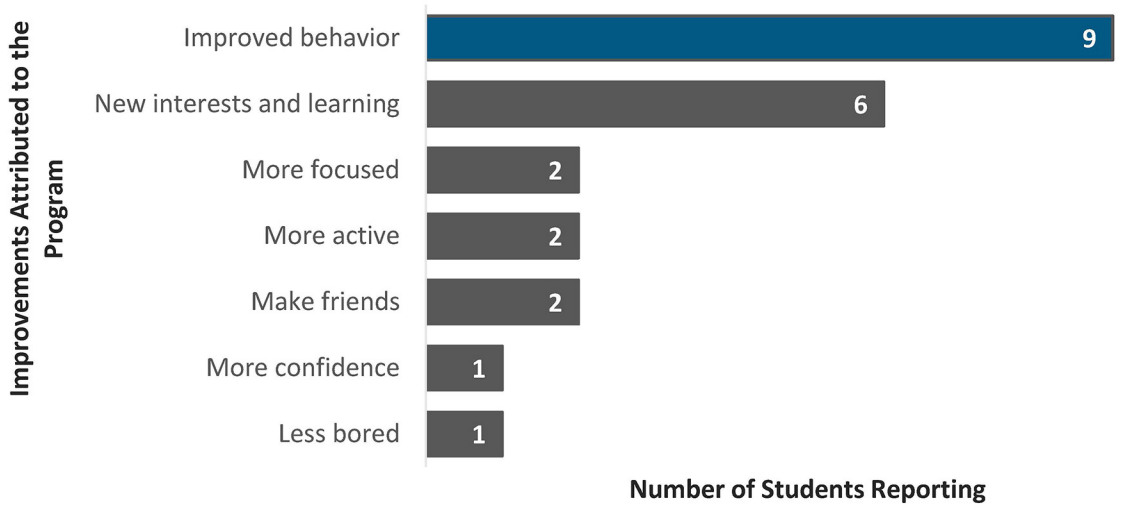
- "I feel like he's more prepared for middle school now with this program."

Students feel they are completing their homework more often because they have the support of their programs and ample time to complete their homework (for student responses, see Exhibit 38). Students in one program described how staff members incentivized students to track their goals by giving them candy and scholar store tickets if they continued to practice and track their goals. Students feel they can understand concepts better from the activities offered, such as working with drones and planting in the garden.

Student Feedback

"They help you with your homework or your projects that you need then you'll know what to do after. It's like a life skill."

Exhibit 38. Student Reported Impacts as a Result of Program Participation



Program Structure

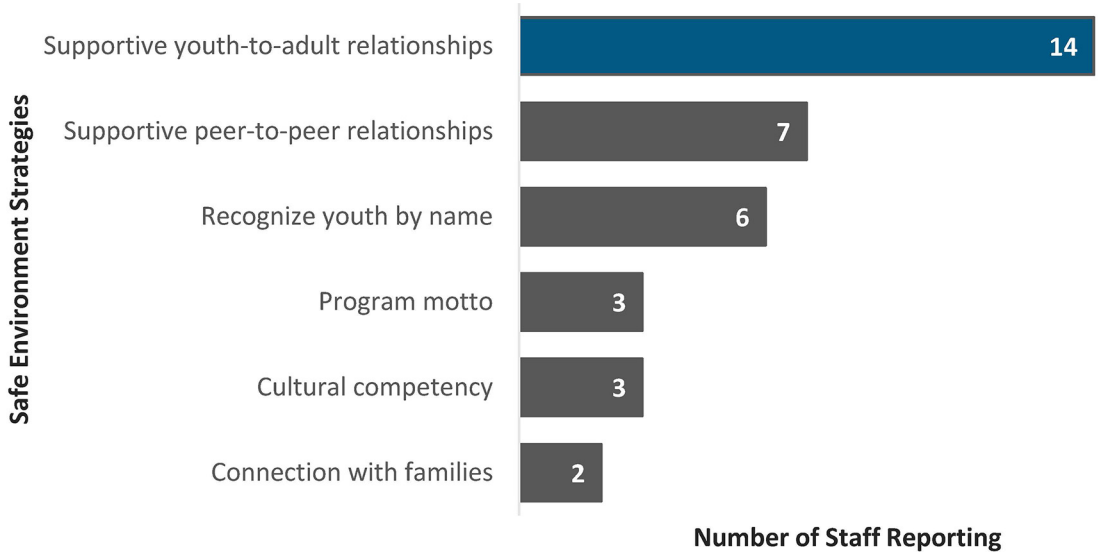
Safe and Welcoming Environment

Staff members work hard to promote a safe and welcoming environment for students. Staff members consistently use students' names. Some programs engage students in daily icebreakers or a pledge to ensure that they are comfortable in the program space. Staff

members have open relationships with the students by asking them about their families and their interests (Exhibit 39).

Staff members feel that students have begun to deal with and express their emotions in a healthy way. For example, one program created a supportive environment by implementing a "zones" strategy, reciting student-created daily pledges, hosting family nights, and frequently using "team" language. The "zones of regulation" were a useful tool to help students deal with their emotions and provide them with "definitive strategies to use" such as breathing exercises when they felt anxious or jumping jacks when they felt angry. Zones also helped students understand the emotions of others and how they can respond to them. Staff members feel that students could utilize the zones to express themselves and students agree.

Exhibit 39. Staff-Reported Strategies to Create a Safe and Welcoming Program Environment



Interaction

Staff members work very hard to build positive peer relationships. A major component of most programs is to ensure that students are working together and encouraging one another. Students viewed the staff members positively and have developed relationships with them. Families see that the staff members have built positive relationships with students. They reported that the staff members are present for the students. One family cited that staff

members, who are currently in college or have freshly graduated, provide students with new insights. They are concerned about the needs of their students and are very interested in students succeeding and building relationships with one another.

Students are offered a variety of leadership opportunities in these programs. These opportunities may consist of the following:

- Pick the schedule for the day
- Pass things out for the activity
- Be the line leader
- Be the time keeper
- Lead the ice breaker of the day
- Elect student leaders

Program Director Feedback

"Leadership at the school wants the best for the best for the kids and has been super-flexible and even supportive in times when he probably was putting himself out there to do it. Now, teachers are even bought in, everyone believes in the program."

Engagement

Student choice is a critical component of 21st CCLC programs. Even if it is small choice, such as when they want to eat or start on their homework, staff members make sure students know that they have choices. Students enjoy when they can choose which activity they want to participate in.

Parent Insight

"A couple of times I came to pick up my son and my nephew and a staff member said, 'Oh, you did really good today' or 'He helped somebody else.' And those types of things are good to hear."

Staff members encourage students to reflect on their activities, in terms of what they like and did not like, as well as what they learned and connections they may have made to prior activities or to the school day. Staff members listen to the students' reflections and think about how they can be incorporated in the activities. One program allows students to commit to an activity of their

choice for one week and present what they learned in that activity to the program. So, not only do students have choice, but also they take responsibility and ownership in that choice.

Family Feedback

"Every time I pick him up, for my son, good or bad, I hear about it. They definitely communicate."

Alignment With School Day

Most programs work to ensure that they connect the program to the school day. Almost all programs feel that they share some vision of the same goals as the school and work to connect with school leadership. Some principals and staff members have stronger relationships. These stronger relationships can lead to allowing for more program space or even school leader attendance at program events.

Some staff members have a strong relationship with teachers to learn more about their students and how they connect the program. Some program directors and principals check in weekly or monthly, usually about whether program space is adequate and students' progress. Many programs face challenges with space and working with the school staff to make sure they have enough space and resources. It is a delicate balance to work with the school, especially if the program is new or does not have a strong relationship with the school staff and/or principal.

Site Coordinator Insight

"There's a student leadership team, where they get to elect students from the grade, so they're choosing who they're voting in for office and who they want to represent them."

Family Communication and Engagement

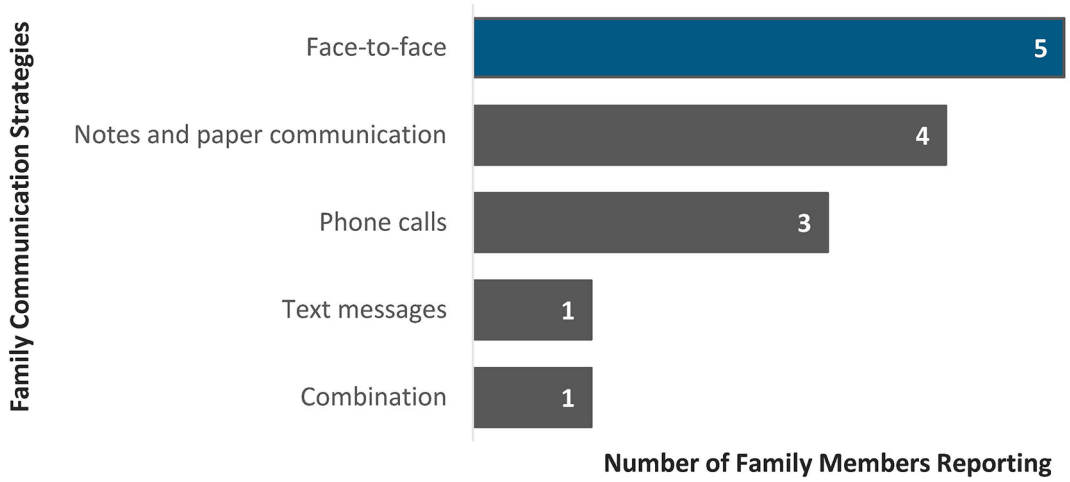
Families feel most staff members work hard to connect with them when it comes to program activities and how their child is progressing on desired outcomes. Staff members try to connect with families, some daily, to simply check in and say hello. Families reported that some programs take it a step beyond, such as providing adult resources or checking in daily about student performance and behavior.

Parent Insight

"When we have parent nights, where we connect with the school counselor support what she's doing. There are also resource tables there for career and job training, some are resources for local community classes and things like that."

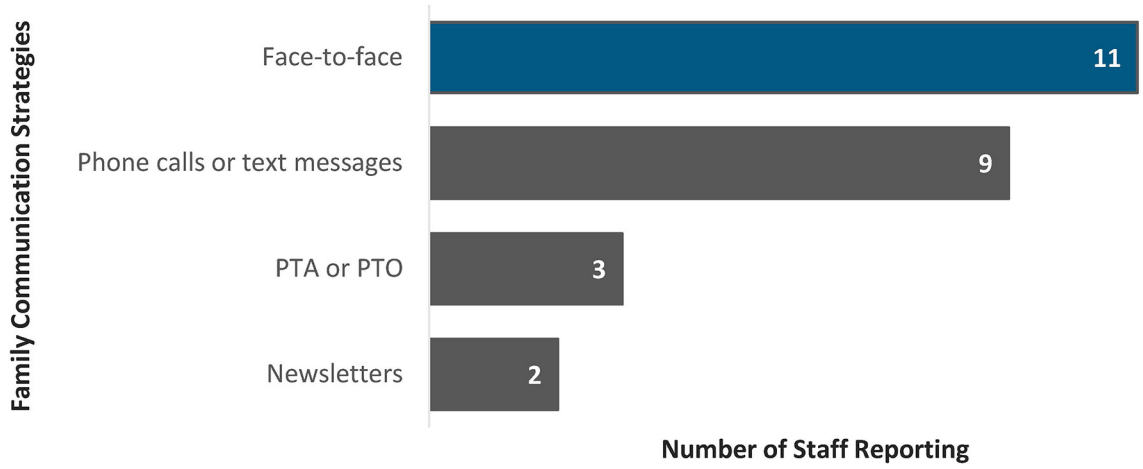
Staff members regularly call parents about student progress and/or behavior and sometimes send flyers home. The results from the section on parent communication are shown in Exhibit 40. Program staff use multiple methods to communication with families, whatever is more apt to successfully get in touch with the families.

Exhibit 40. Family-Reported Communication Regarding the Afterschool Program



Some staff members also use text messages, e-mails, and even home visits to communicate with parents (Exhibit 41). Families say they have often received flyers about afterschool programming and calls if the program will be closed or there is an issue with student behavior.

Exhibit 41. Staff-Reported Family Communication Strategies



Note. PTA = parent-teacher association. PTO = parent-teacher organization.

However, some families feel that some staff members do not check in as regularly as they could. Some families also feel that voice communication should happen more regularly and they tend to hear only about negative behavior and would like more opportunities to hear about positive behavior.

Program Director Insight

"We have tutors go in at lunchtime. They'll have barbecues twice a year. We have tutors come in and eat lunch with the kids. That way they get to know us. We try to embed ourselves within the school in all aspects."

Staff members put on family nights to connect with families. Some sites host these nights regularly and some have annual theme events during which students present their work. Families appreciate when the programs have events that showcase students work and various opportunities for involvement, such as field trips. Some programs also host families to connect the program and students further; this may include a potluck or building gingerbread houses around the holiday season. One program hosts a monthly town hall meeting for families to attend. Some programs have family advisory boards that they connect with regularly to voice their feedback on the program.

Staff members acknowledge that some families are more difficult to get in touch with than others. Communication is more complicated the parents do not speak English. Although some

staff members are multilingual and provide translated materials, this is not the case in every program.

Family Services

Some programs provide a variety of family services, such as parent counseling or an English as a second language class. Often, programs connect with community partners to provide these services for families, such as offering adult education courses or classes in nutrition. One program provides food for families through a weekly backpack program, and translated materials about program activities are included with the food.

Families who participate in these programs appreciate that the programs offer these services to them. Some programs host monthly parent nights to cover different topics, such as working on child behavioral issues.

Community Engagement

Programs are required to engage with community partners at some level. Many partners come in and teach something to students, such as writing poetry or filmmaking. Some organizations provide direct funding or goods, such as providing backpacks for a program's initiative to donate food to families. At one center, students worked on creating a garden because of a program created by the University of Washington. Some organizations, such as the YMCA's hip hop class or Tri Tech's welder demonstration, try to involve students in activities they may not have experienced otherwise. One program has an advisory committee that consists of community partners. This committee works on making the program more effective.

Program Director Insight

"We have local banks that come in and do like banking sessions with the kids. Tri Tech comes in and brings in their welders and their graphic people and so it's just reaching out. Definitely having coordinators that aren't afraid to do that makes their job and my job easier to bring in community members."

Program Management Practices

Program Preparation

In most programs, staff members meet weekly to discuss program goals and upcoming events. Staff talk about program improvements that can be made and what is going well in the program. Some programs set specific goals, such as relationships with students and among students, and check in on those goals weekly. One program does a daily reflection in the summer on how the program went that day and what can be improved. Most staff members feel that they can bring their own ideas and concerns into these meetings.

Most staff members participate in activities related to the YPQI and attend professional development trainings on growing their skills in student development. Staff engage in the Youth Work Methods trainings that equip them on how to do things like build community, offer opportunities for students' voice and choice, and reframe conflict. Additionally, the planning meetings might have a training component, such as how to develop as an organization, time management, or youth development strategies.

Recruitment

Staff members work to ensure that the students enrolled in the programs are those who would benefit the most. These students are often identified by school staff and can consist of ELL students, students with special needs, students with social-emotional needs, and students who struggle academically.

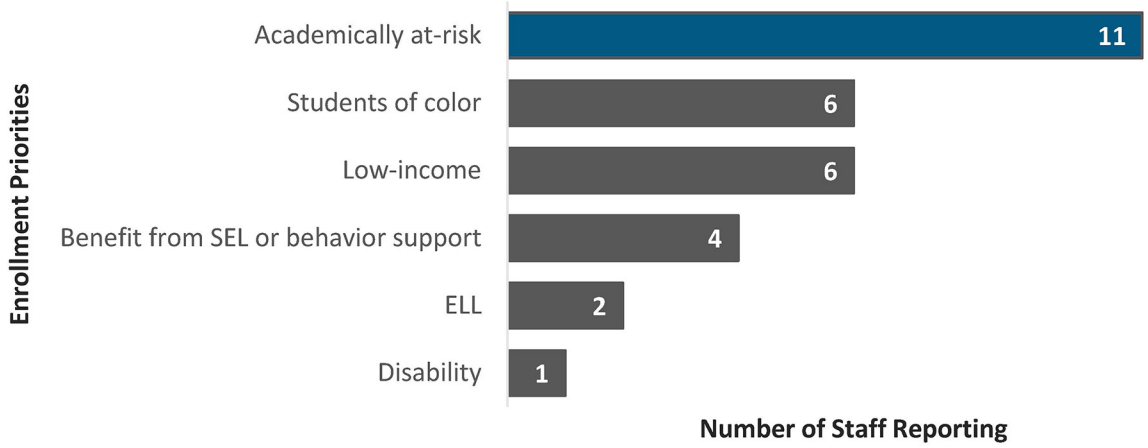
To be eligible for 21st CCLC funding, at least 40% of the district population must meet FRPL status. To recruit and enroll ELL students, some programs have staff members who speak Spanish and can translate materials for families. Most programs have open enrollment, in which any students can enroll. However, priority is often given to students who are in the targeted population, and sometimes students are placed on a waiting list. Exhibit 42 outlines

Program Director Insight

"We analyze our program together in a circle and staff have time to reflect. Yes, sometimes I lead sort of hokey activities for them, like, hey everyone, please write down like the hardest thing that happened last week and the thing you're most looking forward to, also I do some small activities for team building and reflection as well. A lot of it does come up organically."

responses from program staff regarding priorities for enrolling student groups. Programs prioritize recruiting academically at-risk students to the program.

Exhibit 42. Staff-Reported Program Enrollment Policies



Note. SEL = social-emotional learning.

Programs rely on many recruitment strategies. Some programs depend on word of mouth from teachers, school leaders, and other parents. When recruiting specific populations of students, such as ELL students, staff members may go to ELL specialists or student counselors to ensure that those students who need the program are enrolled. Staff members try to be visible to parents by having informational tables at school open houses to promote the programs or hanging up flyers at the school. Some program staff reach out to parents by calling them and asking if they have any questions. Exhibit 43 shows the frequency of responses from program staff about which recruitment strategies are used. The most common recruitment method is direct referral from school staff.

Exhibit 43. Staff-Reported Program Recruitment Methods

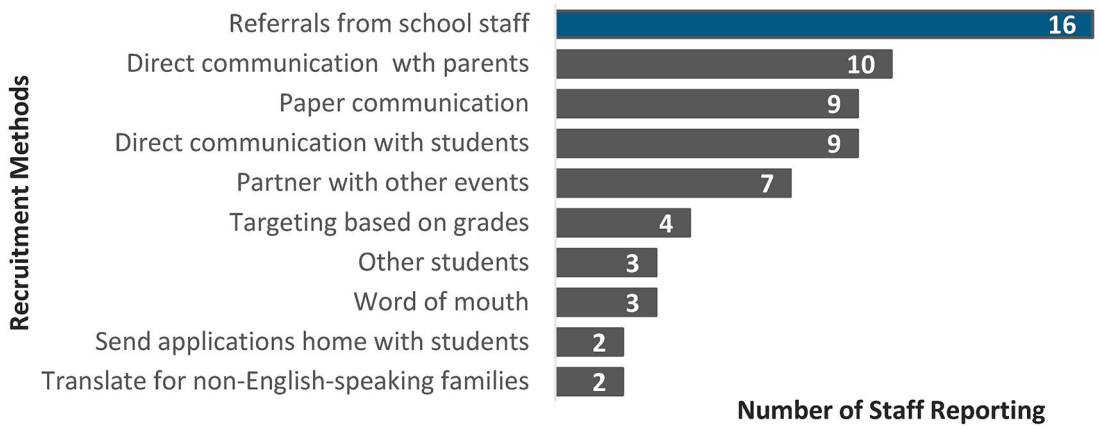
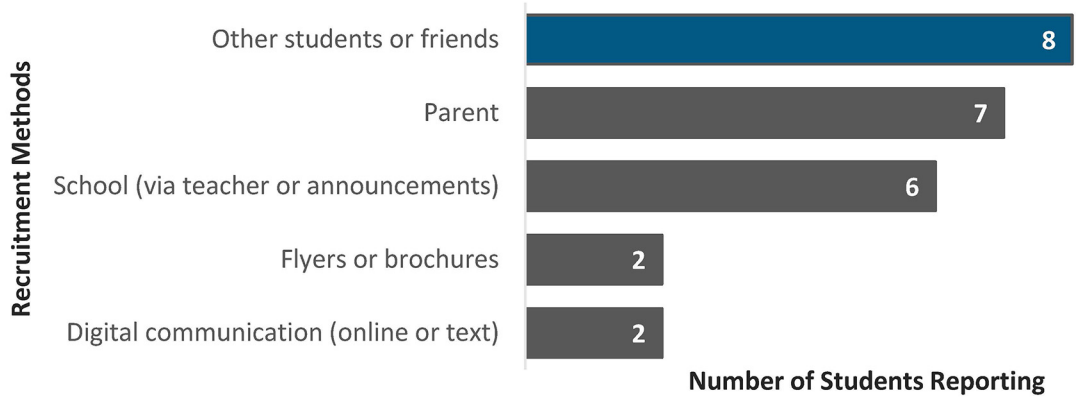


Exhibit 44 shows the frequency of responses from students on how they were recruited. Many students reported being recruited by other students or friends.

Exhibit 44. Student-Reported Program Recruitment Methods



Some students feel that if they were not enrolled in these programs, then they would be sitting at home and would likely be watching TV or playing on their phone. Most students reported that they were originally encouraged by someone, usually a

Student Feedback

"I came here because…my mom asked me I wanted to do it. At first, I didn't want to do it. Then, I thought about it for a couple days and I said I wanted to go. It'd be easier for my mom and it'd be fun for me."

parent, to join the program. However, students remain in these programs for variety of reasons, such as peers in the program, activities offered, and relationships with staff.

Recruitment Barriers

The programs face many barriers to recruitment. Some of the new programs need school and teacher buy-in to help refer students to the program and encourage students to attend. Programs without multilingual staff members feel that it is difficult to recruit ELL students because their materials are not translated for the parents. Alternative programs and activities compete for the students' participation, such as Girl Scouts, sports, or drama programs led by the school. Some programs have difficulty with transportation for students after the programs.

Retention Strategies

Programs rely on a variety of strategies to ensure that students continue to participate in the program. Staff members call home and send flyers to make sure families are aware of the program's opportunities and events and continue to send their children to the program. Staff members feel that the connection to families is critical to students remaining in the program, especially if family members are seeing results, such as students continuing to complete their homework.

Staff Member Insight

"For students, letting them know that we're here for them, that we want them to succeed. We're here to be helpful. I think that was a big selling point for the kids and their families."

Staff members also use student-based incentives to keep students engaged, such as Free Fridays or field trips. One program recognizes a student every month who has had consistent attendance and engagement and gives them an award. Staff members also work to ensure that students feel connected to the program and have strong peer and staff relationships.

Student Insight

"The fun thing about 21st Century is the field trips, like when we went to Reach Museum, we went to the animal research thing, we got to see some fake animals, but their fur and stuff were like real."

Drivers for Students Participation

Some staff members ensure that there is student buy-in to the program by truly allowing students choice or having leadership activities. Staff members think the number and variety of

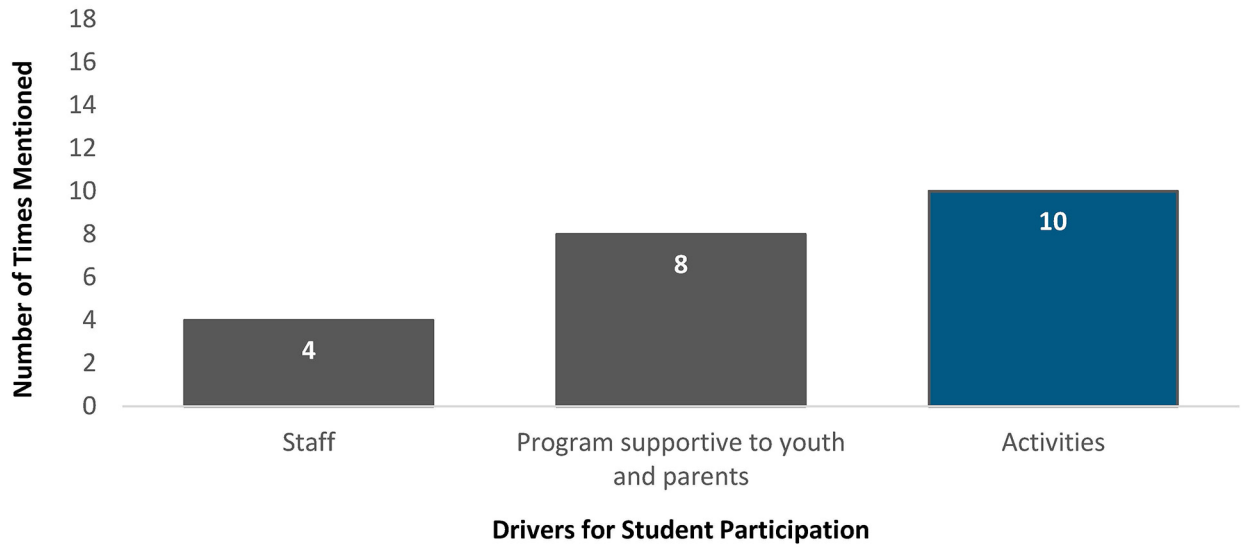
activities offered to students, and the peer relationships are large drivers for student engagement (Exhibit 45). Activities that have the largest draw tend to be STEM focused, such as coding or robotics.

Staff members also work to ensure that students feel connected to the program. Staff members are a major driver for students because of their relationships with the students. Some programs recognize the value of having multilingual staff members to connect with students and families.

Parent Insight

"I think the best thing is their [staff members'] concern for the kids. You can see it."

Exhibit 45. Drivers for student participation



There are additional drivers to student participation to consider, including the things that students and families like about the program. Students feel that they can get their homework done faster than if they did not attend the program, participate in fun activities, and build meaningful relationships with staff members. Most students responded that they like the activities most about the programs; see Exhibit 46 for an outline of the responses.

Staff members recognize that most families send their students to the programs because they provide students with a safe and free place to go after school. However, the programs do not want to be a version of daycare and work to be a place of expanded learning opportunities. Exhibit 47 shows responses from families about what they like best about the programs.

Exhibit 46. Student Reports of What They Like Most About the Program

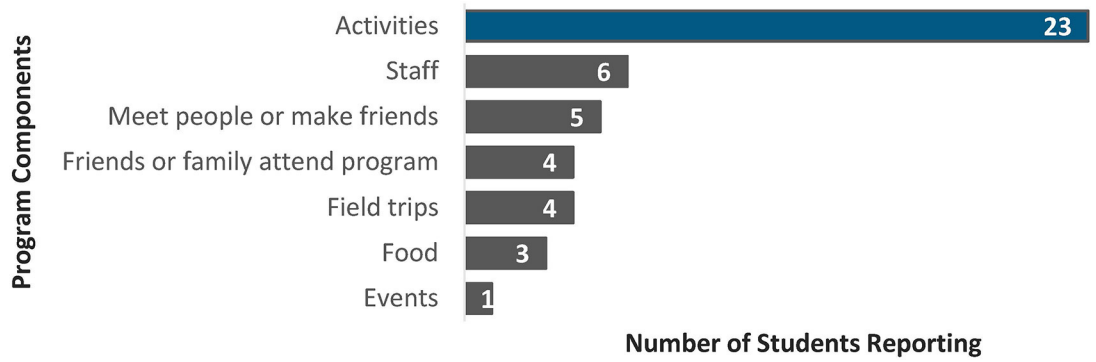
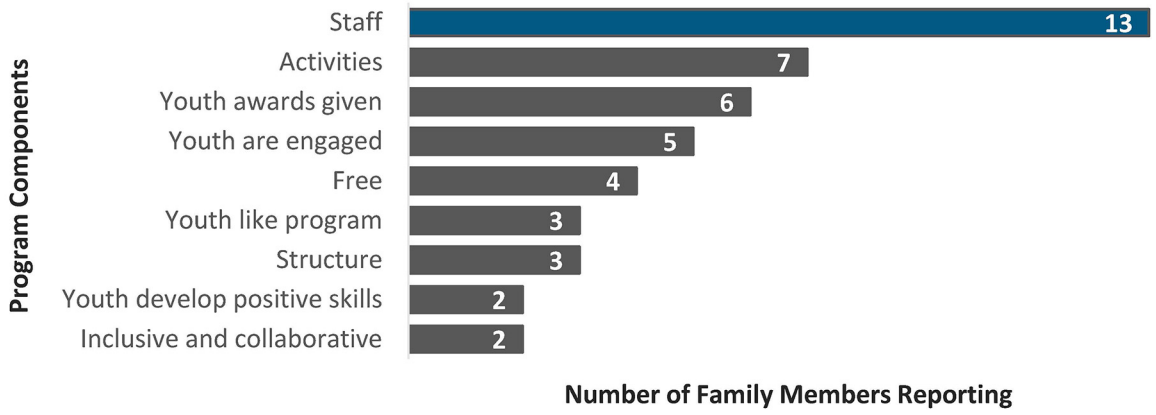


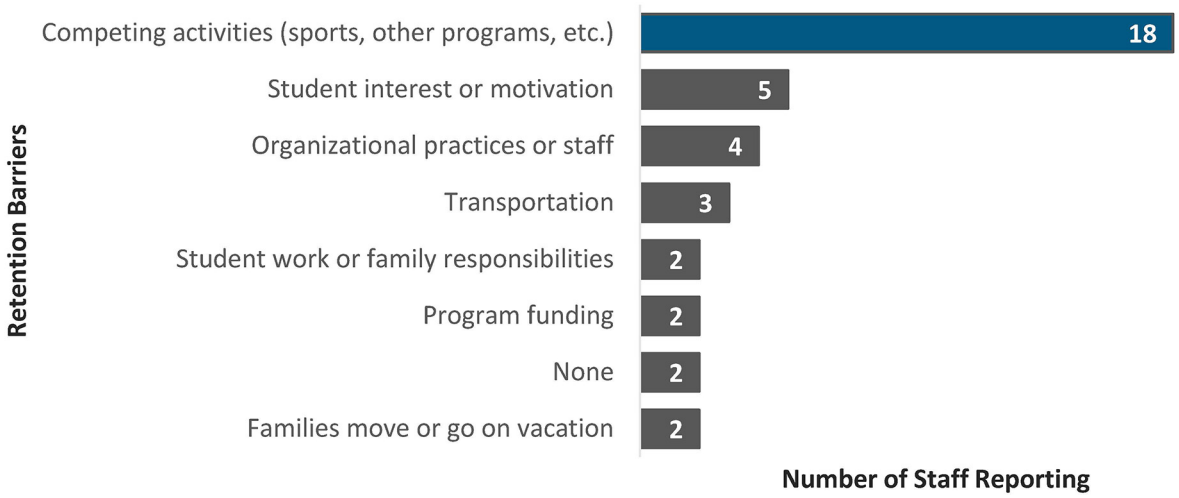
Exhibit 47. Family Reports of What They Like Most about the Program



Retention Barriers

Although results show many reasons why students enjoy the program, these programs still face retention barriers (Exhibit 48). For most programs, youth participation in non-program sports is a frequent barrier to retention. Sports conflict during the school year for the beginning half of the program, the last month, and during the summer. One program allows students to miss Wednesdays to attend a music program, but they can remain in the program if they attend the rest of the week. Some programs have adapted their own STEM and robotics programs to avoid declining enrollment due to competing programs. Summer programs have difficulty keeping students engaged because students do not have a regular routine and families take vacations.

Exhibit 48. Program Retention Barriers



Adaptations for ELL Students and Students With Special Needs

Staff Member Insight

"With those students, we make accommodations where if things aren't working out, you can go take a little break, you can go to the office or go to the front and breathe a little bit, and then you can come back to the activity when you're ready type of thing."

Most programs (83% of staff responses) have implemented adaptions for ELL students and those with special needs. Some programs work to ensure that staff members are bilingual or multilingual to meet the needs of the students. It is especially helpful if the staff shares a similar culture background with the students. Programs work to pair ELL students together to work through homework or an activity and have an added layer of peer support. Programs tend to use scaffolding to build comprehension each day. After a student completes one area of competency, they are moved up so they can progress gradually.

For students with special needs, staff members connect with school-day teachers or specialists to ensure that their needs are met. Staff members work hard to ensure that these students do not feel left out during activities and work to make sure that they are engaged by having staff members help them focus and allowing space for a break if needed. Some staff members take it a step further and try to get the root of why a student may be acting out and talk about their emotions and actions. Overwhelmingly, programs meet the needs of diverse learners, with 83% of programs adapting for English language learner students and students with special needs.

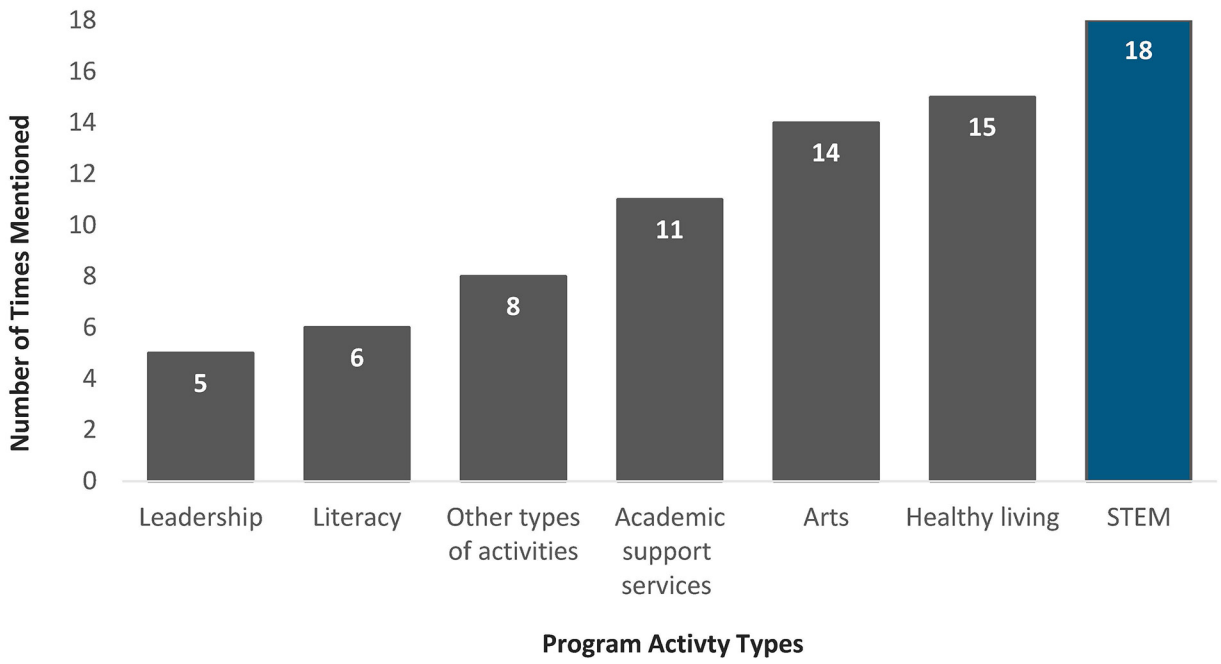
Activities

Most programs have a mix of structured and unstructured activities. Some programs have students rotate through activity blocks after allowing time to work on homework. Some programs have a looser structure in which students can transition from one activity to another. Some programs survey students to determine what types of activities they enjoy and how to make them better. Exhibit 49 shows the number of times each activity type was mentioned by staff respondents. The majority of programs offer STEM activities to students.

Student Feedback

"My favorite part is activity and snack. Each group has a different activity about what we're learning, like math. We get to do computer stuff, like how to do movements of an angry bird thing to try and catch the pig. All the activities are really good, and they're really good and about learning."

Exhibit 49. Types of Activities Offered to Students



Students seemed to appreciate the variety of activities that these programs offer. Students reported feeling learned new things through the activities, such as working on coding. Many students cited going on field trips to places they would not often visit as a benefit of the

program. For example, some students talked about going to the farm and learning more about food sovereignty.

Families reported noticing the variety of activities that are offered to the students from gardening to STEM-based activities. Families noted appreciation that these activities tend to be academically focused, and that there is a focus on reading and writing. They also reported believing that these activities help pique their students' intellectual curiosity by learning about things such as photosynthesis and pollution outside of the classroom.

Program Evaluation

All programs participate in a process of continuous quality improvement. Programs depend on multiple data sources to understand where they are doing well and where they can improve.

These data sources can include family surveys, observations of student behavior or engagement, staff or teacher surveys, student data from school, and/or student surveys. Some programs track school attendance, program attendance, and testing data, mainly the STAR and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills testing, from the school.

Staff Member Insight

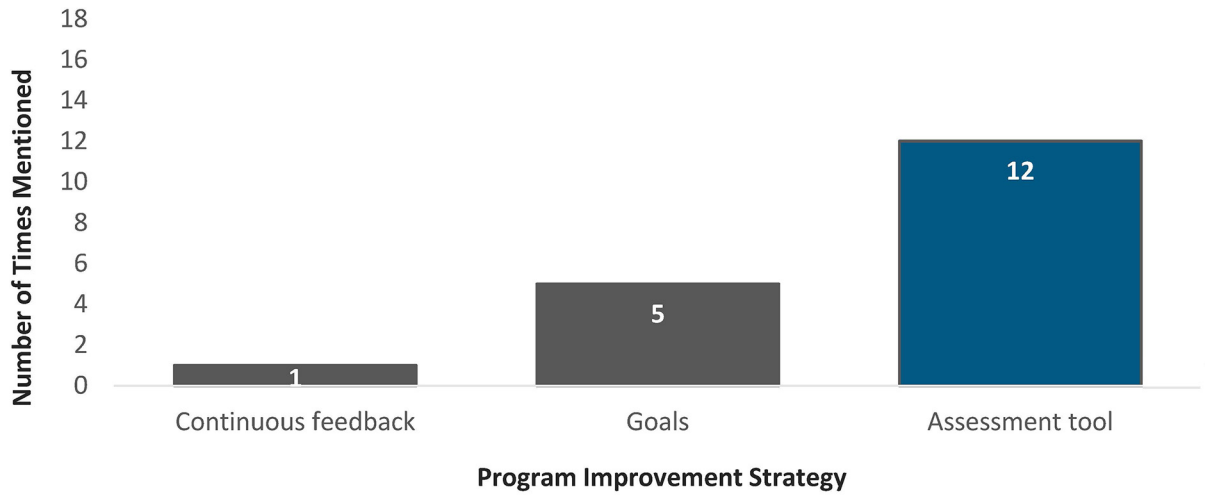
"We did small group work, kind of committee work on brainstorming, on how to address those areas of growth. One of the big things that we decided to work on this year from that evaluation, and from those talks, was the zones curriculum. The school uses zones of regulation, and it's like a socio-emotional tool for our students."

Family Feedback

"They have art. When I get here, there's a big group of kids back there and they're drawing, and they're doing something. It's just amazing to see what they do, what they come up with."

Additionally, staff use the YPQA to evaluate the point-of-service quality of the programs. Programs review the data generated from the YPQA to determine in which areas the program is doing well and needs to improve. Most staff members seem to be familiar with the rubric and what constitutes best practices for student development. Exhibit 50 shows the number of times staff members reported each strategy for improving program quality. According to staff, most programs use an assessment tool to assess and improve program quality.

Exhibit 50. Staff-Reported Strategies to Improve Program Quality



Programs are required to hire a local evaluator to conduct a yearly local evaluation report. Some programs will use more local sources of data to review as well, as opposed to those that are provided under statewide evaluation services, which was noted as the most common way that programs evaluate their outcomes (68%). Programs will look at the evaluation results at one point in the year and think about how to adjust their curriculum or activities. Staff members feel the information from the evaluators is very useful. Some sites conduct internal evaluations, in which staff members assess their progress and goals against the YPQI model.

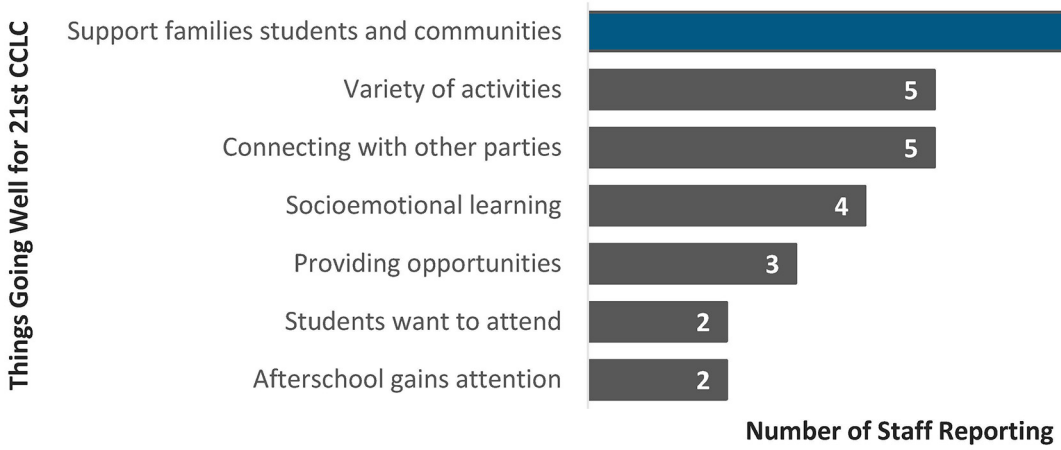
Program Director Feedback

"The evaluators provide very, very well-documented information back to the site supervisors, to us as far as what they saw, what the strengths were and so forth."

Systemwide Practices

Staff members shared some thoughts on the things that are working well when it comes to 21st CCLC in Washington. Staff members feel that being a part of 21st CCLC allows them to create relationships and collaborate with their peers, specifically to share strategies that work well in their own programs. For example, some programs developed subcommittees that programs feel that they can tap into as a resource. Additionally, most staff members feel that the 21st CCLC model strongly supports families and students and allows more opportunities that will foster positive students' outcomes. Exhibit 51 shows the frequency of responses to the question, "What do you think is going well for the 21st CCLC program broadly?" According to program staff, supporting families, students, and communities is the main thing going well for 21st CCLC programs.

Exhibit 51. Staff Reports of What Is Going Well for 21st CCLC Programs, Broadly



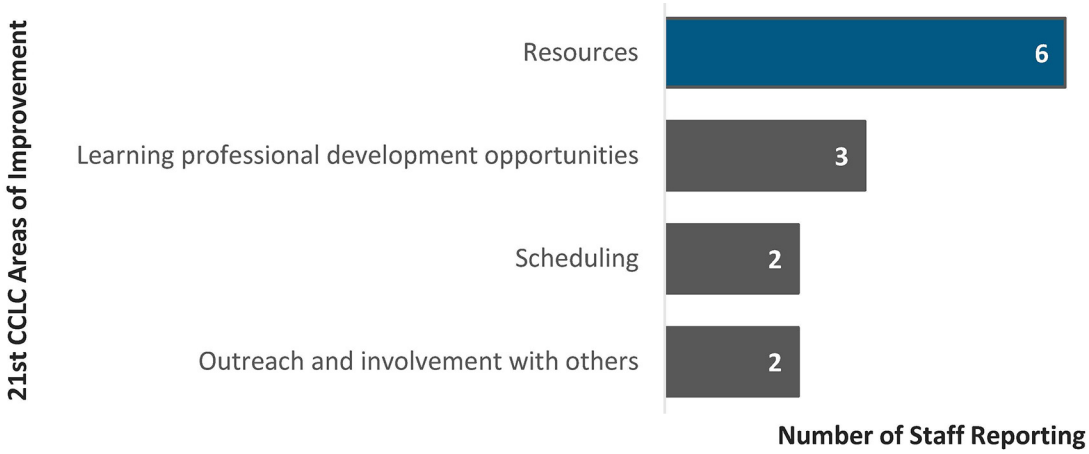
Conversely, staff members reported that 21st CCLC can improve upon some areas systemwide. While many staff noted that opportunities to collaborate with their peers was a strength of the 21st CCLC program in Washington, some staff suggested that sites meet more often and learn from one another because they often encounter the same issues. Staff

Site Coordinator Insight

"I think that the 21st Century is doing a really good job of allowing programs to figure out what their needs are and address those needs appropriately and not forcing them to do homework for the whole entire time."

members would value more trainings and professional development opportunities from OSPI. Exhibit 52 shows that according to staff members, the most critical issue to the programs is that of resources, especially in terms of funding and space.

Exhibit 52. Staff-Reported Areas of Improvement for 21st CCLC



Chapter 4. Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey

Findings

The majority of youth respondents on the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey expressed having a positive, engaging, and supportive experience when attending programming. In addition, the majority of responding youth indicated the 21st CCLC program they attended had helped them improve academically and on social and emotional skills. We found a similar trend in relation to youth-reported program impact in the area of self-management. In this case, 38% of youth indicated that they had been impacted in a positive way in this area by participating in the program.

The evaluation team also explored change over time on youth functioning on their skills and beliefs. AIR hypothesized that youth with the most room for improvement during the 2014–15 program year would show more growth than those who were already performing well. The findings support this hypothesis.

Finally, the evaluation team also explored whether youth functioning on survey scales was related to a series of school-related outcomes obtained from the data warehouses maintained by OSPI. AIR hypothesized that higher scale scores would be related to a variety of positive school-related outcomes, thereby empirically demonstrating the potential connection between what is measured on the survey and the types of academic-related outcomes sought by the 21st CCLC program. The proposed hypothesis was largely supported by the findings. This promising finding suggests that what is being measured on the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey is relevant to youth functioning in other contexts as hypothesized.

Recommendations

The evaluation team should explore the connection between quality practice and social and emotional competencies and skills as measured on the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey. Evaluation results from the past 3 years demonstrate that the program has a positive effect on a variety of youth outcomes. Rather than continuing to explore program impact through a traditional impact analysis, it might be more appropriate to invest time and effort into exploring how the program affects the beliefs, skills, and knowledge found in the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey and how program quality influences these outcomes. Answering these questions could help ensure a pathway from program quality; to changes in youth beliefs, skills, and knowledge; to school-related outcomes. Understanding how this

pathway works and where it fails to produce the desired results could help in making the tweaks and adjustments needed to optimize the outcomes derived from the 21st CCLC system.

Overview

While school-related outcomes have been commonly employed to assess the impact of the 21st CCLC on participating youth, most 21st CCLC programs across the country and in the state of Washington implement programming designed to support a broader array of more immediate youth development outcomes, including those related to the formation of positive mindsets and beliefs and social and emotional skills and competencies. Social and emotional skills, beliefs, and knowledge are the most immediate outcomes that can emerge from participation in high-quality afterschool programs. That is, youth growth and development across these areas occurs within the program and can be observed directly by the staff leading afterschool activities, making them a natural place to start when assessing the impact of 21st CCLC programming on youth. However, social and emotional outcomes are increasingly gaining traction in the educational and workforce development fields as being key determinants of youth success (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Farrington et al., 2012; Wilson-Ahlstrom, Yohalem, DuBois, & Ji, 2011), efforts to measure youth development in these social and emotional skills, beliefs, and knowledge within the afterschool programs are still new.

Consequently, measures that address social and emotional outcomes are being developed and refined. Since 2013, the Youth Development Executives of King County have worked with community-based providers of youth development programming to define how afterschool programs impact youth and developed the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey. This tool measures the extent to which youth report having skills and dispositions that are critical for positive youth growth and development. For the past several years, AIR and OSPI have worked with Youth Development Executives of King County to refine the tool for use with the state's 21st CCLC programs. The 2015–16 programming period marked the second year this tool was administered in all 21st CCLC programs to understand what the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey responses indicate about youth experiences in programming, youth functioning on social and emotional skills, competencies, and noncognitive factors.

Furthermore, the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey collects data to answer the following questions:

1. How have youth benefited from participation in program activities?
2. To what extent do youth grow on a series of constructs related to positive social and emotional development, mindsets, and attitudes during a programming year?

3. How well are youth functioning on the aforementioned constructs related to success in school and in life more broadly?

Three types of scales were included on the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey. A full copy of the survey can be found in Appendix D.

- **Items pertaining to how youth reported functioning at present when taking the survey on a series of areas related to positive youth development.** The purpose of these items was to gauge how well youth described themselves as doing on four key areas: (a) Academic Identity, (b) Positive Mindsets, (c) Self-Management, and (d) Interpersonal Skills. Examples of items appearing on these scales include "Doing well in school is an important part of who I am (academic identity)," "I can solve difficult problems if I try hard enough (positive mindsets)," "I can calm myself down when I'm excited or upset (self-management)," and "I work well with others on shared projects (interpersonal skills)."
- **Items pertaining to youth sense of belonging and engagement in the 21st CCLC program.** The purpose of these items was to obtain authentic feedback from youth on their experiences at the 21st CCLC program they were enrolled in during the school year. Examples of items of this type included "I fit in at this program," "This program helps me build new skills," and "What we do in this program is challenging in a good way." For all items appearing on the survey, youth were asked to respond to each item by endorsing one of the following response options: not at all true, somewhat true, mostly true, or completely true.
- **Items pertaining to youth's sense of how they may have been impacted by participation in the program.** The purpose of these items was to explore the extent to which youth believed the program might have helped them in terms of developing positive academic behaviors and better self-management skills. Examples of items of this type included "This program has helped me to become more interested in what I'm learning in school" and "This program has helped me get better at staying focused on my work."

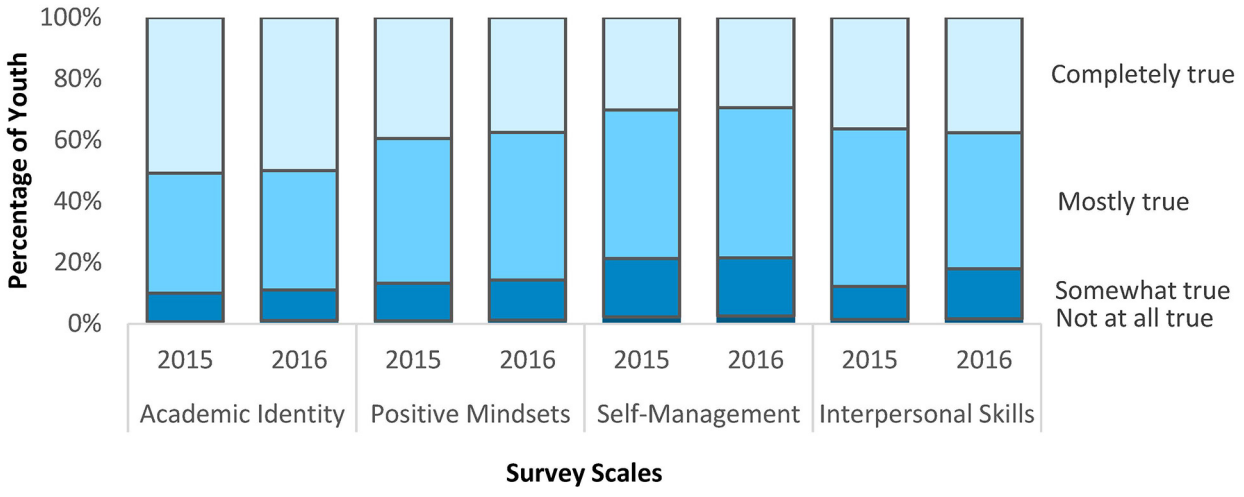
In spring 2016, AIR administered the survey in all 21st CCLC programs serving youth in Grades 4–12. In addition to surveying students who were likely to meet the regular attendee definition for the 2015–16 program year, we advised programs to collect responses from students who also took the survey in spring 2015 to give us a sample of students who completed surveys in both years. A total of 4,968 completed surveys were collected during spring 2015 from 21st CCLC programs (approximately 36 surveys were completed per center). In spring 2016, 4,162 responses were collected (approximately 34 surveys were completed per center). In some

centers, data were collected from youth who were not in Grades 4–12. These students were removed from the sample, resulting in 4,497 responses from 2015 and 3,750 responses from 2016 that could be used in analyses.

More than 80% of completed surveys were taken by youth in Grades 4–8; most respondents were in Grades 4–6. In each year, 8% to 10% of completed surveys were missing grade-level information for the respondent. Surveys with missing grade-level information were retained for the analyses summarized in this report because date-of-birth information was provided for these respondents. Youth who were 9 years old or older at the start of the school year in question were retained as part of the study sample. To answer the research questions above, we also must understand the distribution of students within a given response category. The evaluation team used Rasch analysis approaches to calculate a scale score for each survey scale, which was then used to determine what response category (not at all true, somewhat true, mostly true, or completely true) best described a youth's experience in the program, perception of program impact, or current level of functioning. First, we examined youth reports on positive youth development skills and beliefs.

The percentage of youth who responded "mostly true" and "completely true" ranged from 89% for the Academic Identity scale to 79% for the Self-Management scale (see Exhibit 53). The scale demonstrating the most opportunity for growth is the Self-Management scale; more than 20% of respondents replied "not at all true" or "somewhat true."

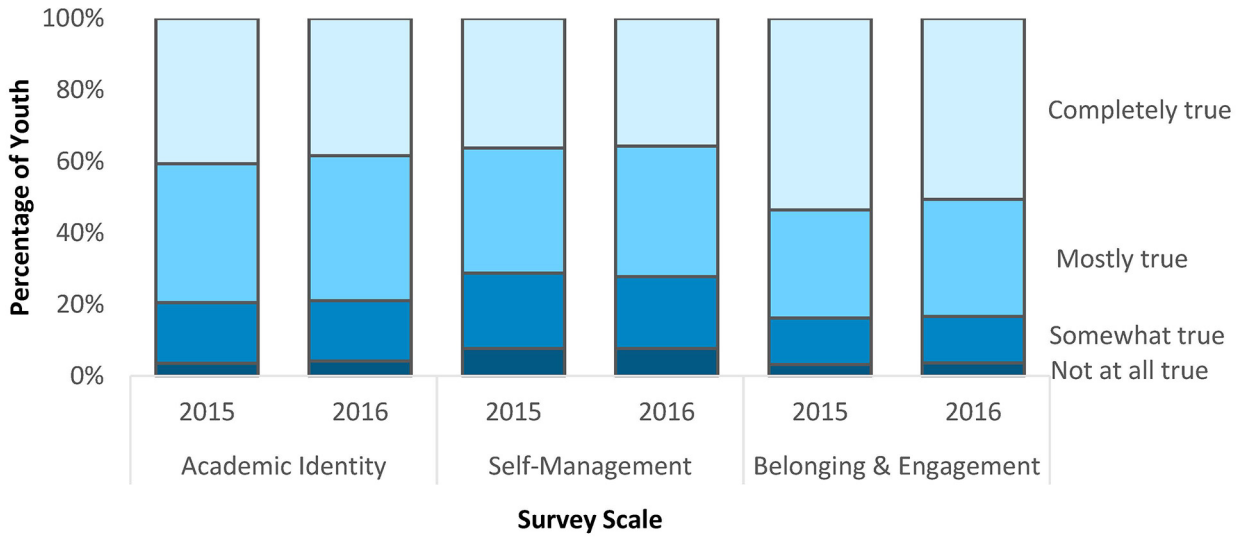
Exhibit 53. Frequency Distribution of Youth Responses on Academic Identity, Positive Mindsets, Self-Management, and Interpersonal Skills Scales



Our sense is that youth who replied "not at all true" or "somewhat true" represent the domain of youth for whom there may be opportunities to further develop and reinforce positive beliefs and skills.

We also examined the distribution of youth responses across scales related to self-reported program impact and feelings of program belonging engagement. There is substantially more variation across response categories for both the Program Impact—Academics and Program Impact—Self-Management scales (see Exhibit 54) than what was observed in the scales outlined in Exhibit 54, although most responses were "mostly true" and "completely true." In terms of the Program Belonging and Engagement scale, more than 80% of youth in both program years responded "mostly true" or "completely true" to items describing a positive experience in programming.

Exhibit 54. Frequency Distribution of Youth Responses on Program Impact on Academic Identity, Self-Management, and Belonging and Engagement Scales



One purpose of the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey is to measure growth on the domain of youth outcomes measured on the survey. However, because of the high percentage of youth who responded "mostly true" or "completely true," the viability of using the survey for this purpose could be called into question. To explore this issue further, the evaluation team conducted a comparison of pre–post data from youth taking the survey in spring 2015 and spring 2016. A total of 984, or 22% of youth in the 2015 sample, took the survey in both years.

When examining the full sample of 984 youth, the overall mean scores declined slightly from time 1 to time 2.[2] Although these declines were found to be significant for three of the four scales in question based on a paired sample *t*-test, the degree of decline was, for all practical purposes, close to 0. The large sample size caused the significant results. Additionally, the correlation between the 2015 and 2016 scores was moderate for each scale, ranging from .327 to .378.

Next, the evaluation team explored how changes in survey scores might be different for youth who (a) responded "not at all true" or "somewhat true" in spring 2015 and (b) youth receiving a scale score in the bottom 50th percentile for the scale in question, or for the students for actually had room to grow. As shown in Exhibit 55, youth scoring in the *not at all true* and *somewhat true* response categories of the survey demonstrated substantive growth between the 2015 and 2016. Improvements in the mean scores between 2015 and 2016 ranged from .37 to .56 scale score points. The 2015 and 2016 scores for this group were weakly and not significantly correlated.

Exhibit 55. Comparison of Means and Correlations Between 2015 and 2016 for Youth Responding *Not at All True* or *Somewhat True* During Spring 2015

Subscale	Paired Sample *t*-Test			Bivariate Correlation	
	2015 Mean	2016 Mean	*p* Value	Correlation Coefficient	*p* Value
Academic Identity (*n* = 83)	2.19	2.75	.000***	.093	.401
Positive Mindsets (*n* = 106)	2.27	2.64	.000***	.026	.790
Self-Management (*n* = 195)	2.21	2.59	.000***	.115	.109
Interpersonal Skills (*n* = 104)	2.20	2.66	.000***	.095	.337

***$p < .001$.

[2] In calculating these means, the logit value resulting from Rasch calibrations were converted to a scale of 1 through 4 to better represent the 4-point response scale associated with the survey.

Exhibit 56 shows that youth falling in the bottom 50th percentile of each scale demonstrated substantive growth between 2015 and 2016. Improvements ranged from .16 to .25 scale score points, and all correlations between 2015 and 2016 scores, were found to be moderately and significantly correlated.

Exhibit 56. Comparison of Means and Correlations Between 2015 and 2016 for Youth in Bottom 50th Percentile of Each Scale Score During Spring 2015

Subscale	Paired Sample *t*-Test			Bivariate Correlation	
	2015 Mean	2016 Mean	*p* Value	Correlation Coefficient	*p* Value
Academic Identity (*n* = 437)	2.78	3.03	.000***	.270	.000***
Positive Mindsets (*n* = 457)	2.63	2.79	.000***	.213	.000***
Self-Management (*n* = 491)	2.47	2.68	.000***	.197	.000***
Interpersonal Skills (*n* = 477)	2.60	2.82	.000***	.236	.000***

***$p < .001$.

These results suggest the following conclusions on the utility of the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey to assess changes in youth functioning over time.

- First, the mean scores for the full sample with both 2015 and 2016 scores were stable, demonstrating a slight decline between the two administration periods, although pre and post scores were found to be only moderately correlated.
- When there was room for youth to grow on the scales in question, however, significant and substantive growth was shown for youth who scored both in the bottom two response categories in spring 2015 and in the bottom 50th percentile of a given scale.

Preliminary hypotheses can be made about the nature of this positive growth for these populations. First, this growth could represent growth that occurred during this period, and participation in 21st CCLC may have contributed to this growth. Unfortunately, we do not have the data to rigorously explore whether this was the case now. Perhaps youth with lower levels

of functioning in spring 2015 regressed back to the mean of the overall sample between administrations, and the survey did not capture any growth between the two time periods.

To explore which of these explanations was more viable, the evaluation team examined how growth on the survey between the two administration periods was related to other data collected on the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey. The results showed that not only was the degree of growth positively and significantly correlated with the program belonging and engagement scale, but also the strength of the correlation increased as the sample of youth increasingly represented youth who scored lowest on survey scales during the 2015 administration. This result supports a possible connection between program experiences and growth on survey scales among youth demonstrating a lower level of functioning in these areas at baseline. Similar results were found when the degree of growth in the Academic Identity scale was correlated with the scale scores for the Program Impact—Academic scale, and growth on the Self-Management scale was correlated with the scale scores for the Program Impact—Self-Management scale. In this sense, for youth who demonstrate a lower level of functioning on these scales at baseline, the correlation between growth on these scales and self-reported impact was stronger than for youth who performed at higher level on these scales in spring 2015.

Another approach the evaluation team used to explore the possibility that pre–post changes are associated with the regression to the mean was to examine scatterplots of the scores received by youth at time 1 and the level of growth witnessed between times 1 and 2. Findings suggested there are issues related to regression to the mean between preadministration and postadministrations of the survey that should be controlled for when examining pre and post change using the survey, although again survey scales do appear to be potentially sensitive to capturing the hypothesized relationship between positive program experiences and growth on youth outcomes (Naftzger, 2016). For more detailed information on these analyses, please refer to Appendix E.

Relationship of Youth Functioning in Skills and Beliefs With School-Related Outcomes

The constructs measured on the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey are the result of extensive efforts to identify and measure key skills and beliefs related to positive youth growth and development. In light of this, we wanted to explore whether youth functioning on survey scales were related to a series of school-related outcomes obtained from the data warehouses maintained by OSPI. We hypothesized that higher scale scores would be related to a variety of positive school-related outcomes, thereby empirically demonstrating the

potential connection between what is measured on the survey and the types of academic-related outcomes sought by the 21st CCLC program.

When collecting youth survey data, the evaluation team took steps to capture the unique statewide identifier for each youth, allowing survey response data to be linked to school-related demographic and outcome data housed in OSPI's data warehouse. Of the 4,497 youth who completed the survey, matches were found for 3,463 youth in Grades 4–8 (a small number of youth in Grades 9–12 were represented in the sample and were therefore excluded from analyses described in this section of the report).

To explore this possible relationship, we ran a series of hierarchical linear models to assess the correlation between survey scale scores and school-related outcomes associated with the 2015 school year. The following outcome variables were included in these analyses:

- State assessment scores in reading
- State assessment scores in mathematics
- Number of absences
- Number of disciplinary incidents
- Number of intervention days associated with disciplinary incidents

The evaluation team included a series of other youth- and school-level predictors in the model to control for key features related to the school-related outcomes in question. The predictors are listed as follows:

Youth-Level Predictors

- Eligibility for free and reduced-price lunches
- Special education status
- Bilingual status
- Hispanic ethnicity
- Enrollment in the Learning Assistance Program for reading
- Enrollment in the Learning Assistance Program for mathematics

School-Level Predictors

- Number of youth enrolled in the school
- Percentage of school population that is Hispanic
- Percentage of school population eligible for free and reduced-price lunches
- Percentage of school population with bilingual status
- Percentage of school population with special education status
- Mean number of unexcused absences
- Ratio of the number of disciplinary incidents at the school to school enrollment

We ran separate models for each survey subscale and outcome, where a youth's score on a given scale was included in the model as a level 1 predictor. The goal was to examine whether a given subscale was related to a given school-related outcome. The results are presented in Exhibit 57.

Exhibit 57. Summary of Hierarchical Linear Model Results by Survey Subscale and School-Related Outcome

	Coefficient	Standard Error	*p* Value
Academic Identity			
Reading assessment	0.060	0.008	.000***
Math assessment	0.059	0.007	.000***
Unexcused absences	–0.092	0.006	.000***
Disciplinary incidents	–0.183	0.018	.000***
Intervention days	–0.211	0.016	.000***
Positive Mindsets			
Reading assessment	0.034	0.010	.000***
Math assessment	0.045	0.010	.000***
Unexcused absences	–0.078	0.008	.000***
Disciplinary incidents	–0.146	0.024	.000***
Intervention days	–0.122	0.022	.000***
Self-Management			
Reading assessment	0.019	0.011	.078†

	Coefficient	Standard Error	*p* Value
Math assessment	0.022	0.011	.040*
Unexcused absences	–0.090	0.009	.000***
Disciplinary incidents	–0.225	0.028	.000***
Intervention days	–0.249	0.025	.000***
Interpersonal Skills			
Reading assessment	0.018	0.009	.054*
Math assessment	0.001	0.009	.943
Unexcused absences	–0.046	0.008	.000***
Disciplinary incidents	–0.200	0.025	.000***
Intervention days	–0.151	0.022	.000***

Note. N = 3,463 youth in Grades 4–8 with complete survey data. The actual sample size varies by analysis.
*p < .05. ***p < .001. †p < .10.

In summary, we observed the following findings:

- Higher scores on the Academic Identity scale were significantly related to higher reading and mathematics assessment scores, fewer unexcused absences, fewer disciplinary incidents, and fewer intervention days.
- Higher scores on the Positive Mindsets scale were significantly related to higher reading and mathematics assessment scores, fewer unexcused absences, fewer disciplinary incidents, and fewer intervention days.
- Higher scores on the Self-Management scale were significantly related to higher mathematics assessment scores, fewer unexcused absences, fewer disciplinary incidents, and fewer intervention days. There was also a moderately significant relationship with higher reading assessment scores.
- Higher scores on the Interpersonal Skills scale were significantly related to higher reading assessment scores, fewer unexcused absences, fewer disciplinary incidents, and fewer intervention days. Higher scores on the Interpersonal Skills scale also were associated with higher mathematics assessment scores, although this relationship was not statistically significant.

Chapter 5. Youth Academic Outcomes

Generally, findings from the outcome analyses conducted in relation to the 2015–16 project period indicate positive findings across each of the outcomes examined, replicating many of the findings identified in relation to earlier programming periods. Important findings are summarized as follows:

- For students who had "room to grow" in the direct program outcomes of interpersonal skills, positive mindsets, and self-management, higher levels of participation in the 21st CCLC program (defined by 60 days or more) had a positive significant impact on the growth students made in these areas between 2014–15 and 2015–16.
- For students who had "room to grow" on the Academic Identity survey scale, higher levels of participation in the 21st CCLC program (defined by 60 days or more) did not have any significant impact on the growth students made in academic identity.
- For students who had "room to grow" in Interpersonal Skills, Positive Mindsets, and Self-Management survey scales, higher levels of participation in the 21st CCLC program (defined by 60 days or more) did have a significant impact on the reduction of school-day absences between 2014–15 and 2015–16.
- Growth on the Academic Identity, Interpersonal Skills, Positive Mindsets, and Self-Management scales did not function as a mediator between program participation and school-day absences, but program participation directly affected school-day absences (reduction).
- There was a statistically significant, negative impact of 21st CCLC on reading achievement for students who attended at 30+ days and 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program.
- There was a statistically significant, negative impact of 21st CCLC on math achievement for students who attended at 30+ days and 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program.
- There was a statistically significant, positive impact of 21st CCLC on cumulative grade point average (GPA) for students attending at 30+ days and 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program.
- There was no significant impact on the percentage of credits earned for students attending at 30+ days and 60+ days.

- There was a statistically significant, positive impact of 21st CCLC on disciplinary incidents for students attending at 30+ days and 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program, meaning those participating in the program had more disciplinary incidents than those who did not.
- For school-day absences, there was no significant impact for students attending at 30+ days. However, there was a significant, negative impact for students attending 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program, meaning that students who attended the program for 60 days or more had fewer school-day absences than those who did not attend the program.

A few points are noteworthy. Although many of the effects would be deemed small by traditional standards for interpreting effect sizes (Cohen, 1988), these effects should be considered substantive and commensurate with expectations for program impact based on the amount of time youth spend in programming. Youth were considered 21st CCLC participants if they participated in programming for either 30+ or 60+ days during the school year, which approximates to 60–120 hours or more of program participation. During the average school year, youth will spend close to 1,200 hours in school (Planty et al., 2008).

What is less clear is why there was a divergence from what we have observed in past impact analyses within the state of Washington and other states for which we have executed similar approaches and analyses. The research team hypothesizes that effect sizes in the opposite direction than expected could be related to selection bias and/or changes in the state standardized assessments.

Recommendations

The evaluation team recommends continuing to use the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey as a measure for direct program outcomes and for consideration in a longitudinal study. Additionally, when conducting impact analyses on the school-related outcomes, the evaluation team recommends testing for additional sources of selection bias by running an analysis comparing high and low attenders. This process eliminates the selection bias of 21st CCLC attendees versus nonattendees, and it focuses on the difference between students who attend more and less frequently. Finally, we recommend reexamining impact on school-related outcomes after the new standardized tests have had a bit more time to mature and programs have had more opportunity to adapt to the needs of students are required by common core standards.

Overview

The evaluation team ran a series of analyses to understand how participation in 21st CCLC programming might affect behavioral and academic outcomes for youth. Here, we employed causal models to assess the relationship of program participation on key youth development outcomes, as well as the impact on school-day absences. These analyses originate from our conceptual framework for how afterschool programming can have an impact on youth. Specifically, we wanted to understand:

- To what extent do higher levels of program participation impact growth on key youth development outcomes?
- To what extent do higher levels of program participation impact school-day absences?
- To what extent does growth on key youth development outcomes mediate the relationship between higher levels of program participation and school-day absences?
- To what extent does the level of program participation impact school-related outcomes for students who needed to improve on those outcomes?

Impact Analyses on Youth Development Outcomes and School-Day Absences

To construct causal estimates, the evaluation team employed a quasi-experimental research design to examine the effect of participating in 21st CCLC programming on four key youth development outcomes: Academic Identity, Positive Mindsets, Self-Management, and Interpersonal Skills as measured by subscales of the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey highlighted in Chapter 3.

Specifically, the analyses compared the performance of students who participated in 21st CCLC for 60 days or more with similar students who participated fewer than 60 days. This definition of treatment was determined to ensure that the comparison of program effect was based on students who received a significant dose of 21st CCLC programming. In our past work, we have found that students who attend 60 days or more tend to have larger effects on selected youth outcomes.

The quasi-experimental approach outlined in this report, propensity score matching (PSM), is a method for mitigating the potential sources of bias that would otherwise make high and low attenders different from each other on key characteristics that may impact the outcomes being examined, making it hard to determine whether the program caused changes in the outcomes being examined or whether it was caused by preexisting differences between the two groups

(i.e., if one were to compare the students who attended at higher levels and those who attended at lower levels). For more information on the PSM approach, please see Appendix A.

The first question the evaluation team examined was: ***To what extent do higher levels of program participation impact growth on key youth development outcomes?*** To examine this question, we first had to make sure our sample consisted of students who had data on the key youth development outcomes in both the 2014–15 and the 2015–16 program years. Additionally, it was important to focus on students who had room to grow in the outcome area of interest.

Because not all students had room to grow on each of the survey constructs, we ran a separate two-level hierarchical linear model of students nested within centers for each of the constructs in question. Therefore, our sample for each of the outcomes ranged from 262 to 423 students who attended programming 60 days or more (treatment) and 107 to 164 similar students who attended fewer than 60 days (comparison). We included a number of school- and student-level covariates in our models, such as prior year outcome, minority status, gender, free or reduced-price lunch status, English language learner status, grade level, and program quality (see Appendix E for a full list of covariates and descriptive statistics). Exhibit 58 shows the effect sizes for higher levels of program participation on all four scales on the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Belief Survey. For students who responded not at all true or somewhat true to items on the youth survey, higher levels of participation in the 21st CCLC program had a positive significant impact on the growth students made between 2014–15 and 2015–16 on the Interpersonal Skills, Positive Mindsets, and Self-Management scales. There was not a significant impact on the Academic Identity scale.

Exhibit 58. Effects of higher levels of program participation on growth on youth survey scales

	Effect Size	Standard Error of Effect Size	*p* Value	Observation
Interpersonal Skills	0.11	0.05	.02	513
Positive Mindsets	0.10	0.05	.02	496
Self-Management	0.09	0.04	.03	587
Academic Identity	–0.09	0.07	.16	369

Please note, the effect sizes are not standardized, indicating that the value represents growth or decline is survey scale score points. For example, there was positive impact of 0.11 survey scale points for students who had room to grow on the Interpersonal Skills survey scale.

Our second question was: ***To what extent do higher levels of program participation impact school-day absences?*** In this analysis, we included any student who had room to grow in *any* of the key youth development outcomes during the 2014–15 program year. Again, the treatment group is comprised of students who attended the program 60 days or more while the comparison group consists of students who attended fewer than 60 days. In this model, we included prior year school-day absences as a covariate along with the student and school-level demographic covariate noted in evaluation question 1 above (see Appendix E). Exhibit 59 shows that higher levels of participation in the 21st CCLC program had a significant impact on the reduction of school-day absences between 2014–15 and 2015–16.

Exhibit 59. Effects of Higher Participation on Reduction in School-Day Absences

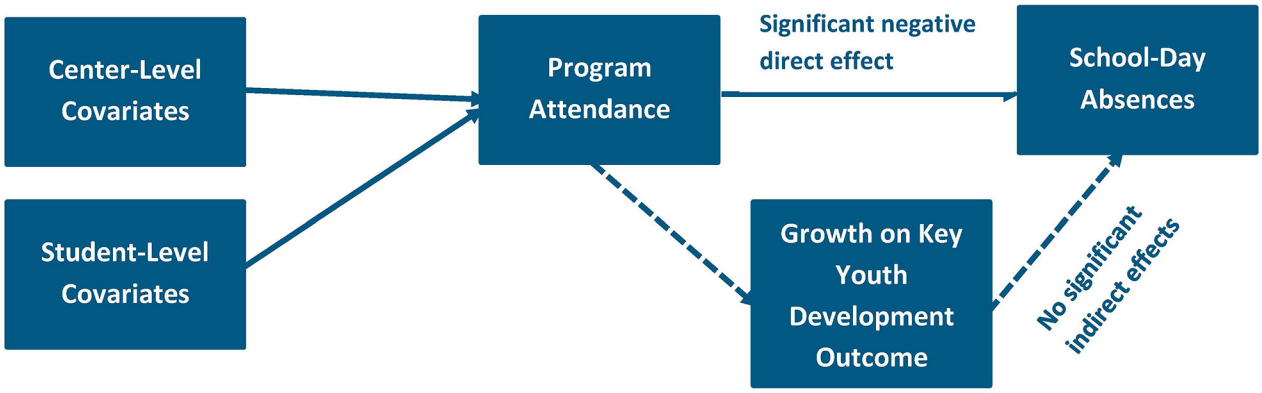
	Effect Size	Standard Error of Effect Size	*p* Value	Observation
School-day absences	–0.16	0.03	.00	712

This effect size is also not standardized, meaning that students who attended the program more frequently (60 days or more) had 0.16 fewer school-day absences than those who attended programming less frequently.

Our third question was: ***To what extent does growth on key youth development outcomes mediate the relationship between higher levels of program participation and school-day absences?*** The sample for this set of analyses is the same as the sample described for research question 1. Four separate analyses were run for each of the key youth development outcomes.

As shown in Exhibit 60, a negative effect indicates a decrease in school-day absences; therefore, the impact is in the direction desired. We did not find a significant indirect effect of program participation on school-day absences via growth on the key youth development outcomes in question. However, we did find a significant direct effect of program attendance on school-day attendance. This finding indicates that growth on the Academic Identity, Interpersonal Skills, Positive Mindsets, and Self-Management scales may not function as a mediator between program participation and school-day absences and that program participation directly affects school-day absences (decrease), further substantiating our findings to research question 2.

Exhibit 60. Mediation Analysis Diagram for Research Question 2



The last research question we examined using the quasi-experimental design was: ***To what extent does the level of program participation impact school-related outcomes for students who needed to improve on those outcomes?*** The goal of this analysis was to answer the following evaluation questions:

- To what extent is there evidence that students who participated in services and activities funded by 21st CCLC demonstrated better performance on reading and math assessments, GPA, and the percentage of credits earned compared with similar students who did not participate in the program?
- To what extent is there evidence that there are differences between students who participated in services and activities funded by 21st CCLC and similar students who did not participate in the program in terms of the number of school-day absences and number of disciplinary incidents?

It is important to define the phrase "students who needed to improve," as it has a different meaning for different outcomes.

- Students who needed to improve in math and reading were categorized as below proficient on state assessment exams in the prior year.
- Students who needed to improve in relation to the percentage of credits earned were those who had less than 100% of their credits earned in the prior year.
- Students who needed to improve on school-day absences were those who were absent 10 days or more during the prior year.
- Students who needed to improve on disciplinary incidents were those who had two or more incidents in the prior year.

- Due to lower sample sizes, we did not set a "students who needed to improve" threshold in relation to cumulative GPA.

The evaluation team employed a quasi-experimental research design to examine the effect of participating in 21st CCLC programming on the academic and behavioral student outcomes measured by the Academic Identity, Interpersonal Skills, Positive Mindsets, and Self-Management scales. The analyses compared the performance of students who participated in 21st CCLC with similar students who did not participate using a propensity score stratification approach, which used both student- and school-level variables to determine a comparison group (Table 10).

Participation was defined two ways for the analysis. First, students who attended at least 30 days were compared with students who did not attend the program at all. Second, students who attended at least 60 days were compared with students who did not attend the program. These definitions of treatment were determined to ensure that the comparison of the program effect was based on students who received a significant dose of 21st CCLC programming.[3]

Table 10. Impact of 21st CCLC on Achievement Pooled Across Grades

Subject	Treatment	Effect Size	Standard Error of Effect Size	*p* Value
Reading[a]	30+ days	–0.206	0.017	<.001
	60+ days	–0.274	0.023	<.001
Math[a]	30+ days	–0.128	0.018	<.001
	60+ days	–0.168	0.023	<.001
Cumulative GPA[b]	30+ days	0.072	0.023	.002
	60+ days	0.102	0.038	.008
Percentage of credits earned[b]	30+ days	–0.035	0.039	.367
	60+ days	–0.069	0.077	.370
Disciplinary incident[c]	30+ days	0.142	0.019	<.001
	60+ days	0.102	0.027	<.001
Absence[d]	30+ days	0.000	0.000	.362
	60+ days	–0.005	0.000	<.001

[a] This measure includes Grades 4–8. [b] This measure includes Grades 9–12.
[c] This measure includes Grades 3–12. [d] This measure includes Grades 6–12.

[3] The outcome of interest in modeling propensity scores is treatment status (1 for students who participated in the program, 0 for the comparison group). To account for this binary outcome, logistic regression was used to model the logit (or log-odds) of student group assignment status.

In summary, the results showed the following findings:

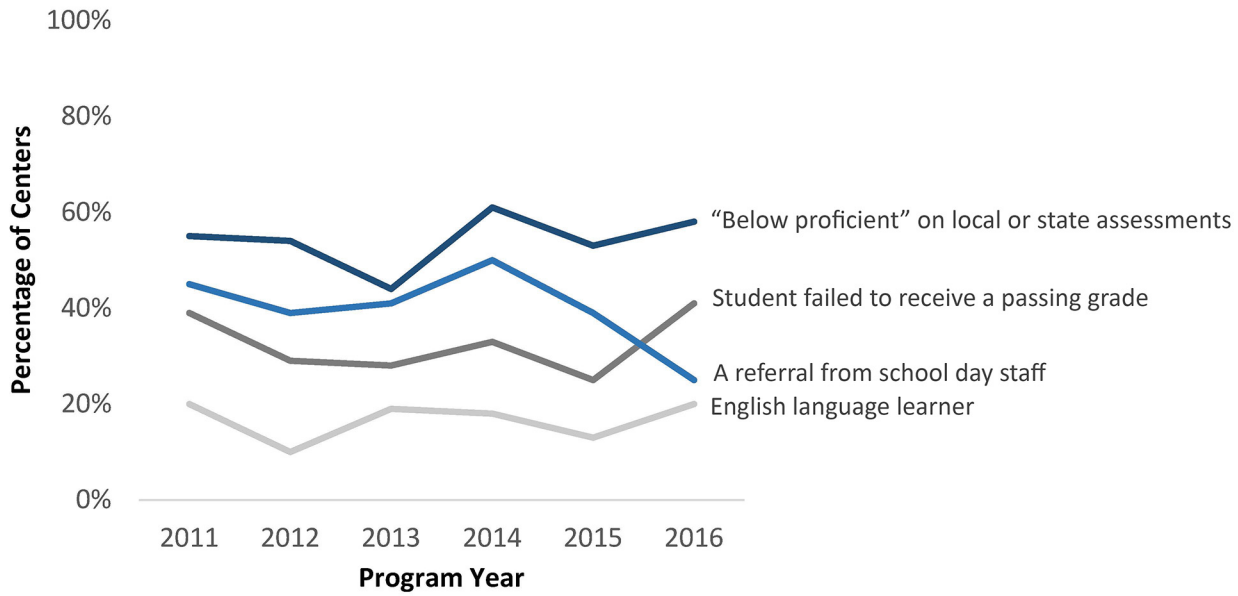
- There was a statistically significant, negative impact of 21st CCLC on reading achievement for students who attended at 30+ days and 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program.
- There was a statistically significant, negative impact of 21st CCLC on math achievement for students who attended at 30+ days and 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program.
- There was a statistically significant, positive impact of 21st CCLC on cumulative GPA for students attending at 30+ days and 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program.
- There was no significant impact on the percentage of credits earned for students attending at 30+ days and 60+ days.
- There was a statistically significant, positive impact of 21st CCLC on disciplinary incidents for students attending at 30+ days and 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program, meaning those participating in the program had more disciplinary incidents than those who did not.
- For school-day absences, there was no significant impact for students attending at 30+ days. However, there was a significant, negative impact for students attending 60+ days compared with similar students not attending the program, meaning that students who attended the program for 60 days or more had fewer school-day absences than those who did not attend programming.
- Regardless of the significance of effect estimates, all effect sizes are small (Cohen, 1988).

These findings indicate a divergence from what we have found in past impact analyses within the state of Washington and other states for which we have executed similar approaches and analyses. For most of the outcomes in question, the results represent a change in direction of impact from what we observed in the past. Potential reasons are selection bias and changes in standardized assessments.

Selection Bias. It is possible that the students who participated in the 21st CCLC program are different from the students who do not, which is why we are seeing these results. While key demographics and prior year outcomes were included as covariates in the models to account for as much bias as possible, there is still a possibility that this has an impact on results. One thing to consider is the proportion of academically at-risk students that are targeted for

inclusion in the program. To investigate this, we reviewed data back to 2011 to understand whether there were changes in recruitment approaches as reported by site coordinators. Exhibit 61 shows the percentage of programs indicating that all or most of their students are targeted based on academic indicators increased from 2011 to 2016.

Exhibit 61. Program Enrollment Policies Across Time, 2011–2016



It is important to note that the propensity score stratification approach employed in this analysis seeks to minimize the impact of selection bias on the estimates of program impact. However, it is an untestable assumption that such models can fully account for selection bias. To the extent that other variables, not available for this analysis, exist that predict student participation in 21st CCLC (e.g., unobservable characteristics such as youth motivation, parental support, and goal orientation) and are related to student achievement, unexcused absences, or disciplinary incidents, these analyses may be limited in fully accounting for all sources of selection bias. That is, there may be something fundamentally different about 21st CCLC participants compared with nonparticipants. Some variable could drive participation that is not reflected in the variables we have available. Or to put it another way, is the PSM missing a variable necessary to ensure we compare apples with apples?

Changes to Standardized State Assessments. Based on work in other states, the research team hypothesizes that recent changes in state assessments to make them compliant with the common core could affect the results. In the state of Washington, the state standardized test changed to the Smarter Balanced Assessment during the 2014–15 school year, so the 2015–16

program year is the first year in which we have run the analyses using this new test. Additionally, as the standardized tests become compliant with the common core, it is possible that 21st CCLC programs are less prepared to support youth in developing the academic skills examined by the new tests.

To that end, these analyses provide initial evidence about the impact of 21st CCLC on the outcome examined but should not be considered equivalent to experimental studies that have strong internal validity. As such, the evaluation team has two recommendations related to future impact analyses on school-related outcomes:

- Take further steps to eliminate potential sources of selection bias between participants and nonparticipants by running an analysis comparing high and low attenders. This change focuses on the difference between students who attend more and less frequently. If that is the case (an unknown), then comparing one set of 21st CCLC participants against another set (high attenders versus low attenders) is a way to better ensure a comparison of "apples to apples."[4]
- Reexamine impact on school-related outcomes after the new standardized tests have had more time to mature and programs have had more time to adapt to the needs of students as required by common core standards.

[4] This design is still not perfect, of course. There could be something fundamentally different about youth who attend frequently compared with youth who do not attend frequently, something our models again do not capture. As described in the Limitations section, this is why random assignment is better when it comes to avoiding selection effects. For random assignment to be effective, any youth assigned to nonparticipation would need to be kept from participating in other 21st CCLC-like programming, which could be very difficult to do. No impact analysis will be perfect under the vast majority of real-world conditions.

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Appendix A. Technical Appendix

To answer the evaluation questions, the evaluation team utilized a variety of data collection strategies and data analysis methods. We collected surveys from site coordinators, staff, and youth participants; we used the YPQA Form A and Form B to assess program quality practices at the organizational and instructional levels. We received youth-level data from the state data warehouse to examine school-related outcomes.

Methods for Data Collection and Analysis

Data Sources

Data collected and analyzed in this report come from six primary sources, including administrative data systems and surveys. We describe each data source and associated methods of data analysis in this section.

Continuation Report Data

In October of 2014, the former federal reporting system known as the Profile and Performance Information Collection System (PPICS) went offline. PPICS was a Web-based data collection system developed and maintained by AIR on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education (ED). We collected data on the full domain of 21st CCLC programs funded nationally, including those in Washington, through this system. The online system that would replace PPICS became available in late fall 2015 but did not capture the traditional data elements we have used for reporting, and there was no data export functionality available to states. As such OSPI, together with AIR, devised a plan to fold as many necessary data elements as possible into their annual continuation reporting requirements. We received a data file export from this continuation reporting process from OSPI and extracted the necessary information for this report.

Youth Outcome and Related Data From CEDARS

AIR constructed a unique data collection module for Washington that allowed for the collection of student-identifiable information that was extracted from the system and provided to OSPI. OSPI used this information to perform a series of merges against state data warehouses to obtain Smarter Balanced Assessment reading and mathematics scores, cumulative GPA, credits earned, and the number of unexcused absences and disciplinary incidents, as well as additional demographic information about the students in question from CEDARS, a longitudinal data warehouse of educational data maintained by OSPI. OSPI also identified students not participating in 21st CCLC programming who attended the same schools as 21st CCLC participants and provided

the same testing and related CEDARS information for these students. We used these data to conduct the descriptive analyses exploring outcomes for youth regularly attending the program as compared to youth not attending regularly and those not participating in the program.

Site Coordinator Survey

We administered an online survey of site coordinators working in 21st CCLC programs active during the 2015–16 program year in spring 2016. We define site coordinator as the individual at a given center who was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the program and was the initial point of contact for parents and staff when questions or issues arose on-site. Generally, site coordinators are important middle managers in the delivery of 21st CCLC programming at sites.

The survey addressed the extent to which centers engaged in practices that the research indicates are supportive of effective afterschool programming. We organized sets of survey questions to create scales measuring the following dimensions of program operations:

- Activity enrollment policies and recruitment approaches
- Access to and use of student data
- Linkages to the school day
- Staffing approach and challenges
- Other operational challenges
- Intentionality in activity and session design
- Internal communication designed to support program development and improvement
- Practices supportive of parent involvement and engagement

Staff Survey

The purpose of the online staff survey was to obtain information from frontline staff who worked directly with youth during the 2015–16 school year. The survey focused on practices that support both positive academic outcomes and youth development outcomes. As with the site coordinator survey, the staff survey included sets of questions associated with a given scale, as well as open-ended questions to assess dimensions of program operations. Dimensions of program operations assessed on the staff survey included the following:

- Intentionality in activity and session design
- Practices supportive of academic skill building, including linkages to the school day and using data on student academic achievement to inform programming

- Internal communication designed to support program development and improvement
- Program climate in terms of how staff view the organizational supports and structures as supporting their work with youth

As with the site coordinator survey, we used data obtained from the staff surveys to support the leading indicator process.

Youth Program Quality Assessment Data

As noted previously, OSPI, in collaboration with the Weikart Center, has taken steps to craft a quality assessment improvement system and support grantees in completing the YPQI process. As part of this process, observations were conducted by program staff as a self-assessment or by trained external observers of activities provided by 21st CCLC grantees, and YPQA Form A, a validated instrument designed to evaluate the quality of youth programs and identify staff training needs, was scored to provide an estimate of how safe, supportive, interactive, and engaging the observed session was for participating youth. In addition, although YPQA Form A is meant to measure program quality at the point of service, YPQA Form B is a rubric completed by program staff on how well the program has adopted organizational processes that are likely to engender and facilitate point-of-service quality. YPQA Form B focuses on program quality at the organizational level and assesses the quality of organizational supports for the youth program offering assessed in Form A. Data from YPQA Forms A and B were uploaded to the Weikart Center through the center's online score reporter.

OSPI mandated participation in the YPQI process for all Washington 21st CCLC grantees during the 2014–15 school year. As a result, YPQA Form A data were available for all 133 centers associated with 47 grantees in 2015–16. Form B data were provided in relation to 127 centers associated with 46 grantees in 2015–16.

Site Visits

Selection of Sites. Each year as a part of our evaluation services, AIR creates a data dashboard for use at the state level. This dashboard contains four domains where programs are ranked based upon their score within each of these domains: Performance, Compliance, Quality, and Characteristics. This process provides OSPI with a general picture of how well programs and centers fare compared with what is expected. We used this data dashboard as a starting point for selecting exemplary programs to include on our site visit roster. From this roster, we selected approximately 10 programs for consideration. Our next step included a screening interview where we asked project directors to respond to a series of logistical questions. Based

on the answers to these questions, we narrowed down our field of programs. We finalized our selection based on travel and scheduling logistics.

Interviews. Each site visit consisted of a series of interviews with program and school-day staff, including the project director, site coordinator, direct program staff, and school principal. Each staff person was asked a series of questions related organizational policies and procedures, program quality, program evaluation, and other topics to glean as much information about best practices as possible. Similar questions were asked across all staffing levels in order to provide multiple viewpoints on a given topic.

Focus Groups. The evaluation team also conducted focus groups with participating students and parents/guardians. The aim of the focus groups was to determine what impact the program had on students from the perspective of the students and their family members, as well as to gauge what worked well in terms of communications with parents. Exhibit A1 shows the data collection methods used at each site.

Exhibit A1. Data Collection Method by Site in 2015–16 and 2016–17

2015–16 Sites			
Data Collection Method	**McCarver Elementary School**	**Toppenish Safe Haven**	**Garrison Middle School**
Parent focus group	X	X	X
Program director interview	X	X	X
Principal interview	X	X	X
Site coordinator interview	X	X	X
Staff interview	X	X	X
Students focus group	X	X	X

2016–17 Sites			
Data Collection Method	**Allen Elementary School**	**Amistad Elementary School**	**Liberty Elementary School**
Counselor		X	
District representative	X		

2016–17 Sites			
Data Collection Method	**Allen Elementary School**	**Amistad Elementary School**	**Liberty Elementary School**
Parent focus group		X	X
Program director interview	X	X	X
Principal interview			X
Site coordinator interview		X	X
Staff interview	X (2)	X	X
Students focus group	X	X	X

Site Visit Permissions. All participants in the site visits gave their consent to participation in the process. All interviews and focus groups were recorded and all participants were informed of their rights as determined by Institutional Review Board practices.

Youth Survey

During the 2015–16 programming period, we administered the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey, originally developed by the Youth Development Executives of King County, in all 21st CCLC programs serving youth in Grades 4–12. The survey measures youth experiences in programming, youth perceptions of how the program impacted them, and how youth report they are functioning on a series of indicators of social and emotional skills and competencies.

The domain of characteristics assessed through the site coordinator and staff surveys reflect best practices in the field. This report will dedicate particular attention to explaining how staff responded to site coordinator and staff survey questions and what this response may mean in terms of how programs design and deliver activities in ways that are consistent with best practices.

Analytic Approach and Methods

The findings outlined in this report are primarily quantitative. We based our approach on the evaluation questions being answered and the resources available to carry out the project. The analyses highlighted in this report fall within four general categories, as follows:

1. **Descriptive analyses.** We analyzed information related to grantee, center, and student characteristics obtained from PPICS, the surveys, and the YPQA descriptively to explore the range of variation on a given characteristic. Some of the leading indicators also were calculated employing descriptive analysis techniques.

   In addition, we opted conduct PSM-based analysis for the 2015–16 school year. It is important to draw a contrast between the school-related outcome indicators reported in Chapter 4 and what the domain of impact analyses completed and reported on in recently published evaluation reports. While robust, propensity score matching is a resource-intensive analysis. Given that we have seen some stability in results across multiple years in the impact estimates derived from these analyses, we opted not to conduct the PSM-based analysis for the 2015–16 school year. Instead, we have opted to report on statewide results for the new school-related outcome indicators previously described.

2. **Analyses to create scale scores.** Many questions on the site coordinator and staff surveys underpinning the leading indicators were part of a series of questions designed to assess an underlying construct or concept, resulting in a single scale score summarizing performance on a given area of practice or facet of 21st CCLC afterschool implementation (e.g., practices that support linkages to the school day). We illustrate an example Exhibit A2, which outlines the questions making up the Intentionality Program Design scale that appeared on the site coordinator survey.

Exhibit A2. Example of a Survey Scale Calibrated Using Rasch Techniques

How often do your staff provide program activities that are...	Rarely (once or twice a semester)	Sometimes (once or twice a month)	Frequently (once or twice a week)	Always (daily for every session)	Not Sure
a. Based on written plans for the session, assignments, and projects?	O	O	O	O	O
b. Planned before the start of the session?	O	O	O	O	O
c. Tied to specific learning goals?	O	O	O	O	O
d. Meant to build upon skills cultivated in a prior activity or session?	O	O	O	O	O
e. Explicitly meant to promote skill building and mastery in relation to one or more state standard?	O	O	O	O	O
f. Explicitly meant to address a specific developmental domain (e.g., cognitive, social, emotional, civic, physical, etc.)?	O	O	O	O	O
g. Structured to respond to youth feedback on what the content or format of the activity should be?	O	O	O	O	O
h. Informed by the expressed interests, preferences, and/or satisfaction of participating youth?	O	O	O	O	O

For scales such as this, we created Rasch scale scores using staff and site coordinator responses to a series of questions to create one overall score. These scale scores ranged from 0 to 100, where higher scores indicated a higher level or more frequent adoption of a specific quality practice or set of practices.

We can use scale scores resulting from the application of Rasch approaches to classify what portion of the rating scale the average scale score fell within. For example, if the statewide mean value for the Intentionality in Program Design scale highlighted in Exhibit A1 is 59.97, then it would put the statewide average in the *"frequently"* range of the scale, indicating the typical staff member responding to the survey reported engaging in these practices on a frequent basis. This approach also allowed the evaluation team to explore the distribution of centers in light of what response option their average scale score put them in.

The primary benefit of this approach is the capacity to distill responses from several questions into an overall score for the center, simplifying the process of interpreting how a center performed on a given element of quality compared with other programs in the state.

3. **Correlational multilevel modeling techniques.** The evaluation team ran several multilevel models explore the relationship between (a) youth reports of functioning on skill and belief areas measured on the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey and (b) a series of school-related outcomes. Although these analyses afford the capacity to determine whether a significant relationship existed between youth scores on the survey and a given outcome such as mathematics achievement, these approaches cannot indicate that a given skill or belief measured on the survey caused a given outcome. These analyses are correlational, not causal.
4. **Qualitative coding of site visit data.** All interviews and focus group recordings were transcribed and loaded into NVivo software for qualitative coding. Prior to the site visits, a coding framework was established by the evaluation team based on the most anticipated responses from each participant group. Qualitative coders then added any additional nodes to the framework as they reviewed the data.

   To quantify the qualitative data, coding structure was developed in NVivo. The coding structure for staff focus groups and interviews[5] was developed across eight categories: Interviewee Background Information, Management Practices, Program Design, Program Delivery, Partnerships and Collaboration, Program Evaluation, Observed Outcomes, and Final Thoughts. These categories were created by the original coding structure and consisted of 317 subcategories. For each subcategory, the staff interviews were quantified to determine the outcomes at site level and across all programs. In additional, the subcategories were exported for the qualitative data.

   For the students focus group data, the coding structure consisted of three main categories: Students Enrollment, Students Perception of Program, and Students' Final Thoughts. These categories consisted of 55 subcategories. For each subcategory, the focus group data were quantified to determine the outcomes at site level and across all programs. In additional, the subcategories were exported for the qualitative data.

   Finally, for the parent focus group data, the structure consisted of four main categories: Parent Expectations, Parent Communication With Program, Parent Perceptions of Programming, and Final Thoughts. These categories consisted of 80 subcategories. For each subcategory, the focus group data were quantified to determine the outcomes at site level and across all programs. In additional, the subcategories were exported for all the qualitative data.

[5] This includes staff, program director, principal, site coordinator, counselor, and district representative.

All data eventually were summarized under their respective nodes, which allowed the evaluation team to pull specific information for each case study report and to describe general themes of best practices for the aggregate report.

5. **Hierarchical Linear Modeling.** To determine student- and center-level characteristics related to the outcome areas measured on the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey, the evaluation team employed a series of hierarchical linear models to test for statistically significant relationships between student and center characteristics and results on the Academic Identity, Positive Mindsets, Self-Management, and Interpersonal Skills survey scales. This takes into consideration the nested structure of these programs, with students within centers, and centers within grantees.
6. **Propensity Score Matching.** In contrast to the multilevel modeling techniques, propensity score matching approaches were employed to estimate the causal impact of 21st CCLC participation on student performance in reading and mathematics using Smarter Balance Assessment scores obtained from OSPI, as well as a series of other school-related outcomes. Given that 21st CCLC program participants were not randomly assigned to participate in the program, the problem of selection bias needed to be addressed before program impact could be explored from a causal perspective. It is likely that students who participated in 21st CCLC programming were different from those students attending the same schools who did not enroll in 21st CCLC. These differences can bias estimates of program effectiveness because they make it difficult to disentangle preexisting differences between participants and nonparticipants from program impact. Propensity score matching was used to mitigate that existing selection bias in program effect.

Exhibit A3 summarizes the methods employed to answer each evaluation question.

Exhibit A3. Summary of Methods by Evaluation Question

Evaluation Question	Descriptive Analysis	Rasch Analysis	Correlational Multilevel Modeling	Qualitative Data Analysis	Propensity Score Matching
What were the primary characteristics associated with the grants and centers funded by 21st CCLC and the student population served by the program?	✓				
To what extent was there evidence that centers funded by 21st CCLC implement research-supported practices related to quality afterschool programming?	✓	✓		✓	
To what extent is there evidence that students participating in services and activities funded by 21st CCLC demonstrated better performance on youth outcomes as compared with similar students not participating in the program?	✓				✓
What does youth completion of the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey indicate both about youth experiences in programming and youth functioning on social and emotional learning and noncognitive areas?	✓	✓	✓		

Appendix B. Determining Program Improvement Priorities From the Leading Indicator System

One goal of the leading indicator system is to help OSPI determine where they should invest efforts to support programs in the adoption of quality afterschool practices. For each scale represented in the leading indicator system, a portion of that scale indicates that a quality approach or practice is largely not being adopted by the center in question. In Exhibit B1, we list the indicators along with the portion of the scale that indicates that a given practice is not happening and the number and percentage of centers that fall within these ranges.

As shown in Table B1, across the 2015–16 reporting period, there were three indicators where more than 50% of centers had substantive opportunities for growth and improvement (interaction, engagement, and linkages to the school-day—staff). This finding suggests that staff were not really using data on youth academic needs to inform the design and delivery of programming and there was room for improvement in providing more consistent opportunities for interaction and engagement during program activities.

Exhibit B1. Leading Indicator Scales by Number and Percentage of Centers Where Quality Practices Were Largely Absent, 2015–16

Domain/Scale	Rating Options Indicating Practice Not Present	2014–15		2015–16	
		N Centers	*%* Centers	*N* Centers	*%* Centers
Organization Practices					
Program Climate The extent to which program staff report that a supportive and collaborative climate exists within the program	Disagree, Strongly disagree	2	1.4%	3	2.2%
Internal Communication—Site Coordinator Survey The frequency with which the site coordinator engages in practices with program staff that support internal communication and collaboration	Never	1	0.7%	2	1.5%

Domain/Scale	Rating Options Indicating Practice Not Present	2014–15		2015–16	
		N Centers	*%* Centers	*N* Centers	*%* Centers
Internal Communication—Staff Survey The frequency with which the staff engages in practices with other program staff that support internal communication and collaboration	Never	1	0.7%	4	3.0%
Leadership and Management—YPQA Form B The extent to which the program is engaging in practices that ensure staff are well positioned to create developmentally appropriate settings for youth and that processes are in place to support program improvement efforts	1	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Instructional Practices					
Intentionality in Program Design—Site Coordinator Survey The frequency with which staff engage in practices that indicate intentionality in activity and session design among staff responsible for the delivery of activities meant to support student growth and development	Rarely	1	0.7%	0	0.0%
Intentionality in Program Design—Staff Survey The frequency with which staff engage in practices that indicate intentionality in activity and session design among staff responsible for the delivery of activities meant to support student growth and development	Rarely	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Point of Service Quality—YPQA Form A					
Supportive Environment	1, 3	21	14.7%	18	13.5%
Interaction	1, 3	70	49.0%	70	52.6%

Domain/Scale	Rating Options Indicating Practice Not Present	2014–15		2015–16	
		N Centers	*%* Centers	*N* Centers	*%* Centers
Engagement	1, 3	112	78.3%	105	78.9%
Youth-Centered Policies and Practices—YPQA Form B The extent to which the program adopts youth-centered policies and practices conducive to a supportive learning environment	1	0	0.0%	2	1.6%
Partnership Practices					
Family Communication—The frequency with which staff adopt practices that support communication with parents and adult family members	Never	7	4.6%	6	4.5%
Linkages to the School Day—Site Coordinator Survey The extent to which the site coordinator reports the program taking steps to establish linkages to the school day and using student data to inform programming	Not a strategy	3	2.2%	1	0.8%
Linkages to the School Day—Staff Survey The extent to which program staff report taking steps to establish linkages to the school day and using student data to inform programming	Disagree, Strongly disagree	20	14.0%	14	13.4%
Data Use—Site Coordinator Survey The extent to which the site coordinator reports the program using student data to inform programming	Do not receive	19	14.0%	21	15.8%

Domain/Scale	Rating Options Indicating Practice Not Present	2014–15		2015–16	
		N Centers	*%* Centers	*N* Centers	*%* Centers
Data Use—Staff Survey The extent to which program staff report taking steps to use student data to inform programming	Do not receive	70	49.0%	71	53.0%
Family and Community—YPQA Form B The extent to which the program adopts policies and practices supportive of family and community engagement	1	2	1.4%	2	1.6%

Appendix C. Reflections From the Field Case Study Reports

Reflections From the Field: Amistad Elementary

Introduction

For the past 6 years, American Institutes for Research has partnered with the Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to provide statewide evaluation services for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) program. During the 2016–17 program year, evaluation activities included identifying high-performing programs and conducting site visits to gather information on what is contributing to their success. The afterschool program at Amistad Elementary School, funded by OSPI with 21st CCLC dollars and located in Kennewick, Washington, was one of the outstanding programs selected for a site visit.

Several themes surfaced from Amistad staff members, families, and students. Findings include:

- The program prioritizes improving student's academic outcomes and student confidence in their academic abilities.
- Families feel the program is running well and has a positive academic impact on students.
- Students are given various leadership opportunities in the program.
- The program has a strong academic curriculum but also incorporates student feedback.
- Program staff members do a lot of community outreach and often seek out new partners.

Organizational Policies and Practices

Professional Development and Training Opportunities

Staff members are trained in the Youth Program Quality Assessment (Youth PQA) and Adverse Childhood Effects measure. Every month, there is an all-day staff training, which includes reviewing

Staff Insight

"We are lucky to have trainings. I think once a month we have certain staff trainings…we go through YPQI, and we'll go through the different sections. So we'll have building community or youth voice and different subject areas like that."

budgets and community events. There also are many summer trainings, where the staff members dive into more topics, such as social-emotional learning and the curriculum's activities. The program provides staff members with flexible hours and incorporates staff training into the budget and job descriptions to ensure that staff are well-prepared and high quality.

Preparation for Program

The program works to ensure that staff members are teaching topics in which they are interested and have some expertise. There are regular meetings and check-ins, where staff members discuss events and student-related concerns.

Program Director Insight

"You always have to make sure you have strategies…to get team members to work together, so [there is] a lot of communication. And then we give the kids leadership opportunities within the classrooms as well."

Recruitment Strategies

Information about the program is primarily spread through word-of-mouth; many families refer other families to the program. The program also uses flyers, phone calls, and open houses to make sure that families know how to enroll. Students are often recruited by their friends or family members in the program. Teachers give participating students flyers to give to their friends to help with recruitment.

Retention Strategies

Students often stay in the program because of the relationships that they have built with staff members. Staff members work to engage students and families by calling. Staff members are encouraged to be helpful and build a personal relationship with students, showing them that it is not just a part of the school day, but something more. Staff members send individual letters to each student, especially during testing time, to let students know how much they are valued. Students connect with staff members because they are likable and friendly.

Staff Involvement in Planning and Data Usage

Staff members have a large role when it comes to planning activities. Goals for the program are created at the beginning of the year based on the previous year—what worked, what didn't work, and what needs to change. Every year, an external evaluator assesses the program using

Staff Insight

"Everyone has some voice in what we could change or what we could do better."

the Youth PQA, and staff members meet to discuss the results. Staff members also conduct an internal self-assessment every year with the Youth PQA and review scores as a group, with the goal of coming up with an overall consensus score on the tool. Based on the results of the external and internal assessments, they will explore ways to improve the lower scores and determine how they will integrate new approaches into the program. They also focus on how they are collecting data in particular areas of interest, such as classroom management.

Drivers for Student Participation

Students are engaged in the program because of the activities offered and the relationships they build with staff members. Staff members ensure that students receive the help that they need on homework and any other topics. Students have noticed changes in themselves, such as being nicer to others and being more willing to help at home. Students enjoy the opportunities the program gives them to learn, especially taking deeper dives into subjects like science and coding.

Student Insight

"My favorite activity is art because we get to use our imagination to create pictures on paper, or we can form different pieces of art…. We can use all of our imagination, what we think, what we can do, what we wish can happen in the world."

Activities Offered

Students are offered a variety of activities: gym, art, coding, math, and so on. The programming is based on an academic curriculum, with a focus on math and science, but also incorporates student preference with things like coding. If the students are struggling with a specific subject, such as multiplication, then staff members will spend more time on it. There is a lot of hands-on learning in the program. For example, a local gardening society came in with an assortment of plants and seeds to show students how to identify them and to discuss how seeds grow. The staff members also have an informational component of the program focused on healthy eating habits, spending a lot of time discussing things like how much sugar is in soda, providing visuals, and more.

Adaptations for Special Needs or English Learner Students

The program takes into consideration students with special needs. Staff members work closely with the site coordinator and the life skills teacher. Together, they set up realistic expectations about what supports are needed for students to be successful in the program. The staff members are flexible and work together closely to accommodate students as needed. Staff members make sure that students do not feel excluded and work on setting up groups that make sense for varying abilities.

Adaptations Made

English learners are grouped together to focus on practicing English skills through homework groups. Staff members ensure that students from higher grades help those in lower grades practice English and help build peer-to-peer connections by allowing students to become more comfortable with one another.

Instructional Practices

Safe and Supportive Environment

One of the main goals of the program is to ensure that students feel welcomed and comfortable. Staff members make an effort to be kind and listen. They focus on students who are having academic or social challenges by giving them individual attention. Staff members want students to feel that this is their program and they have a say in how the program works. Creating buy-in early in the year ensures that students will feel supported and able to vocalize their thoughts.

Staff Insight

"We're always open to listening to the students. So we just try to be as accommodating as we can but also want them to participate as much as they can as well."

Interaction

Staff members set up small groups so that students receive more individualized attention. The program conducts icebreakers daily to make sure that students feel connected when they arrive. Students often work together as a team during activities.

Students also are provided leadership opportunities in the program. These include:

- In homework groups, older peers will often help the younger students.
- Sometimes, students will lead the schedule or an activity for the day.
- Within activities, there are roles assigned: timekeeper, helper, or "cleaner upper."

Engagement

Students have a lot of choice. They can choose what groups they want to become involved in to do various activities. Students are asked what type of programs they want to learn more about or see included. Students learn how to vote for things that they want and voice their feedback on why they chose a certain activity. Students also reflect on program activities, as well as on how they might use these skills outside the program (e.g., home or school).

Staff Member Insight

"We encourage students to have time to reflect…and think about what they learned, or what they've done and how they might implement that in different areas, or how they might have changed what they did."

Social-Emotional Practices

Students recognize the changes in each other because of the program. Students see peers are becoming nicer and more talkative. Staff members address student self-control issues and help them cope when they don't always get what they want. Staff members let students know that it's okay to feel angry but also help them get to the root of the problem. Staff members help students express their feelings through painting, an activity that has been proven to be relaxing.

Academic Outcomes

Students value structured homework help because they feel it helps them focus on homework and learning. Staff members also work to improve students' academic confidence. For example, for students who tested in the lower reading levels, staff members work on reading more challenging books with them, helping them to believe that they can improve their reading skills.

Student Insight

"[In the program, I am] able to focus more on my homework, because in my house I don't have a lot of time to do my homework."

Connections to the School Day

Alignment With School Day

The program focuses on academic programming for students. Through the activities, staff members work to go beyond what is happening in the school day and provide additional background on what they are learning. Space at the school is limited, but teachers allow the program to use their classrooms. Staff members in the program are involved with the Parent Teacher Association and attend meetings and events, such as helping with the food harvest.

Communication

The program and school work together to support one another. The program staff make an effort to talk to teachers about what students are learning to plan activities. The teachers and the program staff meet occasionally to discuss upcoming events and student-related concerns. They also communicate by e-mail often. There are monthly meetings between the program director and the principal.

School Counselor Feedback

"Those relationships [between counselor and program staff] and that support are really, really important."

Relationships With Families and the Community

Family Engagement

There are events on a variety of topics and at different times of day: career and job training, sharing local community resources, help in addressing academic challenges, yoga mornings, movie nights, and reading nights. Families are encouraged to go on class field trips, as well.

Family Communication

Staff members try to be outside during pickup so they can talk with families in person, and they also will call to ask for feedback. Staff members communicate with families if there is an issue as well as if a student is doing well. The staff members provide flyers and call families often with reminders. The staff members are accessible to contact at any time by e-mail and phone.

Family Expectations for Program

Families see the program creates new friends and adds extra academic help beyond school. Students can then practice skills more. Families also have noticed an improvement in academic drive.

Parent Insight

"My son is more self-motivated. He already goes home and does the reading…. He relaxes more and he likes to be a leader, too."

Family Perceptions of Programming

Families believe homework help is the best part. Parents also cite the importance of students working in the community to help others. For example, a UNICEF project has the students collect points on wristbands. Once they have many points, UNICEF feeds a child on the student's behalf and the students send letters. Parents feel this program opens up students socially because it exposes them to more and they are building more relationships with peers.

Community Engagement

The program is active in the community, helping gather speakers for the program. The Ben Franklin Health District safety committee coalition helps with safety night. Local banks teach banking, Tri-Tech Skills Center sends welders and graphics experts, and the gardening society teaches about plants and seeds. A local store even led comic-book making, which was a student favorite this year. Students were able to do a lot of hands-on learning in these activities.

Program Director Insight

"Having coordinators that aren't afraid to do that [outreach to community members] makes their job and my job easier to bring in community members."

Reflections From the Field: Allen Elementary

Introduction

For the past 6 years, American Institutes for Research (AIR) has partnered with the Washington Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) to provide statewide evaluation services for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) program. During the 2016–17 program year, evaluation activities included identifying high-performing programs and conducting site visits to gather information on what is contributing to their success. The afterschool program at Allen Elementary School, funded by 21st CCLC dollars through OSPI and located in Bow, Washington, was one of the outstanding programs selected for a site visit.

Several themes surfaced from Allen staff members, families, and students. Findings include:

- The program aims to ensure students achieve academic outcomes and feel more academically prepared as a result of the program.
- The activities in the program promote student voice and choice, aiming to help them gain a stronger sense of self.
- The program is strongly connected to the community's culture and integrates this cultural understanding into the program.
- Staff members work hard to ensure that families feel engaged in the program by offering services to the families, speaking in various languages to accommodate the needs of the families, and offering food to the families through the food backpack program.

Organizational Policies and Practices

Professional Development and Training Opportunities

Staff members attend training on the Youth Program Quality Assessment (Youth PQA) and one in-person Youth Work Methods training in the fall. Staff members also attended a variety of 21st CCLC trainings all over the state, including one in Walla Walla last

Program Director Feedback

"A friend told me about a workshop she was presenting; it was about…re-imagining race conversations and so I thought it would be a neat opportunity for us to…sort of discuss what's happening in a lot of places."

year, to share best practices. This year, the state is hosting a summer institute, and half of the Allen staff members will attend. The institute will include re-imagining race conversations, youth program quality best practices, and various other topics.

Preparation for Program

The staff members apply best practices to design and deliver quality programming as defined by the Youth PQA. In regular staff meetings, staff members reflect on the previous week and discuss what they learned, as well as prepare for logistics for the upcoming week. The program director also tries to build in time for team building.

Recruitment Strategies

Staff members feel that their relationship with the school has led to an increase in recruitment in the past few years. The first step was getting the teachers involved in the recruitment process and showing them the benefits of the program. Parents often hear about the program by word of mouth and become interested in learning more about how their child(ren) can attend. The program currently has a waiting list of students. To determine which students are admitted, the program first prioritizes those who need a safe place to be after school. In addition, the program specifically works with English language learner (ELL) teachers to ensure that ELL students are recruited into the program. The program also advertises on the radio.

Staff Insight

"There's a lot of need for this kind of programs, so you can even just tell one family, and it's just kind of like word-of-mouth information that just spreads. We always have kids on the waiting list."

Retention Strategies

If a student has been consistently missing the program, the program director makes a point to reach out to him or her to find out why, especially to understand if it's a program or personal issue. The staff members feel students stay in the program because of the activities offered and the freedom the program gives them compared with the structured school day. The staff members also believe the program design, which allows students to express themselves culturally, has been one of the driving factors of student retention.

Program Director

"The vision is to create a place where kids feel okay celebrating their different languages and different cultures."

Staff Involvement in Planning and Data Usage

The staff members feel that they have the opportunity to share ideas for the program and have a great deal of input on the activities offered. Activities are commonly based on staff background interest. The staff members also work together to create goals aligned with youth development best practice. For example, staff members have students conduct presentations after they complete a long-term activity because staff members want to ensure that students learned from these activities.

Drivers for Student Participation

Students enjoy the variety of activities available each month and the chance to build relationships with their peers. Students also have strong connections with the staff members, especially because the majority of them are bilingual or trilingual. The staff members believe that students feel they are part of a community.

Activities Offered

The program shifts activities based on the interests of the students. This is usually determined by how many sign up for a given activity. Currently, there are radio and video classes offered. There also is a strong science, technology, engineering, and mathematics foundation that can be seen throughout the activities offered, such as coding, computers, and engineering. Arts and sports have been consistent components of programming and will vary based on interest.

Activities Offered

Adaptations for Students With Special Needs or English Language Learners

The program works to ensure that students from different cultures feel included. For example, the program works to include all English Language Learners (ELL) who speak many different languages. The staff members are aware of which students are learning English as a second or even a third language. Some of the staff members are bilingual, so they can work with students in the language that they are most comfortable in and also can serve as translators. A few of the students have special needs, and staff members allow for these students to work at their own pace.

Staff Insight

"[We tell the students,] tell us about your culture. Show off about your culture. That's unique. That's special. It's good for the world."

Instructional Practices

Safe and Supportive Environment

Staff Member Insight

"Participating in the program goes a lot deeper than that. It builds their self-esteem, [and] it ensures them that they have a voice and that it matters.... It's gotten very personal sometimes because once they feel really comfortable, they build this relationship with me and with the other staff as well."

Allen staff members always use the students' names to ensure that the students feel welcome. The staff members also work to include different cultural backgrounds and languages so that students feel connected to the staff and one another. Staff members encourage the students to keep going when they make mistakes and offer emotional support to students going through difficult situations.

Interaction

Staff Member Insight

"I always have a helper, so I give the kids an opportunity to help me help their classmates."

The program ensures that students have opportunities to lead and show off their work. If students are working on a certain activity for a longer period of time, they will present what they learn at the end of the month. They will also give presentations during parent celebration nights. In many activities, there also is a student helper who assists the staff member with the activity.

In addition, students are asked to demonstrate their skills to other students and learn from each other. For example, a student who is skilled at drawing came up with his own way of teaching the other kids. The program had a staff member supervise the activity, help the student explain things, and support the student in learning to teach. Students also collaborate on dancing and singing by teaching one another the song or dance. Staff members feel that teaching another peer contributes positively to increasing their self-esteem and helping them feel empowered.

Engagement

Student Insight

"The best part about this is that we are allowed to choose which activities [are offered]."

Student voice is a major component of the program. For example, if a student does not

want to participate in an activity, a staff member will take that student aside and see why they do not want to participate. Students also get to choose long-term activities or clubs that appeal to their interests.

Beforehand, students are asked what they want to get out of the activities that they are doing. Student reflection happens at the end of activities, focusing on what the students liked about the activity, and also can be used to address immediate behavioral situations, which include recognizing why a student is acting out in the way they are and allowing them to explain why. The program also has student surveys once or twice a year, where students give their feedback on activities.

Social-Emotional Practices

When there are behavioral issues, students are asked to reflect on and think about their actions to try to improve relationships with one another. The program staff want to help students develop a strong sense of self as well as improve self-efficacy.

Staff Member Reflection

"What I'm really valuing with this program is the students developing their sense of self, finding their voice, developing agency for themselves as individuals, for their families, for their culture."

Academic Outcomes

The program staff want to ensure that students aim high with their academic goals, such as completing high school. Students feel more prepared for the upcoming school year because of the additional learning that happens in the program through homework help, tutoring, and test preparation. There also is a reading requirement for younger students and a reading club run by Western Washington University.

Connections to the School Day

School-Day Alignment

Program Director Insight

"Leadership at the school wants the best for the kids and has been super flexible and even supportive.... Now, teachers are even bought in. Everyone believes in the program."

The Allen program works to integrate 21st CCLC goals to school-day learning and larger school goals. There is frequent discussion about how to align them well. One way is that teachers sometimes review program materials to ensure consistency of learning. Teachers also will visit the program periodically to help out. The program tries to ensure that the teachers can volunteer in a variety of ways such as by leading a session on something that they are passionate about.

Communication

There is a constant stream of communication between school and program staff. The program staff are considerate of the space being used. The principal and the program director communicate daily. Also, program staff members check in with teachers and school specialists regarding student behavior and how to best address their needs.

Relationships With Families and the Community

Family Engagement

Staff Member Insight

"I think we've helped the families a lot, and it helps a lot with the relationship with the families of course, and also with the students."

Because much of this community does not speak English, staff members are creative in engaging families. A couple of family events every year showcase students' work, and staff members bring potluck-style food. There is a backpack food program to send food home to families each Friday. The food distribution is based on the needs of the families. Staff members feel there is a strong connection with families.

Family Communication

A lot of families do not have access to e-mail, so the program is resourceful in communicating with families. This year, the program used an autodialer and flyers that are distributed for students to take home, such as with the backpack food items. There also are announcements on the radio and word-of-mouth communication between families in the community. The families in the program speak many different languages, and program staff work to ensure that they translate for them when providing materials or speaking with them one-on-one.

Staff Member Thoughts

"I go to where the family members are or the family members know that I speak their language, and they can come to school and ask for me."

Adult Services

The program supports a number of adult services for families. These services include adult education courses led by partners in contracting organizations as well as English language classes. The program also uses its connections to families to provide resources and encourage them to participate in community activities. Families have been sent to take classes at the district parent center, which offers English language classes, financial literacy classes, basic computing, computer use, and general equivalency diploma preparation.

Family Adult Services

Community Engagement

The program has a number of community partners. The program works with the food bank to help with food distribution for the family backpack program. The Mexican Consulate provides the program with information for families, as well as books from Mexico for adult education, such as reading or math. A lot of Mexican stores in the community also contribute in various ways, such as offering to pay for backpacks for the food backpack program. The program also partners with radio stations to get messages out to the community.

Staff Insight on Community Engagement

"Most of the Mexican stores around here, they're willing to help us if we just go out and reach out, or just any businesses around that.... We have to go out there and talk to them about what we're doing. Most of the ones we've talked to have helped us."

The Allen program won a community award from the Skagit County Child and Family Consortium. The program received the award because of the staff's efforts to treat students with respect, to honor families, and to serve the community.

Reflections From the Field: Summer Program at Garrison Middle School

Introduction

For the past 6 years, American Institutes for Research has partnered with the Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to provide statewide evaluation services of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) program. During the 2015–16 program year, evaluation activities included identifying high-performing programs and conducting site visits to gather information on what is contributing to their success. The summer program at Garrison Middle School, funded by OSPI through the 21st CCLC grant and located in Walla Walla, Washington, was one of the outstanding programs selected for a site visit. This report focuses on the summer program, but participants included thoughts on the afterschool program during the year as well.

Several themes surfaced from Walla Walla staff members, families, and students. These include:

- Youth development practices are integral to the program, including fostering relationships and allowing for student choice.
- Families are pleased with the academic and social-emotional offerings of the program.
- The program's greatest strengths are science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programming, the safe and supportive environment, engaging and project-based programming, recruiting diverse students, and active participation and ownership.

Organizational Policies and Practices

Professional development opportunities are an important component of setting up the Walla Walla summer program for success. Training opportunities are regularly offered for the site coordinator and the direct service staff members.

Professional Development and Training Opportunities

There are several professional development opportunities for staff members, including Youth Program Quality Assessment Basics

Program Director Insight

"I feel like anytime you are presenting, it's actually a professional development opportunity from the other side. You have to be really introspective and figure out exactly what you are doing. A lot of reflection takes place when you present."

and relevant conferences. The content of the professional development includes safety and academics, conflict resolution or behavior management, mindfulness training, and quality assessment.

Preparation for Program

To prepare for programming, staff members meet on a regular basis during the school year and check in daily during the summer. Before the summer program began, staff members met as a group to review expectations and roles for everyone.

Recruitment Strategies

The program employs several recruitments strategies such as referrals from schools, advertising within the schools, posting on the schools' Facebook page, and direct outreach with students. Staff members also are observant, and if they think a student would benefit from the program, they will speak to him or her directly.

Program Director
"When it comes time to actually recruit the kids, I find especially with middle school and high school youth, treat them like young adults, pull them in."

A particular success of the program is recruiting diverse students. Both the principal and the program director believe in the importance of targeting students who would benefit most from the program. Staff members often target free or reduced-price lunch recipients. During the first year of the program, the project director found that Hispanic females were practically non-existent in STEM careers, so they reviewed the attendance roster of all the science classes in the seventh and eighth grades for Hispanic female students. They worked with teachers to get to know these students better and to see if they would be a good fit for the program.

Retention Strategies

To retain students, staff members focus on creating community through relationship building and offering youth a variety of clubs that appeal to their interests. Staff members work to build student identification with specific club activities, such as dance, drones, video games, or soccer.

Program Director
"Over the years, what we found is the recipe for success from a programming, curricular perspective with regard to student recruitment, engagement, and retention, is our fundamental tenants of active participation, ownership of ideas, and real-world relevancy."

Staff Involvement in Planning

The site coordinators check in with staff members during the school year to determine what is going well and what can be done differently, and to make sure that students who may need additional help are receiving it. During the summer, the staff members debrief and reflect daily.

Drivers for Student Participation

Students are engaged because of both the people and the activities. Students feel that they have friends in the program and that they meet new people through the program as well. Students also enjoy the activities that the program offers, such as working with the drones. Staff members think the use of technology in the program is a big draw.

Activities Offered

The program has emphasized the importance of science, which is visible throughout all the program offerings. They report that another local program helps them run a drone program and that they were the first to adopt the LEGO robotics program. Their newest program is 3-D printing and animation. They plan for future programming to include microcontrollers and mini computers.

Activities Offered

The project director believes that they are providing engaging and exemplary programming. They realize they have a unique challenge to remain innovative and creative. The program strives to continue to be real-world relevant, to self-reflect on their offerings, and to adjust as needed.

Student Insight
"Here [at the program], you get more hands-on learning."

Adaptations for English Learner Students

The program provides adaptations for special populations like English learners (ELs). One of the newest groups to attend the program are Latinos. The majority of these students are EL students. At first, these students would play games

Staff
"We've done…a program where it was with drones and…we had 12 Latino females that went through the process of building it. Then they created their own drone with the components. Then we did a whole big presentation in front of their parents and in front of their school…. [For] most of them, their second language was English."

and read, but they were not speaking much. Staff members began to reinforce English language skills and work with Spanish-speaking tutors as well. The program was a safe place for students to practice, mess up, and become more comfortable with English. Staff members are aware of each student's needs.

Instructional Practices

Safe and Supportive Environment

Site Coordinator

"I feel like we try to connect with each and every student. The first day that we have camp, we try to do a group game where everybody gets to know each other. [We] make it a safe environment so that nobody feels like they can't share something."

The staff members believe that they create a safe environment for participants in the program. Staff members make an effort to learn every student's name and build a one-on-one relationship with each student, which creates a foundation so students feel like they can share. The program builds in a basic framework that is emotionally and physically safe. Basic guidelines and parameters are set, but participants can differentiate within those parameters. They give students space to try, make mistakes, and learn.

Interaction

Staff Member Insight

"Using the group time to build a little community and the friendship part…. You have to have building community and realizing when people are ready for something to change."

Collaboration is visible in the program. Students learn to collaborate through activities that include many opportunities to talk to each other. The program tries to ensure that students feel a sense of belonging by giving them hands-on activities and using group time to ensure students build relationships with each other. Every day, they have time when everyone comes into the "living room" to talk together about the activities from the day before and the expectations for the day.

Engagement

The program has multiple programs running on the same day, so students choose what activities to participate in. Staff members give students space to learn on their own and are

around to help when needed. Adults aren't talking all the time; rather, the participants are taking control of their learning and making the program their own. Participants also reflect on the program at the end of the day in a group, sharing what they did and what they thought about it.

Staff Member Insight

"They planned intentionally to do things to get kids engaged, to get kids connected with each other, get kids connected with us, so that's a daily thing."

Other Practices and Outcomes

The program also supports youth in broader ways. The principal expressed the best outcome is for students to hang out in school instead of going to an empty home or getting in trouble on the streets. Programming also exposes students to new interests, like film-making and writing books, and provides opportunities they might not be able to experience without the program.

Connections to the School Day

Alignment With School Day

The program is designed specifically to align with the school's mission, with a focus on closing the opportunity gap by providing programs to underserved students. Most of the programming happens in the school library, and both the program and school agree on the benefits of sharing the space.

Principal Insight

"We've also made our afterschool program an integral part of our school."

Communication

The success of the relationship is based on good communication. The principal credits the program director with updating everyone on what's going on. The school realizes the programming offered is exemplary and fills a need in the school. To show their continued support, the principal and school staff members often attend program events. The principal went as far as adopting the program's soccer team.

Relationships With Families and the Community

Family Engagement

The program engages families through both school and afterschool interactions. During the schoolwide open house, the program has a table where they tell families about what is going on with the program. There is information for the program on a bulletin board at the school. There also was a drone presentation for parents of Latina participants last year. Families are welcome to come observe the program.

Staff Member on Families

"Doing the afterschool programs, … the soccer program attracts a lot of families that come in and watch their children play."

Family Communication

The program communicates with families about the importance of students not missing the program. The staff members make follow-up calls to families to remind them when the program is starting, as well as provide flyers to those without access to phones.

Family Expectations for Program

Overall, families are pleased by the academic and social-emotional offerings of the program. Families reported that their students look forward to the program and instead of "being bored at home," they find their children reading or creating their own book. Others commented on the sense of community the staff members have built and how their student fits into that environment.

Parent Feedback

"The biggest plus for my son has been the sense of community that's been built…; [the] facilitators have been phenomenal with building a community."

Family Perceptions of Student Programming

Families feel the program offers students a wide variety of creative programming. Families appreciate that the program is offered in the summer because there is often not much going on then. The program provides students with the

Parent Insight

"My daughter—she just [got] involved with this program like a week and a half ago…. She's always complaining about she's bored around the house…. But now, she's reading books and she's going to make a book and so it's great."

opportunity to grow relationships and build skills. The families also see the increased focus on academics than in years prior.

Community Engagement

The program seeks ways to engage the community with the students. For example, one of the final projects for the film camp was to create a commercial for a new start-up technology company in Walla Walla. Each group submitted a commercial, and the company picked the winner. They plan to use that commercial in their marketing efforts. Another community partner helped the students write a book; when the book is complete, they are going to donate copies of the book to the students' choice location. According to staff members, the students are excited about this community connection.

Staff on Community Engagement
"You know, some day when we go back to the public library and have [the] kids, they're going to see our book."

Reflections From the Field: Liberty Elementary

Introduction

For the past 6 years, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) has partnered with the Washington Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) to provide statewide evaluation services of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) program. During the 2016–17 program year, evaluation activities included identifying high-performing programs and conducting site visits to gather information on what is contributing to their success. The afterschool program at Liberty Elementary School, funded by Washington Alliance for Better Schools and located in Marysville, Washington, was one of the outstanding programs selected for a site visit.

Several themes surfaced from Liberty staff members, families, and students. Findings include:

- The program has a mix of structured and unstructured activities.
- Families feel the program has allowed students to grow academically and gain an interest in learning.
- Students feel that this program has helped them build stronger relationships with their peers and the staff members.
- The program provides various professional development trainings throughout the year, such as on planning and reflection strategies, student academic expectations, and more.

Organizational Policies and Practices

Professional Development and Training Opportunities

There are professional development opportunities for all staff a few times a year. Most of the trainings focus on behavior management and understanding what the students are going through, as well as a session on how to incorporate youth development best practices into the program. Also, someone from the University of Washington Curriculum Office offered insight

Site Coordinator Feedback

"[Speakers] come in and talk about planning and reflection and how do we build that into our programs. And why it is important that it's in here."

on where students should be performing academically. In addition, the site coordinator has attended various professional development conferences, such as the BOOST Conference and the School's Out Washington Bridge Conference.

Preparation for Program

All staff members meet to prepare for the program annually before the program begins. Throughout the school year, staff members are allowed flexibility in creating lessons, and the program director provides needed activity materials to engage the students.

Recruitment Strategies

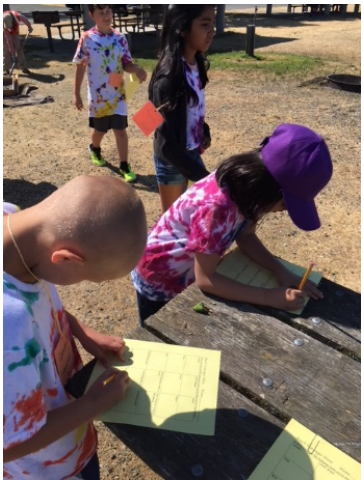
Many students are recruited by friends and family members in the program. The program staff use creative ways to get students interested. For example, the program had a bubble party, setting up a bubble station outside in the schoolyard to attract other students to come over. Then the staff members would tell them about the program and give them an overview packet. If interested students came for 5 days, then they got their own bubble wand. The program also works with teachers to identify which students need help socially or academically that would benefit most from the program.

Recruitment Strategies

Retention Strategies

According to staff members, some students stay in the program for academic reasons. They want to learn and continue learning. For other students, the fun activities and games are the main reasons they remain in the program. Relationships between staff members and students also are key to making them more likely to remain in the program.

Staff Involvement in Planning and Data Usage



Staff members are given surveys to provide their input in the planning process, especially around planning activities. For each activity rotation, staff members plan two lessons for that week. When the program receives the Youth Program Quality Assessment (Youth PQA) external assessment results annually, the staff members then get together to do some planning and reflection of their own based on these results.

Drivers for Student Participation

Students enjoy the variety of activities offered, such as art and robotics. Students attend the program because of the connections that they build with peers and staff members, as well as the safe and friendly space created by the program.

Activities Offered

There are four core activities offered: homework help; reading; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; and art and leadership. Students rotate through these activities every week with their groups. They also have homework time and free time built in every day. Students are grouped into the four groups based on age, ability, and more, and there are about 15 students in each group.

Program Director Insight

"It's not a formal curriculum that we hand them to say this is what we should teach, but we try to provide staff members with a lot of resources to choose from."

Adaptations for Students With Special Needs or English Learner Students

The staff members provide activities for English learners (ELs) to help support their learning. Staff members also work with EL students individually if they are struggling with reading. The program works to assist students with special needs, helping them make good choices and supporting their behavioral needs.

Instructional Practices

Safe and Supportive Environment

Students generally feel a close relationship with staff members. Staff members make a point to talk to all students and call them by their names. Staff members make sure that students know staff will listen and that students feel supported. If a student is being bullied, staff members will explain why it is not okay to tease someone else and make it clear that is not allowed in this program.

Student Feedback

"I think they're [the program staff] really nice and they actually listen to your problems and help you out."

Interaction

Students feel that they are building relationships with their peers as a result of this program. The program has implemented bonding games and icebreakers to help grow peer relationships. The program director wants there to be positive relationships with "everyone involved in the program," from peers to teachers to partners.

Staff Insight

"This is a place for all of us to come together and be friends and get along."

Leadership is a critical program component. There is currently a student leadership team, where a small group of students plan activities for the whole group. This leadership team is composed of elected students from each grade, with students getting to select who they want to represent them.

Engagement

Student choice is an important part of the program. Students take surveys to gauge interest in various activities. Staff members often provide students with two different activity options. During homework time, students choose

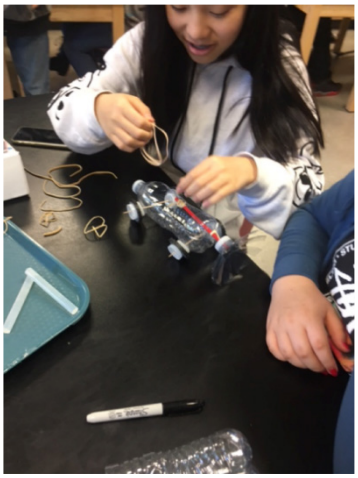
Site Coordinator Insight

"Our biggest choice item is our free choice at the end of every night, where they have 25 to 30 minutes that they get to choose something from the kids' cabinet. There's multiple things in there...Barbies,... Littlest Pet Shops,…board games and cards,…beads,…[and] there's other things like just drawing and reading that you can work on too during that time."

to work on either homework or reading. They have free choice time every night, as well as choose dinner and snack.

Social-Emotional Practices

Students think the program helps improve their "comprehensive skills," such as seeing the consequences of their actions and how to work together as a team. Staff members also provide support to students who need help working through their emotions.



Academic Outcomes

Students feel that the program helps them learn and think creatively. Students enjoy doing their homework at the program. The focused homework time gives students support that they may not receive at home. The staff members also like to focus on changing student perspectives, showing that learning can be fun.

Connections to the School Day

School-Day Alignment

According to the site coordinator, the program is considered to be an added component to the school day. The program really wants to build a positive attitude around school and learning. The program works to help students, in a different way than the school day. For example, one student did not like reading in school, so staff members dove a little deeper into what his interests are. Staff members found that he does not like the style of books from class, but he does enjoy reading. So now the program allows him to use his own. Sharing classroom space is laid out in the program proposal, and program staff members are flexible in moving space around as needed.

Principal Feedback
"I think it's been a really good experience for kids and a positive thing. I've only heard good things from parents."

Communication

There are quarterly meetings and regular quick check-ins between the principal and the program director to monitor progress. The school-day staff keep the program staff in the loop on school events and any issues with classroom spaces. Some teachers also are willing to offer teaching tips and supplies to the program.

Site Coordinator Insight

"The teachers, they let us know [what's going on]...and it's mainly the classrooms that we use…; [a teacher is] really awesome about giving us things and letting us know concerns…. So just communication is a really big thing."

Relationships With Families and the Community

Family Engagement

There are events every year that families are invited to, such as building gingerbread houses around the holidays. There also is a summer family event, where the students showcase what they have learned in the program and the staff members provide resources for families to help them see the program's value for students and families. Some families even periodically come in and observe the program. Staff members also attend school conferences and events to connect with families.

Parent Reflection

"It [the program] has expanded his curiosity, and he spends a lot of time quizzing me now. That's very interesting."

Family Communication

Staff members check in with families daily to let them know how the students did each day, whether it was good or bad. Staff members use any communication method necessary to get in touch with the parents. Staff members will make phone calls, send texts, and send Facebook messages with program updates and notes on students' behavior. There also is a newsletter that goes out to families regularly.

Parent Feedback

"Every time I pick him up, for my son, good or bad, I hear about it."

Family Expectations for Program

Families cited science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to be a core component of what they expect the program to be about. Although some parents thought the students would be further along, they recognized the program has given students the opportunity to build a foundation. The students are starting to think of different questions, how to ask them, and how to conduct effective research. Families also see that students are beginning to learn more about engineering through building their own bridges in the program.

Parent Insight

"[They are] really getting to understand the science behind it as to the why's and the how's, and then taking that time to build different devices and getting that hands-on [experience]."

Family Perceptions of Programming

Families think the program has created an opportunity for students to grow. Families feel that students are more engaged in their learning in both the program and school, helping them to be more prepared for middle school. Families enjoy the fact that students are provided with a more varied learning format compared to the school day. Families believe the program is creating an effective rewards system by offering free time for participation and completion of projects. Families also feel that students are building relationships with their peers.

Family Feedback

"She's gotten to know a lot more of her fellow classmates better than she normally would if she was just in regular school."

Community Engagement

The program worked with the University of Washington to develop a community garden. The county has high rates of diabetes and heart disease, so the University asked students what they can do to make the community healthier to solve this problem. To address the proposed question, the students came up with the idea for a community garden because they believe it could be a way to get people to eat healthier. With University funding, the program planted many plants and built a greenhouse, creating a big community garden. Then, the students

Youth Insight

"It would be really cool if we did a garden because then people would be getting exercise and they'd be eating healthier and they'd be doing all these things."

made individualized invitations to share with family and neighbors to showcase their work. Parents attended opening day to check out the community garden.

The program works closely with the library. The library worked with the students on poetry and playwriting, having the students act out their plays with self-made puppets and videotape them. In the past, the program worked with the YMCA and the Snohomish County Music Project.

Reflections From the Field: McCarver Elementary School

Introduction

For the past 6 years, American Institutes for Research (AIR) has partnered with the Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to provide statewide evaluation services for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) program. During the 2015–16 program year, evaluation activities included identifying high-performing programs and conducting site visits to gather information on what is contributing to their success. The afterschool program at McCarver Elementary School, funded by Peace Community Center and located in Tacoma, Washington, was one of the outstanding programs selected for a site visit.

Several themes surfaced from McCarver staff members, families, and students. Findings include:

- Staff members focus on building relationships, socioemotional development, and leadership opportunities for students in the program.
- To determine student progress, staff members use the previous year's evaluation, STAR testing for reading levels, and annual testing for baseline data to measure success.
- The program creates solid links to the school day through reading and writing specialists.
- Families feel the program exceeded their expectations in relation to homework help, improving student attitudes, and academic outcomes.

Organizational Policies and Practices

Professional development opportunities are an important component of setting up the McCarver afterschool program for success. Training opportunities are regularly offered for the site coordinator and the direct service staff members.

Professional Development and Training Opportunities

Staff members are often AmeriCorps members. To join AmeriCorps, staff must surpass the

Principal Feedback

"They are pretty consistent in what they're doing. They have some place to be and they know that they're going to be fed. They know that they're going to have adult contact that is consistent on a daily basis. I think that's one of the things that kids and parents count on."

number of required training hours. Many felt that their AmeriCorps training was a place to build, learn, and hone their skills. Through AmeriCorps, one staff member attended a training on fundraising, grant writing, and fund development to learn more about how to work at a nonprofit organization.

Preparation for Program

All staff members attend weekly staff meetings to discuss various programming topics like upcoming evaluations, leading indicators, and meeting goals. They also identify their strengths and discuss how they can work on program weaknesses.

Recruitment Strategies

The program recruits students as they transition between grades, especially those who need extra academic and emotional support. The site coordinator works directly with parents of kids who need more support. Particular attention is paid to first-generation college students and students of color to ensure these groups are represented.

Staff Member Insight

"We're always looking for students that need support…. There's a lot of kids that need support, both that have disabilities and have different social needs…. [Students] fill out an interest form…that gauges where the student is at socially, academically.

Retention Strategies

Staff members work to develop strong relationships with participants and encourage them to return year after year. The best way to retain students is through engagement. Students are essential in recruiting their friends from outside of the program.

Staff Involvement in Planning and Data Usage

Staff members review all kinds of data to address program and student needs. These include:

- the previous year's program evaluation;
- annual standardized student tests to establish a baseline and help measure achievement; and
- the STAR reading skills test, which helps identify students who need extra support.

Drivers for Student Participation

The program is free and provides students with a meal.

Activities Offered

The program offers science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; academic time; and enrichment with a wide variety of content.

Adaptations for Students With Special Needs or English Language Learners (ELL)

Staff members connect students with special needs with the school's special education teacher and identify any modifications that need to be made. English Language Learners participate in a reading program to practice reading with high school student volunteers. These volunteers build the capacity of the students, and their consistent presence helps develop relationships.

Instructional Practices

Staff members used a variety of instructional practices at McCarver to engage students and improve program participation. A focus of the program was improving social-emotional skills.

Safe and Supportive Environment

Staff members create an emotionally safe climate, where students learn without judgment. This begins with positive relationships, especially encouragement of respect and inclusivity. For example, staff members redirect students during lessons with, "You have such great ideas, why don't we take turns sharing." Emotional safety also can be seen in how students interact with each other. During meals, all students sit with their grade level and no one is alone.

Staff Member's Encouragement
"Wow, look at you doing all those right things! I'm impressed!"

Staff members also use several methods to encourage students, such as by giving positive feedback on what they are doing, using open-ended questions to create substantive dialogue, and giving students opportunities to contribute. Staff members also set clear expectations for the activity so that they have the freedom to move around the room and be more actively involved with students.

Student Insight
"[The program is] fun! There's lots of field trips and activities. You can get help from the staff members, volunteers, and owners."

Interaction

Building relationships is a big focus, and there is a strong sense of belonging among students. Most students are regularly observed conversing with each other, and some frequently have their arms across their friends' shoulders. After witnessing tantrums and bullying in the past, staff members sought out ways to make students feel more included. They now have "team time" so students build relationships and tolerance for each other.

Staff Member Insight

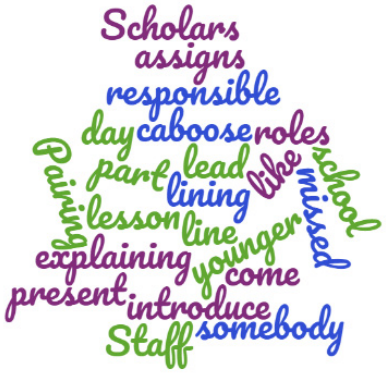
"When we have enrichments, all the grades are mixed, and if you see a fifth grader push a second grader too hard while they're playing a sports enrichment or something, all the other second graders flock to him. 'Are you okay? Did you know that you hurt him? You need to say you're sorry.' It's really cool to see that concern and those relationships that definitely were not there at the beginning of the year."

Interaction (continued)

Staff members give students numerous opportunities to lead: scholars of the day, where students nominate the next student with a recognition on why;

- students who missed a day are paired with somebody who was present to get them caught up;
- students have assigned roles in activities, such as the caboose or line lead; and
- students help explain part of the lesson to younger students who attend.

Leadership Opportunities



Engagement

Choice is important to program success. Staff reported an increase in enrichment and field trips to give students more opportunities to choose what activities they do. One program designated the last week of the program for student-led activities by grade level.

Student choice also leads to increased planning and reflection. Students get to practice planning their chosen enrichment days. With more enrichment, staff are asking for student feedback on what they want to do and how to improve the program. Students also are reflecting more on themselves "on what they did well, and the things they want to do better." In this way, everyone is working on continuous improvement.

Staff Member on Choice

"They [students] get to choose their enrichments once a month. We give them a ballot that they vote on, and they'll give me ideas about the things they want to do and learn. The goal is to have choice in what they work on or how they go about projects."

Student on Growth

"I learned teamwork, how to control anger, and be independent."

Social-Emotional Practices

McCarver staff members create a supportive environment by implementing a "zones" strategy, student-created daily pledges, hosting family nights, and frequently using "team" language. The "zones of regulation" are a useful tool to help students deal with their emotions and provide them with "definitive strategies to use" such as breathing exercises when they feel anxious or jumping jacks when they feel angry. Zones also help students understand the emotions of others and how they can respond to them. Several students described the changes they saw in themselves and their peers as a result of this strategy.

Connections to the School Day

The program deliberately connects activities to what students are learning in the classroom. For example, the principal reported that the program brought in writing and reading specialists. The goals of providing additional educational opportunities were to improve students' reading scores, prepare them for secondary education, and help students realize their potential. As a result, more students are completing their homework and students report working harder in class. The project

Staff Member Insight

"A lot of the students that I used to see in the office during the day are not there anymore. They've learned different strategies to help them calm down.... They talk and they're making friends. Those are just minor changes that wouldn't be on paper or that would be hard to gauge on a test."

director sees how the program helps students develop self-confidence and recognize the value of their voice, helping them to speak up in class.

Relationships With Families and the Community

Staff members report that relationships with families and the community make programming stronger.

Staff Member on Families

"We want every family member to have at least three touch points with program…. It could be a family [member] who just wants to come observe, volunteer, and help out. You're doing something extra."

Family Engagement

Family nights and workshops are important components of the program. Staff members reported some families come for the workshops, some for the family nights, some for all events, and some families don't come at all. Family nights are the events most likely to get everyone involved. Family council is another new program where families can connect with other families. The council is responsible for planning, advertising, and executing the program's Family Nights and Workshops.

Family Communication

Staff members use different communication types to engage families, such as phone calls, e-mails, texts, face-to-face meetings, and home visits. Staff members call families both to engage positively and resolve challenges to ensure that families know how their student is doing. Staff members always try to use the preferred communication method to best engage parents.

Family Expectations for Program

Many families reported that the program exceeded their expectations in relation to homework help and homework completion, improving student attitudes, and improving academic outcomes. Feedback from families includes the following:

- One parent is happy that her son's homework is completed before he comes home.
- Parents appreciate the college-age staff members because they give students "brand-new insights."

Parent Feedback

- Parents say it's helpful when staff members share what their child is doing well, where they are struggling, and how parents can support them at home.

Family Perceptions of Programming

Families notice the staff members' positive attitude and concern for students in the program. Families believe the programming helps students get into their choice college. The focus on homework and grades as well as the participation in extracurricular activities, rounding out each student's experience, makes them ideal candidates for higher education. The program gathers parent feedback through parent surveys and check-ins.

Parent Perceptions of Adult Services

Parents were surveyed on their perceptions of adult services such as scholarship information or community programs on food stamps. They report that they enjoy these offerings.

Staff Member Insight

"Next year, it sounds like they're going to get some more partners like a dance studio…; that program would be really expensive for the kids to participate in as an afterschool activity, just doing that."

Community Engagement

Community partners enrich their students' experience, allowing students to engage in activities that may be cost prohibitive. Often led by volunteers, partnerships offer low-cost access to resources that align with the program's mission. The program relies on the volunteers from the community such as AmeriCorps, local adults, and older students who are able to share their passion.

Reflections From the Field: Toppenish Safe Haven

Introduction

For the past 6 years, American Institutes for Research has partnered with the Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to provide statewide evaluation services for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) program. During the 2015–16 program year, evaluation activities included identifying high-performing programs and conducting site visits in an effort to gather information on what is contributing to their success. Toppenish Safe Haven (TSH), funded by Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic and located in Toppenish, Washington, was one of the outstanding programs selected for a site visit.

Several themes surfaced from TSH staff members, families, and students. Findings include:

- The program's greatest strength is the variety of activities offered.
- Staff members keep track of student outcomes through a variety of data sources.
- Staff members are focusing on higher levels of SEL skills and academic outcomes.
- Families seem pleased with the programming offered.

Organizational Policies and Practices

Professional development opportunities are an important component of setting up the TSH afterschool program for success. Training opportunities are regularly offered for the site coordinator and staff members.

Professional Development and Training Opportunities

A majority of training was completed through OSPI related to the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) or School-Age PQA (SAPQA), as well as resources from conferences.

Staff Insight

"We've had a lot of afterschool training where you get to meet up with other 21st century and afterschool professionals and share ideas and things that they're doing."

Training content included:

- positive youth development;
- conflict resolution and behavior management, specifically with classroom management;
- youth work methods (voice and choice, reframing conflict, etc.);
- youth mental health; and
- first aid.

Preparation for Program

All staff members attend regular meetings to check in on programming and any concerns or ideas for improvement. Content can include topics like suggestions for programming, discipline within an activity, and classroom management.

Recruitment Strategies

Student Insight

"I came here because my mom asked me if I wanted to do it. At first, I didn't want to do it…She asked me one more time, and I had thought about it for a couple days and I said I wanted to go. It'd be easier for my mom and it'd be fun for me."

The site coordinator sends out recruitment flyers to schools and will occasionally go to health fairs and other events. They also receive referrals from school staff members. Although the program often finds itself at maximum capacity, staff members always encourage current participants to reach out to their friends and family as a way to recruit. One population they would like to target is students with disabilities. The program faces some barriers to recruitment because of competing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) activities, so to address this issue, the program began offering its own version of robotics.

Retention Strategies

The program employs several strategies to retain students. They survey students every 2 to 3 months about what they want to learn and do in the program, and then they incentivize participation by offering field trips, food, recognition, and rewards throughout the year.

Staff Involvement in Planning and Data Usage

Planning and Data Usage

The program uses the EZ Report system, where staff members input all information: activity name, time spent, and what the activity aligns with. Based on this data, staff members can see what activities are well attended and that students like the best.

Staff members rely on several methods to track their progress toward reaching their goals. Data sources include school data (e.g., test scores and attendance), teacher surveys, student surveys, external evaluations from an RGI independent evaluator, self-assessment with the Youth Program Quality Assessment (Youth PQA), and feedback from students and parents through the monthly advisory committee meetings, student daily reflection, and student surveys.

Drivers for Student Participation

Families are a big driver for participation. Families want a safe, inexpensive place for their children to go during afterschool hours. The program is working hard to change its reputation from an "inexpensive form of child care" to a program that emphasizes academic enrichment.

Activities Offered

Staff Member Reflections

"With youth buy-in, your program can be successful. If students are engaged and interested and working collaboratively with adults, then you'll have a successful program."

Staff members first survey the students on many different types of activities to see what interests them. Then, staff members narrow down the activities to a manageable number of options. The program currently offers homework help, art, gardening, and STEM.

Adaptations for Special Needs or English Learner Students

The program hires staff members who are bilingual so they are able to communicate with English learner students and families. The program also is working to make sure that kids with disabilities are able to come. The program works with special education school staff and has made some of them afterschool site supervisors. The program also makes accommodations for students who have individualized education programs. For example, if a student needs to take a break, he or she can go to the office.

Instructional Practices

A variety of instructional practices were used at TSH to engage students and increase program participation. The staff members use the YPQA or SAPQA to assess their programming. Improving social-emotional and academic outcomes are large focus areas of the program.

Staff Member Insight

"They actually are more interactive with the reflection itself, and I would like to get to a point where it's them asking questions rather than me asking them questions about how things went."

Safe and Supportive Environment

Staff members want to create a safe haven to keep students out of trouble, build citizenship and character, and improve academic success by giving students a structure to do homework and ask questions. Students appreciate that the program sets clear boundaries and that they can pursue a wide variety of activities.

Staff members ensure that every student is greeted before they enter the building or room. They are greeted with not just "hello," but with their name and even a high five. All staff members are encouraged to give a high five to every student as they enter each new activity. Staff members work hard to let students know that they are welcome and to keep the program fun.

Interaction

As a result of the program, students feel that they have grown their friendships with peers by learning how to work with one another and how to respect one another. On Free Fridays, students can choose what activity they want to participate in, including leadership activities.

Staff Member Insight

"We're kind of starting to lay the groundwork with that now, so we're trying to give every kid a high five as they come through the door as many times as possible every day and say their names and just let them know that they're welcome here and then it's just a matter of trying to keep the place fun."

Engagement

The program decides activities based on student choice and feedback. And when an activity starts, staff members help students practice planning by thinking about what they want to get

out of the activity, what they want to create, and ultimately how they are going to present it at the end of the activity. The program also encourages students to reflect on the day's activity: what they liked and didn't like, as well as how they would do it differently. This informal feedback allows staff members to continuously improve the offerings.

Social-Emotional Practices and Outcomes

Through a student survey, staff members see the change in students from the beginning to end of the year. From this survey, staff can see how students approach situations more thoughtfully. Staff members work to help them "know how to behave, how to be responsible in the community…just teaching them how to cope, coping mechanisms and how to handle tough situations." Students report that they learn a lot about relationships, respect, and responsibility from the program.

Student Feedback

"I've become nicer. I've been respecting others. I learn not to fight with others. I learn not to flip over tables. I learned how to control my manners and respect others instead of getting mad."

Academic Practices and Outcomes

Academic outcomes are reflected through high school graduation and improved performance in reading and math. Students are offered homework help but also want to instill a love a learning in program participants. Staff members scaffold skills across sessions so students can start with a little knowledge and learn to take on the activity on their own. In reading, staff members focus on character analysis, encouraging students to go beyond the book report and think about how they relate to characters on a deeper level. STEM also is a big program component.

Connections to the School Day

Building strong connections to the school day is an important part of the program.

Alignment With School Day

The program connects to the school day primarily through homework help and interactions between program and school staff members. Based on these collaborations, there has been a focus on STEM in addition to

Principal Feedback

"Many of our parents work until late, late hours in the day, and they [the students] come here and they have activities to do… [and] structure, and they have a safe place to be at, which gives an opportunity to those in need to work on their homework."

academic enrichment in reading. Because art is not readily offered during the school day, the program also incorporates it after school. Staff members are looking to offer more "out of the box" activities like coding and programming. During the summer, the emphasis shifts to more outdoor education, thanks to funding by Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office. Staff members report strong relationships with the districts, and they get help from schools during their parents' nights.

Communication

A district staff member described how the school and the program are connected and have regular communication. The program director frequently talks with school staff, including working with school counselors to support students who need additional academic or behavioral help.

Relationships With Families and the Community

Staff members report that relationships with families and community make the program stronger.

Family Engagement

The program supports family nights and town halls in conjunction with the school. Other activities include community barbeques and potlucks.

Family Participation Incentives

Ways the program has incentivized family participation:

- providing food to increase their attendance;
- offering English as a second language and computer classes to parents;
- having classes on health and nutrition;
- training on social media, e-mail, and Internet use;
- presenting on family CPR, food handling, college options, and financial aid.

Family Communication

Direct family communication can be challenging because the program services nine different communities, but the program differentiates communications based on the population. For

example, the program is cognizant of the customs at the Yakama Tribal School and follows these practices when reaching out to families.

Parent Feedback

"For me, it's awesome because it's like the second home for my kids. Roberto said, 'I love the Safe Haven.' Sometimes I go early to my home, and I call Roberto…. He'll say, 'No, I want to stay in the Safe Haven.' He likes to be here."

Family Perceptions of Student Programming

Overall, families seem pleased with programming. Families appreciate its flexibility and how staff members are well-versed with the students. They report knowing staff members well because of daily check-ins and family nights. Families have noticed positive changes in the program becoming more structured and more focused on academics.

Community Engagement

Staff Member on Community Engagement

"We work very closely in many different levels within our own community…. When we need each other, it doesn't take much more than either a phone call, or a text, or an e-mail and we're here to support each other."

Community members contribute to the program's success. The program is run out of the community center, so it is connected to the community. For example, doctors from local clinics come to the center and host informational nights for parents. The program also hosts an advisory committee that encourages community members to offer advice on what could be done to make the programming even better.

Appendix D. Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey Measure

Scales and Items	Not at All True	A Little True	Somewhat True	Mostly True	Completely True
Academic Identity					
Doing well in school is an important part of who I am.	1	2	3	4	5
Getting good grades is one of my main goals.	1	2	3	4	5
I am the kind of person who takes pride in doing my best in school.	1	2	3	4	5
Getting a college education is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I am a hard worker.	1	2	3	4	5
It is important to me to learn as much as I can.	1	2	3	4	5
Positive Mindsets					
I plan out what I need to do to reach my goals.	1	2	3	4	5
I am good at staying focused on my goals.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe that I will be able to reach my goals.	1	2	3	4	5
I finish whatever I begin.	1	2	3	4	5
I don’t get discouraged when things don’t go the way I want them to.	1	2	3	4	5
I don’t give up easily.	1	2	3	4	5
I try things even if I might fail.	1	2	3	4	5
I can solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.	1	2	3	4	5
I can do a good job if I try hard enough.	1	2	3	4	5
I can stay focused on my work even when it's boring.	1	2	3	4	5

Scales and Items	Not at All True	A Little True	Somewhat True	Mostly True	Completely True
Self-Management					
I can stop myself from doing something when I know I shouldn't do it.	1	2	3	4	5
When I'm sad, I can usually start doing something that will make me feel better.	1	2	3	4	5
I am usually aware of my feelings before I act on them.	1	2	3	4	5
I can calm myself down when I'm excited or upset.	1	2	3	4	5
When my solution to a problem is not working, I try to find a new solution.	1	2	3	4	5
I think of past choices when making new decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
School Belonging					
I fit in at my school.	1	2	3	4	5
People at my school care if I'm not there.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel proud to be part of my school.	1	2	3	4	5
My teachers take the time to get to know me.	1	2	3	4	5
I can count on my friends to listen when something is bothering me.	1	2	3	4	5
Interpersonal Skills					
I listen to other people's ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
I work well with others on shared projects.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel bad when someone gets their feelings hurt.	1	2	3	4	5
I respect other points of view, even if I disagree.	1	2	3	4	5
I try to help when I see someone having a problem.	1	2	3	4	5

Scales and Items	Not at All True	A Little True	Somewhat True	Mostly True	Completely True
When I make a decision, I think about how it will affect others.	1	2	3	4	5
Academic Behaviors (retrospective)					
This program has helped me to become more interested in what I'm learning in school.	1	2	3	4	5
This program has helped me to connect my schoolwork to my future goals.	1	2	3	4	5
This program has helped me to do better in school.	1	2	3	4	5
This program has helped me to complete my schoolwork on time.	1	2	3	4	5
This program has helped me to do a better job on my schoolwork.	1	2	3	4	5
Self-Management (Retrospective)					
This program has helped me to become better at handling stress.	1	2	3	4	5
This program has helped me to become better at controlling my temper.	1	2	3	4	5
This program has helped me learn that my feelings affect how I do at school.	1	2	3	4	5
This program has helped me learn how to be patient with others.	1	2	3	4	5
This program has helped me learn how to calm myself down when I'm excited or upset.	1	2	3	4	5
This program has helped me get better at staying focused on my work even when it's boring.	1	2	3	4	5
This program has helped me learn to resist doing something when I know I shouldn't do it.	1	2	3	4	5

Scales and Items	Not at All True	A Little True	Somewhat True	Mostly True	Completely True
Revised Belonging and Engagement Scale					
I fit in at this program.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel proud to be part of my program.	1	2	3	4	5
The adults in this program take the time to get to know me.	1	2	3	4	5
What we do in this program will help me succeed in life.	1	2	3	4	5
There are things happening in this program that I feel excited about.	1	2	3	4	5
This program helps me explore new ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
This program helps me build new skills.	1	2	3	4	5
What we do in this program is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
What we do in this program is challenging in a good way.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix E. Youth Survey and Outcomes Analysis: Detailed Results

Exhibit E1. Summary of Survey Respondents by Grade Level and Year

Grade Level	Spring 2015		Spring 2016	
	N	%	*N*	%
Grade 4	929	20.7%	920	24.5%
Grade 5	795	17.7%	817	21.8%
Grade 6	899	20.0%	666	17.8%
Grade 7	633	14.1%	423	11.3%
Grade 8	493	11.0%	358	9.5%
Grade 9	189	4.2%	44	1.2%
Grade 10	81	1.8%	65	1.7%
Grade 11	68	1.5%	55	1.5%
Grade 12	58	1.3%	38	1.0%
Missing	352	7.8%	364	9.7%
Total	4,497	100%	3,750	100%

Outcome Evaluation Question 1: To what extent do higher levels of program participation impact growth on key youth development outcomes?

Exhibit E2. Propensity Score Stratification With Weighting on Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey Outcomes

Academic Identity			
Covariates	**Treatment (*n* = 262)**	**Comparison (*n* = 107)**	**smd**
Academic Identity time 1	2.79	2.78	0.03
School-level minority	0.61	0.62	–0.07
School-level gender	0.51	0.51	–0.01
School-level special education	0.16	0.15	0.12
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.76	0.77	–0.07
School-level English language learner	0.19	0.21	–0.13
School-level enrollment	569.19	605.39	–0.18
Program-level student participation ratio	1.54	1.61	–0.11
Student-level minority	0.68	0.70	–0.06
Student-level gender	0.57	0.59	–0.03
Student-level special education	0.27	0.22	0.20
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.82	0.80	0.10
Student-level English language learner	0.24	0.20	0.17
Student-level elementary/middle school	0.95	0.96	–0.11
Student-level elementary school	0.46	0.41	0.13
Student-level middle school	0.48	0.54	–0.14
Student-level high school	0.05	0.05	0.05
Program-level fidelity 2	0.04	0.03	0.25
Program-level fidelity 3	0.96	0.97	–0.25
Program-level quality 1	0.19	0.24	–0.17
Program-level quality 2	0.52	0.46	0.14
Program-level quality 3	0.29	0.29	–0.03

Interpersonal Skills			
Covariates	**Treatment (*n* = 365)**	**Comparison (*n* = 148)**	**smd**
Interpersonal Skills time 1	2.69	2.69	0.00
School-level minority	0.63	0.65	–0.13
School-level gender	0.51	0.51	–0.03
School-level special education	0.16	0.16	0.03
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.77	0.78	–0.08
School-level English language learner	0.20	0.22	–0.11
School-level enrollment	570.20	586.18	–0.08
Program-level student participation ratio	1.50	1.50	–0.01
Student-level minority	0.71	0.75	–0.12
Student-level gender	0.54	0.53	0.02
Student-level special education	0.22	0.18	0.13
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.83	0.83	0.03
Student-level English language learner	0.24	0.24	–0.03
Student-level elementary/middle school	0.96	0.96	0.00
Student-level elementary school	0.53	0.49	0.10
Student-level middle school	0.42	0.47	–0.10
Student-level high school	0.04	0.04	0.03
Program-level fidelity 2	0.04	0.04	0.07
Program-level fidelity 3	0.96	0.96	–0.07
Program-level quality 1	0.18	0.19	–0.03
Program-level quality 2	0.53	0.47	0.13
Program-level quality 3	0.29	0.34	–0.13

Positive Mindsets			
Covariates	**Treatment (*n* = 351)**	**Comparison (*n* = 145)**	**smd**
Positive Mindsets time 1	2.71	2.71	0.00
School-level minority	0.62	0.64	–0.10
School-level gender	0.51	0.51	–0.01
School-level special education	0.16	0.16	0.02
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.77	0.78	–0.11
School-level English language learner	0.20	0.21	–0.08
School-level enrollment	574.81	599.15	–0.12
Program-level student participation ratio	1.49	1.47	0.04
Student-level minority	0.70	0.76	–0.16
Student-level gender	0.54	0.54	–0.01
Student-level special education	0.23	0.23	0.03
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.84	0.87	–0.13
Student-level English language learner	0.24	0.27	–0.12
Student-level elementary/middle school	0.96	0.96	0.01
Student-level elementary school	0.50	0.45	0.13
Student-level middle school	0.44	0.50	–0.15
Student-level high school	0.05	0.05	0.06
Program-level fidelity 2	0.04	0.03	0.22
Program-level fidelity 3	0.96	0.97	–0.22
Program-level quality 1	0.18	0.23	–0.21
Program-level quality 2	0.53	0.46	0.18
Program-level quality 3	0.29	0.31	–0.05

Self-Management			
Covariates	**Treatment (*n* = 423)**	**Comparison (*n* = 164)**	**smd**
Self-Management time 1	2.59	2.60	–0.05
School-level minority	0.62	0.65	–0.12
School-level gender	0.51	0.51	0.00
School-level special education	0.16	0.16	–0.01
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.77	0.79	–0.11
School-level English language learner	0.20	0.21	–0.07
School-level enrollment	570.45	586.27	–0.08
Program-level student participation ratio	1.52	1.48	0.06
Student-level minority	0.70	0.75	–0.13
Student-level gender	0.51	0.51	0.01
Student-level special education	0.21	0.21	–0.01
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.83	0.85	–0.07
Student-level English language learner	0.22	0.23	–0.05
Student-level elementary/middle school	0.96	0.96	0.09
Student-level elementary school	0.52	0.49	0.06
Student-level middle school	0.44	0.46	–0.04
Student-level high school	0.04	0.05	–0.10
Program-level fidelity 2	0.04	0.03	0.28
Program-level fidelity 3	0.96	0.97	–0.28
Program-level quality 1	0.19	0.19	0.00
Program-level quality 2	0.52	0.47	0.11
Program-level quality 3	0.29	0.33	–0.13

Exhibit E3. Descriptives for Outcome Evaluation Question 1

Outcomes	Treatment	Weighted Mean	Weighted Standard Deviation	*N*
Academic Identity	0	3.15	0.57	107
Academic Identity	1	3.03	0.60	262
Interpersonal Skills	0	2.76	0.40	148
Interpersonal Skills	1	2.87	0.51	365
Positive Mindsets	0	2.75	0.39	145
Positive Mindsets	1	2.86	0.47	351
Self-Management	0	2.66	0.38	164
Self-Management	1	2.74	0.48	423

Outcome Evaluation Question 2: To what extent do higher levels of program participation impact school-day absences?

Exhibit E4. Mean Number of Days of 21st CCLC Programming Attended During the School Year

	Spring 2015	Spring 2016
Mean school year days attended	70.8	71.6

Exhibit E5. Propensity Score Stratification With Weighting on Absences Outcome

Absences			
Covariates	**Treatment (*n* = 517)**	**Comparison (*n* = 195)**	**smd**
Student-level absences 2015	10.24	10.82	–0.06
School-level minority	0.63	0.65	–0.09
School-level gender	0.51	0.51	–0.05
School-level special education	0.16	0.16	–0.03
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.77	0.78	–0.09
School-level English language learner	0.20	0.21	–0.09
School-level enrollment	571.95	582.76	–0.05

Absences			
Covariates	**Treatment (*n* = 517)**	**Comparison (*n* = 195)**	**smd**
Program-level student participation ratio	1.50	1.44	0.10
Student-level minority	0.72	0.76	–0.12
Student-level gender	0.52	0.52	–0.01
Student-level special education	0.19	0.19	0.01
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.84	0.84	0.03
Student-level English language learner	0.23	0.25	–0.07
Student-level elementary/middle school	0.97	0.95	0.17
Student-level elementary school	0.53	0.50	0.06
Student-level middle school	0.43	0.44	–0.03
Student-level high school	0.04	0.05	–0.13
Program-level fidelity 2	0.04	0.04	0.02
Program-level fidelity 3	0.96	0.96	–0.02
Program-level quality 1	0.19	0.20	–0.02
Program-level quality 2	0.51	0.48	0.07
Program-level quality 3	0.30	0.32	–0.07

Exhibit E6. Descriptives for Outcome Evaluation Question 2

Outcomes	Treatment	Mean	Standard Deviation	*N*
Student-level absences in 2016	0	14.01	14.54	195
Student-level absences in 2016	1	10.74	10.46	517

Outcome Evaluation Question 3: To what extent does growth on key youth development outcomes mediate the relationship between higher levels of program participation and school-day absences?

Exhibit E7. Multilevel Path Model Parameter Estimates for Self-Management

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables (Endogenous)		
	Program Participation	Self-Management	School-Day Absences
Student Level			
Gender	2.351	–0.056	–0.573
Ethnicity/White	–1.347	0.088	0.056
Ethnicity/Hispanic	–0.564	0.123*	–1.486
Free or reduced-price lunch	0.424	–0.002	3.204*
English language learner	–2.99	–0.055	–1.328
Special education student	3.139	0.11*	0.628
Grade level	–4.691**	–0.002	1.816*
Prior year school-day absences	–0.548**		0.653**
Prior Academic Identity	–3.754		
Prior Positive Mindsets	–0.056		
Prior Self-Management	2.955	0.34**	
Prior Interpersonal Skills	8.255*		
Self-Management			–1.321
Program participation		0.001	–0.058**
Program participation -> Self-Management			–0.001
R^2	0.137**	0.062**	0.472**
Center Level			
Implementation fidelity	9.023	0.111†	
Program quality	–1.572	0.03	
Student participation ratio	–7.688*	0.022	
R^2	0.078	0.219	

†$p < .10$. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Exhibit E8. Multilevel Path Model Parameter Estimates for Positive Mindsets

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables (Endogenous)		
	Program Participation	Positive Mindsets	School-Day Absences
Student Level			
Gender	2.847	–0.012	–0.768
Ethnicity/White	–3.502	0.09	0.26
Ethnicity/Hispanic	–2.69	0.078	–1.845
Free or reduced-price lunch	–0.967	–0.017	3.827*
English language learner	–6.3	–0.005	–1.498
Special education student	5.082	0.067	–0.862
Grade level	–4.299**	–0.029	2.324*
Prior year school-day absences	–0.51**		0.638**
Prior Academic Identity	–1.414		
Prior Positive Mindsets	–6.112	0.453**	
Prior Self-Management	1.138		
Prior Interpersonal Skills	8.181†		
Positive Mindsets			–0.941
Program participation		0.001	–0.062**
Program participation -> Positive Mindsets			–0.001
R^2	0.146**	0.083**	0.484**
Center Level			
Implementation fidelity	13.618	0.014	
Program quality	–2.077	0.019	
Student participation ratio	–10.41**	0.022	
R^2	0.135†	0.098	

†$p < .10$. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Exhibit E9. Multilevel Path Model Parameter Estimates for Academic Identity

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables (Endogenous)		
	Program Participation	Academic Identity	School-day Absences
Student Level			
Gender	2.901	–0.125*	0.045
Ethnicity/White	–0.705	0.011	–2.812
Ethnicity/Hispanic	–2.113	0.097	–2.144
Free or reduced-price lunch	0.748	0.021	0.92
English language learner	–3.09	–0.147†	–1.538
Special education	4.723	–0.003	0.676
Grade level	–3.338†	–0.109**	1.12**
Prior year school-day absences	–0.449**		0.565**
Prior Academic Identity	–6.171	0.285 *	
Prior Positive Mindsets	–6.847		
Prior Self-Management	–2.185		
Prior Interpersonal Skills	12.45*		
Academic Identity			–0.213
Program participation		–0.002	–0.038**
Program participation -> Academic Identity			0.00
R^2	0.113*	0.128**	0.508**
Center Level			
Implementation fidelity	15.876	–0.197†	
Program quality	–3.835	–0.002	
Student participation ratio	–12.685**	0.071	
R^2	0.232*	0.666	

†$p < .10$. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Exhibit E10. Multilevel Path Model Parameter Estimates for Interpersonal Skills

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables (Endogenous)		
	Program Participation	Interpersonal Skills	School-Day Absences
Student Level			
Gender	3.588	–0.148**	0.046
Ethnicity/White	0.517	0.132†	–0.478
Ethnicity/Hispanic	–0.099	0.211**	–1.598
Free or reduced-price lunch	–0.769	–0.057	2.862 *
English language learner	–3	–0.103†	–1.668†
Special education	4.399	0.025	0.006
Grade level	–5.731**	–0.034†	1.735**
Prior year school-day absences	–0.383**		0.628**
Prior Academic Identity	0.718		
Prior Positive Mindsets	–7.605		
Prior Self-Management	3.565		
Prior Interpersonal Skills	10.298	0.204*	
Interpersonal Skills			–0.387
Program participation		0.001†	–0.05**
Program participation -> Interpersonal Skills			0.00
R^2	0.132**	0.088**	0.483**
Center Level			
Implementation fidelity	12.274	–0.015	
Program quality	–2.783	0.013	
Student participation ratio	–6.962†	–0.001	
R^2	0.105	0.075	

†$p < .10$. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Outcome Evaluation Question 4: To what extent does the level of program participation impact school-related outcomes for students who needed to improve on those outcomes?

Exhibit E11. Descriptive Statistics on Covariates on Matched Sample: Grade 4

Covariates	Treatment (*n* = 969)	Matched Comparison (*n* = 6,396)	smd (Treatment - Matched Comparison)
Math scale score 2015	2069.46	1998.52	0.08
English language arts scale score 2015	2040.95	1954.16	0.09
N student absences 2015	7.62	7.06	0.06
N student disciplinary incidents 2015	0.06	0.05	0.03
School-level gender	0.52	0.52	0.06
School-level elementary	0.93	0.94	–0.04
School-level middle school	0.07	0.06	0.04
School-level special education	0.16	0.16	–0.01
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.80	0.79	0.07
School-level English language learner	0.27	0.25	0.08
School-level ethnicity: Black	0.06	0.07	–0.04
School-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.42	0.41	0.07
School-level ethnicity: White	0.36	0.37	–0.04
School-level enrollment	531.54	538.11	–0.04
School-level English language arts scores 2015	–0.09	–0.06	–0.22
School-level math scores 2015	–0.06	–0.01	–0.24
Student-level gender	0.48	0.50	–0.03
Student-level ethnicity: Black	0.08	0.08	0.04
Student-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.50	0.45	0.13
Student-level ethnicity: White	0.28	0.32	–0.11
Student-level special education	0.15	0.13	0.12
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.85	0.82	0.13
Student-level English language learner	0.33	0.24	0.25

Exhibit E12. Descriptive Statistics on Covariates on Matched Sample: Grade 5

Covariates	Treatment (*n* = 857)	Matched Comparison (*n* = 6,182)	smd (Treatment - Matched Comparison)
Math scale score 2015	2184.32	2170.10	0.02
English language arts scale score 2015	2150.48	2126.69	0.03
N student absences 2015	8.08	8.16	–0.01
N student disciplinary incidents 2015	0.10	0.10	0.01
School-level gender	0.52	0.52	0.04
School-level elementary	0.88	0.89	–0.02
School-level middle school	0.12	0.11	0.02
School-level special education	0.16	0.16	0.04
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.80	0.80	0.02
School-level English language learner	0.26	0.26	0.01
School-level ethnicity: Black	0.07	0.07	–0.04
School-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.44	0.43	0.03
School-level ethnicity: White	0.34	0.34	0.03
School-level enrollment	531.28	546.09	–0.09
School-level English language arts scores 2015	–0.09	–0.06	–0.17
School-level math scores 2015	–0.04	–0.02	–0.12
Student-level gender	0.47	0.47	0.00
Student-level ethnicity: Black	0.09	0.09	0.00
Student-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.55	0.50	0.12
Student-level ethnicity: White	0.23	0.25	–0.07
Student-level special education	0.14	0.12	0.07
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.89	0.87	0.11
Student-level English language learner	0.30	0.24	0.19

Exhibit E13. Descriptive Statistics on Covariates on Matched Sample: Grade 6

Covariates	Treatment (*n* = 649)	Matched Comparison (*n* = 7,675)	smd (Treatment - Matched Comparison)
Math scale score 2015	1524.46	1409.03	0.09
English language arts scale score 2015	1512.92	1398.75	0.09
N student absences 2015	5.59	5.26	0.04
N student disciplinary incidents 2015	0.07	0.07	–0.01
School-level gender	0.51	0.51	0.01
School-level elementary	0.26	0.24	0.05
School-level middle school	0.74	0.76	–0.06
School-level special education	0.14	0.14	0.03
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.75	0.75	0.04
School-level English language learner	0.19	0.18	0.04
School-level ethnicity: Black	0.04	0.04	–0.03
School-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.46	0.45	0.01
School-level ethnicity: White	0.37	0.37	–0.01
School-level enrollment	606.91	632.64	–0.11
School-level English language arts scores 2015	–0.05	–0.04	–0.12
School-level math scores 2015	–0.04	–0.03	–0.14
Student-level gender	0.51	0.51	0.00
Student-level ethnicity: Black	0.06	0.06	0.07
Student-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.46	0.46	0.01
Student-level ethnicity: White	0.34	0.35	–0.03
Student-level special education	0.16	0.15	0.05
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.81	0.80	0.06
Student-level English language learner	0.22	0.20	0.06

Exhibit E14. Descriptive Statistics on Covariates on Matched Sample: Grade 7

Covariates	Treatment (*n* = 387)	Matched Comparison (*n* = 8,327)	smd (Treatment - Matched Comparison)
Math scale score 2015	2272.41	2245.68	0.04
English language arts scale score 2015	2254.32	2227.57	0.03
N student absences 2015	9.82	9.94	–0.01
N student disciplinary incidents 2015	0.22	0.23	0.00
School-level gender	0.51	0.50	0.02
School-level elementary	0.03	0.04	–0.02
School-level middle school	0.96	0.96	0.00
School-level special education	0.14	0.14	0.06
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.75	0.75	0.04
School-level English language learner	0.18	0.17	0.02
School-level ethnicity: Black	0.04	0.04	0.00
School-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.48	0.48	0.02
School-level ethnicity: White	0.36	0.37	–0.01
School-level enrollment	667.11	683.19	–0.07
School-level English language arts scores 2015	–0.02	–0.01	–0.02
School-level math scores 2015	–0.01	–0.01	0.03
Student-level gender	0.56	0.55	0.02
Student-level ethnicity: Black	0.08	0.07	0.07
Student-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.52	0.52	0.02
Student-level ethnicity: White	0.30	0.30	–0.02
Student-level special education	0.20	0.18	0.07
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.81	0.80	0.03
Student-level English language learner	0.17	0.16	0.04

Exhibit E15. Descriptive Statistics on Covariates on Matched Sample: Grade 8

Covariates	Treatment (*n* = 311)	Matched Comparison (*n* = 8,927)	smd (Treatment - Matched Comparison)
Math scale score 2015	2501.31	2238.55	0.05
English language arts scale score 2015	2504.22	2230.19	0.05
N student absences 2015	3.15	0.16	0.40
N student disciplinary incidents 2015	0.98	0.06	0.36
School-level gender	12.09	12.11	0.00
School-level elementary	0.12	0.14	–0.03
School-level middle school	0.50	0.50	–0.08
School-level special education	0.14	0.14	0.07
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.75	0.73	0.10
School-level English language learner	0.18	0.17	0.14
School-level ethnicity: Black	0.03	0.03	–0.07
School-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.52	0.48	0.13
School-level ethnicity: White	0.36	0.38	–0.08
School-level enrollment	652.99	676.35	–0.10
School-level English language arts scores 2015	–0.02	–0.01	–0.10
School-level math scores 2015	–0.01	–0.01	–0.02
Student-level gender	0.60	0.57	0.06
Student-level ethnicity: Black	0.05	0.05	–0.09
Student-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.51	0.47	0.10
Student-level ethnicity: White	0.35	0.37	–0.06
Student-level special education	0.21	0.19	0.07
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.80	0.79	0.06
Student-level English language learner	0.23	0.20	0.12

Exhibit E16. Descriptive Statistics on Covariates on Matched Sample: Grade 9

Covariates	Treatment (*n* = 26)	Matched Comparison (*n* = 1,685)	smd (Treatment - Matched Comparison)
Math scale score 2015	10.62	10.50	0.01
English language arts scale score 2015	0.15	0.13	0.05
N student absences 2015	1.24	0.31	0.08
N student disciplinary incidents 2015	0.54	0.14	0.02
School-level gender	0.51	0.51	0.13
School-level elementary	0.02	0.01	0.19
School-level middle school	0.06	0.05	0.07
School-level special education	0.14	0.14	0.11
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.68	0.67	0.09
School-level English language learner	0.08	0.09	–0.08
School-level ethnicity: Black	0.04	0.05	–0.10
School-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.34	0.35	–0.03
School-level ethnicity: White	0.47	0.44	0.12
School-level enrollment	1064.04	1164.99	–0.15
School-level English language arts scores 2015	0.02	0.03	–0.07
School-level math scores 2015	–0.01	0.00	–0.17
Student-level gender	0.62	0.69	–0.20
Student-level ethnicity: Black	0.08	0.12	–0.27
Student-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.38	0.40	–0.03
Student-level ethnicity: White	0.31	0.22	0.26
Student-level special education	0.19	0.20	–0.04
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.85	0.88	–0.17
Student-level English language learner	0.19	0.20	–0.03

Exhibit E17. Descriptive Statistics on Covariates on Matched Sample: Grade 10

Covariates	Treatment (*n* = 36)	Matched Comparison (*n* = 861)	smd (Treatment - Matched Comparison)
Math scale score 2015	24.00	22.14	0.08
English language arts scale score 2015	0.08	0.08	0.03
N student absences 2015	2.32	2.25	–0.11
N student disciplinary incidents 2015	0.81	0.80	–0.12
School-level gender	0.52	0.51	0.14
School-level elementary	0.00	0.00	NA
School-level middle school	0.12	0.14	–0.07
School-level special education	0.16	0.15	0.19
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.74	0.75	–0.07
School-level English language learner	0.10	0.11	–0.14
School-level ethnicity: Black	0.01	0.01	0.28
School-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.41	0.44	–0.10
School-level ethnicity: White	0.44	0.40	0.12
School-level enrollment	681.50	636.64	0.11
School-level English language arts scores 2015	0.03	0.03	0.05
School-level math scores 2015	0.01	0.01	0.00
Student-level gender	0.64	0.65	–0.04
Student-level ethnicity: Black	0.00	0.00	NA
Student-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.44	0.47	–0.05
Student-level ethnicity: White	0.31	0.31	–0.01
Student-level special education	0.19	0.20	–0.02
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.72	0.74	–0.07
Student-level English language learner	0.28	0.28	–0.01

Exhibit E18. Descriptive Statistics on Covariates on Matched Sample: Grade 11

Covariates	Treatment (*n* = 25)	Matched Comparison (*n* = 995)	smd (Treatment - Matched Comparison)
Math scale score 2015	30.36	32.25	–0.06
English language arts scale score 2015	0.04	0.04	0.02
N student absences 2015	2.13	2.17	–0.03
N student disciplinary incidents 2015	0.80	0.80	0.00
School-level gender	0.53	0.53	0.09
School-level elementary	0.00	0.00	NA
School-level middle school	0.05	0.06	–0.04
School-level special education	0.16	0.15	0.05
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.72	0.71	0.11
School-level English language learner	0.10	0.11	–0.02
School-level ethnicity: Black	0.03	0.03	–0.10
School-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.42	0.41	0.03
School-level ethnicity: White	0.44	0.44	0.03
School-level enrollment	572.72	639.38	–0.14
School-level English language arts scores 2015	–0.04	–0.03	–0.05
School-level math scores 2015	–0.05	–0.04	–0.14
Student-level gender	0.68	0.69	–0.02
Student-level ethnicity: Black	0.04	0.04	0.00
Student-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.52	0.53	–0.02
Student-level ethnicity: White	0.28	0.26	0.07
Student-level special education	0.16	0.16	0.01
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	1.00	1.00	NA
Student-level English language learner	0.08	0.08	0.02

Exhibit E19. Descriptive Statistics on Covariates on Matched Sample: Grade 12

Covariates	Treatment (*n* = 24)	Matched Comparison (*n* = 1,079)	smd (Treatment - Matched Comparison)
Math scale score 2015	35.08	33.75	0.04
English language arts scale score 2015	0.08	0.07	0.05
N student absences 2015	2.15	2.13	0.02
N student disciplinary incidents 2015	0.77	0.75	0.07
School-level gender	0.52	0.52	0.10
School-level elementary	0.00	0.00	NA
School-level middle school	0.17	0.13	0.18
School-level special education	0.15	0.15	0.13
School-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.76	0.74	0.15
School-level English language learner	0.10	0.10	0.00
School-level ethnicity: Black	0.03	0.03	–0.12
School-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.35	0.36	0.00
School-level ethnicity: White	0.37	0.41	–0.13
School-level enrollment	572.50	571.83	0.00
School-level English language arts scores 2015	–0.05	–0.03	–0.11
School-level math scores 2015	–0.03	–0.03	–0.05
Student-level gender	0.54	0.51	0.08
Student-level ethnicity: Black	0.00	0.00	NA
Student-level ethnicity: Hispanic	0.38	0.40	–0.05
Student-level ethnicity: White	0.33	0.37	–0.09
Student-level special education	0.29	0.23	0.20
Student-level free or reduced-price lunch	0.83	0.82	0.04
Student-level English language learner	0.08	0.09	–0.04

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