Washington Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers Statewide Evaluation

2022–23 Program Year Report

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Executive Summary

For almost two decades, 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) programs in Washington state have provided afterschool and expanded learning programming to enhance the academic well-being of students living in high-poverty communities. The Washington Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) contracted with the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) to conduct an evaluation of the statewide 21st CCLC program in Washington. Specifically, we conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the 21st CCLC program, which included data collection and support for the existing continuous quality improvement process. AIR built and monitored online data collection modules that not only supported program improvement efforts but also facilitated the ability to report required federal data, monitor programs at the state level, and collect data necessary for evaluation activities that culminated in this annual report.

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted traditional 21st CCLC program operations. State and federal guidance instructed local education agencies and their associated afterschool and expanded learning programs to close all in-person activities and transition to remote instruction. In summer 2020, OSPI issued guidance for all school districts to develop reopening plans for the 2020–21 school year. Plans not only took into consideration offering in-person instruction, distance education, or a combination of these learning modes, but also addressed multiple reopening scenarios as the circumstances surrounding the pandemic continued to evolve. These contextual factors are important to consider in relation to the results, specifically in looking at trends across prior years, as well as the 2022–23 program year—the focus of this report.

In 2022–23, program operations resembled pre-pandemic conditions, with students in Washington returning to a predominantly in-person setting for both the school day and afterschool programming. Key findings and recommendations for the 2022–23 program year are as follows.

Findings on Program Characteristics

One hallmark of the 21st CCLC program is the wide diversity (a) of organizations involved in the provision of 21st CCLC programming, (b) of programs' approaches to delivering services and activities, and (c) in the nature of the student population served.

During the 2022–23 program year, 128 centers were associated with 51 21st CCLC grantees. These centers served 13,030 total youth in Grades prekindergarten (PK) through Grade 12. For

the most part, the domain of Washington 21st CCLC grantees and centers operating during 2022–23 was comparable with prior years in terms of organizational and operational characteristics.

Program Characteristics for the 2022–23 Program Year

- Most 21st CCLC programming (98%) took place in school-based locations, even if the funding agency was not school based.
- Most grantees (49%) were considered midcycle (i.e., in the second to fourth year of their funding cycle); 31% of grantees were new (i.e., in their first year of funding) and 20% were sustaining (i.e., in their last year of funding).
- Most program partnerships were with community-based organizations or other not-for-profit organizations (44%) and school districts (16%) in 2022–23.
- In 2022–23, more than 90% of centers offered in-person-only programming during both the regular school year and the summer.
- Most center program staff were paid during both the regular school year (74%) and the summer (80%).
- The most commonly offered activities during the 2022–23 programming period were STEM (100%), literacy (98%), and physical activity (97%).
- Centers in Washington mostly served youth in Grades PK–5, with nearly 60% of all participants in these grades.
- In 2022–23, 81% of youth attendees had at least a 5% school-day absence rate in the prior academic year, and 52% were chronically absent.

Aligned recommendations
• Consider the different training and technical assistance needs of subgrantees based on their maturity, staffing model, and location. • Continue to monitor the extent to which students from low-income families and those academically at risk are served in the program. • Given the large proportion of students with at least a 5% absence rate during the 2022–23 program year, explore how 21st CCLC staff and programming can support student school-day attendance and academic engagement.

Findings on Program Attendance

The findings presented here are based on descriptive analyses conducted to examine overall youth attendance in programming and the relationship between the level of youth participation in programming and certain program characteristics. These analyses should provide a starting point for further exploration and analyses to inform outcome analyses carried out in future years.

Student Program Attendance

- Overall student attendance decreased in 2022–23 relative to the previous program year, with 13,030 total students attending programming. Of these total attendees, 5,847 (45%) attended regularly (for 30 or more days).
- Of the students who attended programming regularly in 2022–23, the highest proportion (44%) participated for 30–59 days in total.

Student Program Attendance and Student Characteristics

- A majority of regular (58%) and non-regular (50%) attendees were identified as Hispanic in 2022–23.
- Most regular attendees (82%) qualified for free or reduced-price lunch.
- Nearly a third of regular attendees had limited English proficiency (32%), and 17% identified as having special needs.

Student Program Attendance and Program Characteristics

- Nearly 50% of student attendees spent most of their time in STEM or arts-related activities for 3 months or more. Approximately a fourth of attendees spent most of their time in these activities for 6 months or more.
- Across all grade bands (elementary, middle, and high), students with high attendance levels tended to spend a majority of their time in specific activities, such as STEM and the arts.
- No clear associations were found between program attendance levels and students earning less than 100% of attempted credits or having a grade-point average (GPA) of 2.0 or less.
- Elementary and high school students anticipated to need intensive reading and mathematics supports also tended to have the highest program attendance.
- High school students in programs with higher percentages of teachers involved in programming had higher attendance levels, whereas middle school students tended to have lower attendance levels when more teachers provided programming.

Aligned recommendations

- Continue to emphasize the importance of students consistently attending programs.
- Explore what strategies were successful in retaining students, and document these best practices.
- Explore ways to promote youth choice in programming that enable youth to self-direct into activities that represent their interests.
- Explore ways to engage student participants to improve frequency and consistency of participation across the program year.
- Explore further the different staffing roles in promoting recruitment and retainment of youth.

Findings on Student Perceptions, Interests, and Engagement

In spring 2023, the evaluation team from the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) administered a brief survey to students who participated in programming, as well as to the school-day teachers of elementary student participants, to learn about (a) the experiences and feelings of students, and (b) teacher perceptions of student engagement in learning in the classroom. A total of 892 students (705 students in Grades 6–8 and 187 students in Grades 9–12) responded to the student survey, and school-day teachers completed 2,008 surveys about their students in Grades K–5. A summary of findings obtained from the surveys is outlined below.

Student Academic Identity and Self-Esteem

- Nearly three quarters of the student respondents (at least 74%) indicated that getting good grades was one of their main goals and that it was important to them to learn as much as they could.
- More than two thirds of the student respondents (at least 67%) either mostly or completely agreed with statements indicating strong self-esteem, such as feelings of pride and self-satisfaction, a belief in their ability to achieve success, and a recognition of their positive qualities.

Student Program Experiences

- A majority of the student respondents (58%) indicated that they really look forward to attending their afterschool programming.
- More than half of the student respondents (52%) felt that their afterschool program helped them to make new friends, and nearly one third (at least 27%) felt that their afterschool program helped them to find out what they enjoyed doing and what they were good at doing.
- More than half of the student respondents (at least 54%) felt that their afterschool program provided opportunities for them to try new things, work hard to get better at something, or do things that they don't get to do anywhere else.

- A vast majority of the respondents (approximately 80%) reported that there was an adult at their afterschool program who they enjoyed being around and who helped them when they encountered a problem.
- Student respondents who attended programming regularly (60 or more days) consistently demonstrated higher rates of agreement with positive statements about adult program staff than respondents who did not attend programming regularly.
- A majority of the student respondents (approximately 60%) reported that students in their afterschool program supported and helped one another, were friendly with each other, and listened to their teachers.
- High school respondents consistently had higher rates of agreement with positive statements about peer-to-peer interactions and experiences in their program than middle school respondents did.

Changes in Students' Interests

- Half of the student respondents (50%) reported feeling more interested in art than when they began participation, and nearly half (46%) reported feeling more interested in sports.
- More than one third of the student respondents (38%) reported feeling less interested in politics and government, and more than a fourth felt less interested in drama (29%) and in history (27%) than before they started.

Changes in Student Learning Engagement in the Classroom

- According to school-day teachers, about half of all students (at least 52%) made improvements in their learning engagement, whereas roughly 20% of students saw no change in engagement.

Aligned recommendations
• Further explore connections between key student characteristics (e.g., attendance status, grade level) and program experience. Consider what other data collections might be necessary to determine if and how these characteristics have a differential impact on program experience. • Further explore the perceptions and needs of students who indicated unfavorable program experiences with adult staff members and peers. Consider using qualitative methods, such as focus groups, to gather additional data that will inform continuous improvement efforts around program climate and structure.

Findings on Project Director and Site Coordinator Perspectives on Staffing

In spring 2023, the evaluation team from AIR administered a center-level survey to project directors and site coordinators regarding the topic of program staffing. The goal of the surveys

was to understand more about staffing challenges, adaptations, and innovations identified by 21st CCLC centers in Washington, and to document different approaches to staffing 21st CCLC programs and best practices in terms of hiring, orienting, training, and monitoring the performance of 21st CCLC staff. Below we offer a summary of the findings from this survey.

- Nearly two thirds of respondents (65%) reported that staff turnover had at least somewhat of an impact on the operation of their programs during the past year (with 20% indicating a moderate impact and 17% indicating a substantial impact).
- The most cited challenges in hiring different types of staff were in hiring certified teachers to lead academic programming.
- The issue most frequently cited as being at least a minor challenge related to stressful working conditions was maintaining ideal staff-to-student ratios, followed by allocating sufficient time to orient new staff.
- The most frequently reported staff type for turnover compared to previous programming periods was activity leaders for enrichment programming, followed by assistants to help activity leaders provide programming.
- Nearly one third of respondents (31%) reported that they were seeking staff to address academic learning loss but were finding it challenging to obtain appropriate staffing. Approximately one quarter (27%) found it challenging to find staff to support student social and emotional needs or to support enrichment opportunities (24%).
- The most commonly reported strategies for addressing staff turnover were being more intentional about being supportive and responsive to staff needs (83%), adding flexibility to worked hours (63%), and providing additional training and professional development (63%).
- When examining these challenges by different program characteristics, there were some notable differences based on grantee type, year funded, and grade levels served.
- Respondents reported that being more intentional about being supportive and responsive to staff needs was indeed effective, with 75% of all respondents reporting that this approach helped.
- Respondents frequently mentioned four types of strategies that have been most effective in support staff retention: (1) improving pay/benefits, (2) reducing time commitment and scheduling flexibility, (3) fostering a supportive work environment, and (4) providing opportunities for professional development and collaboration.

Aligned recommendations

- Further explore connections between key program characteristics (e.g., grantee type, funded cohort, grade levels served) and staffing challenges and solutions. Consider what other data collections might be necessary to determine if and how these characteristics have a differential impact on program experience. For example, what role might urbanicity of the surrounding community play in the noted staff challenges and solutions?
- Further explore the solutions that respondents indicated were most effective in reducing staff turnover and mitigating stressful working conditions. Consider using qualitative methods, such as interviews, to gather additional data that delve into the details of how programs implemented these solutions. These details may be useful to the field more broadly.

Findings on State and Federal Targets

AIR explored aggregate statewide performance on a series of key performance indicators (KPIs) across four domains: Program Implementation, Program Quality, Student Program Attendance, and Student Outcomes for the 2022–23 program year.

- Data point to strong performance across centers on some indicators related to program implementation, program quality, and student program participation, and to weaker performance on others.
- Among students who needed to improve, over half in each sample improved for most indicators.

Aligned recommendations

- Monitor indicators for the next several years to better understand performance and trends. Use this information to further refine the KPIs as necessary and identify areas where grantees and centers could use more support in meeting the stated expectations and goals of the 21st CCLC program in Washington.

Introduction

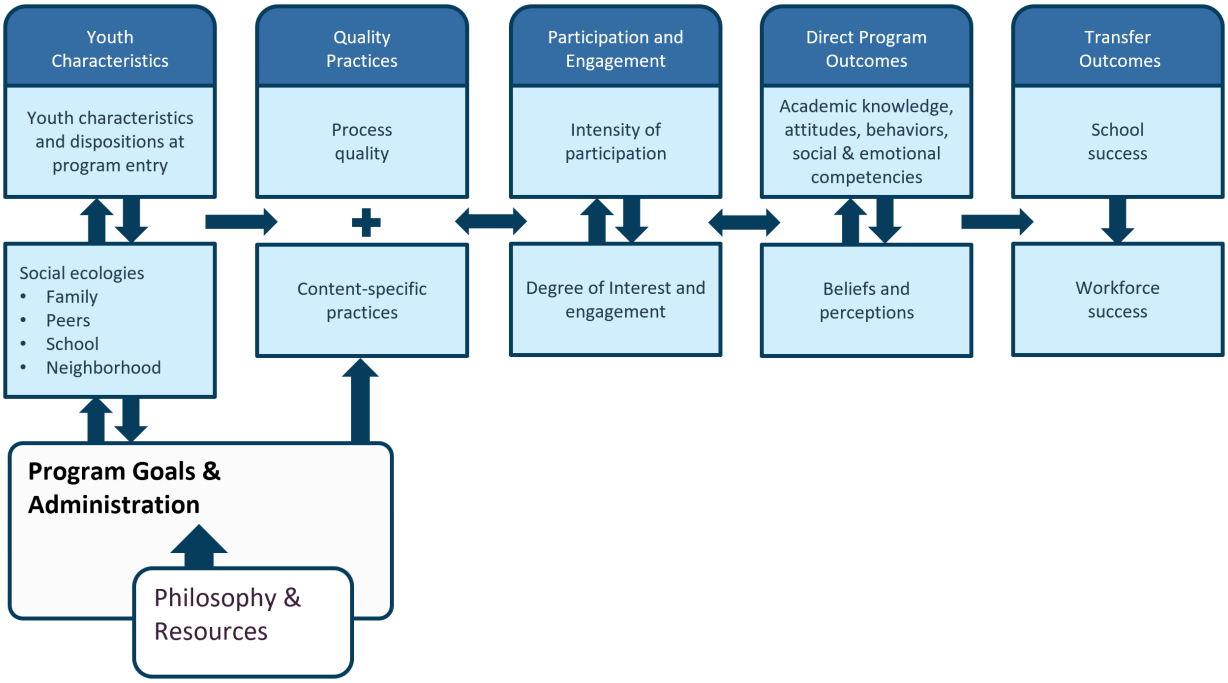
For almost two decades, the Washington Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program has provided afterschool programming to enhance the academic well-being of youth who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. Since 2011, the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has contracted with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to support the evaluation of the statewide 21st CCLC program in Washington state.

Specifically, for the current evaluation contract with OSPI, we conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the 21st CCLC program for the 2022–23 programming period, which included data collection and reporting to support OSPI in submitting federally required data, investigation of statewide evaluation questions, and support for continuous program quality improvement efforts using data. AIR built and monitored an online data collection system to support program improvement efforts and facilitate the ability to report required federal data, monitor programs at the state level, and collect data necessary for evaluation activities that culminated in an annual report. These activities align with our conceptual framework for how change happens in 21st CCLC, to which we turn next.

Conceptual Framework for Understanding Afterschool Impact

AIR's evaluation activities were grounded in a research-based theory regarding how afterschool programs can have an impact on youth. For more than a decade, researchers have explored how youth benefit from participation in high-quality afterschool programs (Auger et al., 2013; Durlak, Weissberg, et al., 2010; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Vandell et al., 2007). Based on this work, AIR created a conceptual framework that outlines the key elements needed for afterschool programs to have an impact on youth outcomes. This conceptual framework, outlined in Exhibit 1, guides the approach we used to conduct the statewide evaluation of the 21st CCLC program in Washington.

Exhibit 1. Conceptual framework for how afterschool programs can have an impact on youth participants.



The framework starts with the youth 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, et al., 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 fare in the school-day classroom, and (b) information provided by the youth on youth surveys.

After considering the predispositions and contextual factors influencing youth before they enter a program, several factors affect the experiences that youth have once they do. First, programs must be of high quality to have an impact. The two broad categories of quality are process quality and content-specific practices. Process quality refers to the adoption of practices and approaches to service delivery that ultimately create a developmentally appropriate setting for youth, where participants feel safe and supported and have opportunities to form meaningful relationships, experience belonging, and be active participants in their learning and development. These universal practices 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 seeks 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 for teaching technology skills. Content-specific practices adopted by the 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 used to develop content-specific skills and (b) data on youth participation in specific types 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 distinct types of activities. Being "present" in the program is not enough, however, to ensure that youth will benefit from the 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 practices related to process quality and content-specific practices should heavily influence the degree of engagement and interest that youth experience while participating in 21st CCLC programming.

Once youth become engaged and active, they will 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, plus (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 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 that youth develop by participating in high-quality 21st CCLC programming may be used in other settings outside the program to drive achievement and success in the school and the workplace—a concept commonly referred to as *transfer.* The 21st CCLC programs typically measure these outcomes by connecting participation data with school-related data available at the state or local level.

Evaluation Questions

Given this understanding of the conceptual framework, AIR's evaluation activities during the contract period helped to answer several evaluation questions. Data presented in this report

reflect 21st CCLC programming in Washington state as programs continue to adapt to and work through challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The reader must consider the contextual implications of the pandemic when reviewing the data, key findings, and recommendations in this report. Differences in the results for the 2019–21 program years may be caused by interruptions in data collection or transitions in normal program operations. The pandemic continued to impact some data collection processes and data availability during the 2021–22 program year. The evaluation questions for the 2022–23 program year are organized into the following chapters:

Chapter 1. Program Characteristics

1. What primary characteristics were associated with the grants and centers funded by 21st CCLC and the student population served by the program?

Chapter 2. Program Attendance

2. What did program attendance look like?
3. How did student characteristics relate to students' level of program attendance?
4. How did participation in different activity types relate to program participation rates and student academic performance?

Chapter 3. Student Perceptions, Interests, and Engagement

5. What do students think of their own academic identity and self-esteem?
6. What were the experiences of students attending 21st CCLC programming in the 2022–23 program year, including how they think the program has helped them?
7. How did students' interests change after participating in afterschool programming?
8. To what extent did student learning engagement in the classroom change during the 2022–23 program year?

Chapter 4. Descriptive Study of Project Director and Site Coordinator Perspectives on Staffing

9. What are the ongoing staffing challenges in Washington 21st CCLC centers?
10. What changes have Washington 21st CCLC centers made to staffing to better respond to the needs of students and families?
11. What especially innovative or robust staffing practices and approaches are being employed that may warrant consideration as best practices for the Washington 21st CCLC community more broadly?

Chapter 5. State and Federal Targets

12. Are 21st CCLC programs in Washington state meeting state and federal performance targets for student outcomes?
13. Are 21st CCLC programs in Washington state meeting state and federal goals and objectives for program implementation?

In the remaining sections of this report, we address each of these questions.

Chapter 1. Program Characteristics

One hallmark of the 21st CCLC program is the wide diversity (a) of organizations involved in the provision of 21st CCLC programming, (b) of programs' approaches to delivering 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 for the 2022–23 program year.

Findings	Aligned recommendations
• Most 21st CCLC programming (98%) took place in school-based locations, even if the funding agency was not school based. • In 2022–23, more than 90% of centers offered in-person-only programming during both the regular school year and the summer. • Most staff were paid during both the regular school year (74%) and the summer (80%). • The most commonly offered activities during the 2022–23 programming period were STEM (100%), literacy (98%), and physical activity (97%). • Programs mostly served youth in Grades PK–5, with nearly 60% of all 2022–23 participants in these grades. • 81% of 2022–23 student attendees had an absence rate of at least 5% in the prior academic year.	• Consider the different training and technical assistance needs of subgrantees based on their maturity, staffing model, and location. • Continue to monitor the extent to which students from low-income families and those academically at risk are served in the program. • Given the large proportion of students with at least a 5% absence rate from school during the 2022–23 program year, explore how 21st CCLC staff and programming can support student school-day attendance and academic engagement.

Evaluation Question 1: What primary characteristics were associated with the grants and centers funded by 21st CCLC and the student population served by the program?

Grantee Characteristics

OSPI distributes 21st CCLC funds from the U.S. Department of Education through a competitive bidding process, through which applicants are selected to receive new grants to operate centers in high-poverty communities and serve students attending schools in need of improvement. Grants active during the 2022–23 programming period were initially awarded in 2018 (*n* = 10), 2019 (*n* = 13), 2021 (*n* = 12), and 2022 (*n* = 16). 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.

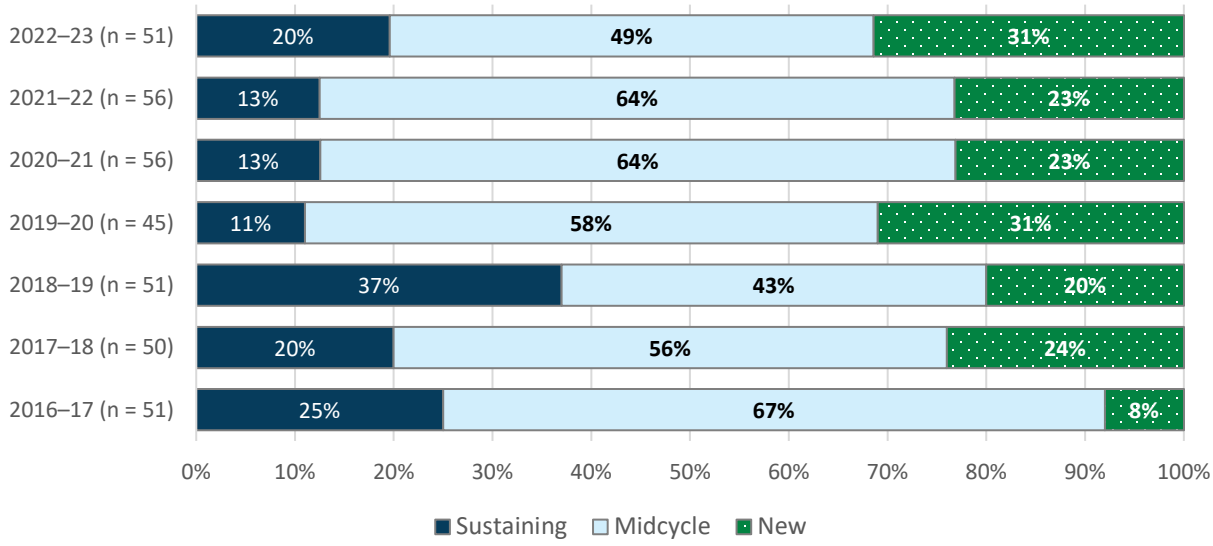
Grantee Maturity

The evaluation team examined grantee maturity from 2016–17 through 2022–23 (Exhibit 2). We classified Washington grantees into the following three possible maturity categories and examined the distribution across each year:

- **New**—grantees in their first year of 21st CCLC funding.
- **Midcycle**—grantees not in their first year but also not in their last year of funding.
- **Sustaining**—grantees in their last year of funding.

Understanding grantee maturity in relation to the types and level of support each group might need is important. Many grantees in their first year of funding likely navigate compliance activities related to grant requirements and might need different supports than midcycle grantees, which focus on things such as providing higher quality services, or than grantees sustaining their program and thinking about how to continue services once the grant funding ends.

Exhibit 2. During the 2022–23 programming period, of the 51 Washington state grantees, 31% were new, 49% were midcycle, and 20% were sustaining.



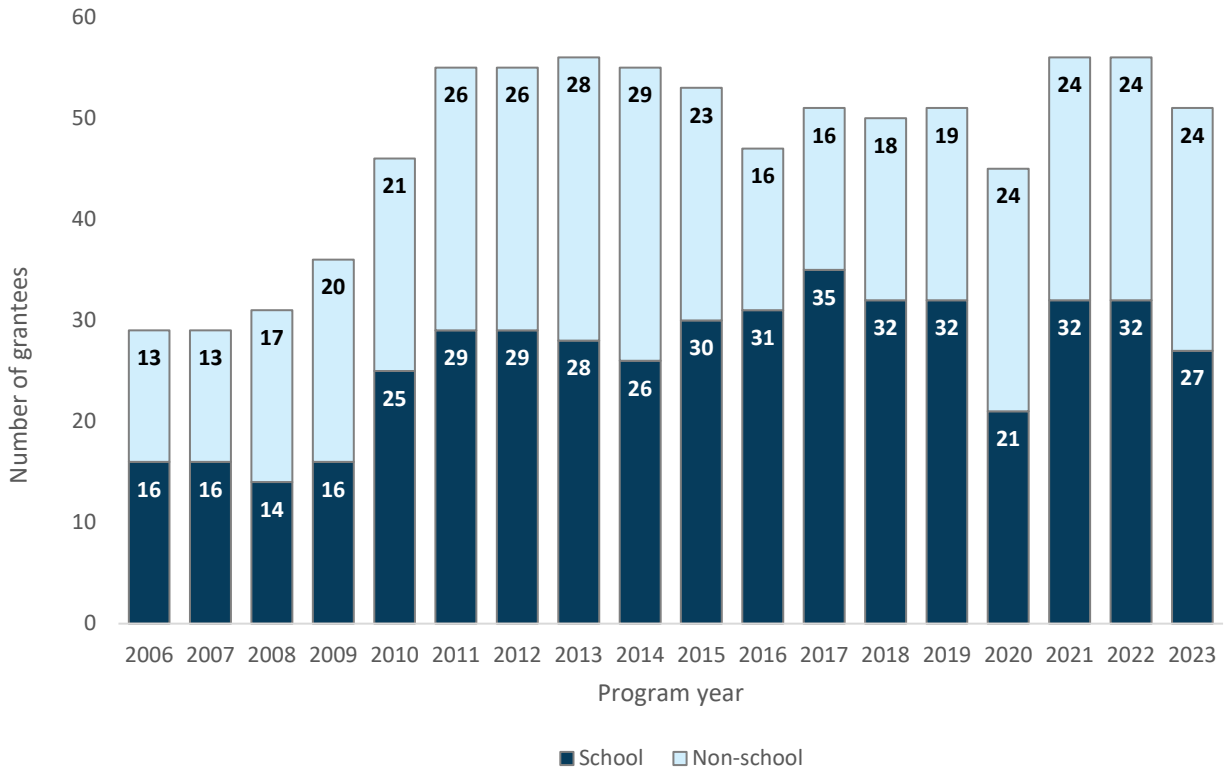
Note. OSPI awarded grants for a 5-year period; however, during the 2020–21 and 2021–22 program years, some programs received an extension. In addition, Cohort 17 programs were funded in the winter of the school year, months later than when traditional awards happen. As a result, Cohort 17 programs used the remainder of Year 1 of their grant to for planning purposes. No new awards were made in 2021–22. Data are from OSPI records.

Grantee Organization Type

As established in the authorizing legislation for 21st CCLC programming, 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 include public districts, charter schools, and private schools. Non-school organizations include, among other entities, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, health-based organizations, and park districts. However, school and non-school organizations can look different from each other 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 state, school and non-school organizations have been represented equally since the state-administered program began. This trend changed in the 2014–15 program year (Exhibit 3), however, with more school-based programs represented in 7 of the 8 following years (with 2019–20 being the exception). In 2022–23, approximately 53% were funded through school entities.

Exhibit 3. During 2022–23, more than half of grantees were funded through school entities.



Note. Data are from OSPI records.

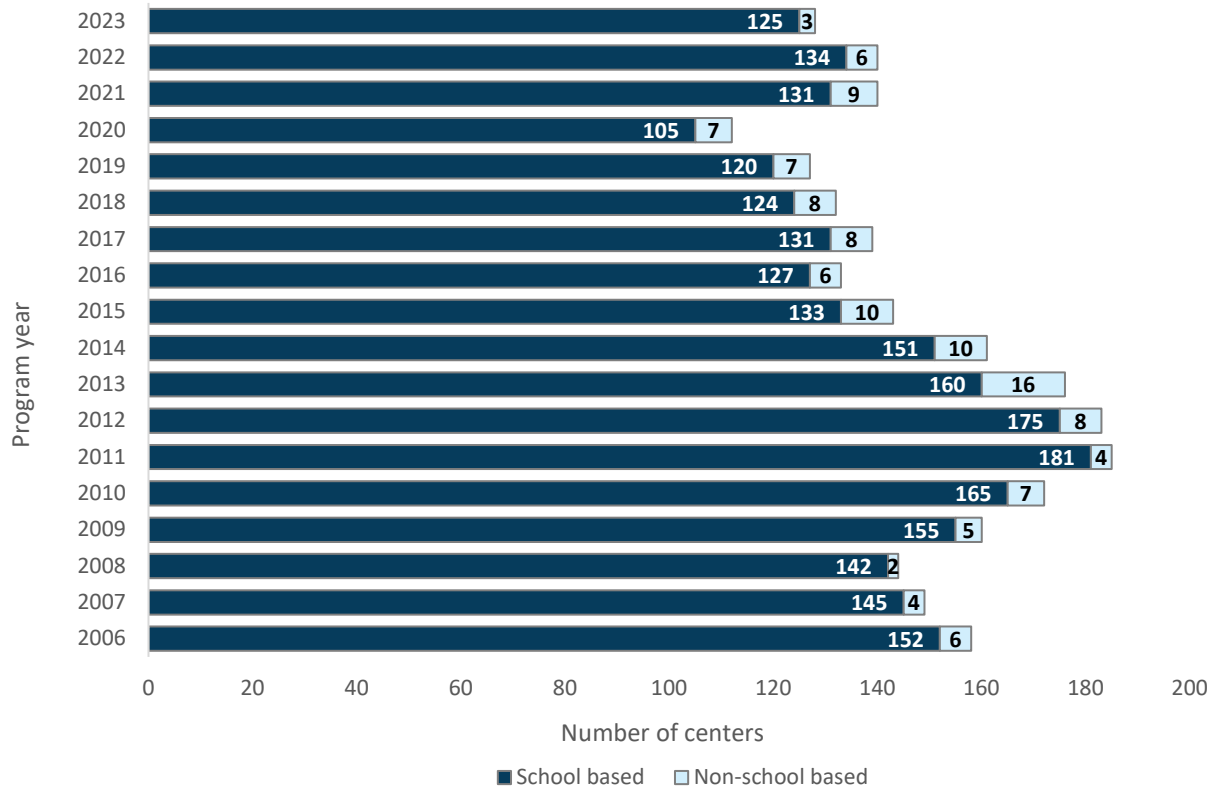
Center Characteristics

We use the term *center* in this report to refer to the physical location where 21st CCLC-funded services and activities take place. Centers have defined hours of operation, dedicated staff members, and usually site coordinator positions. Each 21st CCLC grantee in Washington has at least one center; many grantees have more than one center. During the 2022–23 program year, 128 centers were funded in Washington. Of these centers, 99 operated during both the school year and the summer and 29 operated during the school year only (none operated during the summer only). Of the 29 operating during the school year only, 24 were newly funded in late summer 2022 and would not have been expected to operate during the summer 2022 term.

Center Organization Type

Like grantees, centers are either school or non-school based (Exhibit 4). During the 2022–23 program year, the vast majority of Washington's 128 centers (98%) were in schools. Also noteworthy is that there has been a downward trend in the number of total centers funded through the 21st CCLC grant since 2014. This is likely because of the decreasing overall funding amount available for 21st CCLC grants each year. A smaller number of grant awards likely leads to a smaller number of centers funded.

Exhibit 4. During the last 17 years, most centers have been based in schools.

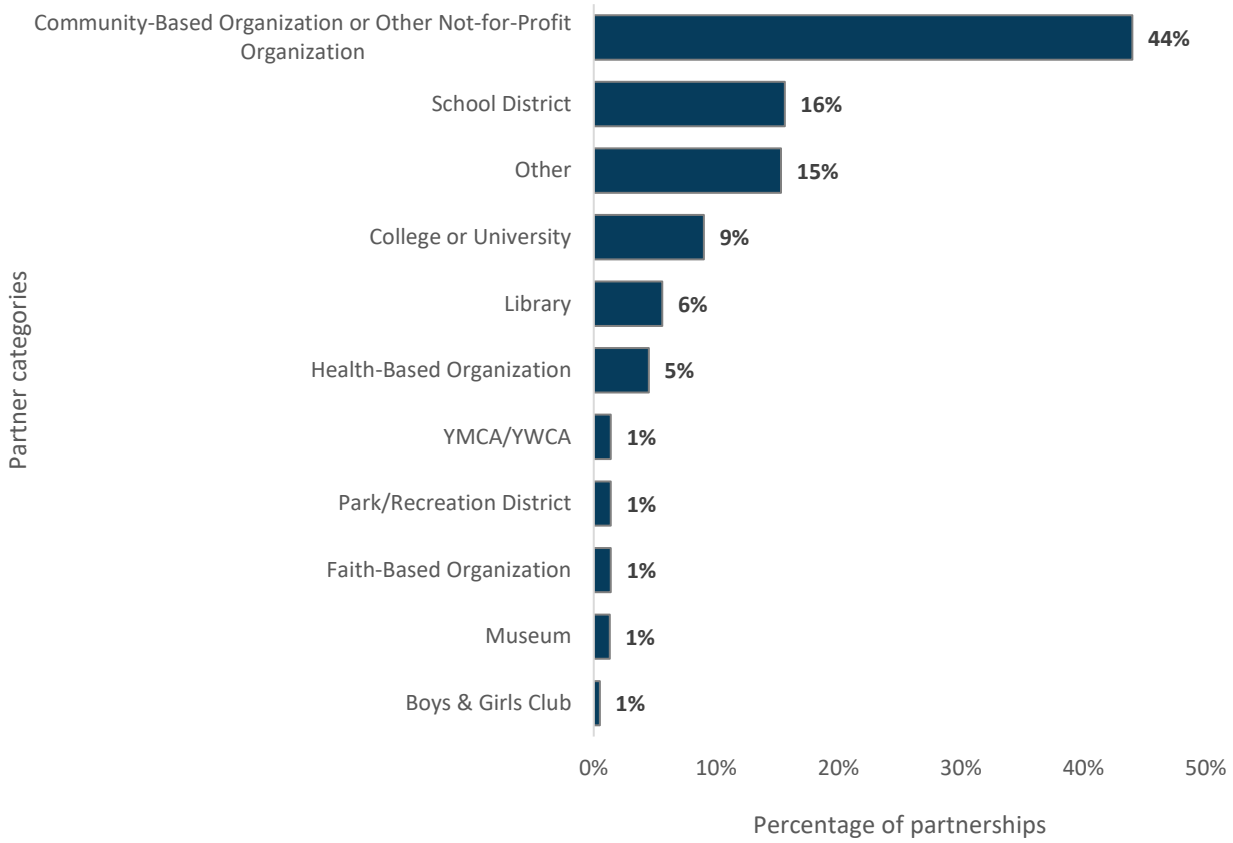


Note. Data are from OSPI records.

Center Partners

The 21st CCLC programs in Washington work with a variety of partner organizations. In 2019–20, centers worked with a range of two to 52 partners, with an average of nine partners per center (*N* = 112 centers). In 2020–21, centers worked with a range of one to 11 partners per center, with an average of four partners per center (*N* = 108 centers). In 2021–22, centers worked with a range of one to 18 partners per center, with an average of four partners per center (*N* = 140 centers). In 2022–23, centers worked with a range of one to 18 partners per center, with an average of four partners per center (*N* = 128 centers). This overall downward trend in the number of partnerships is likely a result of two things: 1) a smaller number of operational subgrantees and centers, and 2) lingering effects from the COVID-19 pandemic (limitations on who may enter centers to support programming). The 128 centers in Washington with partner data available held a total of 557 partnerships with these entities, with some partners working with multiple centers in Washington. The largest percentage of partnerships in the 2022–23 program year was with community-based organizations or other not-for-profit organizations (Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5. The largest percentage of partnerships in 2022–23 was with community-based organizations or other not-for-profit organizations.

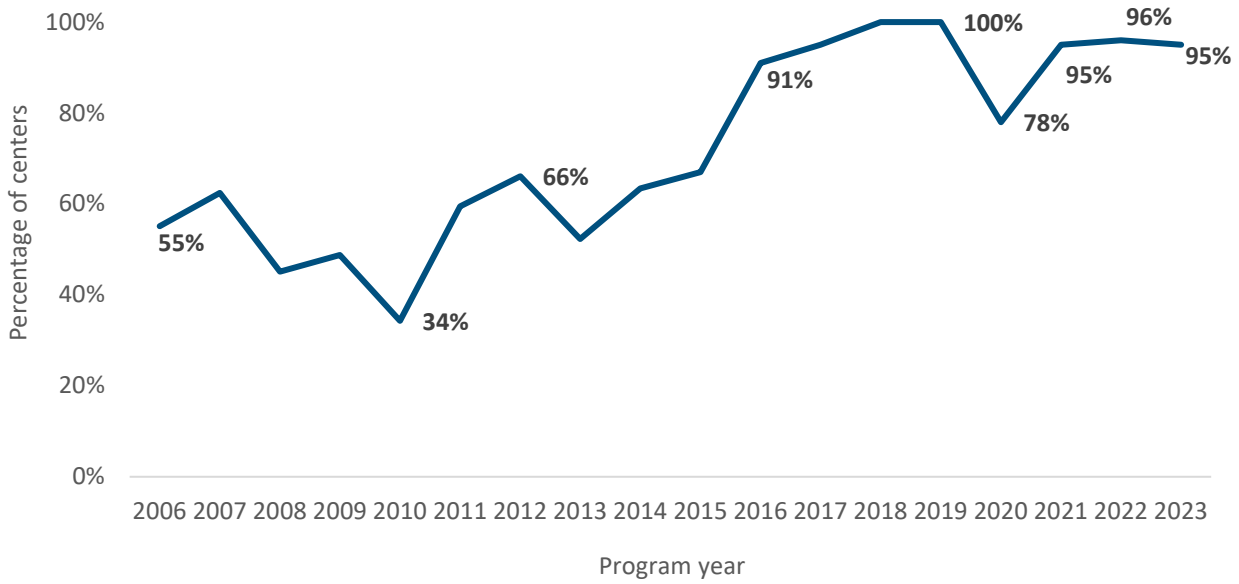


Note. 2023: *N* = 557 partnerships. Other partnerships included entities such as banks, local businesses, public/city services, and individual vendors. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal.

Summer and School Year Operations

In 2018, the number of 21st CCLCs in Washington that offered summer programming increased from previous years, likely resulting from a policy shift that all funded projects must offer summer programming; in 2017–18 and 2018–19, 100% of Washington's centers required to provide summer programming were doing so (Exhibit 6). In 2019–20, the percentage of centers offering summer programming decreased to 78% (*N* = 112) but then increased in 2020–21 to 95% (*N* = 108) and to 96% in 2021–22 (*N* = 140). In 2022–23, the percentage of centers expected to offer summer programming decreased slightly to 95% (*N* = 128). On average, Washington centers operated for 36.3 weeks during the 2020–21 school year, 36.9 weeks during the 2021–22 school year, and 37.1 weeks during the 2022–23 school year; if they held summer programming, an average of 4.9 weeks were added (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 6. The percentage of centers offering summer programming plateaued at 95% in 2023, after a COVID-related decline between 2019 and 2020 and an upward trajectory in the subsequent program years.



Note. 2020: *N* = 112 centers. 2021: *N* = 108 centers. 2022: *N* = 140 centers. 2023: 128 centers. Data are from continuation reports and the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal.

Exhibit 7. Program operations by summer and school year.

Program operations	2020–21		2021–22		2022–23	
	Summer (*N* = 103)	School year (*N* = 108)	Summer (*N* = 135)	School year (*N* = 140)	Summer (*N* = 99)	School year (*N* = 128)
Average program **hours per week**	24.4	14.0	22.6	14.3	28.3	16.8
Average program **days per week**	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.6	4.6	4.8
Average program **weeks per summer/ school year**	5.4	36.3	4.9	36.9	4.9	37.1

Note. Data are from continuation reports and the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal.

Program Delivery Mode

ESSER-funded programs in Washington offered programming through two different delivery modes: in-person or hybrid (any combination of in-person and virtual) delivery. During the 2022–23 program year, center program delivery saw an increasing return to physical spaces after the pandemic. During both the summer (*N* = 99) and regular school year (*N* = 128), more than 90% of centers only offered in-person programming.

Center Staffing

The quality of center staffing is crucial to the success of afterschool programming (Vandell et al., 2004). Many program improvement approaches used in the field emphasize the importance of staff for creating positive developmental settings for youth. The success of afterschool programs depends 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, paraeducators from the school day, and other program staff with a wide spectrum of backgrounds and training. Exhibit 8 illustrates the composition of center program staffing by staff type during the summer and school year of 2022–23. During both the summer and the school year, nonteaching school staff, administrators, school-day teachers, and community members were most prevalent among all center program staff. The proportions of school-day teachers and nonteaching school staff (22% each) employed as center program staff during the summer decreased in the school year (17% and 15% respectively). The proportion of subcontractors (4%) employed as center program staff during the summer increased in the school year (11%).

Exhibit 8. In 2022–23, nonteaching school staff, administrators, school-day teachers, and community members were most prevalent among center program staff during both the summer and the school year.

Program staff type	2022–23	
	Summer (*N* = 99 centers)	School year (*N* = 128 centers)
Total staff	807	1,183
Nonteaching school staff	22%	17%
Administrators	16%	15%
School-day teachers	22%	15%
Community members	14%	15%
College students	8%	12%
Subcontracted staff	4%	11%
High school students	8%	9%
Other staff	3%	4%
Parents	2%	3%

Note. Data are from continuation reports and the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal.

Additionally, Exhibit 9 shows the percentages of staff members who were paid and who volunteered during the school year and the summer. Consistent with the previous two program years, a majority of 2022–23 center program staff during the regular school year (74%) and the summer (80%) were paid. Community members, college students, and high school students were most likely to be employed as volunteer center program staff.

Exhibit 9. The vast majority (74% or more) of center program staff in the 2020–21, 2021–22, and 2022–23 program years were paid staff.

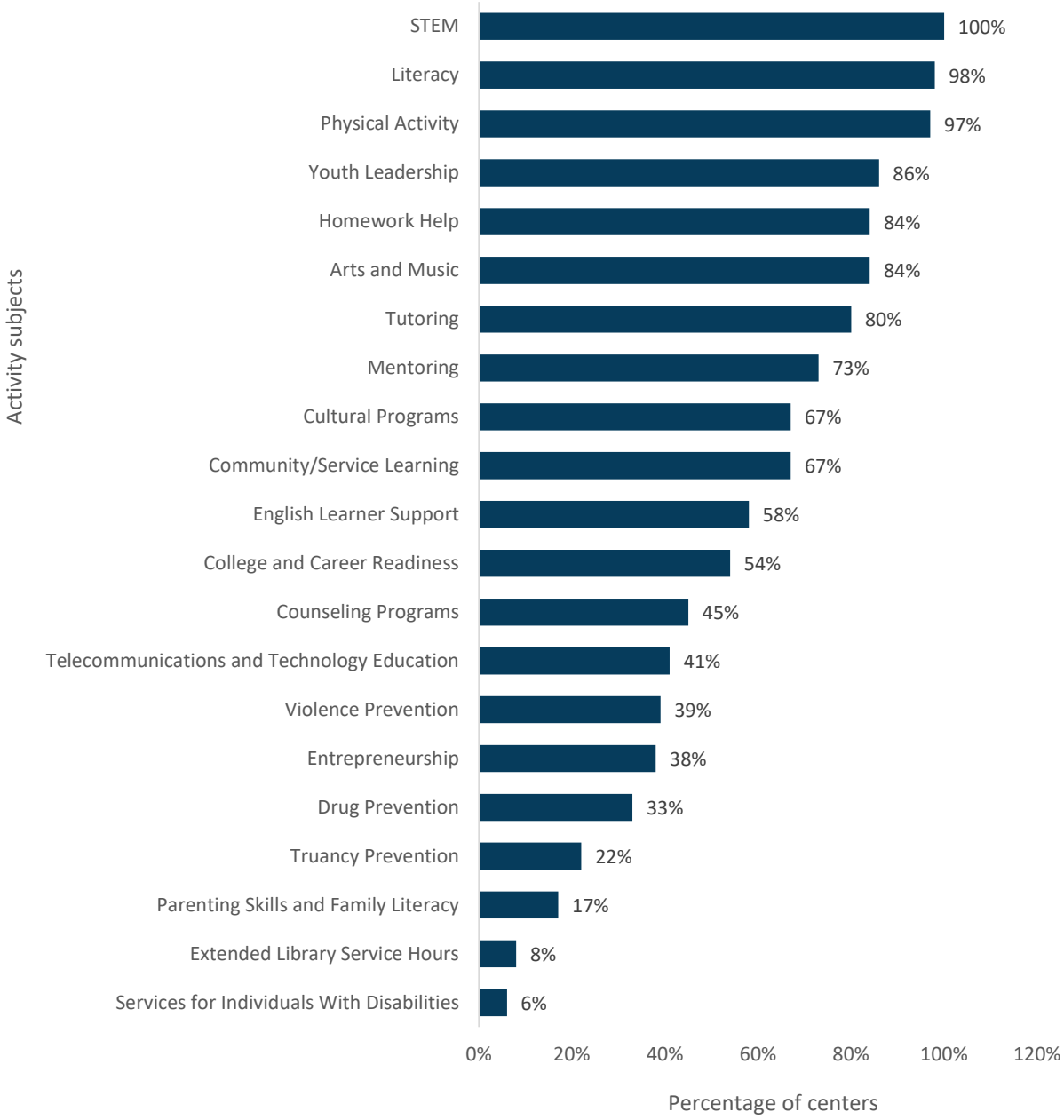
Program staff	2020–21		2021–22		2022–23	
	Summer (*N* = 103 centers)	School year (*N* = 108 centers)	Summer (*N* = 135 centers)	School year (*N* = 140 centers)	Summer (*N* = 99 centers)	School year (*N* = 128 centers)
Total staff	667	835	1,230	1,131	807	1,183
Paid staff	87%	80%	83%	81%	80%	74%
Volunteer staff	13%	20%	17%	19%	20%	26%

Note. Data are from continuation reports and the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal.

Center Activities

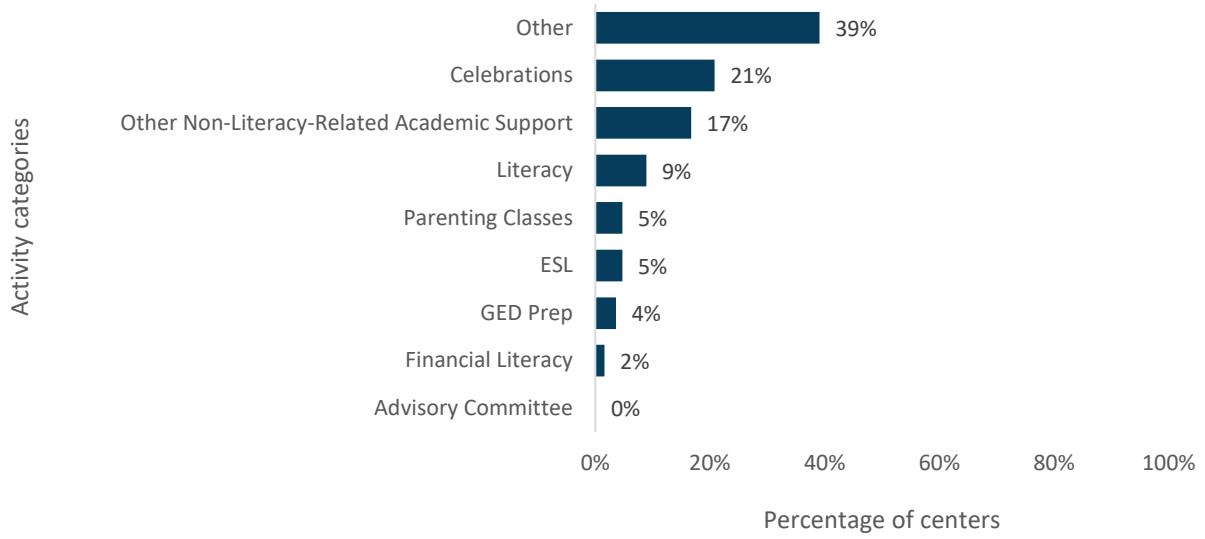
The staff working at a given 21st CCLC program and the activities offered to students attending it are critical elements for how youth experience and potentially benefit from their participation in 21st CCLC programs. Nationally, the 21st CCLC centers provide academic and nonacademic enrichment programs that reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students. This overarching purpose encompasses multiple types of activities. During 2022–23, 100% of centers offered STEM, and more than 95% offered physical activity and literacy activities to students. Most centers also offered youth leadership (86%), homework help (84%), arts and music (84%), and tutoring (80%) activities (Exhibit 10). The least commonly offered activities were services for individuals with disabilities (6%) and extended library service hours (8%). Of the 128 centers in Washington state, 52 offered adult family member activities, with celebrations, activities categorized as *other* (e.g., family engagement nights, resource/information sharing, and community events), and other non-literacy academic support being the most offered activities (Exhibit 11).

Exhibit 10. More than 95% of centers offered STEM, physical activity, and literacy activities to students in 2022–23.



Note. N = 128 centers. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal.

Exhibit 11. The most commonly offered activities for adult family members in 2022–23 were *other*, celebrations, and non-literacy-related supports.



Note. *N* = 52 centers. ESL = English as a second language. Prep = preparation. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal.

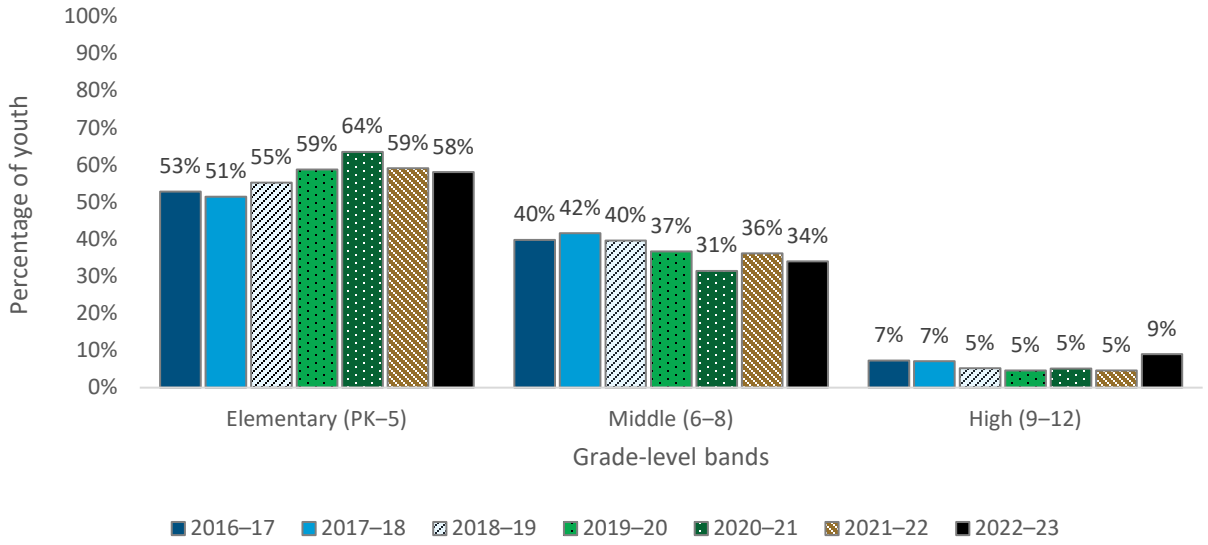
Student Characteristics

Understanding the youth population served in 21st CCLC programs in Washington is an important step in exploring the effectiveness of the program for youth outcomes. Youth who participate in 21st CCLC programming have unique academic and extracurricular interests, demographic backgrounds, and lived experiences that influence how they interact with the program. During the 2022–23 program year, programs in Washington served 13,030 students. In the exhibits that follow, some sample sizes reflect only the students we could match with state records (*N* = 11,063).

Exhibit 12 shows a consistent pattern of centers primarily serving elementary school youth across the last 8 program years. In 2022–23, the percentage of youth in elementary school remained consistent with that of the previous year, whereas the percentage of youth in middle school decreased and the percentage of youth in high school increased relative to the previous year. Exhibit 13 shows the diverse needs of youth served by 21st CCLC programming.

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 Washington. As large cohorts of programs shift into and out of their 5-year grant cycles, the number of centers serving students also changes.

Exhibit 12. Over the last 8 program years, 50% or more of youth served were in elementary school.



Note. *N* = 15,997 in 2016–17; *N* = 14,910 in 2017–18; *N* = 13,848 in 2018–19; *N* = 7,118 in 2020–21, *N* = 14,283 in 2021—22; *N* = 13,030 in 2022–2023. 2017–19 data: From the Washington Attendee Module and Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS). 2021–23 data: From the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal and CEDARS.

Exhibit 13. Across the last 5 program years with data available, Washington 21st CCLC programs served diverse needs, but overwhelmingly focused on serving youth eligible for and receiving free or reduced-price lunch.

	% male	% female	% free or reduced-price lunch	% English learners	% special needs
2022–23	49%	51%	80%	29%	16%
2021–22	49%	51%	81%	35%	16%
2020–21	48%	52%	79%	34%	15%
2019–20	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available
2018–19	50%	50%	82%	30%	16%
2017–18	50%	50%	82%	31%	15%

Note. *N* = 15,997 in 2016–17; *N* = 14,910 in 2017–18; *N* = 13,848 in 2018–19; *N* = 7,118 in 2020–21; *N* = 14,283 in 2021–22; *N* = 13,030 in 2022–2023. We did not receive 2019–20 demographic data from OSPI. 2017–19 data: From the Washington Attendee Module and CEDARS. 2021–23 data: From the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal and CEDARS. Analyses are limited to students with demographic data available. In 2022–23, less than 1% of students were classified as of nonbinary gender.

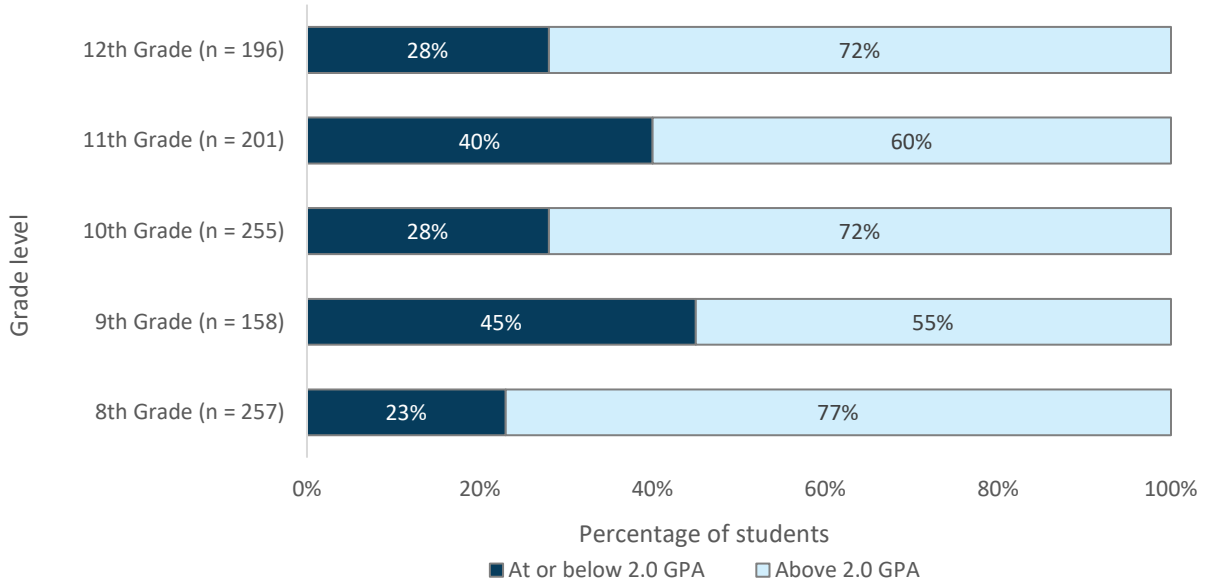
Student Baseline Descriptive Data: School Achievement and School-Day Attendance

The 21st CCLC program primarily serves youth academically at risk or who otherwise struggle in school. This subsection presents school-related data for youth who attended 21st CCLC programming in 2022–23. The academic data available for 2021–22 to 2022–23 include grade-point averages (GPAs) and the percentage of attempted credits earned. After showing the academic data, we show data related to school-day absences and disciplinary incidents for youth who participated in programming during the 2022–23 year.

None of the data in this subsection relate to program effectiveness. The data presented show only the types of youth served by 21st CCLC programming, and have no bearing on program outcomes.

GPA data for the prior school year were available for eighth through 12th graders who participated in 21st CCLC programming during the 2022–23 school year (*N* = 1,067). These middle and high school students averaged a GPA of 2.45 on a 4.0 scale during the 2021–22 academic year. To understand the proportion of students who might be academically at risk, we categorized students who had a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or below as at risk. Overall, 31% of students served in 21st CCLC centers during the 2022–23 program year had a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or less based on 2021–22 academic records. Exhibit 14 shows the proportion of students at risk by grade level.

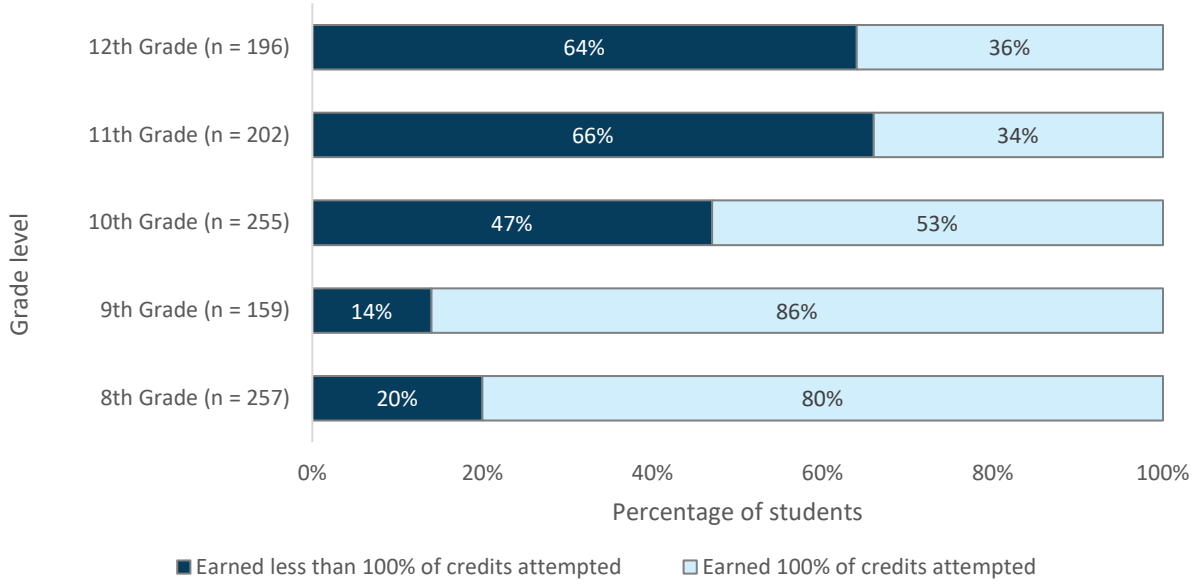
Exhibit 14. In 2022–23, 40% or more of ninth- and 11th-grade program participants had a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or less from the prior academic year.



Note. Students in Grades 8–12: *N* = 1,067. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal and CEDARS.

Data for the percentage of attempted credits earned for the prior school year were also available for eighth- through 12th-grade students who participated in 21st CCLC programming during the 2022–23 school year (*N* = 1,069). During the 2021–22 academic year, these students earned 87% of the credits they attempted, on average. As with the GPA data above, we wanted to understand the proportion of students who might be academically at risk. We categorized students who earned less than 100% of credits attempted as at risk. Overall, 42% of students served in the 2022–23 program year earned less than 100% of the credits they attempted based on 2021–22 academic records. Exhibit 15 shows the proportion of students at risk by grade level.

Exhibit 15. In 2022–23, 11th- and 12th-grade 21st CCLC program participants appeared to be academically at risk, with more than 60% earning less than 100% of the credits they attempted during the prior academic year.



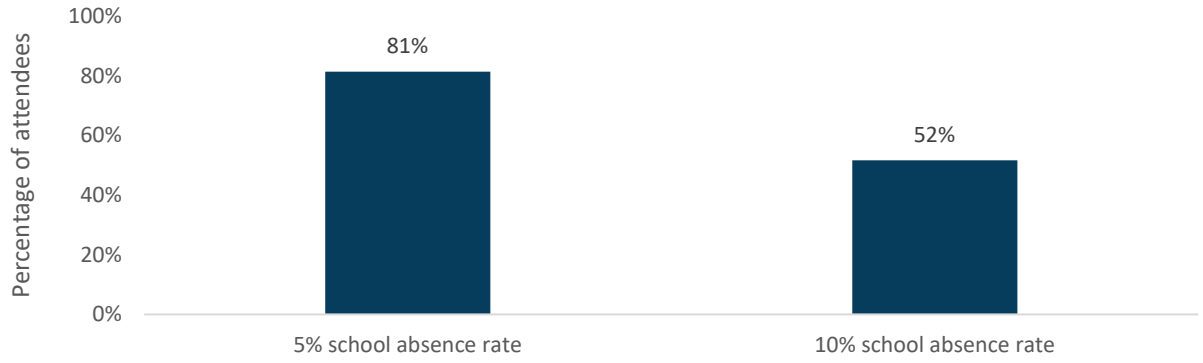
Note. *N* = 1,069 students in Grades 8–12. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal and CEDARS.

Recent studies have found that chronic absenteeism rose sharply during the COVID-19 pandemic and remained high through the 2022–23 school year, and that Black and Hispanic students have disproportionately higher rates of chronic absenteeism (Dee, 2023). In addition to understanding the demographic characteristics of the student population served by the 21st CCLC, it is also important to understand the proportion of these students who are chronically absent.

Data on students' cumulative school days attended were available from the prior year, enabling us to calculate an average school-day absence rate for students served in 21st CCLC centers in

2022–23. On average, students served in 2022–23 were absent for 15% of their total days during the prior academic year (*N* = 9,990 students). Chronic absenteeism is defined by OSPI as an absence rate of 10% or more during a given school year. We examined the percentage of youth attendees who met this definition of chronically absent in the prior year, as well as the percentage of participants who had at least a 5% absence rate (Exhibit 16). We found that a vast majority of 2022–23 program participants (81%) had at least a 5% school-day absence rate during the prior academic year, and more than half (52%) were categorized as chronically absent. These rates of school-day absenteeism are noticeably higher than those among participants during the 2021–22 programming period—particularly the rate of chronic absenteeism, which was previously 33%.

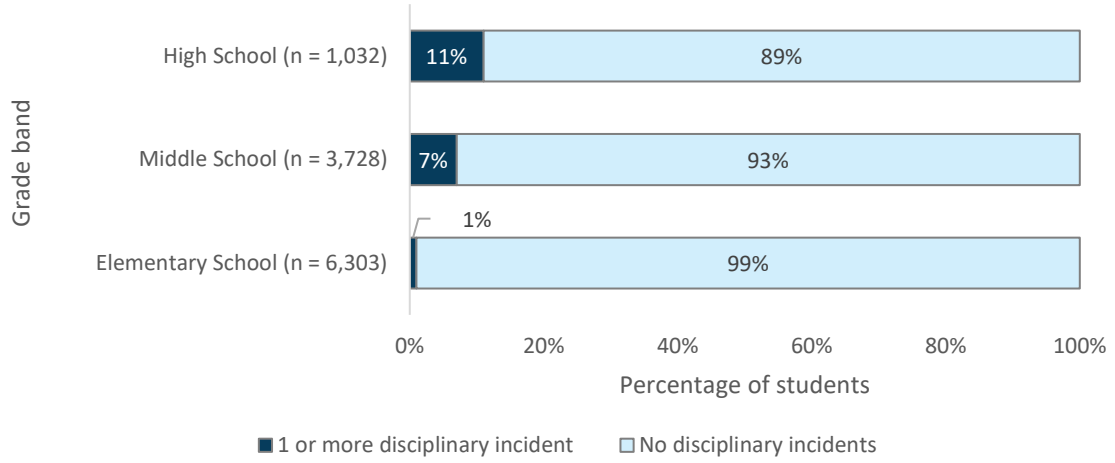
Exhibit 16. In 2022–23, more than 80% of youth attendees had at least a 5% school-day absence rate during the prior academic year, and more than half were chronically absent.



Note. N = 9,990 students with 2021–22 school day attendance data available. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal and CEDARS.

Finally, data on total disciplinary incidents from the prior year were available for students in grades PK–12 served in 21st CCLC centers in 2022–23. In total, 4% of students served in 2022–23 had at least one recorded disciplinary incident from the prior academic year (*N* = 11,063). Within each grade band, we calculated the proportion of students served with one or more recorded disciplinary incident from 2021–22. Of all grade bands, high school students had the highest overall proportion of disciplinary incidents (11%) during the prior academic year (Exhibit 17).

Exhibit 17. Eleven percent of high school students served at 21st CCLC centers in 2022–23 had at least one recorded disciplinary incident from the prior academic year.



Note. *N* = 11,063 prekindergarten through 12th-grade students with 2021–22 discipline data available. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal and CEDARS.

Summary

The 21st CCLC program, according to the authorizing legislation, is intended to serve youth who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. Our analysis of baseline outcome data showed that many youth attending 21st CCLC programming in Washington are, in fact, the students that the 21st CCLC program intends to serve. Based on outcome data from the 2021–22 academic year, the vast majority of 2022–23 program participants (80%) were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, nearly one third of program participants in Grades 8–12 (31%) had a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or below, and more than half of program participants (52%) were considered chronically absent. Collectively, these findings suggest that the students who are most in need of additional supports (academically at risk, chronically absent, and high poverty) are quite prevalent among 21st CLLC program participants in Washington.

Chapter 2. Youth Program Attendance and Related Characteristics

Research has shown that increased attendance in afterschool programming for a young person may lead to improved outcomes for that person. The federal 21st CCLC program uses 30, 60, and 90 days as the attendance benchmarks on which programs must report. Research supports these figures, showing that youth can have improved outcomes after 30 days of program participation. Therefore, the analyses in this chapter use 30 days or more of total program participation as the threshold for regular attendance. However, research also demonstrates that youth who participate 60 days or more have even greater improved outcomes (Harvard Family Research Project, 2004; Kauh, 2011; Naftzger et al., 2013). In addition, evidence from AIR's statewide evaluation work in other states across the country further corroborates the finding that youth benefit more from 21st CCLC programming the more they participate (Naftzger et al., 2015). We use this 60-day threshold to more closely examine differences in participants' self-reported program experiences in Chapter 3. The 60 days (120 hours) or more threshold is predicated on evidence accumulated by AIR that program effects associated with participation tend to be found at this level of annual program participation.

In this chapter, we examine overall youth attendance in programming and the relationship between the level of youth participation in programming and certain program characteristics by answering the following research questions:

- What did program attendance look like?
- How did student characteristics relate to students' level of program attendance?
- How did participation in different activity types relate to program participation rates and student academic performance?

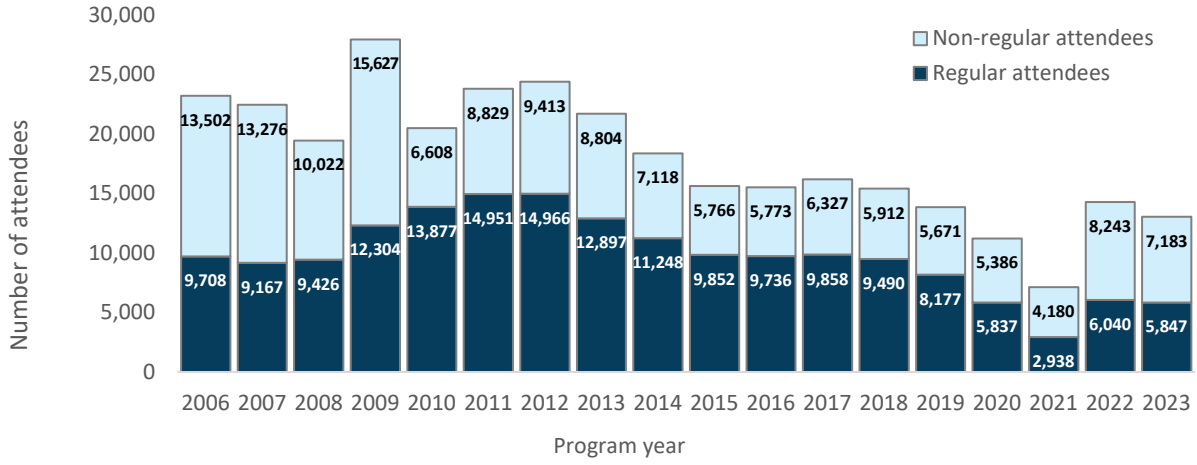
Findings	Aligned recommendations
Student program attendance • Overall student attendance decreased in 2022–23 relative to the previous program year, with 13,030 total students attending programming. Of these total attendees, 5,847 (45%) attended regularly (30 or more days of program participation). • Of students who attended regularly during the 2022–23 program year, the highest proportion (44%) participated for 30–59 days in total. **Student program attendance and student characteristics** • A majority of regular (58%) and non-regular (50%) attendees were identified as Hispanic in 2022–23. • Most regular attendees (82%) qualified for free or reduced-price lunch. • Nearly a third of regular attendees had limited English proficiency (32%) and 17% identified as having special needs. **Student program attendance and program characteristics** • Nearly half of student attendees spent most of their time in STEM or art activities for 3 months or more. Approximately a fourth spent most of their time in these STEM or art activities for 6 months or more. • Students with high attendance levels across all grade bands (elementary, middle, and high) tended to concentrate their time and involvement in specific activities, such as STEM and the arts. • There was no clear association between program attendance levels and students earning less than 100% of attempted credits or having a 2.0 GPA or below. • Elementary school and high school students anticipated by center program staff to need intensive reading and mathematics supports also tended to have the highest program attendance. • High school students in programs with higher percentages of teachers involved in programming had higher attendance levels, whereas middle school students tended to have lower attendance levels when more teachers provided programming.	• Continue to explore approaches to building student buy-in, with respect to the importance of consistent program attendance. • Explore what strategies were successful in retaining students and document these best practices. • Explore ways to promote youth choice in programming that enable youth to self-direct into activities that represent their interests. • Explore ways to engage student participants to improve frequency and consistency of participation across the program year. • Continue to explore the different roles that center program staff can play in support of student recruitment and retention.

Student Program Attendance

Evaluation Question 2: What did program attendance look like?

Program attendance as an intermediate outcome indicator reflects the potential breadth and depth of exposure to afterschool programming. In this context, we consider attendance in terms of (a) the total number of students who participated in the center's programming throughout the year and (b) the frequency and intensity with which students attended programming when offered. The total number of students who participated measures the breadth of a center's reach, whereas the frequency and intensity of attendance measures how successful the center was in retaining students in center-provided services and activities. Exhibit 18 shows the number of attendees across program years. The percentage of regular attendees (students who attended a total of 30 days or more during the reporting period) was consistent across the 2011–19 program periods (between 59% and 63%). In 2019–20, this percentage decreased slightly to 52%, before falling in 2020–21 to 41%. In 2021–22, the total number of students attending programming increased to 14,283, and the percentage of regular attendees increased slightly to 42%. In 2022–23, the total number of students who attended programming decreased to 13,030, and the percentage of those students who attended regularly (45%) increased slightly compared with the previous programming year.

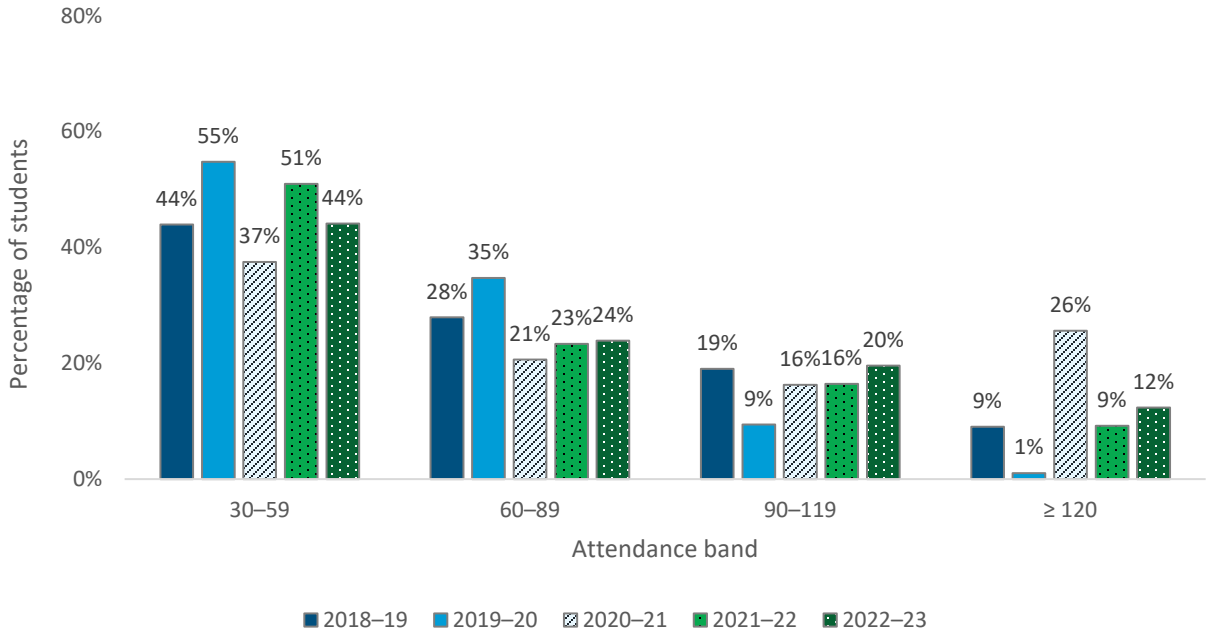
Exhibit 18. The number of students who attended programming decreased in the 2022–23 program year, while the percentage of students who attended regularly remained largely consistent.



Note. The decline in attendance levels between 2009 and 2010 represents a policy change adopted by OSPI that increased the number of days a student would need to attend to be counted as a participant. Subsequent declines in overall attendance may relate to the decline in the number of grantees and centers awarded, as well as to the COVID-19 pandemic. 2006–2020 data: From the Washington Attendee Module. 2021–2023 data: From the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal.

We also examined attendance across 30-day attendance bands (e.g., 30–59 days and 60–89 days). In 2022–23, the greatest proportion of regular attendees (44%) participated for 30 to 59 days, while 24% participated for 60 to 89 days, 20% participated for 90 to 119 days, and 12% participated for 120 days or more (Exhibit 19).

Exhibit 19. During the 2022–23 program year, more than 40% of regular attendees participated for 30–59 days.



Note. Data are from the Washington Attendee Module and the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal.

Overall, the mean school year attendance for regular attendees (*n* = 5,827) was 69 days in 2022–23, with a median of 62 days. For the summer, the average number of days of attendance for regular attendees (*n* = 1,480) was 16 days, with a median of 15 days.

Centers saw a slight increase in total attendance and regular attendance from 2015 to 2016, and then attendance leveled off in the following 2 years. In 2018–19, attendance decreased slightly, but with the disruption brought on by the pandemic, centers saw a continued decline in attendance in 2020 and 2021, followed by substantial increases in both total and regular attendance levels in 2021–22. The average number of students per center in 2022–23 plateaued at approximately 102 total attendees and 46 regular attendees, on average, with centers serving a range of 9 to 520 students (Exhibit 20).

Exhibit 20. In 2022–23, both the number of total attendees per center and the number of regular attendees per center remained largely consistent with the previous program year.

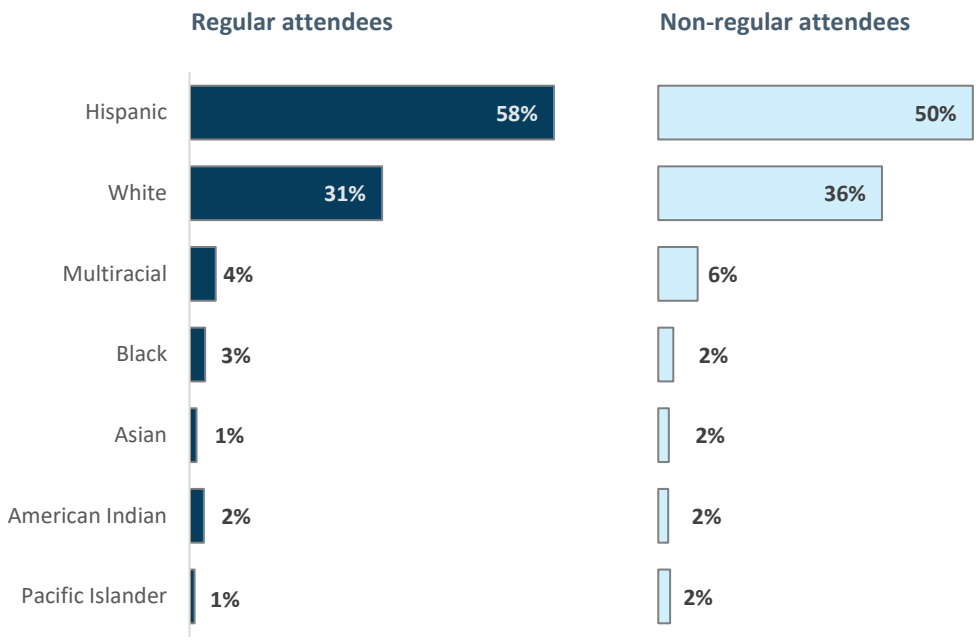
Note. The decline in participation between 2009 and 2010 represents a policy change adopted by OSPI that increased the number of days a student would need to attend to be counted as a participant. Subsequent declines in overall attendance may relate to the decline in the number of grantees and centers awarded, as well as to the COVID-19 pandemic. 2006–2020 data: From the Washington Attendee Module. 2021–2023 data: From the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal.

Student Program Attendance and Student Characteristics

> *Evaluation Question 3: How did student characteristics relate to students' level of program attendance?*

In this section, we examine the demographic characteristics of students who participated in 21st CCLC programming in Washington during the 2022–23 programming period. In 2022–23, a larger proportion of regular attendees were identified as Hispanic (58%), compared to the proportion of non-regular attendees who were identified as Hispanic (50%). A smaller proportion of regular attendees were identified as White (31%), relative to the proportion of non-regular attendees who were identified as White (36%). Exhibit 21 outlines the racial/ethnic backgrounds of 21st CCLC attendees in Washington.[1]

Exhibit 21. Most regular and non-regular attendees in 2022–23 were identified as either Hispanic or White.



Note. *N* = 5,576 for regular attendees; *N* = 7,492 for non-regular attendees. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal and CEDARS.

[1] Please note that the data represented in Exhibits 20 through 23 include only students we could match in the CEDARS data system (*n* = 11,063; 85%).

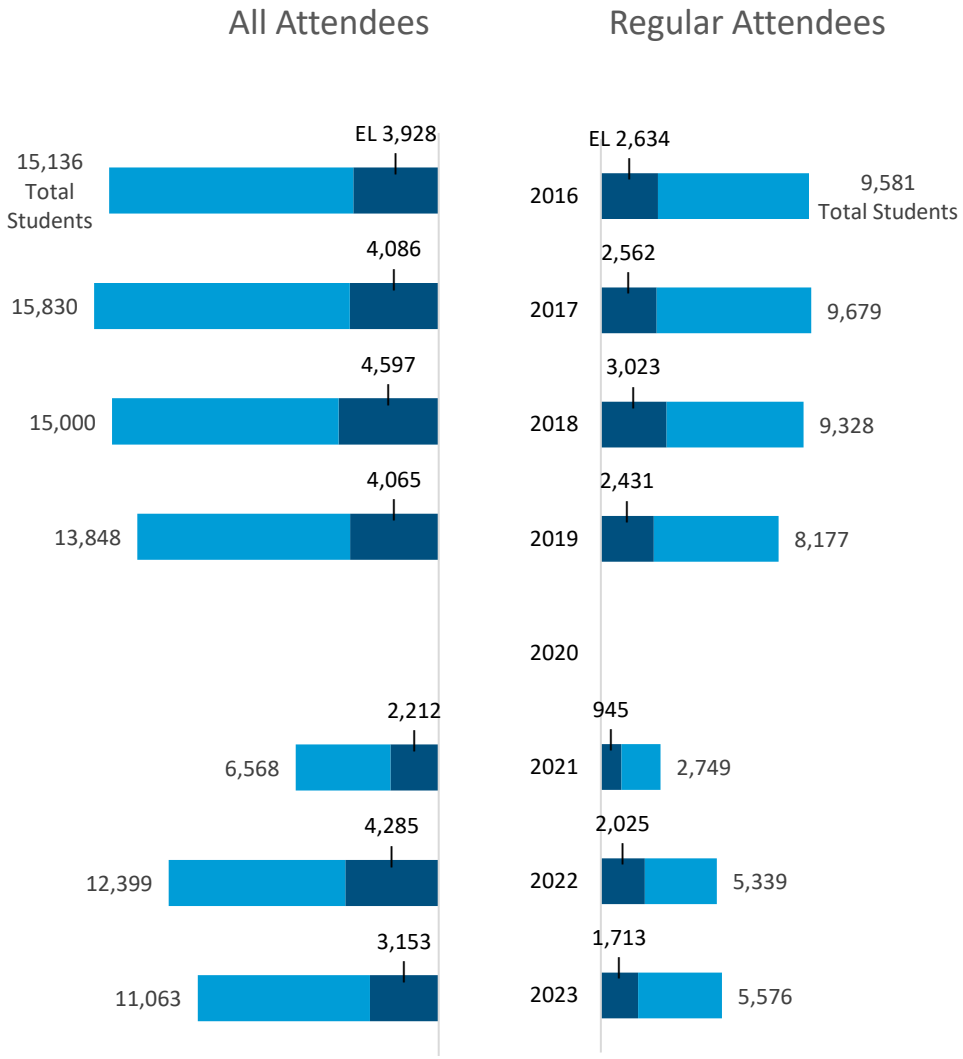
The 21st CCLC program specifically provides afterschool activities and services to students living in high-poverty communities attending schools in need of improvement. Typically, states rely on student eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch as the metric to assess how well states and grantees reach this target population. The number of attendees eligible for free or reduced-price lunch is shown in Exhibit 22. An estimated 80% of all attendees and 82% of regular attendees were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch during the 2022–23 programming period.

Exhibit 22. A majority of the 21st CCLC program participants in Washington over the last 8 program years have qualified for free or reduced-price lunch.

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 2006–2015 from this figure to maximize readability. We did not receive 2019–20 demographic data from OSPI. Data are from the Washington Attendee Module, Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal, and CEDARS.

In addition to free or reduced-price lunch eligibility, information about the student population served by 21st CCLC programming recorded in CEDARS includes students designated as being English learners (ELs) or as having special needs. As shown in Exhibit 23, 29% of all participants and 32% of regular attendees were ELs during 2022–23—a decrease from the 2021–22 program year.

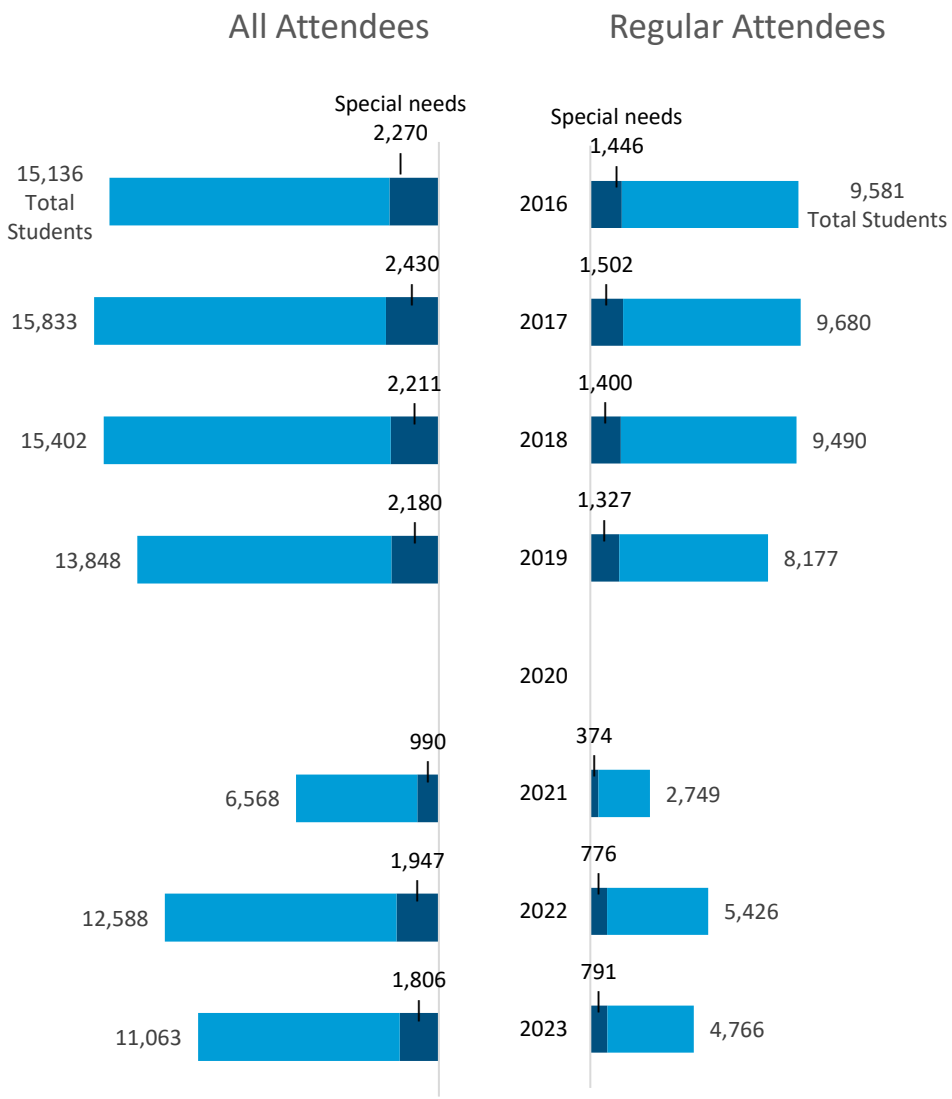
Exhibit 23. English learners accounted for nearly one third of total program attendees and regular program attendees in 2022–23.



Note. EL = English learners. We do not show the number of students whose EL status was unknown. We removed program year data for 2006–2015 from this exhibit to maximize readability. We did not receive 2019–20 demographic data from OSPI. Data are from the Washington Attendee Module, Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal, and CEDARS.

Exhibit 24 shows the total number of attendees, the total number of regular attendees, and the number of attendees who have special needs. During 2022–23, 16% of all attendees and 17% of regular attendees had a special need—a slight increase relative to the 2021–22 program year.

Exhibit 24. Fewer than 20% of both total and regular program attendees over the past 8 program years have been identified as having a special need.



Note. We do not show the number of students whose special needs status was unknown. We removed program year data for 2006–2015 from this exhibit to maximize readability. We did not receive 2019–20 demographic data from OSPI. Data are from the Washington Attendee Module, Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal, and CEDARS.

Student Program Attendance and Program Characteristics

> *Evaluation Question 4: How did participation in different activity types relate to program participation rates and student academic performance?*

In this section, we examine key differences in program and student characteristics for groups of students who attended programming more regularly versus those who attended less regularly. The first step in this process was to classify each student attending programming in the 2022–23 programming period into one of four, relatively equal, groups based on level of program attendance. Because the level of program attendance varied by grade level, with younger students attending more frequently than older students, we ran the classification process separately for elementary, middle, and high school students. We generated attendance quartiles within each grade band based on the total number of program days attended by each student in 2022–23, with the first quartile (Quartile 1) representing students who attended the least regularly and the fourth quartile (Quartile 4) representing students who attended the most regularly.

Next, we wanted to explore how membership in a given attendance quartile may be related to a set of program- and student-level characteristics, like students spending the majority of their time in specific types of activities (such as STEM or the arts) or their performance on key school-related outcomes. Our goal here was to explore if certain types of characteristics or programmatic circumstances seemed to be associated with more or less participation in programming.

To account for these differences in program and student characteristics, we ran one-way analyses of variance on attendance for each grade band using the program attendance quartiles as the explanatory variable, to gain a better understanding of which site activities might be associated with higher or lower levels of attendance. We applied the same methodological approach to all subsequent analyses of program attendance by student academic characteristics and center staffing.

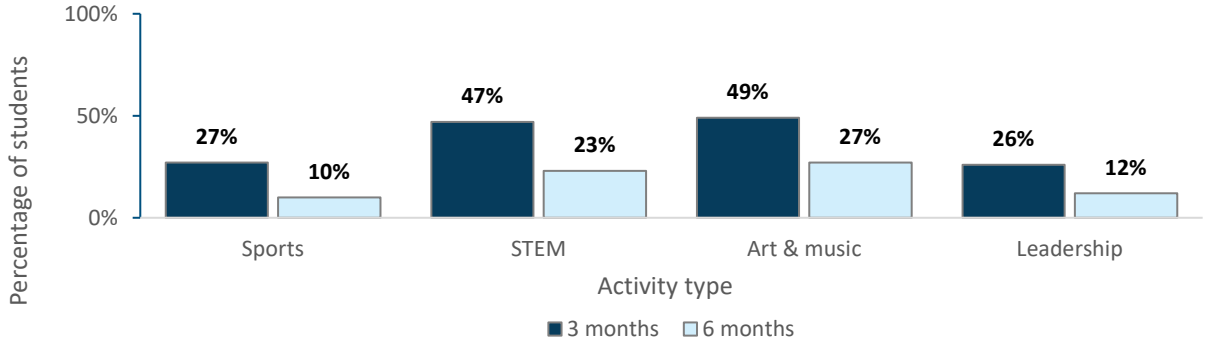
Student Participation by Types of Activities Attended

As part of data collection efforts, we asked all subgrantees to report monthly on whether students spent the majority of their time in the following types of activities: sports, STEM, the arts, or leadership. These four activities are not mutually exclusive, and students could participate in more than one type of activity during the programming period. We wanted to understand the proportion of students spending most of their time in these activities consistently across the program year. We then calculated the total number of months during

which students spent the majority of their program time in each type of activity. For the analyses in this section of the report, we compared students that spent the majority of their time attending programming in one of the four categories for 3 or more months and for 6 or more months. In other states, when we have performed similar types of analyses, we have generally found a positive relationship between higher levels of program participation and more concentrated participation in specific program categories like STEM and the arts (Sniegowski, et al., 2023; Kazi, et al., 2023). We hypothesize that programs that allow greater choice for students to select activities of interest may see higher attendance levels across a longer period of time.

In Exhibit 25, we first summarize the percentage of students attending programming during the 2022–23 programming period that spent the majority of their time in sports, STEM, the arts, or leadership programming for 3 months or more, as well as for 6 months or more. We found that students were more apt to spend the majority of their programming time in STEM and arts activities, although in each case, less than half of students spent the majority of their time in these types of activities over a 3-month period and less than 30% for 6 months or more (Exhibit 25). In viewing the exhibits that follow, the reader should keep these levels in mind.

Exhibit 25. A little less than half of the students spent most of their time in STEM activities and art and music enrichment for 3 months or more. Percentages were lower across all activity types for students who participated in them 6 months or more.

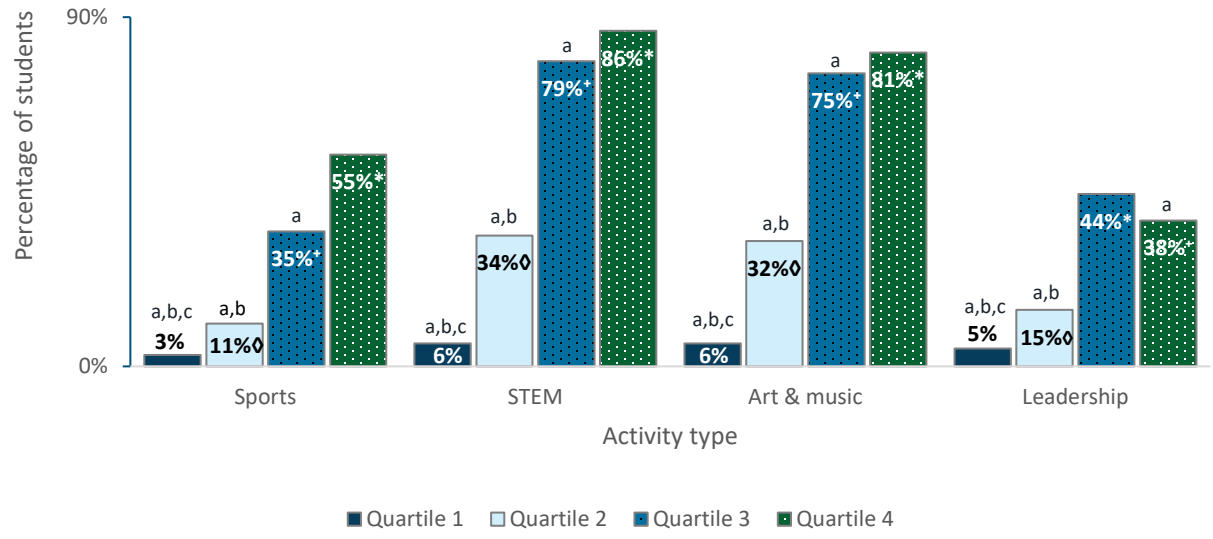


Note. N = 13,030 students in Grades PK–12. Activity categories are not mutually exclusive. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal.

We then examined program attendance using the quartiles described previously among students with 3 or more months of involvement (Exhibits 26–28) and 6 or more months of involvement in each type of activity (Exhibits 29–31). To guide the interpretation of the findings that follow, we present the STEM bars in Exhibit 26 as an example. Each bar in this chart represents elementary student membership in the attendance quartiles described previously.

Quartile 4 represents the highest attending group of elementary students, averaging about 101 days of programming. Among students in this group, 86% concentrated their participation in STEM activities over a period of 3 months or more. In comparison, 79% of students in Quartile 3 (which averaged 40 days of programming) and only 34% of students in Quartile 2 (which averaged 17 days of programming) concentrated their participation in STEM activities for 3 months or more. Similar results are shown in Exhibits 27 and 28 for middle and high school students. Our analyses showed that, across all grade bands, students with high attendance levels tended to concentrate their time and involvement in specific activities, such as STEM, art and music, and leadership. For example, at least 80% of elementary school students (Exhibit 26) and at least 70% of middle school students (Exhibit 27) with the highest attendance levels spent most of their time in STEM activities and art and music enrichment. More than 80% of high school students with the highest attendance spent most of their time in STEM activities, and more than 70% spent most of their time in leadership activities and art and music enrichment (Exhibit 28).

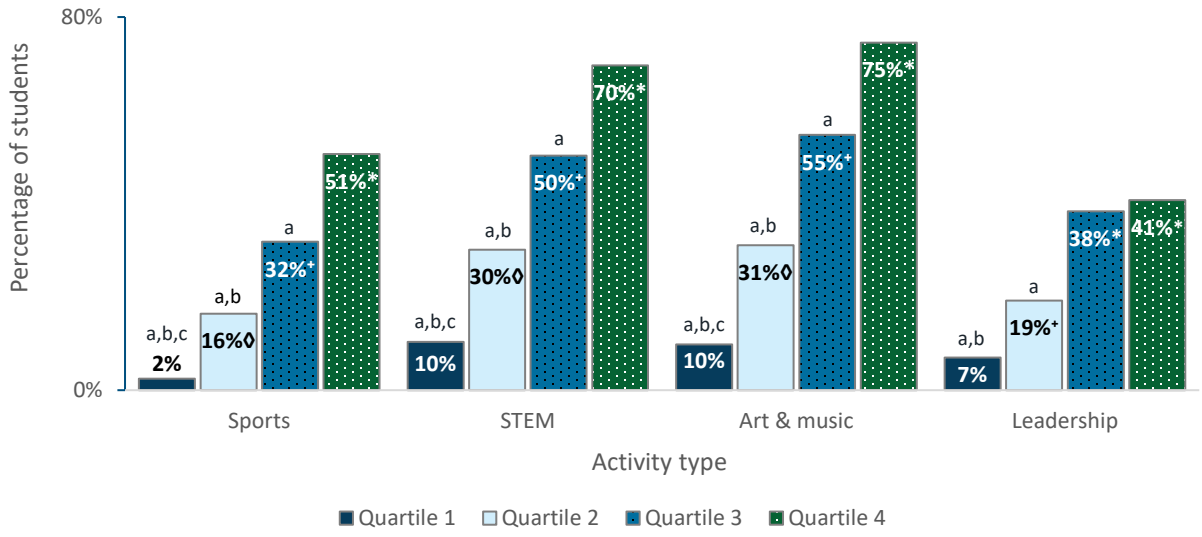
Exhibit 26. More than 80% of elementary school students with the highest attendance levels spent the majority of their time in STEM activities and art and music enrichment across 3 or more months.



Note. N = 7,480 elementary school students (Grades PK–5). Activity categories are not mutually exclusive. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal. Average number of days attended by quartile for elementary school students: 5.4 days (Quartile 1), 17.4 days (Quartile 2), 40.1 days (Quartile 3), 101.4 days (Quartile 4).
*$p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with an "a" value.
$^{+}p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with a "b" value.

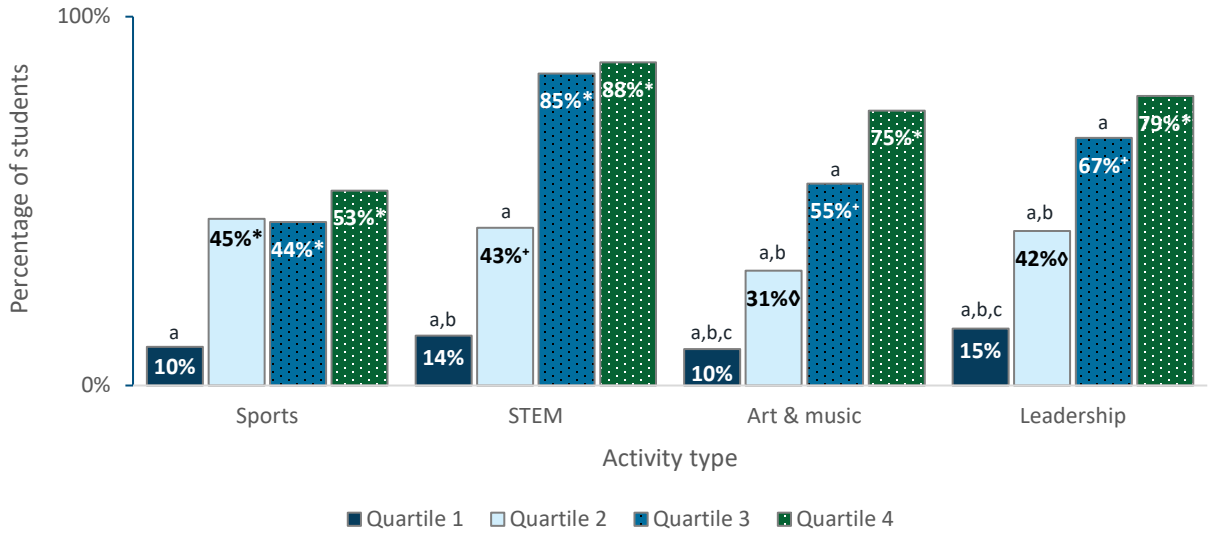
◊*p* < .05, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with a "c" value.

Exhibit 27. More than 70% of middle school students with the highest attendance levels spent the majority of their time in STEM activities and art and music enrichment across 3 or more months.



Note. *N* = 4,428 middle school students (Grades 6–8). Activity categories are not mutually exclusive. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal. Average number of days attended by quartile for middle school students: 4.4 days (Quartile 1), 16.5 days (Quartile 2), 39.0 days (Quartile 3), 93.1 days (Quartile 4).
**p* < .05, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with an "a" value.
$^{+}$*p* < .05, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with a "b" value.
◊*p* < .05, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with a "c" value.

Exhibit 28. Seventy-five percent or more of high school students with high attendance levels spent the majority of their time in STEM activities, leadership, and art and music enrichment across 3 or more months.



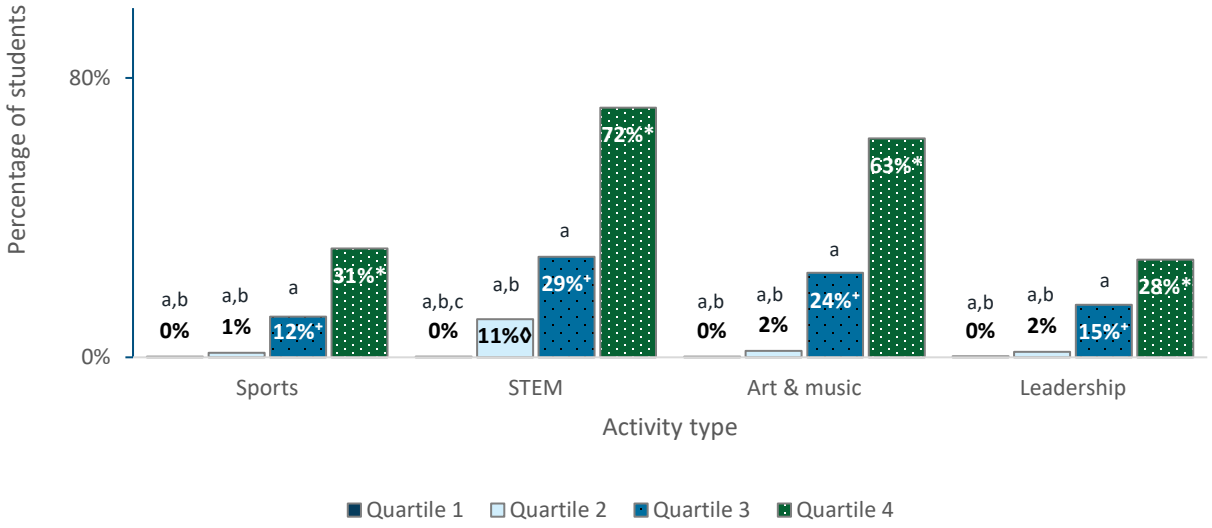
Note. *N* = 1,122 high school students (Grades 9–12). Activity categories are not mutually exclusive. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal. Average number of days attended by quartile for high school students: 4.0 days (Quartile 1), 16.2 days (Quartile 2), 38.6 days (Quartile 3), 84.5 days (Quartile 4).
*$p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with an "a" value.
$^{+}p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with a "b" value.
$◊p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with a "c" value.

For students across all grade bands (elementary, middle, and high) with 3 or more months of participation, a statistically significant difference was found between attendance quartile groups for STEM, the arts, leadership activities, and sports. The highest attendance quartile groups (e.g., Quartiles 3 and 4) tended to have the largest percentages of participating students for each activity type.

We also explored the same analyses for students who spent at least 6 months in these types of activities (Exhibits 29–31) and found similar distributions for each school level. These results were statistically significant as well. Overall, students of all grade bands with high attendance levels tended to concentrate their time and participation in specific activities, especially STEM and the arts. This may suggest a connection between sustained attendance in programming and student interest in specific content areas. We also recognize, however, that some of the

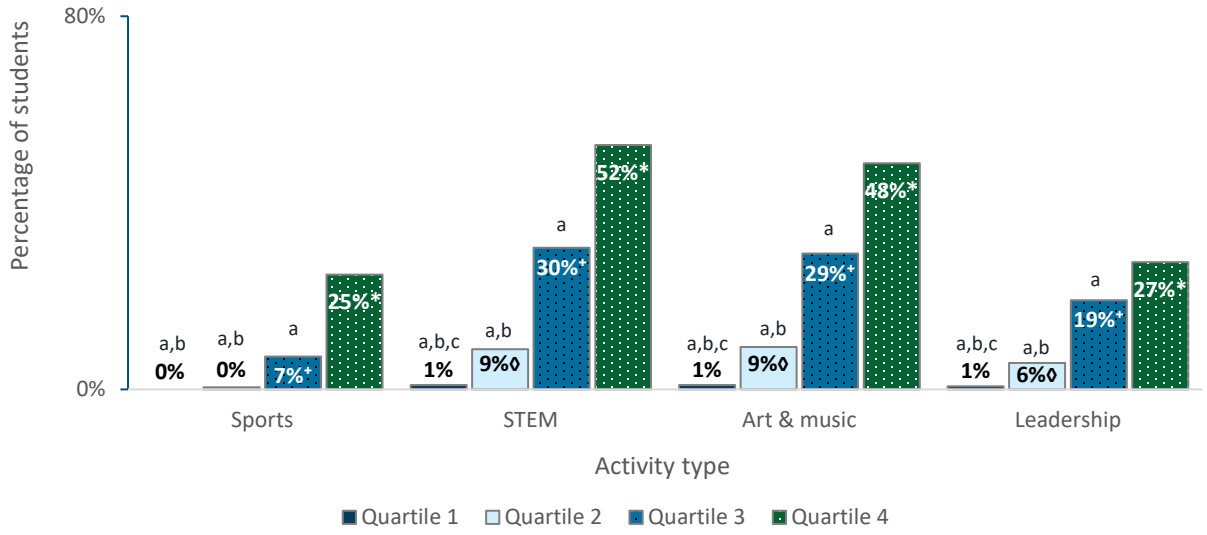
differences between quartiles are the result of students in the lower quartiles attending fewer months of programming overall.

Exhibit 29. More than 60% of elementary school students with the highest attendance levels spent the majority of their time in STEM activities and art and music enrichment across 6 or more months.



Note. N = 7,480 elementary school students (Grades PK–5). Activity categories are not mutually exclusive. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal. Average number of days attended by quartile for elementary school students: 5.4 days (Quartile 1), 17.4 days (Quartile 2), 40.1 days (Quartile 3), 101.4 days (Quartile 4).
*$p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with an "a" value.
$^{+}p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with a "b" value.
$◊p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with a "c" value.

Exhibit 30. Middle school students with the highest attendance levels tended to spend the majority of their time in STEM activities and art and music enrichment across 6 or more months.

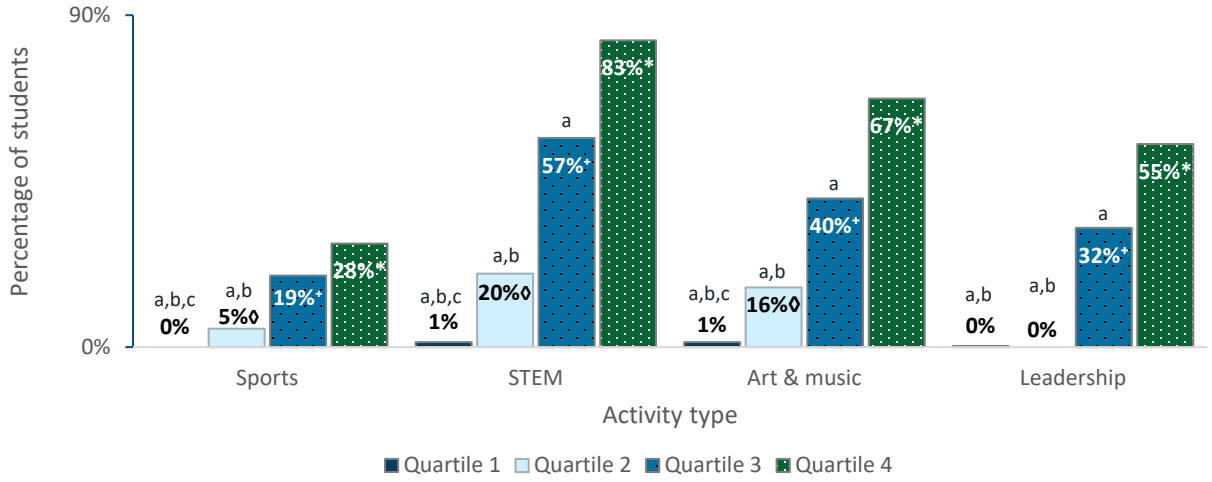


Note. N = 4,428 middle school students (Grades 6–8). Activity categories are not mutually exclusive. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal. Average number of days attended by quartile for middle school students: 4.4 days (Quartile 1), 16.5 days (Quartile 2), 39.0 days (Quartile 3), 93.1 days (Quartile 4).

*$p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with an "a" value.

$^{+}p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with a "b" value.

Exhibit 31. More than 80% of high school students with the highest attendance levels spent the majority of their time in STEM activities and two thirds (67%) spent the majority of their time in art and music enrichment across 6 or more months.



Note. *N* = 1,122 high school students (Grades 9–12). Activity categories are not mutually exclusive. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal. Average number of days attended by quartile for high school students: 4.0 days (Quartile 1), 16.2 days (Quartile 2), 38.6 days (Quartile 3), 84.5 days (Quartile 4).
*$p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with an "a" value.
$^{+}p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with a "b" value.
◊$p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with a "c" value.

Student Participation by Need for Improvement in Academics

The evaluation team also looked at the relationship between program attendance levels and students in Grades 8–12 with room for academic improvement based on their 2021–22 GPA (2.0 or less) or percentage of attempted credits earned (less than 100). We found that all four attendance quartile groups had similar proportions of students earning less than 100% of credits attempted or less than a 2.0 GPA.

Student Participation by Need for Intensive Reading and Mathematics Supports

To understand the types of experiences that youth have in programming, and the level of mathematics and readings supports they receive, we asked programs to report on both the anticipated level of support each student would need at enrollment and the actual level of support students received each month. These support levels are as follows:

- **Level 1: Incidental Support for Mathematics or Reading/Literacy.** Youth receive incidental support in response to an in-the-moment problem or question they have while completing a mathematics or reading/literacy task. This support is most commonly offered for homework help, when youth need assistance in completing a given assignment. These activities react to the in-the-moment needs of participating youth and are not predicated on a preplanned set of activities designed to support skill building in targeted areas.
- **Level 2: Intentional Mathematics or Reading/Literacy Enrichment or Instruction.** Youth participate in enrichment or instructional activities intentionally constructed to support skill development and/or interest (e.g., poetry club and reading circles). Youth may have been recruited to participate in these activities given their need to further develop skills or may have self-selected into the activity given their interests. Activities are primarily delivered in a whole-group format and tend to have higher youth-to-activity-leader ratios than those associated with Level 3. Activity lesson plans typically articulate the specific skills the activity cultivates or how youth interest will be cultivated, although less effort is dedicated to assessing formatively how individual youth progress in the areas of interest.
- **Level 3: Intensive Support for Reading/Literacy or Mathematics Skill Building.** Youth identified as needing substantive assistance to address skill deficits receive targeted and intensive support and attention from qualified activity leaders to improve specific reading or mathematics skills. Instructional support is either individualized or provided in small groups (activity-leader-to-youth ratios are approximately one activity leader per five youth or less). Literacy and mathematics skills areas targeted for improvement have been identified through feedback received from school-day teachers and/or the use of validated assessments. Youth progress is periodically assessed, and instructional supports are modified, to support further youth growth and development in the targeted areas.

Center program staff reported the level of mathematics and reading supports they anticipated each student needing upon enrollment into the program. Each month, staff reported what level of reading and mathematics supports the students actually received. Exhibit 32 outlines the number of students anticipated to need Level 3 reading or mathematics supports versus the actual number of students. Actual numbers reflect whether a student received Level 3 supports within any month of the program year.

Exhibit 32. Anticipated versus actual Level 3 supports in reading and math.

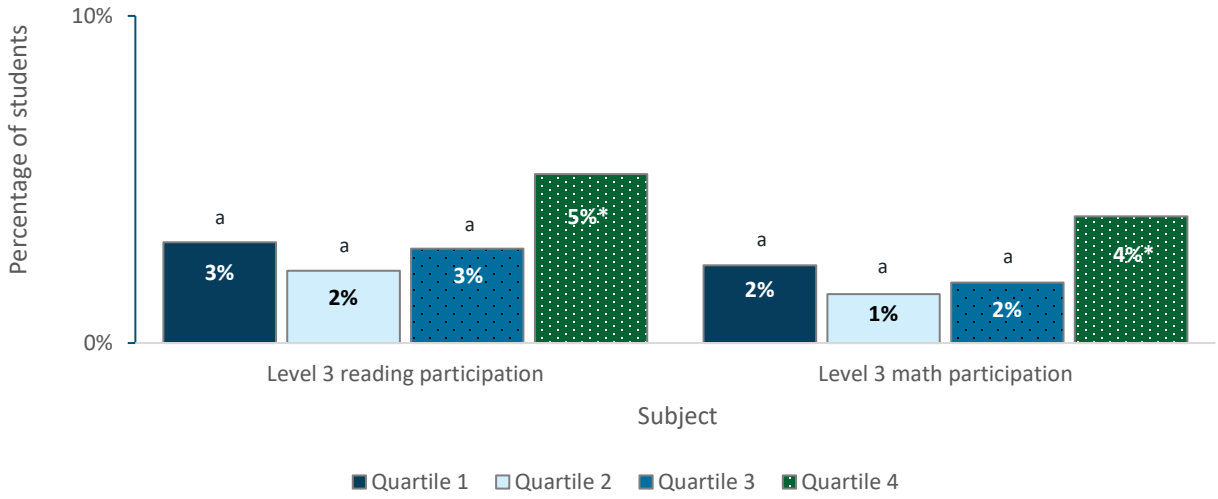
Level 3 supports	Anticipated	Actual
Level 3 reading supports	462	795

Level 3 mathematics supports	418	784

Note. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal.

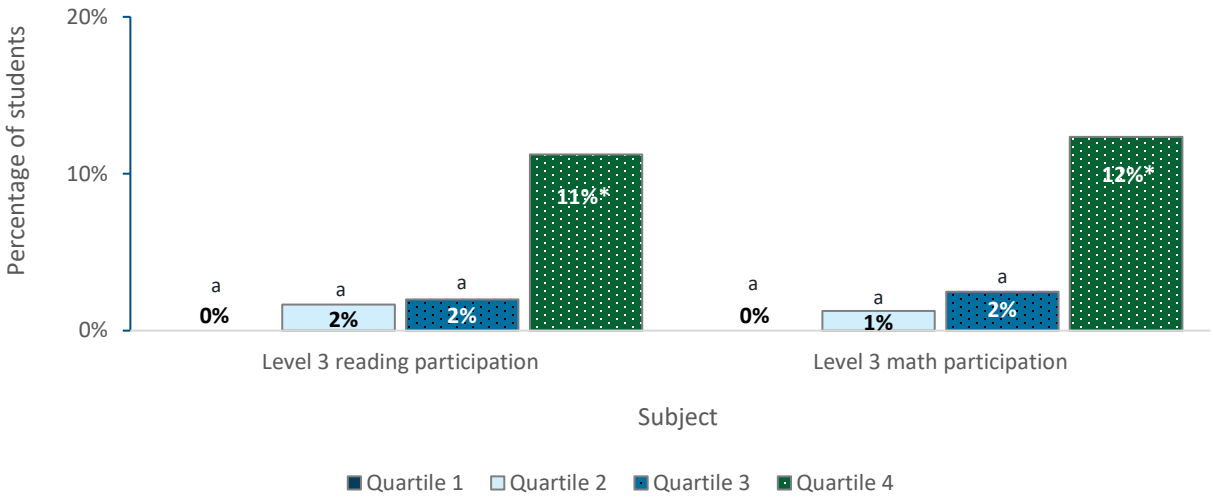
We examined the relationship between program attendance levels and students anticipated to need the most intensive supports (Level 3) in reading or mathematics. Elementary school students (Exhibit 33) and high school students (Exhibit 34) who were anticipated as needing Level 3 mathematics or reading supports tended to attend programming more regularly in 2022–23. Middle school students demonstrated more mixed levels of program attendance across the quartiles, with no clear associations between anticipated academic supports and attendance levels.

Exhibit 33. In 2022–23, elementary school students anticipated to need intensive reading and mathematics support also tended to have the highest levels of program attendance.



Note. N = 7,480 elementary school students (Grades PK–5). Activity categories are not mutually exclusive. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal. Average number of days attended by quartile for elementary school students: 5.4 days (Quartile 1), 17.4 days (Quartile 2), 40.1 days (Quartile 3), 101.4 days (Quartile 4). **p* < .05, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with an "a" value.

Exhibit 34. High school students anticipated to need intensive reading and mathematics support also tended to have the highest levels of program attendance in 2022–23.

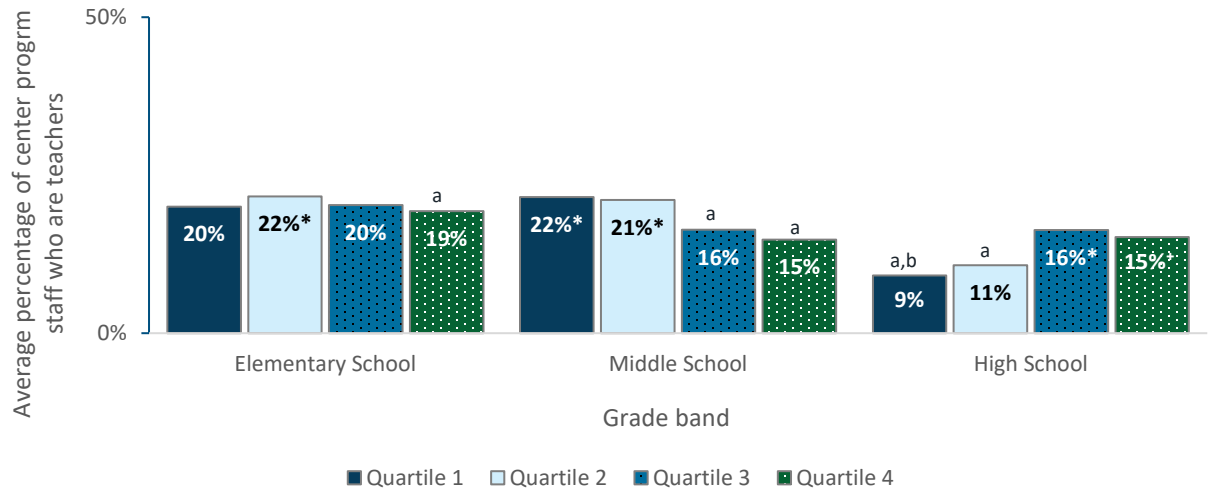


Note. *N* = 1,122 high school students (Grades 9–12). Activity categories are not mutually exclusive. Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal. Average number of days attended by quartile for high school students: 4.0 days (Quartile 1), 16.2 days (Quartile 2), 38.6 days (Quartile 3), 84.5 days (Quartile 4).
*$p < .05$, indicating that the mean percentage for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with an "a" value.

Student Participation by Proportion of Staff Who Are Teachers

The evaluation team also looked at the association between the proportion of center program staff who are teachers and students' overall program attendance within each grade band. We ran one-way analyses of variance by grade band, using the program attendance quartiles as the explanatory variable and the percentage of school-day teachers employed as program staff as the response variable. For elementary school students, no clear association was found between attendance levels and the proportion of teachers involved in programming; however, for middle school students, a higher proportion of teacher involvement was associated with lower attendance levels, whereas for high school students, a higher proportion of teacher involvement appeared to be associated with higher attendance levels (Exhibit 35). These findings should not be used to draw any causal conclusions regarding the quality of program staffing, for example, and student program participation. Additionally, they are presented in aggregate and therefore do not capture potential nuance or variation at the center level with respect to staffing composition and attendance. Rather, these findings are intended to suggest an area for further exploration.

Exhibit 35. High school students in programs with higher percentages of teachers involved in programming had higher attendance levels, whereas middle school students in programs with higher percentages of teachers involved in programming tended to have lower attendance levels.



Note. *N* = 7,480 elementary school students (Grades PK–5); 4,428 middle school students (Grades 6–8); and 1,122 high school students (Grades 9–12). Data are from the Washington 21st CCLC Data Portal. Average number of days attended by quartile for elementary school students: 5.4 days (Quartile 1), 17.4 days (Quartile 2), 40.1 days (Quartile 3), 101.4 days (Quartile 4); for middle school students: 4.4 days (Quartile 1), 16.5 days (Quartile 2), 39.0 days (Quartile 3), 93.1 days (Quartile 4); for high school students: 4.0 days (Quartile 1), 16.2 days (Quartile 2), 38.6 days (Q3), 84.5 days (Quartile 4).

*$p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with an "a" value.

$^{+}p < .05$, indicating that the percentage of students for the quartile was significantly higher than quartile labels with a "b" value.

Summary

By classifying youth into higher and lower attending quartiles, we found that youth who attended 21st CCLC programming more consistently tended to concentrate their involvement in specific activities like STEM and arts enrichment. We also found that a higher proportion of elementary school and high school students who needed to improve their mathematics or reading skills, despite the small number receiving these supports, was associated with higher youth attendance levels. In aggregate, higher proportions of school-day teachers as center program staff appeared to be associated with higher youth attendance levels for high school students and lower youth attendance levels for middle school students.

It is important to note that these findings are not causal and do not indicate that offering more STEM or arts activities or increasing the proportion of school-day teachers involved in high school center programming, for example, will increase student participation. Some of these results, however, are consistent with expectations (e.g., the positive relationship between activity types and program participation), while others suggest a relationship that may warrant additional exploration in the future, such as associations between the types of program staff employed by centers and student attendance levels.

Chapter 3. Youth Program Experiences and Learning Engagement in the Classroom

With the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on 21st CCLC programs in Washington, the evaluation team from the American Institutes for Research® administered a brief survey in spring 2023 to students in Grades 6–12 who participated in programming, as well as to the school-day teachers of elementary student participants, to learn about the experiences and feelings of students and teacher perceptions of student engagement in learning in the classroom. A total of 892 students (705 students in Grades 6–8 and 187 students in Grades 9–12) responded to the student survey, and school-day teachers completed 2,008 surveys about their students in Grades K–5.

In this section, we summarize key findings from our analyses of the student and teacher surveys, from which the evaluation team hoped to gain insights into the following questions:

1. What do students think of their own academic identity and self-esteem?
2. What were the experiences of students attending 21st CCLC programming in the 2022–23 program year, including how they think the program has helped them?
3. How did students' interests change after participating in afterschool programming?
4. To what extent did student learning engagement in the classroom change during the 2022–23 program year?

Finding	Aligned recommendation
STUDENT ACADEMIC IDENTITY AND SELF-ESTEEM • Nearly three quarters of the student respondents (at least 74%) indicated that getting good grades was one of their main goals and that it was important to them to learn as much as they could. • More than two thirds of the student respondents (at least 67%) either mostly or completely agreed with statements indicating strong self-esteem, such as feelings of pride and self-satisfaction, a belief in their ability to achieve success, and a recognition of their positive qualities. **STUDENT PROGRAM EXPERIENCES** • A majority of the student respondents (58%) indicated that they really look forward to attending their afterschool programming.	• Further explore connections between key student characteristics (e.g., attendance status, grade level) and program experience. Consider what other data collections might be necessary to determine if and how these characteristics have a differential impact on program experience. • Further explore the perceptions and needs of students who indicated unfavorable program experiences with adult staff

Finding	Aligned recommendation
• When asked to select the top three areas in which their afterschool program helped them, more than half of the student respondents (52%) felt that their program helped them to make new friends, and nearly one third (at least 27%) felt that their program helped them to find out what they enjoyed doing and find out what they were good at doing. • More than half of the student respondents (at least 54%) felt that their afterschool program provided opportunities for them to try new things, work hard to get better at something, or do things that they don't get to do anywhere else. • A vast majority of the respondents (approximately 80%) reported that there was an adult at their afterschool program who they enjoyed being around and who helped them when they encountered a problem. • Student respondents who attended programming regularly (60 or more days) consistently demonstrated higher rates of agreement with positive statements about adult program staff than respondents who did not attend programming regularly. • A majority of the student respondents (approximately 60%) reported that students in their afterschool program supported and helped one another, were friendly with each other, and listened to their teachers. • High school respondents consistently demonstrated high rates of agreement with positive statements about peer-to-peer interactions and experiences in their program than middle school respondents. **CHANGES IN STUDENTS' INTERESTS** • Half of the student respondents (50%) reported feeling more interested in art than when they began participation, and nearly half (46%) reported feeling more interested in sports. • More than one third of the student respondents (38%) reported feeling less interested in politics and government, and more than a fourth felt less interested in drama (29%) and in history (27%) than before they started. **CHANGES IN STUDENT LEARNING ENGAGEMENT IN THE CLASSROOM** • According to school-day teachers, about half of all students (at least 52%) made improvements in their learning engagement, whereas roughly 20% of students saw no change in engagement and 3% reported a decline in engagement.	members and peers. Consider using qualitative methods, such as focus groups, to gather additional data that will inform continuous improvement efforts around program climate and structure.

In addition to the descriptive analyses presented in the brief, the evaluation team also tested for differences in survey responses by a variety of student characteristics. We opted for a non-parametric test that would allow us to determine if there are statistically significant differences between two or more groups of respondents (e.g., regular versus non-regular attendees, middle versus high-school students) on ordinal survey items. Thus, we ran Pearson's chi-square tests of independence ($p \leq .05$) on each student survey item, to compare the distribution of responses by attendance status, grade band, race/ethnicity, and gender identity. Significant post-hoc findings from the student survey are summarized in response to the relevant evaluation questions.

Surveys and Sample

In this section, we provide information related to the administration process and sample for the student and teacher surveys.

Student Survey

As part of the evaluation efforts each year, AIR typically administers a student survey called the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs (YMEB) survey in mid- to late spring. Through the survey administration process, AIR collects information in an online format at the student level—including personally identifiable information such as student school identification numbers—to connect survey responses with other data points to answer specific evaluation questions.

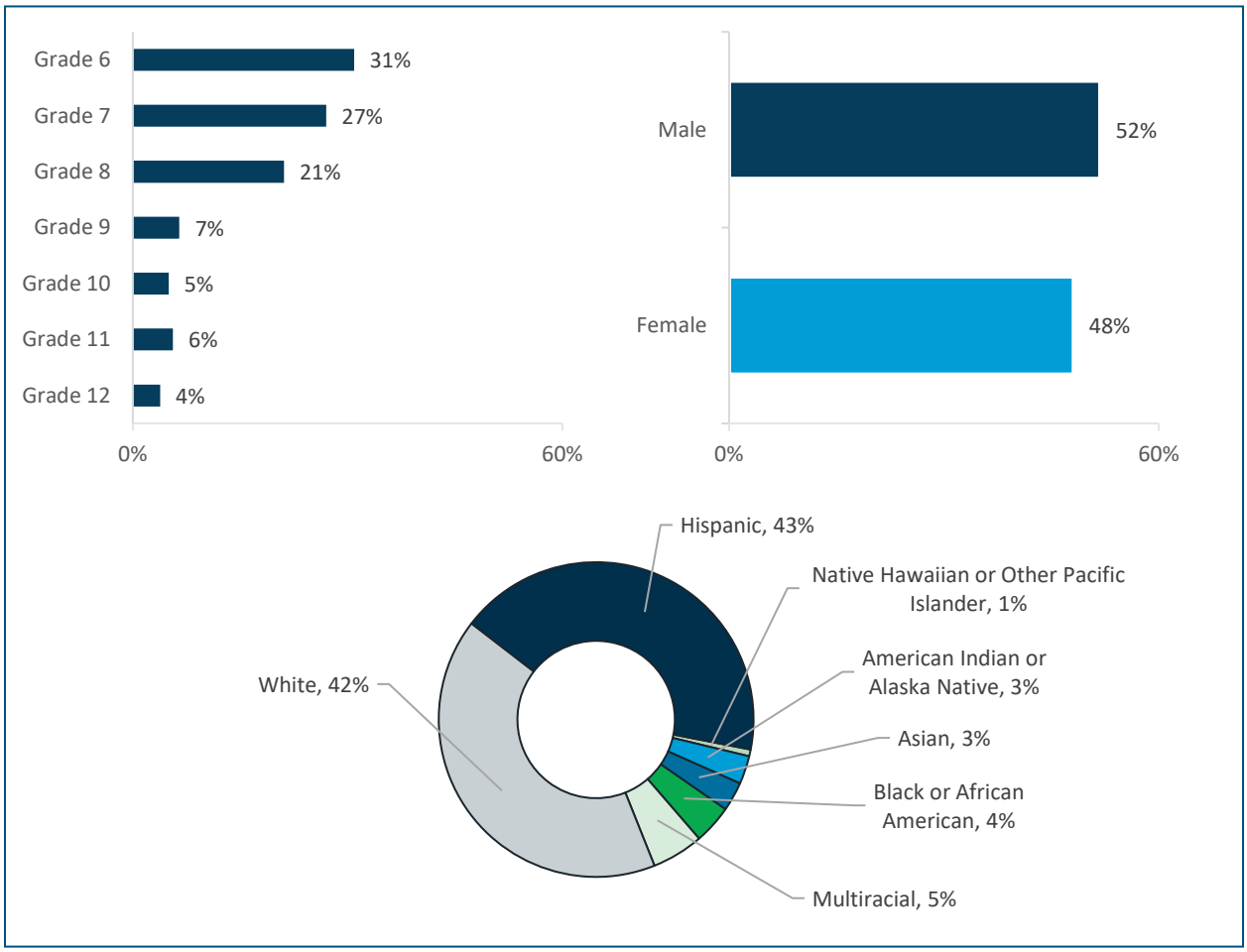
As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in collaboration with the Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI), the evaluation team decided not to administer a student survey during spring 2020 and instead opted to administer alternative surveys during spring 2021 and spring 2022. The pandemic disrupted program learning environments and staff responsibilities, making it very difficult to collect information from students in the same format as in the past, which was based on in-person programming. Also, to better understand youth experiences in programming as they related to the pandemic, we revisited our evaluation questions and the associated measures.

The 2022–23 school year, however, was characterized by program operations that were similar to those of the pre-COVID-19–pandemic era, with the majority of programming happening in in-person settings. Therefore, AIR and OSPI decided to revisit the administration of the YMEB survey, working collaboratively to identify the important questions we hoped to answer with data collected on a student survey and then updating the measure to reflect those goals.

We finalized the updated student survey (see Appendix A) in winter 2023, and the administration window was April 18–June 15, 2023. Prior to administering the survey, project directors received parent passive-consent forms to send to parents and guardians, giving them the opportunity to opt out their child from the survey if they wished.

The evaluation team developed the updated survey for students in Grades 6–12 to complete; however, we did set up the administration process so that programs could survey students as young as Grade 4 if they wished (the prior YMEB survey was administered to students in Grades 4–12). Our analyses of the items on the YMEB survey have indicated that the measure is more appropriate for students in Grade 6 and above; therefore, we limited our analyses to students in Grades 6–12, resulting in a sample of 892 students (705 students in Grades 6–8 and 187 students in Grades 9–12). Exhibit 36 presents student demographic information illustrating the population of students responding to the survey. The demographic composition of student survey respondents is roughly representative of all 21st CCLC program participants in Grades 6–12 with available race and ethnicity data (*N* = 4,760), 48% of whom identified as Hispanic and 37% of whom identified as White.

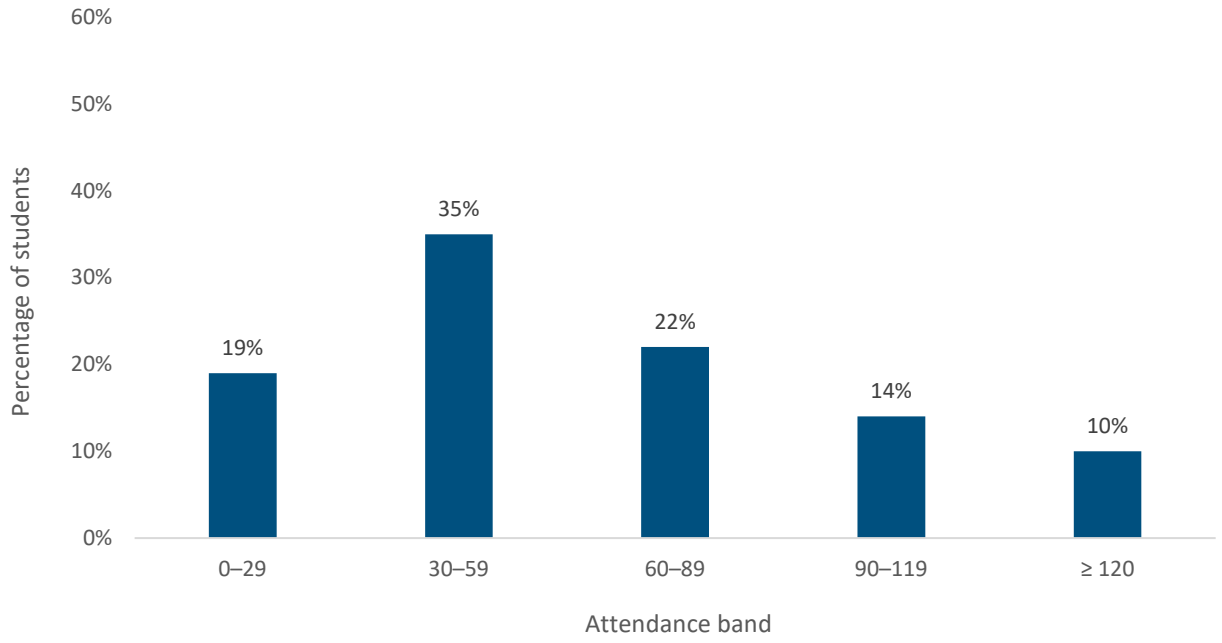
Exhibit 36. The majority of survey respondents were middle school students, and most identified as male. The majority of respondents identified as either White or Hispanic.



Note. Data are from the Washington 21st CLCC Data Portal, student survey, and state data warehouse. *N* = 767–892 students.

We also examined the attendance characteristics of the population of students responding to the survey. On average, survey respondents attended 63 programs days in 2022–23, with a median of 56 days. We found that the vast majority of survey respondents (81%) attended at least 30 days during the 2022–23 programming period. We then examined the attendance of student survey respondents across 30-day attendance bands and found that the greatest proportion of respondents (35%) participated in 30–59 days of programming (Exhibit 37).

Exhibit 37. The majority of survey respondents regularly attended programming in 2022–23. More than one third of respondents participated in 30–59 total program days.

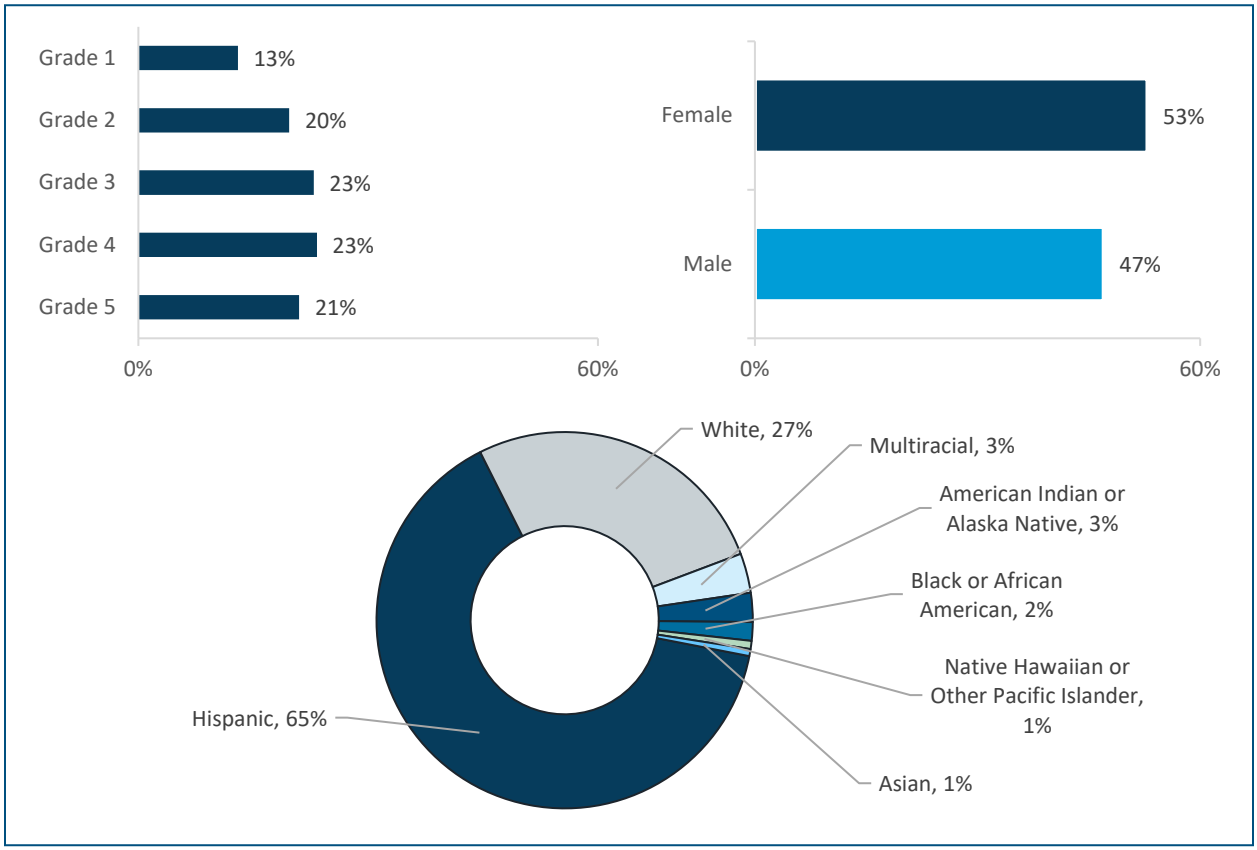


Note. Data are from data portal, student survey, and state data warehouse. *N* = 892 students.

Teacher Survey

We asked school-day teachers to report their perceptions of the learning engagement of students in Grades K–5 who participated in 21st CCLC programming, indicating whether a student's behavior improved, declined, did not change, or did not need to improve (see Appendix B for a copy of the teacher survey). The evaluation team administered the teacher surveys in the online Washington 21st CLCC Data Portal through which program staff submit other data about their program, such as operations, staffing, activities, and student and parent attendance. Program staff identified school-day teachers associated with students who were eligible for the survey (students in Grades K–5 who had at least 1 day of program attendance). We invited teachers to the online data portal and, once signed in, presented them with a list of students about whom we asked them to complete a teacher survey, resulting in 2,008 completed surveys. Exhibit 38 highlights demographic information about the domain of students for whom teachers submitted a survey. The demographic composition of these students generally aligns with that of all 21st CCLC program participants in Grades K–5 with available race and ethnicity data (*N* = 6,303), 58% of whom identified as Hispanic and 31% of whom identified as White.

Exhibit 38. The majority of students for whom teachers completed a survey were in Grades 3–5 and identified as female and Hispanic.



Note. Data are from the Washington 21st CLCC Data Portal, teacher survey, and state data warehouse. *N* = 1,630–2,008 student-level teacher responses.

Limitations

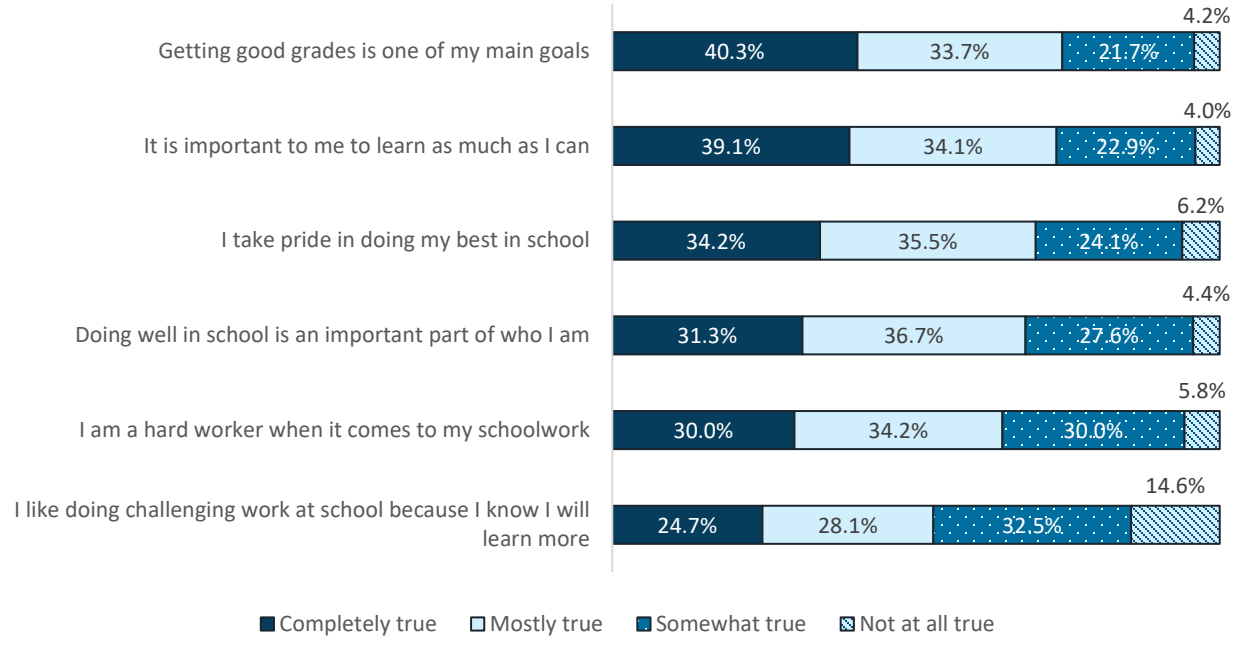
Potential limitations of both the teacher and student surveys include the subjectivity of responses and the potential for social desirability bias in self-reported data. For the teacher survey in particular, additional limitations include minimal exposure to students and the burden of another data collection effort on an already long list of things the teacher must do. Thus, readers should interpret all survey results with caution.

Academic Identity and Self-Esteem

> *Evaluation Question 5: What do students think of their own academic identity and self-esteem?*

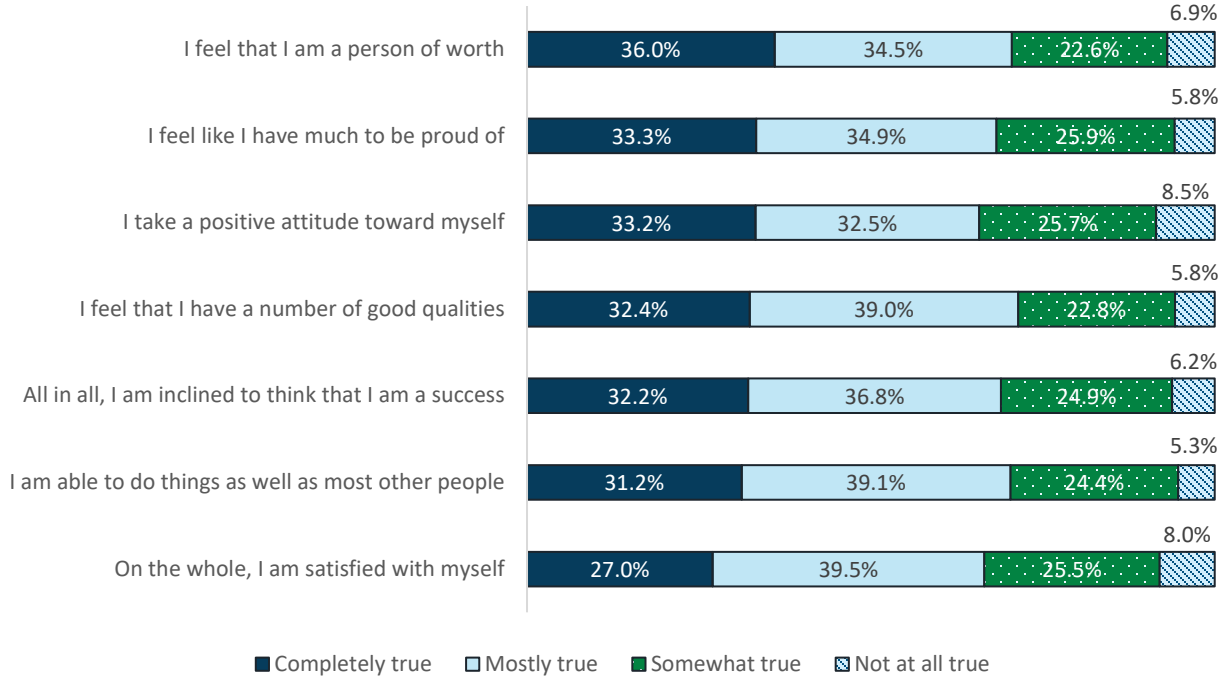
Through the survey, we asked students to think about how they might describe themselves—for example, whether they take pride in doing their best work at school or if they feel that they are a person of worth. Overall, students reported feeling positively about their academic identity and self-esteem across a range of indicators, with more than 50% of students agreeing that all statements were mostly or completely true about themselves, whereas more than 20% of respondents indicated only partial agreement, and between 4% and 15% of respondents felt that positive statements about their academic identity and sense of self were not at all true (Exhibits 39 and 40).

Exhibit 39. Regarding academic identity, close to half of students completely agreed that getting good grades was one of their main goals and that it was important to them to learn as much as they could. Conversely, nearly 15% of students reported that statements about enjoying an academic challenge were not at all true.



Note. Data are from student survey and state data warehouse. For this set of items, *N* = 876–884 students.

Exhibit 40. Regarding self-esteem, a majority of students mostly or completely agreed that they are people of worth with high self-regard and much to be proud of. However, one third of students indicated that these statements were only somewhat or not at all true, with 7% reporting that positive statements about their inherent worth were not at all true.



Note. Data are from student survey and state data warehouse. For this set of items, *N* = 870–880 students.

Student Program Experiences

> *Evaluation Question 6: What were the experiences of students attending 21st CCLC programming in the 2022–23 program year, including how they think the program has helped them?*

In this section, we provide details on students' program experiences, including their relationships with adults and other peers in their program, as well as their perceptions of how attending programming has helped them. Overall, many respondents reported positive experiences in their afterschool program, with 57% of students indicating that they really look forward to attending their program. However, 40% of students reported that they only sort of looked forward to attending programming, and 3% reported attending without any desire to be there (Exhibit 41).

Exhibit 41. Most respondents *really* looked forward to coming to their afterschool programming, whereas more than one third only somewhat looked forward to attending.

Note. Data are from student survey. *N* = 885 students.

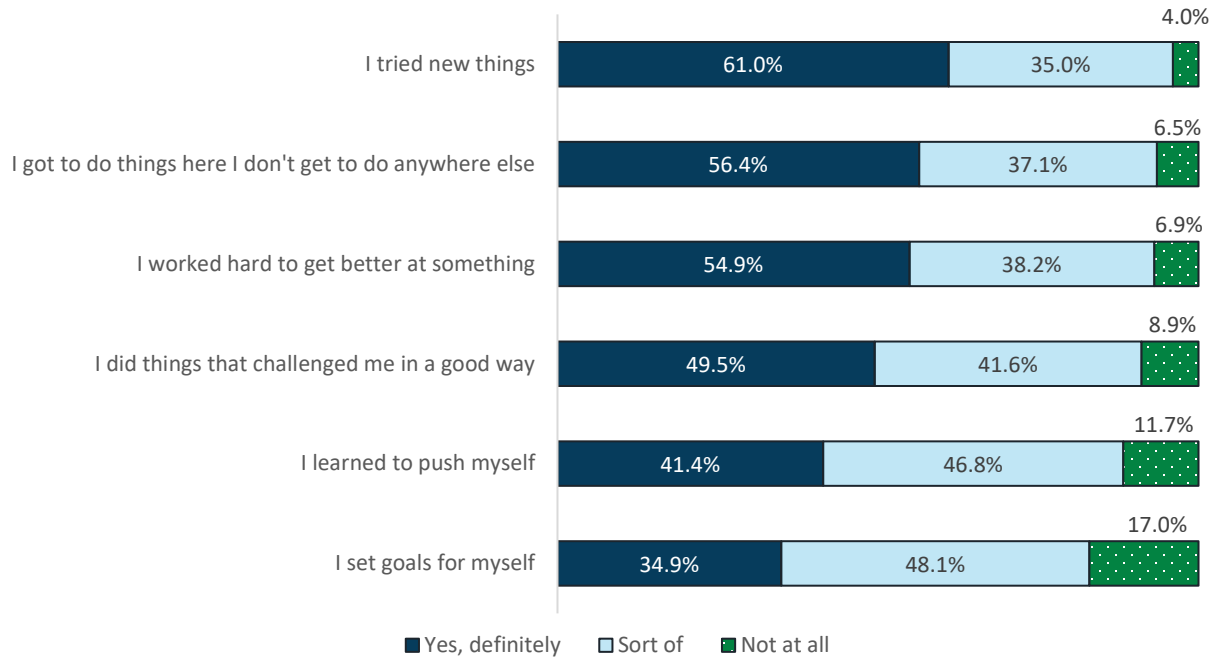
The survey asked students to select up to three specific areas in which they felt that their afterschool program had helped them (Exhibit 42). Approximately half of the respondents believed that their program helped them make new friends (52%), and nearly one third of the respondents believed that their program helped them find out what they liked to do (30%) and find out what they were good at doing (28%). Students' perception that their program supports a positive sense of self is notable in light of the sizable minority of students who reported low self-esteem (see Exhibit 40). The areas in which the fewest students felt that their program helped them were (a) learning about things important to their community (7%), and (b) feeling good because they were helping their community (9%).

Exhibit 42. Half of respondents thought that their afterschool program helped them make new friends, and nearly one third of respondents thought that their program helped them find out what they liked to do and what they were good at doing.

Note. Data are from student survey. *N* = 892 students. Students could select up to three response options, so the response options are not mutually exclusive.

Students also reported on whether their afterschool program provided them with certain experiences, such as trying new things or setting goals for themselves. Most commonly, students reported that they definitely had the opportunity to (a) try new things (61%), (b) do things that they don't get to do anywhere else (56%), or (c) work to get better at something (55%; Exhibit 43).

Exhibit 43. More than half of the respondents felt that their afterschool program definitely provided experiences through which they were able to (a) try new things, (b) do things they don't get to do anywhere else, or (c) work hard to get better at something.



Note. Data are from student survey. For this set of items, *N* = 867–881 students.

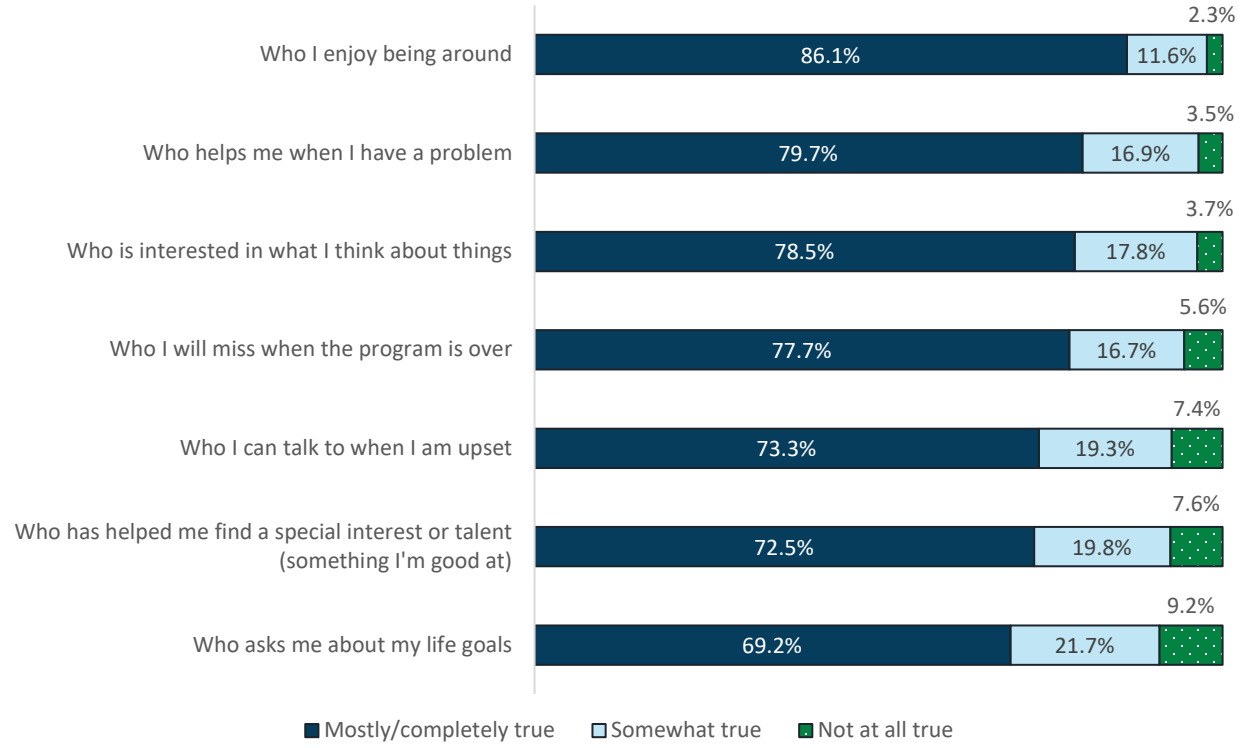
Next, the survey asked students how they felt about the adults in their afterschool program, such as whether there was an adult who they could talk to when they were upset or who asks them about their life and goals, as well as about their experiences with other students attending programming, including whether students teased or bullied each other or treated each other with respect. Across all indicators, the majority of respondents (more than 50%) reported positive experiences with an adult in their program (Exhibit 44) and with their peers (Exhibit 46). However, a sizable minority of respondents indicated a possible lack of connection with adult program staff and negative peer-to-peer experiences within their program. For example, 31% of respondents felt that it was either not at all true or only somewhat true that there was an adult in their program who showed interest in their life goals. Similarly, 45% of

respondents responded that peers in their program did engage either in bullying or in teasing to some degree.

Through post-hoc significance testing, we determined that there were statistically significant differences by attendance status in students' responses to survey questions about experiences with adult staff members. For the purposes of these analyses, we categorized regular attendees as students who participated in 60 or more program days during the 2022–23 programming period. We found that regular attendees who responded to the survey consistently demonstrated higher rates of agreement with positive statements about adult staff members than non-regular attendees (Exhibit 45). For example, 78% of regular attendees either mostly or completely agreed that their program had an adult staff member who helped them discover a special interest or talent at which they excel, as compared to 68% of non-regular attendees. Additionally, 84% of regular attendees either mostly or completed agreed that their program had an adult staff member who offered support when they had a problem, as compared to 76% of non-regular attendees.

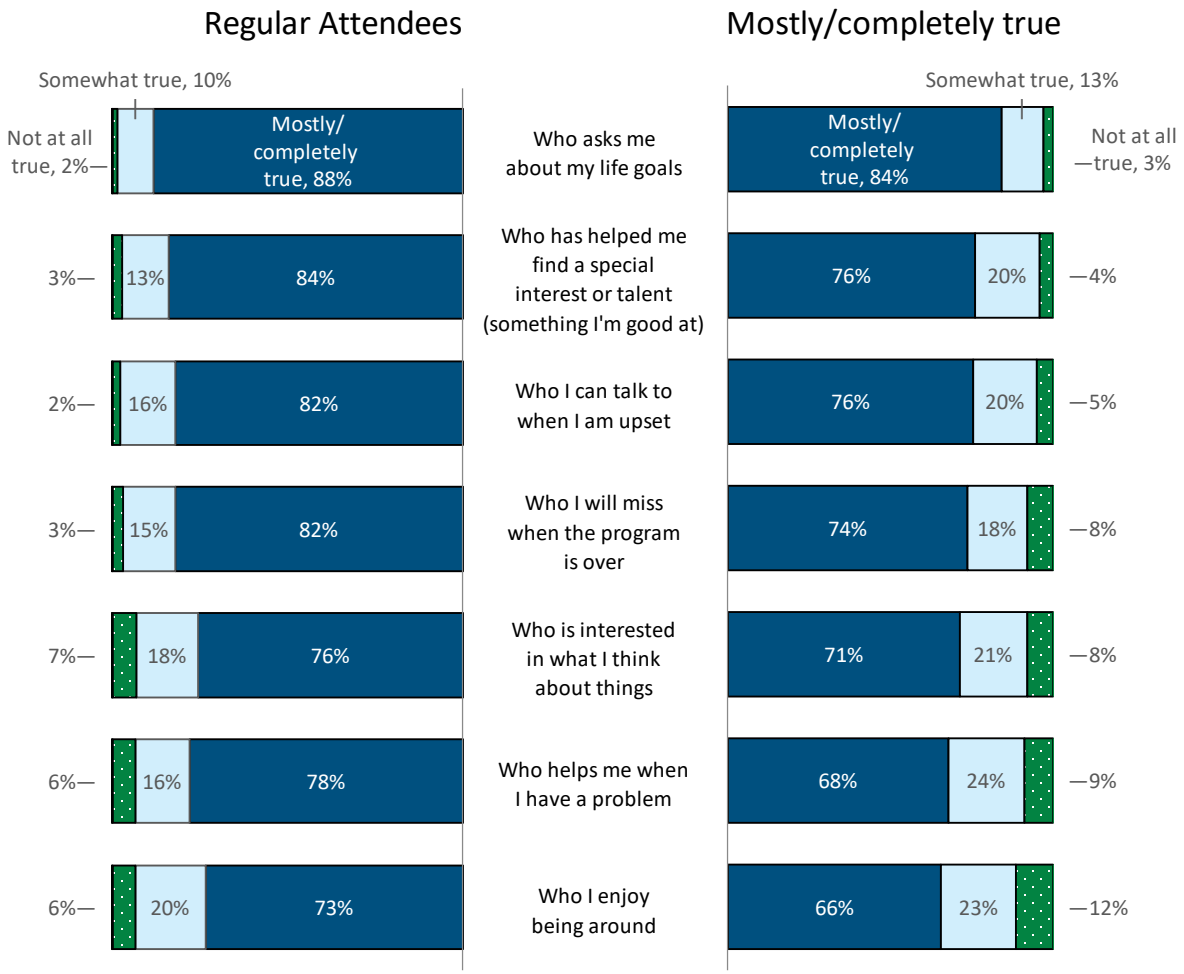
We also determined that there were statistically significant differences by grade band in students' responses to survey questions about peer-to-peer experiences. We found that high school students who responded to the survey consistently had higher rates of agreement with positive statements about interactions with peers than middle school students did (Exhibit 47). For example, 75% of high school respondents either mostly or completely agreed that kids in their program treat each other with respect, as compared to 57% of middle school respondents. Additionally, 65% of high school respondents either mostly or completely agreed that kids in their program do not tease or bully each other, as compared with only 51% of middle school respondents. It is important to note that any differences by grade band should be interpreted with caution, given the disparity in sample size between middle and high school respondents. However, the distribution of survey respondents by grade band roughly approximates the overall distribution of 21st CCLC program participants in Washington, with high school students making up the smallest share of total program participants.

Exhibit 44. Over 85% of respondents reported that their afterschool program had a supportive adult with whom they connected and enjoyed spending time, although a sizable minority (14% or more) indicated limited connections with adult program staff.



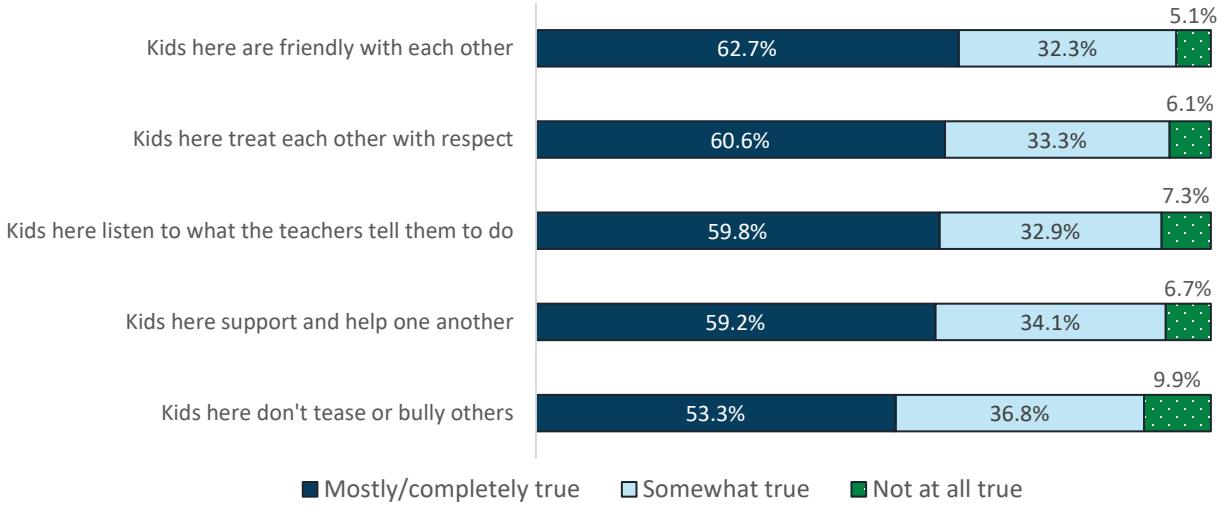
Note. Data are from student survey. For this set of items, *N* = 863–870 students.

Exhibit 45. Overall, a higher proportion of regular attendees reported positive experiences with adult program staff than non-regular attendees. For example, 78% of regular attendees either mostly or completely agreed that their program had an adult staff member who helped them discover a special interest or talent, as compared to 68% of non-regular attendees.



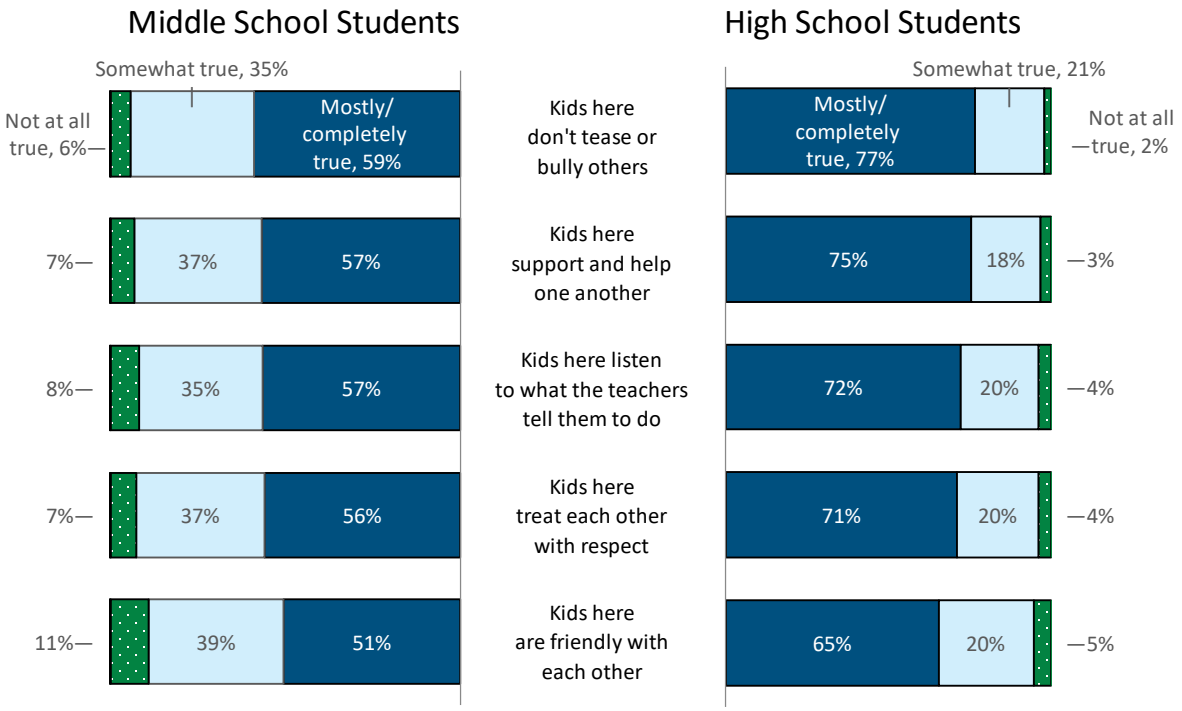
Note. For regular attendees, *N* = 402–406. For non-regular attendees, *N* = 459–465.

Exhibit 46. A majority of respondents (more than 50%) reported friendly and respectful experiences with their peers, whereas more than one third indicated negative peer-to-peer experiences, such as teasing or bullying (47%).



Note. Data are from student survey. For this set of items, *N* = 865–871 students.

Exhibit 47. Overall, a higher proportion of high school respondents reported positive experiences with peers in their program than middle school respondents. For example, 75% of high school respondents either mostly or completely agreed that kids in their program treat each other with respect, as compared to 57% of middle school respondents.



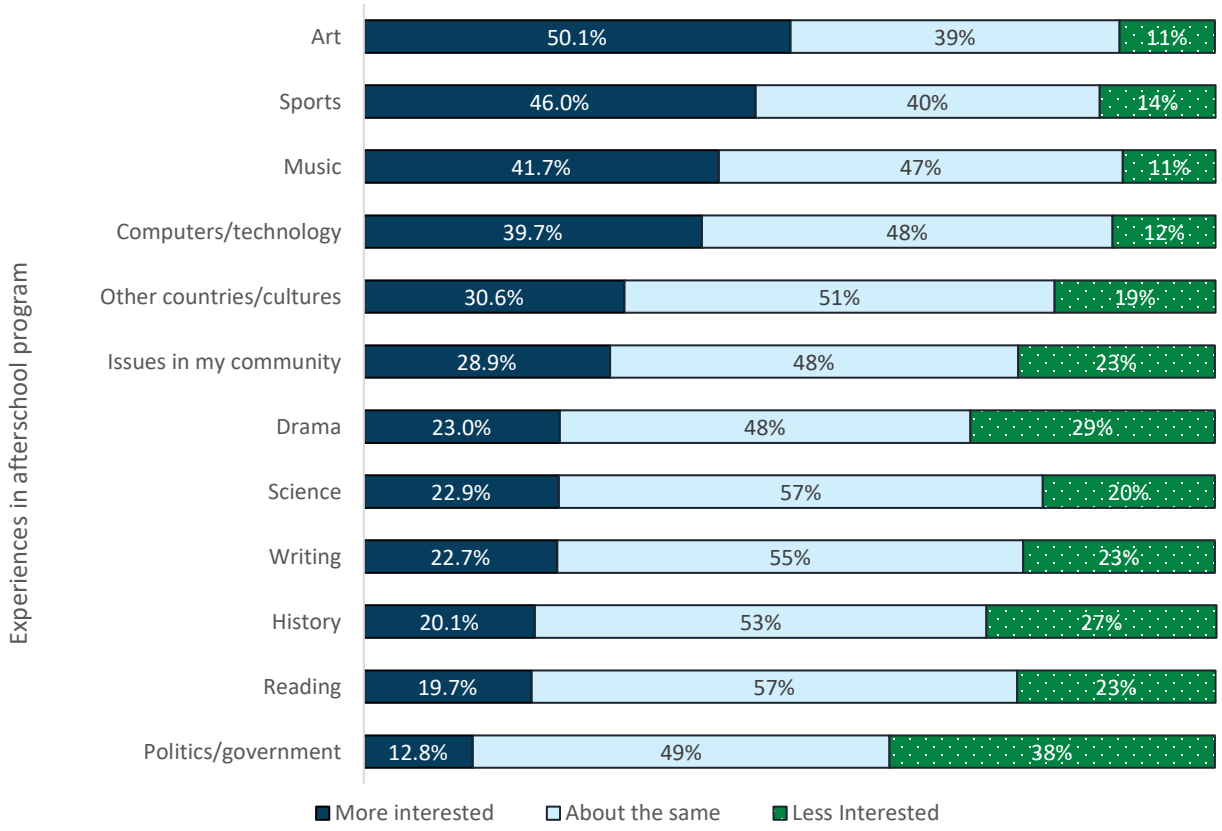
Note. For middle school students, *N* = 682–687. For high school students, *N* = 182–183.

Changes in Students' Interests

> *Evaluation Question 7: How did students' interests change after participating in afterschool programming?*

We explored how interested students felt in a range of topics compared to before starting 21st CCLC programming. Half of respondents reported feeling more interested in art than when they began participation (50%), and nearly half reported feeling more interested in sports (46%). Half or more of students felt similarly about reading (57%), science (57%), writing (55%), history (53%), and other countries and cultures (51%) relative to how they felt prior to attending their program. More than one third of students (38%) reported feeling less interested in politics and government than before they started. In addition, more than a fourth of students felt less interested in drama (29%) and history (27%; Exhibit 48).

Exhibit 48. Half of students reported feeling more interested in art and nearly half reported feeling more interested in sports after participating in afterschool programming. More than one third of students reported decreased interest in politics and government.



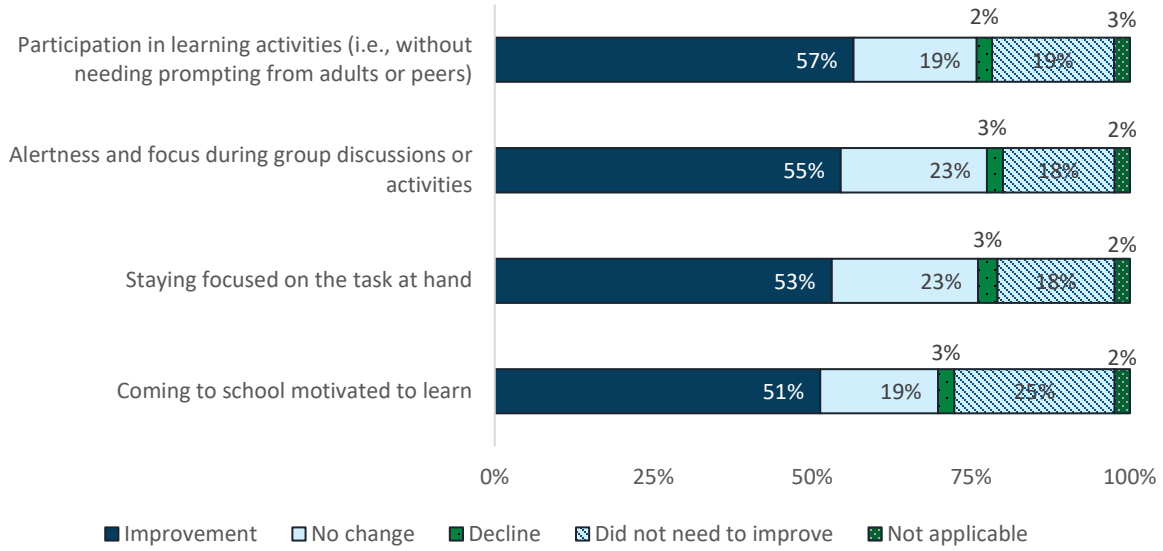
Note. Data are from student survey. For this set of items, *N* = 842–855 students.

Changes in Teacher-Reported Student Learning Engagement in the Classroom

> *Evaluation Question 8: To what extent did student learning engagement in the classroom change during the 2022–23 program year?*

Overall, teachers reported that they saw improvement for half or more of their students in their participation in learning activities, focus during group discussions or activities, focus on the task at hand, and motivation to learn (Exhibit 49).

Exhibit 49. Half or more of respondents reported improvements in their students' learning engagement, whereas approximately 20% reported no change in engagement and 3% reported decreased engagement.



Note. Data are from teacher survey. *N* = 2,008 students.

Summary

Through a brief online survey, students in Grades 6–12 shared their feelings and experiences during the 2022–23 program year. During this past program year, operations were largely aligned with those of the pre-COVID-19–pandemic era, with the majority of programming happening in in-person settings. Therefore, many survey items focused on the social interactions and dynamics that occur during 21st CCLC programming. Based on students' responses, one can infer that the return to in-person programming has enabled them to develop meaningful connections with both their peers and adult program staff.

It is encouraging to see that, in many ways, students' actual experiences in programming were positive: A majority of students reported that they really looked forward to attending programming, where they had the opportunity make new friends, discover new interests, challenge themselves, and develop a positive sense of self. Students also reported heightened interest in such topics as art and sports after attending 21st CCLC programming. The survey data suggest that middle and high school students who participated in 21st CCLC programming not only made social and emotional gains but also identified new academic and extracurricular pathways to pursue.

Not all student responses, however, were positive. Most notably, more than one third of survey respondents indicated that teasing or bullying were prevalent among students in their program. A sizable minority of students indicated limited supportive connections with adult center program staff. Additionally, a small but consistent subset of students expressed disagreement with positive statements about their self-esteem, self-satisfaction, and inherent worth. The perceptions, needs, and experiences of these students merit a closer look from OSPI and other key program stakeholders, to ensure that 21st CCLC programs in Washington offer socially and emotionally nurturing environments for all participants.

Teachers also shared their perceptions on the learning engagement of K–5 students who participated in 21st CCLC programming, and they reported substantial levels of improvement in students' self-directed participation in learning activities, task focus, and motivation to learn. These findings suggest that elementary school students who participated in 21st CCLC programming developed skills and behaviors that support active learning.

Looking forward to next steps, it would be valuable to review the results of these two surveys with OSPI and other 21st CCLC stakeholders to gain input on key findings and then determine whether additional data collection is warranted. One such finding that may inform continuous program improvement efforts is the sizable minority of respondents with unfavorable program experiences and perceptions. OSPI may consider facilitating qualitative focus groups, for example, to learn more about this subset of participants and their specific needs with respect to program climate and structure. Through further data collection and discussion, it may be possible to gain additional valuable information about the emotions and experiences of students in ever-evolving 21st CCLC programming.

Chapter 4. Results From the Center-Level Survey on Program Staffing

The focus of this chapter is on the staffing challenges, adaptations, and innovations identified by 21st CCLC centers in Washington through survey data. Staffing is a critical component of the implementation of 21st CCLC programming, and is vital for ensuring that participating youth have a high-quality learning environment. Operational elements related to the staffing of 21st CCLC programming can be intertwined across more than one key component of high-quality programming, including vision, mission, and goals and continuous quality improvement. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic likely had a substantial impact on the ability of at least some 21st CCLC programs to find and retain the level of staff needed to provide programming at optimal levels—particularly staff who have the skills necessary to effectively work with young people and craft developmentally appropriate learning environments. In light of these considerations, we collected survey data to document different approaches to staffing 21st CCLC programs and best practices in terms of hiring, orienting, training, and monitoring the performance of 21st CCLC staff.

Specifically, this chapter includes survey response data taken from a center-level survey administered during spring 2023, and provides answers to three specific evaluation questions.

1. What are the ongoing staffing challenges in Washington 21st CCLC centers?
2. What changes have Washington 21st CCLC centers made to staffing to better respond to the needs of students and families?
3. What especially innovative or robust staffing practices and approaches are being employed that may warrant consideration as best practices for the Washington 21st CCLC community more broadly?

Finding	Aligned recommendation
• Nearly two thirds of respondents (65%) reported that staff turnover had at least somewhat of an impact on the operation of their programs during the past year (with 20% indicating a moderate impact and 17% indicating a substantial impact). • The most cited challenges in hiring different types of staff were in hiring certified teachers to lead academic programming. • The issue most frequently cited as being at least a minor challenge related to stressful	• Further explore connections between key program characteristics (e.g., grantee type, funded cohort, grade levels served) and staffing challenges and solutions. Consider what other data collections might be necessary to determine if and how these characteristics have a differential impact on program experience. For example, what role might urbanicity of the surrounding community play in the noted staff challenges and solutions?

Finding	Aligned recommendation
working conditions was maintaining ideal staff-to-student ratios, followed by allocating sufficient time to orient new staff. • The most frequently selected staff type for turnover compared to previous programming periods was activity leaders for enrichment programming, followed by assistants to help activity leaders provide programming. • Nearly one third of respondents (31%) reported that they were seeking staff to address academic learning loss but were finding it challenging to obtain appropriate staffing. Approximately one quarter (27%) found it challenging to find staff to support student social and emotional needs or to support enrichment opportunities (24%). • The most commonly reported strategies for addressing staff turnover were being more intentional about being supportive and responsive to staff needs (83%), adding flexibility to worked hours (63%), and providing additional training and professional development (63%). • When examining these challenges by different program characteristics, there were some notable differences based on grantee type, year funded, and grade levels served. • Respondents reported that being more intentional about being supportive and responsive to staff needs was indeed effective, with 75% of all respondents reporting that this approach helped. • Respondents frequently mentioned four types of strategies that have been most effective in support staff retention: (1) improving pay/benefits, (2) reducing time commitment and scheduling flexibility, (3) fostering a supportive work environment, and (4) providing opportunities for professional development and collaboration.	• Further explore the solutions that respondents indicated were most effective in reducing staff turnover and mitigating stressful working conditions. Consider using qualitative methods, such as interviews, to gather additional data that delves into the details of how programs implemented these solutions. These details may be useful to the field more broadly.

Data Collection

During April through June 2023, AIR collected center-level surveys from Washington 21st CCLC project directors and center site coordinators. Surveys were administered in a way that allowed project directors and site coordinators to, if necessary, collaborate on survey responses. The purpose of the surveys was to ask project directors and site coordinators about program staffing; the surveys asked the respondent to indicate staffing-related challenges they had observed, along with any attempted solutions to those challenges.

AIR invited all 128 21st CCLC centers to participate in the survey and received 120 center-level responses in return (for a response rate of 94%). All surveys were administered online through the Data Portal. See Appendix C for a copy of the center-level survey.

Limitations of the Data

The findings in this chapter are predicated on survey responses, which are limited in important ways. These data are limited by respondent memory recall; more recent events are likely to figure prominently in respondents' answers, as are events that, for whatever reason, had a greater impact on the individual responding to the survey (regardless of impact on the program). Additionally, respondents may have provided answers based not on their memory but rather on the perceived social acceptability of the response (social desirability bias).

Role Definitions for Project Directors and Site Coordinators

Project Directors: A project director oversees the administration of Washington 21st CCLC grant funds. A single project director may oversee program implementation at several different program locations, known as *centers*. Centers are often, but not always, located in schools.

Site Coordinators: A site coordinator is responsible for program administration at a single center location. This individual is typically in charge of staffing the center and overseeing day-to-day activity offerings. Site coordinators report to project directors, although sometimes these roles can be held by the same person.

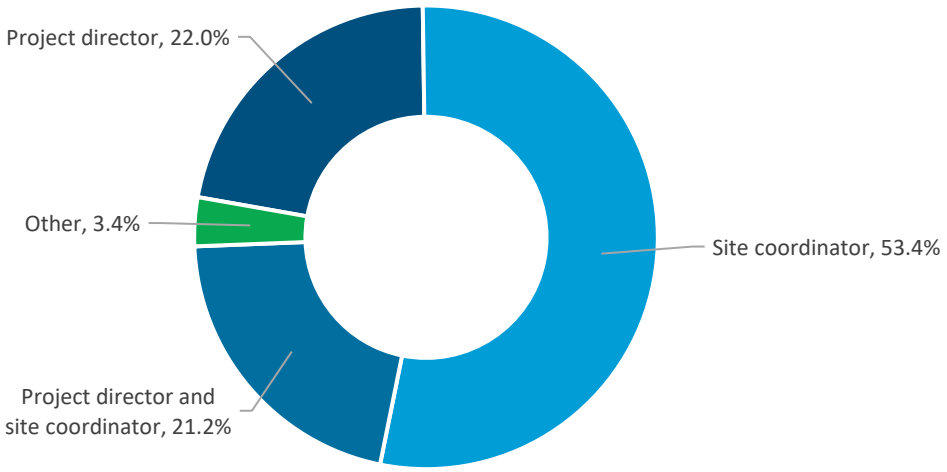
Findings

This section presents findings from the center-level staffing survey. It starts with a high-level descriptive overview of staff responding to the survey and then presents findings by evaluation question. These findings present an initial picture of staffing at Washington 21st CCLC programs and suggest ways that OSPI may be able to support programs experiencing staffing-related challenges in the future.

Survey Respondents

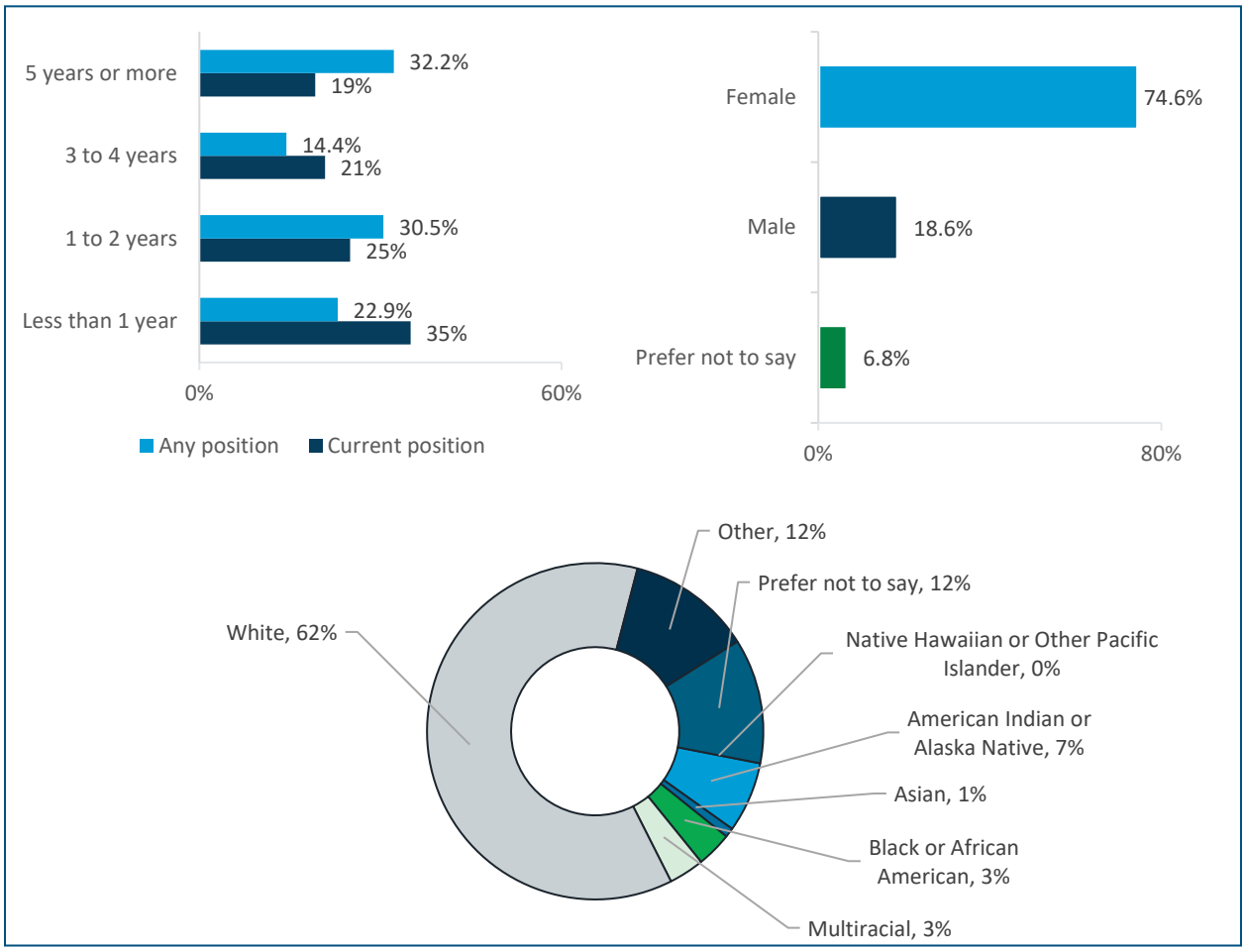
As noted previously, surveys were administered in a way that allowed project directors and site coordinators to, if necessary, collaborate on survey responses. Most respondents (53%) indicated their role in the program was a site coordinator, while nearly one quarter (22%) indicated they were a project director. An additional 21% indicated their role consisted of both project director and site coordinator duties (Exhibit 50). Nearly 75% of respondents were female and nearly two thirds (62%) were White. Over one third (35%) of respondents noted they had been in their *current* position for less than 1 year; however, nearly one third (32%) indicated that they had been working at the afterschool center in *some capacity* for 5 years or more (Exhibit 51).

Exhibit 50. The majority of center-level staffing survey respondents indicated their role as solely a site coordinator.



Note. Data are from the center-level staffing survey, spring 2023. *N* = 118 center-level responses. Other positions included ASAS program managers and directors of data and community.

Exhibit 51. The majority of survey respondents were White, were female, and had been in their current position for 2 years or less. Nearly one third of respondents reported working at the afterschool center in any capacity for 5 years or more.



Note. Data are from center-level staffing survey. *N* = 117 center-level responses. 33.9% of respondents were of Hispanic/Latino descent. 53.4% reported previously working for the school district with which their 21st CCLC program is associated and 62.7% reported they live in the community served by the schools that program participants attend.

Staffing Challenges

> *Evaluation Question 9: What are the ongoing staffing challenges in Washington 21st CCLC centers?*

The COVID-19 pandemic created many challenges for Washington 21st CCLC programs, some of which were directly related to staffing and were persistent through subsequent school years. As programs emerged from the pandemic and activities were delivered more similarly to pracademic times (i.e., primarily in person), AIR and OSPI were interested in knowing from project directors and site coordinators what staffing-related challenges they still face, what solutions they have adopted, and what has worked especially well. This subsection presents their responses, specifically concerning staff hiring and recruitment, stressful working conditions, and staff turnover. Note that the two subsections following this one deal with the attempts of project directors and site coordinators to resolve these challenges and their perceptions concerning how effective those attempts were.

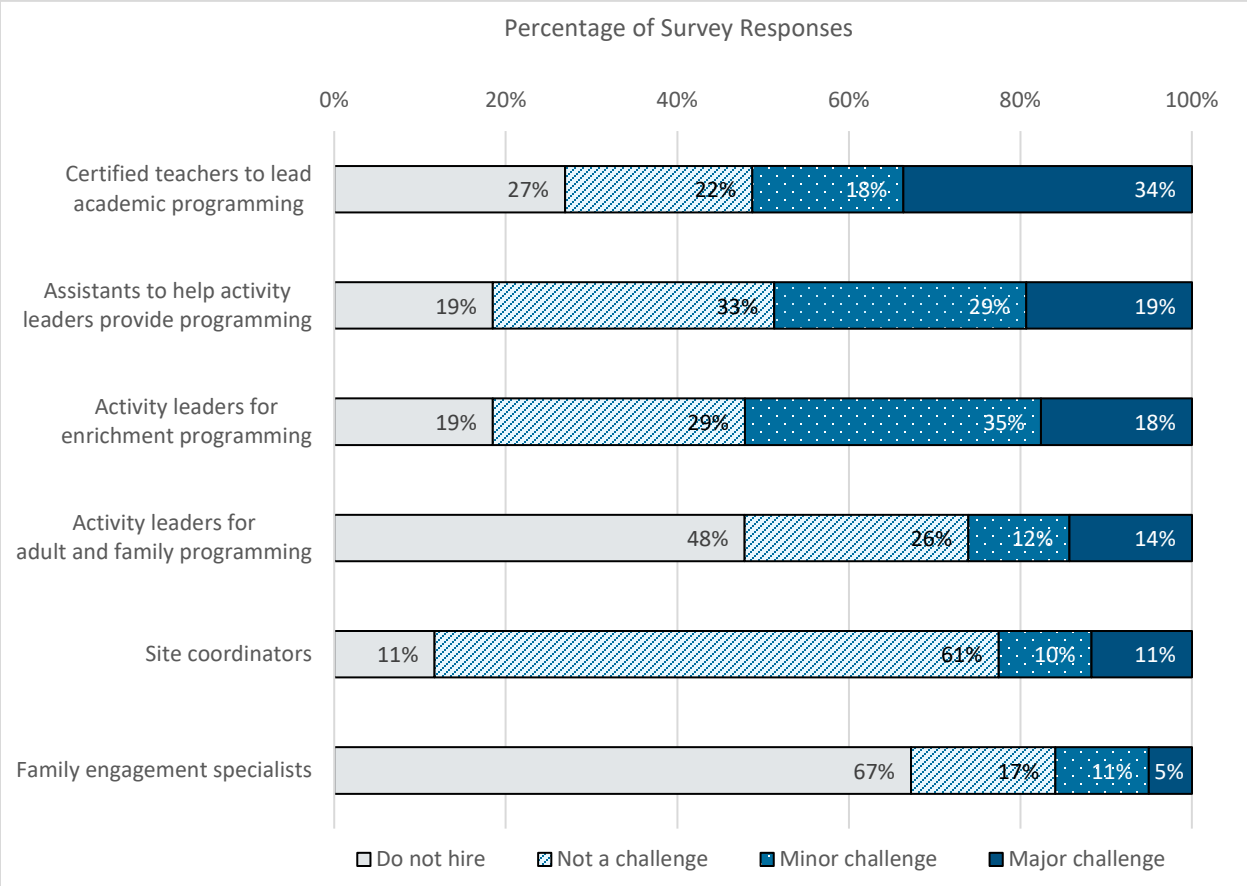
Challenges Related to Staff Hiring and Recruitment

Survey respondents were asked whether they were experiencing challenges hiring or recruiting staff. Specifically, the surveys asked, "To what extent have you experienced challenges in hiring the following types of staff for your 21st CCLC program this school year?" For each staff type listed on the survey ("certified teachers to lead academic programming," "site coordinators," and so on), respondents could also indicate that they do not hire that type of staff.

Over one third (34%) of respondents indicated that they were having major challenges hiring certified teachers to lead academic programming, and 18% indicated this was a minor challenge.[2] Over half of respondents indicated that hiring activity leaders for enrichment programming was at least a minor challenge, and nearly half reported at least a minor challenge with hiring assistants to help activity leaders provide programming (see Exhibit 52). Site coordinators and family engagement specialists had the lowest percentage of respondents reporting challenges with hiring; however, two thirds of respondents reported they do not hire family engagement specialists.

[2] Staff types on the survey included site coordinators, family engagement specialists, certified teachers to lead academic programming, activity leaders for enrichment programs, activity leaders for adult and family programming, and assistants to help activity leaders provide programming.

Exhibit 52. The most frequently cited challenges in hiring different types of staff were in hiring certified teachers to lead academic programming.



Note. Data are from the center-level staffing survey. *N* = 119 center-level responses.

Survey responses to this item were also examined by subgroups (cycle, school-based versus non-school-based grant, and grade levels served), using chi-square to test for significance ($p \leq .05$). We found significant differences between school-based and non-school-based grantees in their ability to hire certified teachers. Not surprisingly, more school-based grantees were more apt to report that they had no or minor challenges with hiring this type of staff. There were also significant differences between funded cohorts on the reported ability to hire family engagement specialists. The main takeaway was that grantees funded in Cohorts 15 and 16 were more likely to have reported hiring this type of staff, while those in Cohorts 17 and 18 were more likely to have reported they do not hire this type of staff. There were also significant differences between the grade levels served at each center in relation to hiring activity leaders for adult and family programming. Centers serving elementary schools were more apt to report hiring these staff as a major challenge.

Survey respondents further elaborated on these responses in answers to an open-ended question that asked them to describe any current staffing shortages they were experiencing and for which positions. Survey respondents frequently mentioned experiencing shortages in the following roles: certified teachers, activity leaders/facilitators, and tutors.

Respondents who mentioned experiencing certified teacher shortages indicated low pay, lack of time or interest in working afterschool, and burnout as reasons positions continue to go unfilled.

"Staff [are] so overwhelmed with the day teaching demands that they refuse to stay after hours to support an afterschool program." –Survey Respondent

Some respondents mentioned lack of school leader support as contributing to staffing issues, stating that it is critical for school administration to "push the importance of 21st CCLC programming." Respondents who mentioned tutor shortages indicated that tutors were often high school students who had competing priorities between working at the afterschool program and participating in clubs and sports. One respondent described the successful logistical solution of rotating schedules throughout the year to keep positions staffed.

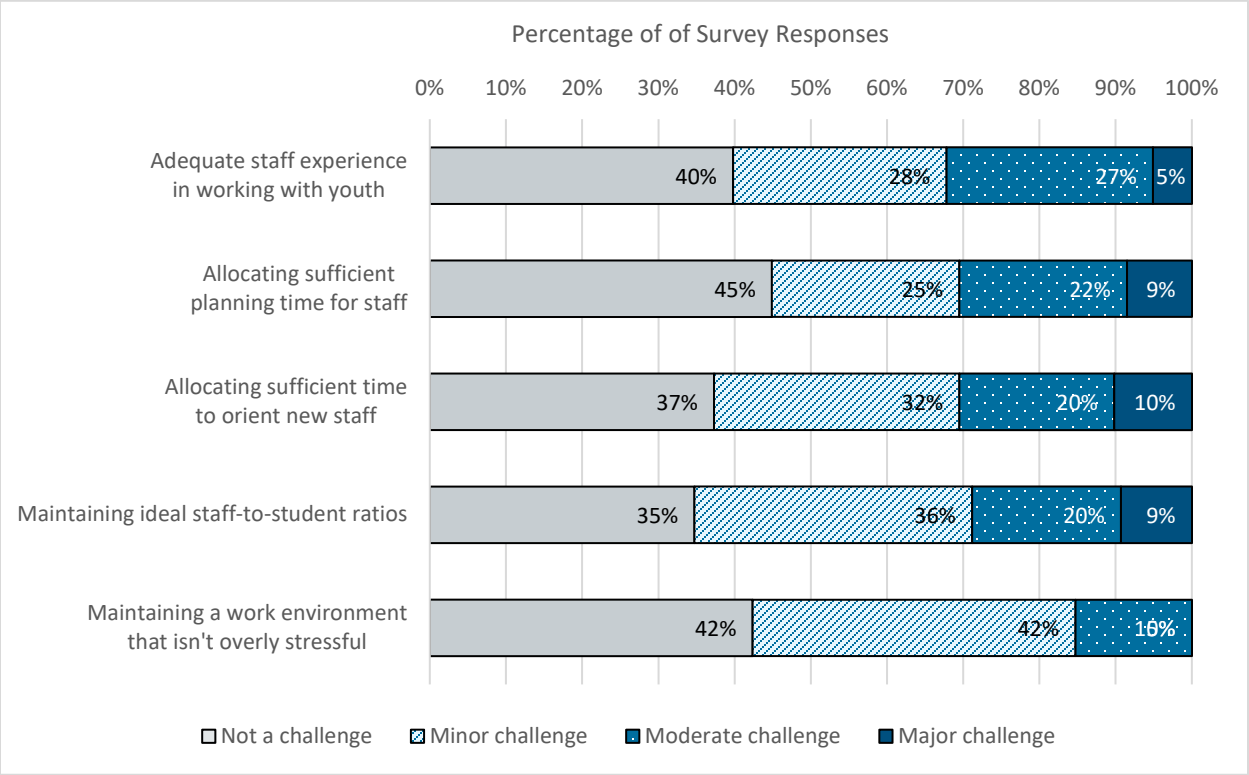
Several respondents also indicated experiencing turnover in the site coordinator role and difficulty filling the position.

"This school year the only staffing experience we had to deal with was high school tutors as we had to alternate them throughout the year due to clubs and sports they participated in at different times of the year." –Survey Respondent

Challenges Related to Stressful Working Conditions

As part of the center-level surveys, project directors and site coordinators were asked about challenges related to stressful working conditions. Respondents were asked, "To what extent have you experienced any of the following challenges with staffing in your 21st CCLC program this school year?" Respondents were then presented with a list of specific challenges, to which they could say that a potential challenge was "not a challenge," a "minor challenge," a "moderate challenge," or a "major challenge." The results are presented in Exhibit 53. Of particular note, nearly one third of respondents experienced a moderate or major challenge with adequate staff experience in working with youth (32%), allocating sufficient planning time for staff (31%), and allocating sufficient time to orient new staff (30%).

Exhibit 53. The issue most frequently cited as being at least a minor challenge related to stressful working conditions was maintaining ideal staff-to-student ratios, followed by allocating sufficient time to orient new staff.



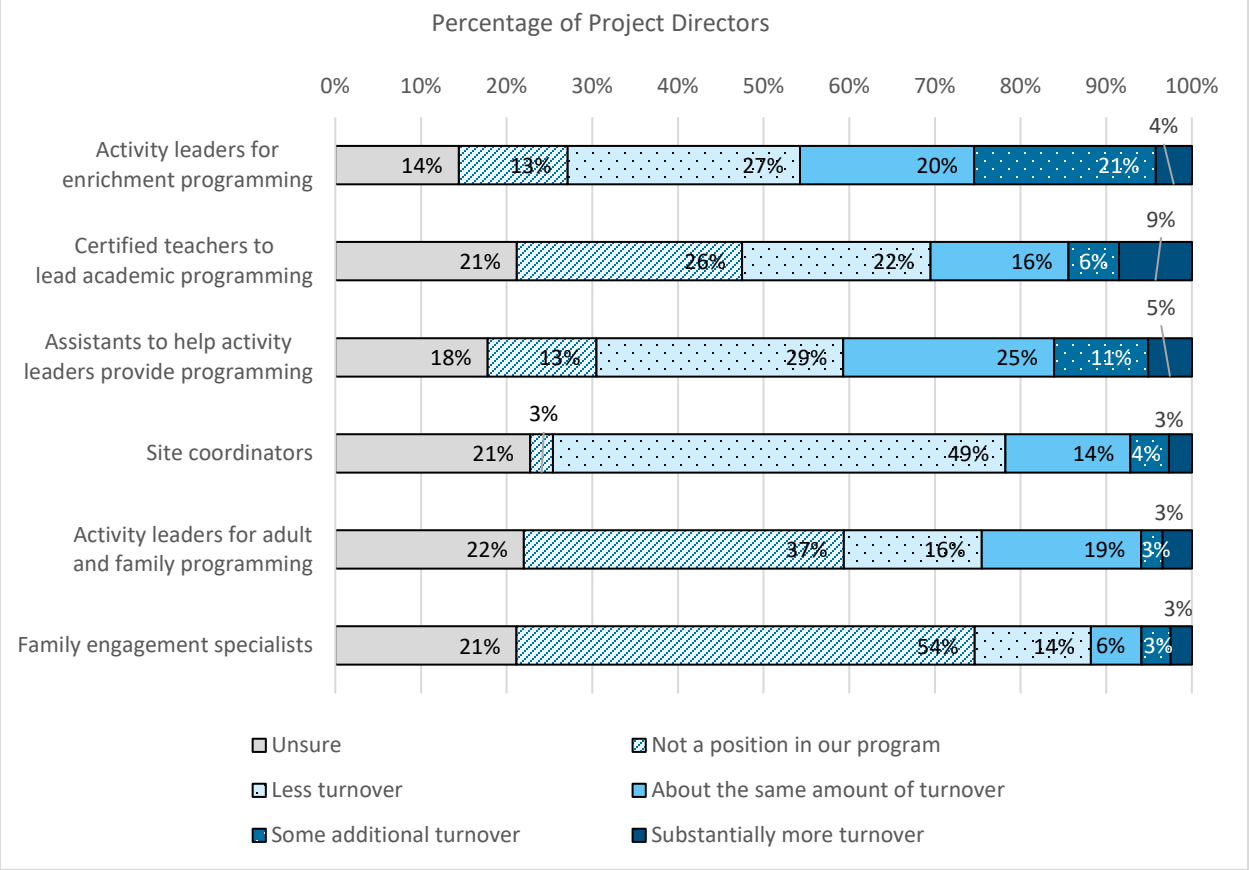
Note. Data are from the center-level staffing survey. *N* = 118 center-level responses.

These findings were also analyzed by center subgroups to see whether center characteristics were associated with differences in the reported challenge level. There was a significant difference between school based and non-school based in terms of challenges faced in allocating sufficient time to orient new staff. There was also a significant difference between grade levels served in relation to maintaining a work environment that is not overly stressful (chi-square test, $p \leq .05$). Otherwise, the differences across subgroups were not significant.

Challenges Related to Staff Turnover

Finally, the survey included a question about staff turnover, asking respondents, "To what extent has turnover in various positions changed this year compared to previous programming periods?" Respondents reported at least some additional or substantially more turnover compared to previous programming periods for activity leaders in enrichment programming (25%), certified teachers to lead academic programming (15%), and assistants to help activity leaders provide programming (16%). See Exhibit 54.

Exhibit 54. The most frequently selected staff type for turnover compared to previous programming periods was activity leaders for enrichment programming, followed by assistants to help activity leaders provide programming.

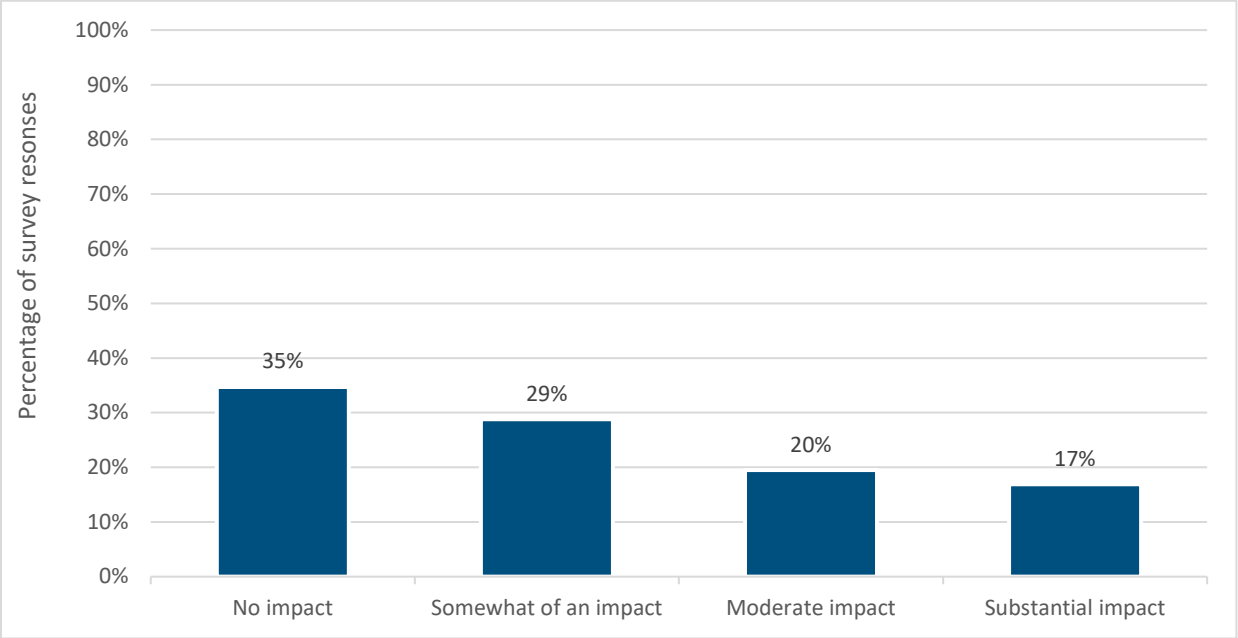


Note. Data are from the center-level staffing survey. *N* = 118 center-level responses.

Effect of Staffing Challenges on Programming

The preceding subsection indicates that programs were having trouble maintaining stable staff levels in 2022–23. However, what impact did that staffing challenge have on the programs? Respondents were questioned about this issue as part of the surveys. Specifically, the surveys asked, "Overall, during the past year, how has staff turnover impacted the operation of your program?" See Exhibit 55 for results.

Exhibit 55. Nearly two thirds of respondents (65%) reported that staff turnover had at least somewhat of an impact on the operation of their programs during the past year (with 20% indicating a moderate impact and 17% indicating a substantial impact).



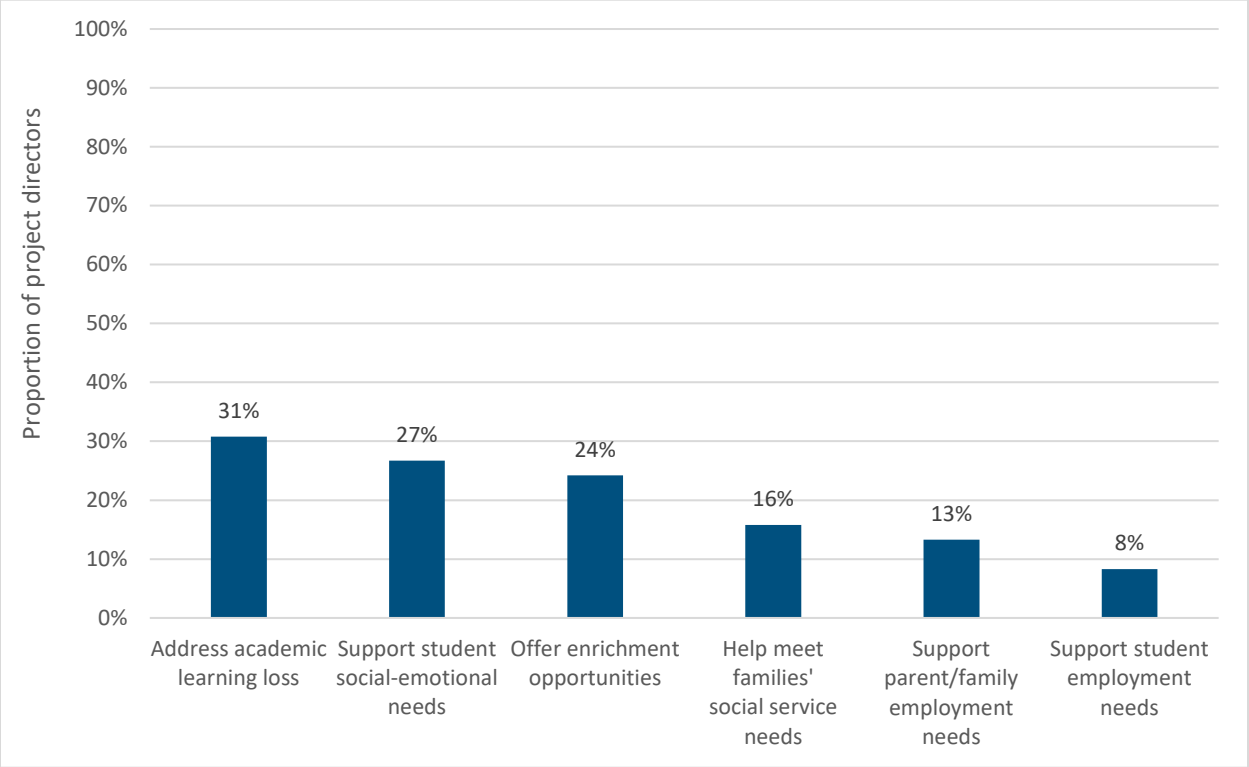
Note. Data are from the center-level staffing survey. *N* = 118 center-level responses.

Responding to Student and Family Needs

> *Evaluation Question 10: What changes have Washington 21st CCLC centers made to staffing to better respond to the needs of students and families?*

Survey respondents were also asked, "What actions have you taken, or are you currently taking, in your 21st CCLC program to hire additional staff to address increased student and family needs since the start of the pandemic? Please check all that apply." (See Exhibit 56.)

Exhibit 56. Nearly one third of respondents (31%) reported that they were seeking staff to address academic learning loss but were finding it challenging to obtain appropriate staffing. Approximately one quarter (27%) were finding it challenging to find staff to support student social and emotional needs or to support enrichment opportunities (24%).



Note. Data are from the center-level staffing survey. *N* = 120 center-level responses.

Survey respondents were asked to further elaborate on any changes they made to staffing during the 2022–23 programming year to better respond to the needs of students and families in an open-ended question. Respondents primarily mentioned two types of changes they made to staffing this programming year, including tweaking their staffing approach and, to a lesser extent, improving incentives. Respondents mentioned increasing their number of staff and/or hiring different roles to fill vacant positions, and indicated that hiring additional staff allowed programs to better meet student needs, decrease class size, and sustain relationships with students. Sometimes implementing these changes meant hiring outside the district or partnering more intentionally with community-based organizations. Respondents also mentioned working closely with their district leaders to encourage educators to apply, as well as recruiting at high schools and college job fairs.

"We took a more collaborative approach by utilizing staff within the school. Somewhat intentional as relationships are already established." –Survey Respondent

"Due to challenging time of finding reliable staff within the school and staff willing to stay after hours we had to seek outside help from sub educators." –Survey Respondent

Respondents mentioned filling vacancies with paraprofessionals, high school tutors, youth development specialists, school-day teachers, and family engagement coordinators.

One respondent described their program's positive experience staffing high school students who were also alumni of the program. This respondent mentioned that high school student hires are "willing to be molded and learn to be great staff."

A few respondents mentioned specifically hiring staff who can attend to student social-emotional needs this year (e.g., school counselor, behavioral specialist, special education teacher).

"We hired a [special education] teacher within the school who helped us set up our Social Emotional Learning room. We have a regulation zone set up where kids can describe their emotions and do timed activities that help regulate those emotions. This has helped greatly with our program." –Survey Respondent

Respondents emphasized the importance of hiring highly qualified staff to help address student needs, and flagged recruiting highly qualified staff as a challenge. One respondent mentioned that it is helpful to hire staff who want to pursue a career in education, because they are likely passionate about the prospect of helping students and gaining hands-on experience.

Finally, a few respondents who mentioned changes to their incentives shared that in some cases they increased staff salaries. Others mentioned offering flexible hours and reduced time commitment expectations as more attractive to potential staff.

"Allowing for flexible work schedule. Make it as convenient for them as possible." –Survey Respondent

Solutions to Staffing Challenges

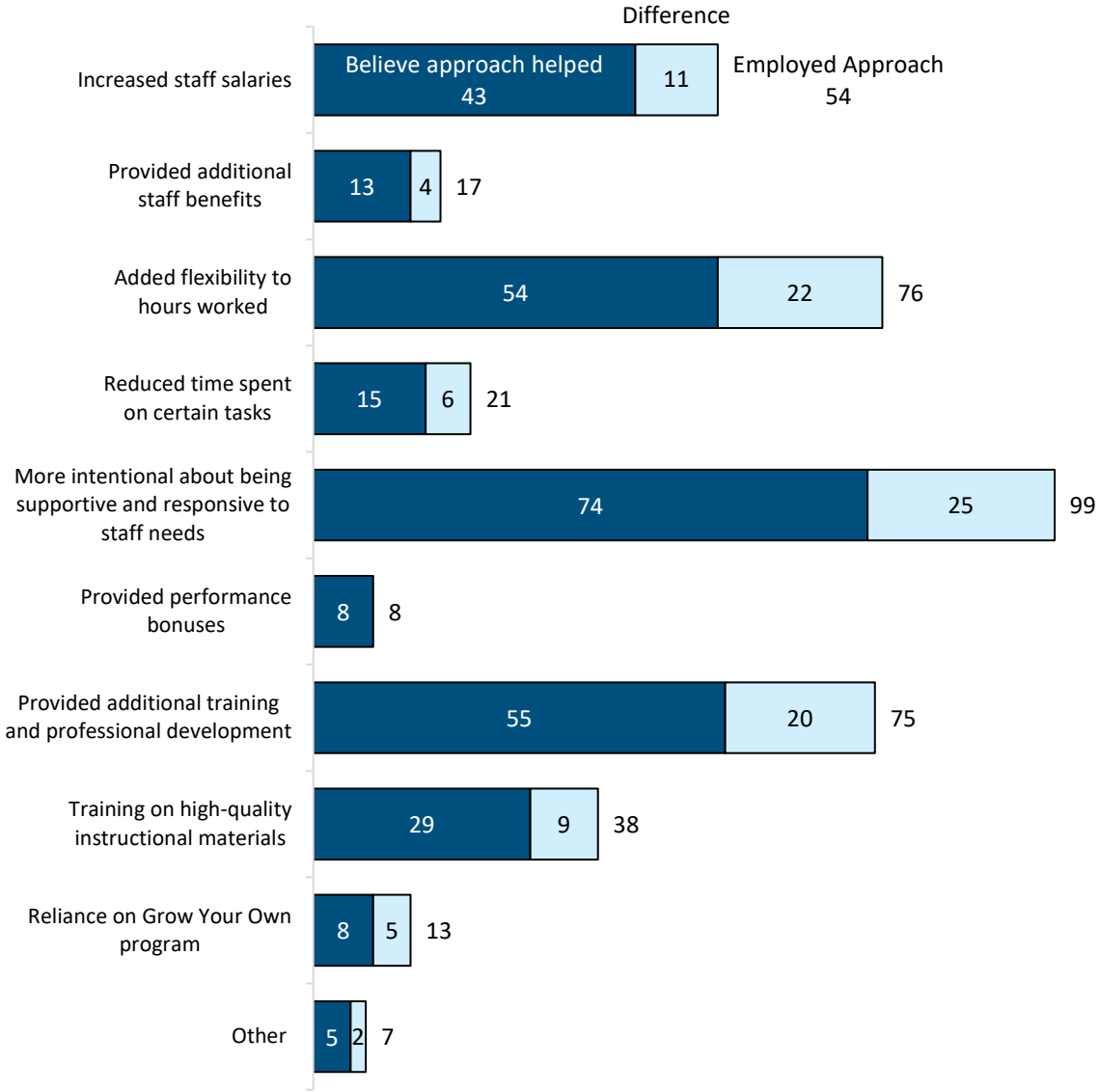
Given the staffing challenges programs have experienced, as well as the reported effects of those challenges on programming, what solutions have project directors and site coordinators tried, and which were effective? This subsection addresses these questions, using project director survey and site coordinator interview findings.

> *Evaluation Question 11: What especially innovative or robust staffing practices and approaches are being employed that may warrant consideration as best practices for the Washington 21st CCLC community more broadly?*

Supporting Staff and Reducing Turnover

Survey respondents were asked what strategies they employed in order to reduce staff turnover, and whether any of these approaches actually helped with staff retention. The most commonly reported strategies were being more intentional about being supportive and responsive to staff needs (83%), adding flexibility to worked hours (63%), and providing additional training and professional development (63%). When asked what strategies actually helped reduce turnover, respondents reported that being more intentional about being supportive and responsive to staff needs was indeed effective, with 75% of all respondents reporting that this approach helped. (See Exhibit 57.)

Exhibit 57. The most employed approach for supporting staff and reducing turnover was also one that survey respondents believed helped to do so.



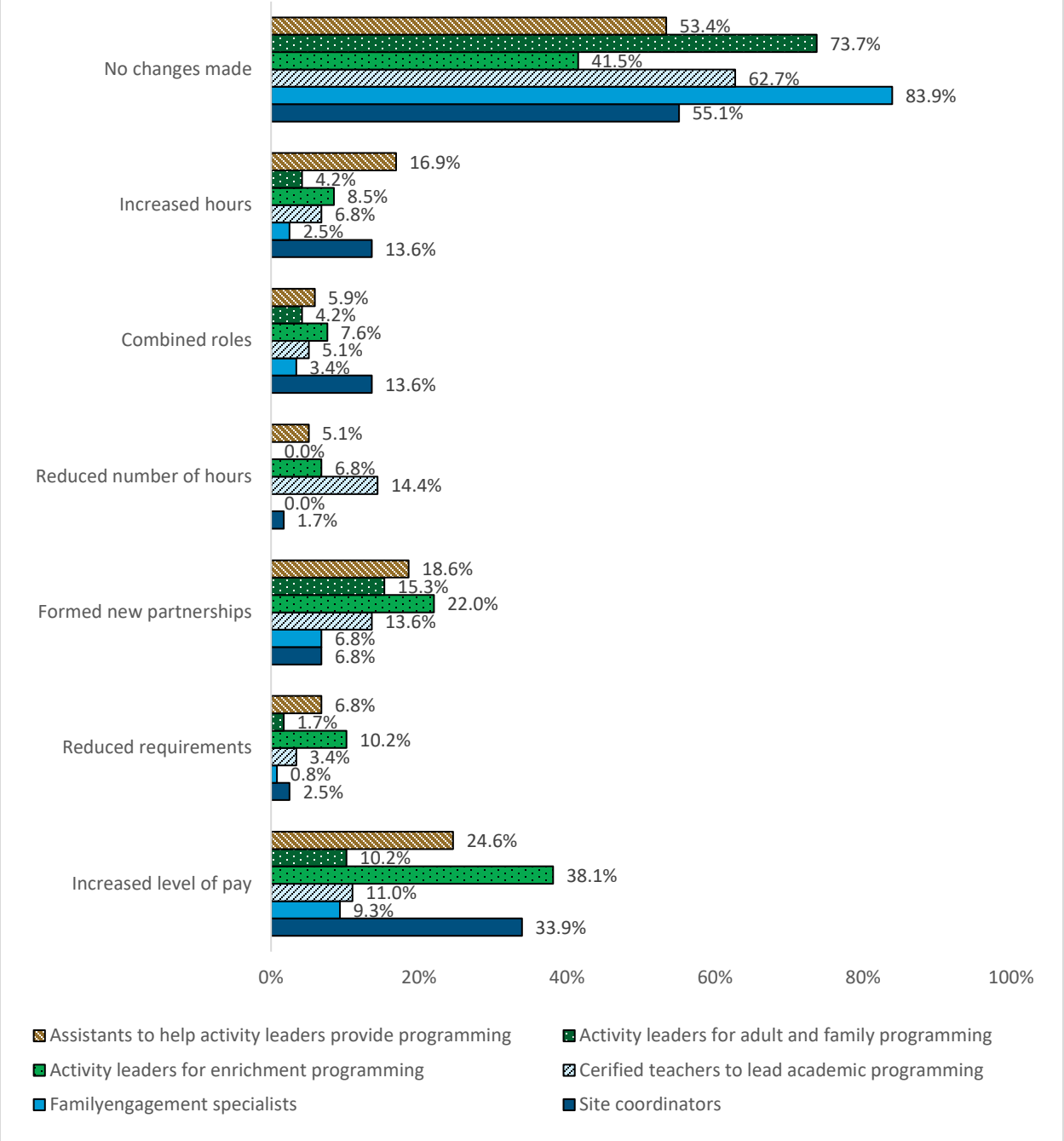
Note. Data are from the center-level staffing survey. *N* = 128 center-level responses.

These findings were also analyzed by center subgroup to see whether different center characteristics were associated with different approaches. School-based and non-school-based programs differed significantly in terms of relying on the Grow Your Own program, but the sample of programs reporting using this strategy is limited ($n = 13$, $p \leq .05$). There were no significant differences based on cohort or grade levels served.

Attracting and Finding Candidates for Open Positions

Survey respondents were asked what strategies they employed in order to better attract and find candidates for open positions for different types of staff. A majority of nearly all staff types (except activity leaders for adult and family programming) indicated they had not made any changes to their strategy. The most frequently cited strategies for recruiting to that open position were increasing the level of pay (38%) and forming new partnerships (22%). Increasing the level of pay was also the most frequently cited strategy for recruiting site coordinators and assistants to help activity leaders to open positions. (See Exhibit 58).

Exhibit 58. Most survey respondents reported making no changes to better attract and find candidates for open positions, however, site coordinators and activity leaders for enrichment programming, increasing the level of pay was reported by approximately 34% or more.

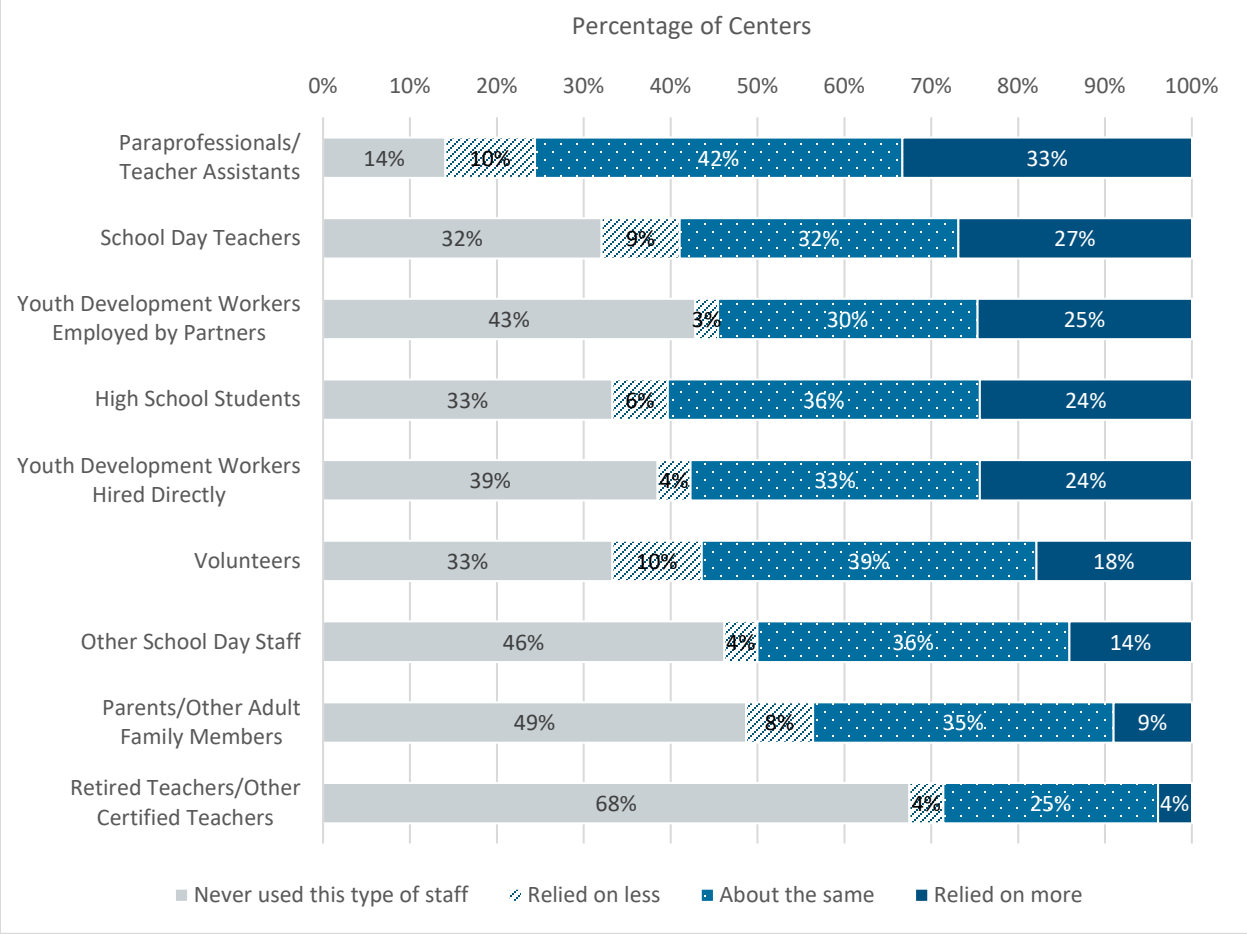


Note. Data are from the center-level staffing survey. *N* = 118 center-level responses.

Shifts in Staffing Approach

As part of the survey, respondents who had been in their position at least the last 1–2 years (*N* = 78) were also asked how they changed their reliance on different types of staff to lead Washington 21st CCLC programming during that same time period. (See Exhibit 59.)

Exhibit 59. One third (33%) reported relying on paraprofessionals and teacher assistants more than they had in prior years; one quarter or more reported more reliance on school-day teachers and youth development works employed by partners.



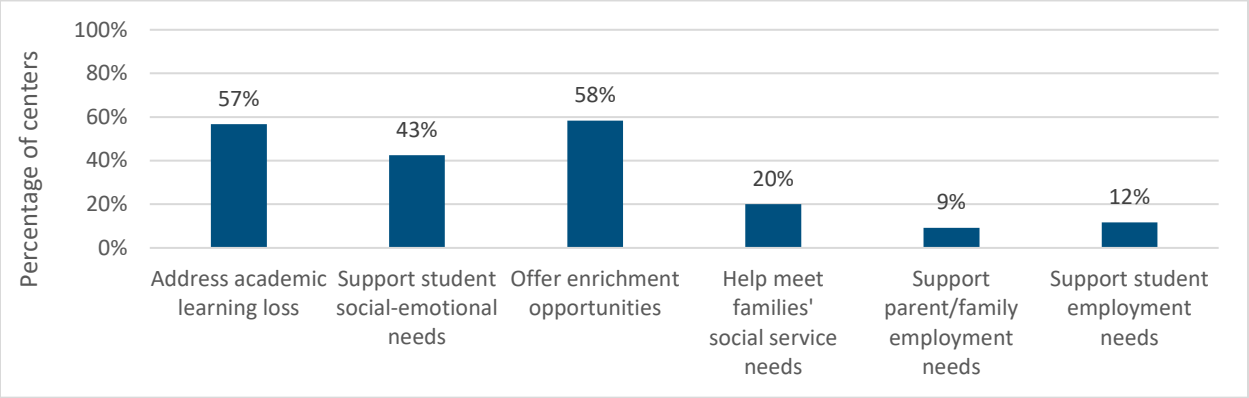
Note. Data are from the center-level staffing survey. *N* = 78.

In contrast, 10% relied less on school-day paraprofessional staff/teacher assistants as well as volunteers. These shifts in reliance do not indicate whether these changes were intentional or reactive; however, they do show how center staff resolved some of their staffing challenges in the last 1–2 years.

Meeting Increased Student and Family Needs

The survey further asked project directors and site coordinators what staff-related actions they had taken, or were currently taking, to address increased student and family needs. Respondents were provided a set of needs (e.g., "address academic learning loss") and could select as many options as applied. Response options included "have hired additional staff to address this need," "relying on partners more heavily to provide staff to address this need," "seeking staff to meet this need but finding it challenging," and "we have not taken any action to increase staff to address this need."[3] (See Exhibits 60 and 61.)

Exhibit 60. In terms of hiring additional staff, respondents were most likely to indicate that they had hired additional staff to address academic learning loss (57%), student social and emotional needs (43%), and enrichment opportunities for students to support youth development (58%).

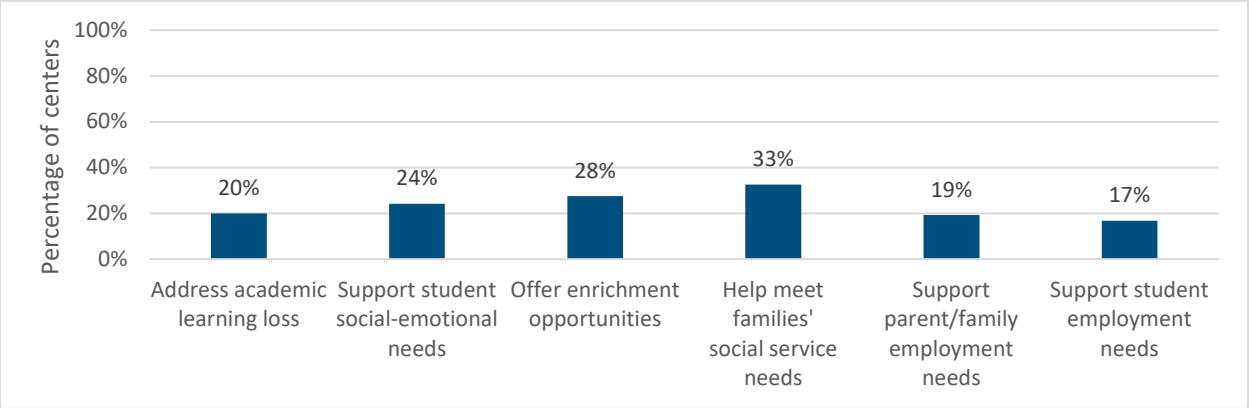


Note. Data are from the center-level staffing survey. *N* = 120 center-level responses.

Respondents were also most likely to report relying more on partners to offer enrichment opportunities (28%) but also to help meet families' social service needs (33%).

[3] The percentage of project directors selecting "seeking staff to meet this need but finding it challenging" is reported in the preceding subsection on staffing challenges.

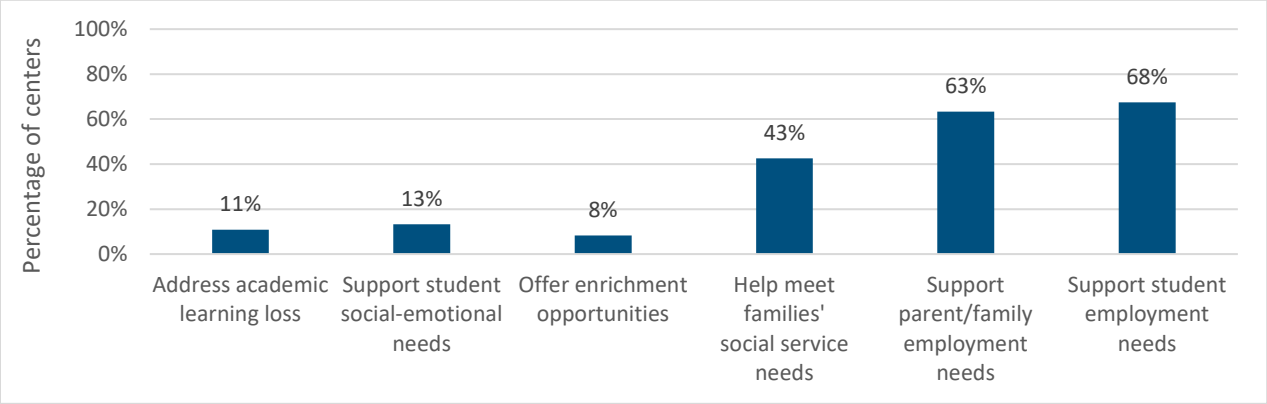
Exhibit 61. Percentage of 21st CCLC centers relying on partners more heavily to address increased student and family needs.



Note. Data are from the center-level staffing survey. *N* = 120 center-level responses.

The respondents reported "we have not taken any action" to address different parent/family and student employment needs with different frequencies. (See Exhibit 62.)

Exhibit 62. Specifically, supporting student or parent/family employment needs was reported more frequently as unaddressed (68% and 63% respectively).



Note. Data are from the center-level staffing survey. *N* = 120 center-level responses.

Respondents were also asked to elaborate on which strategies they believed had been especially effective through an open-ended question. Respondents frequently mentioned four types of strategies that have been most effective in supporting staff retention: (1) improving pay/benefits, (2) reducing time commitment and scheduling flexibility, (3) fostering a supportive work environment, and (4) providing opportunities for professional development and collaboration.

Respondents who mentioned improving their pay/benefits as an especially effective strategy said their staff feel more appropriately compensated, appreciated for the work, and more likely to stay the full year.

"Increasing staff wages is something that has helped us retain staff this year because they are able to make a market competitive wage working in an OST job." –Survey Respondent

"Staff feels properly compensated for their work and are willing to stay after school." –Survey Respondent

While respondents mentioned improving pay/benefits as a helpful strategy, they indicated that pay remains low and that often, qualified people are less likely to consider applying for the job.

"Increasing salaries has helped a little, however, wages are still below family living wages and the hours are not full time. People who are qualified for the position look past it because they need more income." –Survey Respondent

Respondents who mentioned reducing their expectations for time commitments and providing scheduling flexibility as an especially effective strategy shared that splitting shifts weekly or bi-weekly and increasing or decreasing hours based on staff needs was helpful.

"Having a flexible schedule for staff has been the most effective in staff retention. This is an extra job for a lot of our staff that they do not specifically need but like to do. Being flexible and allowing them to go to appointments when needed or other duties helps significantly." –Survey Respondent

Respondents indicated that providing scheduling flexibility also helps staff feel less burned out and allows staff to keep other commitments outside of work.

"I feel having more flexibility in the amount of hours worked made the most impact. I had teachers who are feeling stressed and overworked during their regular school day so I wanted them to know that they could work as many hours as they wanted, even leading only one day a week made a huge difference." –Survey Respondent

While respondents mentioned scheduling flexibility as effective, they also mentioned that it poses additional logistical burden on the site coordinator, who needs to ensure the schedule and processes are set up and updated as needed.

Respondents who mentioned fostering a supportive work environment as an especially effective strategy emphasized listening to staff as key to implementing this strategy well. They also mentioned that this strategy includes building relationships, understanding communication styles, showing appreciation and gratitude, providing autonomy to tweak activity lessons, and meaningfully incorporating staff input.

"Having meaningful communication is key to a successful team. Monthly meetings as well as daily check-ins with staff help to find where issues or burn out may be happening. Letting them know they can come to you with any concerns and they will be heard is very important. It builds trust and a secure working environment." –Survey Respondent

Respondents who mentioned providing opportunities for professional development and collaboration as an especially effective strategy indicated that staff need to feel like they are being invested in by having program support to help them grow their skills and feel more confident in their roles.

"The intentional trainings I conduct with my staff have been very helpful, [i]t helps them be more confident in what work they are doing with our students." –Survey Respondent

Summary

This chapter has focused on a range of themes related to staffing in Washington 21st CCLC programs. Of central importance, however, are findings about staffing challenges and the effect of those challenges on Washington 21st CCLC programs. Survey respondents indicated they had the most trouble hiring certified teachers to lead academic programming and that activity leader staff was the type that had the most turnover compared to previous programming periods. The vast majority of respondents also reported experiencing a range of staffing-related challenges that contributed to stressful working conditions, with "maintaining ideal staff to student ratios" and "allocating sufficient time to orient new staff" among some of the most frequently reported. Nearly two thirds of respondents indicated that staff turnover has had at least somewhat of an impact on the operation of their programs during the past year; nearly 20% indicated it had a substantial impact. When examining these challenges by different program characteristics, there were some notable differences based on grantee type, year funded, and grade levels served that

likely warrant further exploration. At least 25% of respondents reported that they were seeking staff to address academic learning loss, support student social and emotional needs, and support enrichment opportunities, but were finding it challenging to obtain appropriate staffing.

Washington 21st CCLC programs employed a variety of strategies to not only address these staffing challenges, but also respond to student and family needs in a post-pandemic world. Program leaders filled vacant positions with different staff types, such as paraprofessionals and teacher assistants more often than they had in previous years. Survey respondents implemented strategies such as being more intentional about being supportive and responsive to staff needs, adding flexibility to worked hours, and providing additional training and professional development to help mitigate staff turnover; the respondents found that these strategies—particularly improving pay/benefits, flexibility in scheduling, fostering a supportive work environment, and providing opportunities for professional development and collaboration—were indeed effective.

Looking forward to next steps, it would be valuable to review the results of the survey with OSPI and other 21st CCLC stakeholders, such as the Evaluation Advisory Group, to gain additional input on key findings and then determine whether additional data collection is warranted. Similar to the student surveys, OSPI may consider facilitating qualitative data collection (such as interviews or focus groups) to learn more specific details regarding the staffing challenges centers encounter and to highlight innovative solutions centers are implementing that can be shared with the field more broadly.

Chapter 5. State and Federal Targets

The last evaluation question that AIR explored related to aggregate statewide performance on a series of KPIs. In the past several years, AIR and OSPI worked together to revise the state's performance targets in a series of domains. These KPIs were developed in accord with current federal Government Performance and Results Act indicators; the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 legislation; Washington's updated accountability framework in response to ESSA; and feedback from the Evaluation Advisory Group, which comprised Washington 21st CCLC project directors, local evaluators, and other community stakeholders. Exhibit 63 outlines the four domains of the KPIs (Program Implementation, Program Quality, Student Program Attendance, and Student Outcomes), associated indicators within each domain, and the 2022–23 results for each indicator.

> *Evaluation Question 12: Are 21st CCLC programs in Washington state meeting state and federal goals and objectives for program implementation, program quality, and student program attendance?*
>
> *Evaluation Question 13: How are students who attend 21st CCLC programs in Washington regularly faring on a series of school-related outcomes?*

Finding	Aligned recommendation
• Data point to strong performance across centers on some indicators related to program implementation, program quality, and student program participation, and to weaker performance on others. • Among students who needed to improve, over half in each sample improved for most indicators.	• Monitor indicators for the next several years to better understand performance and trends. Use this information to further refine the KPIs as necessary and identify areas where grantees and centers could use more support in meeting the stated expectations and goals of the 21st CCLC program in Washington.

Exhibit 63. 2022–23 Washington 21st CCLC key performance indicator results.

Indicator name	Indicator	Target	2022–23 results
Program implementation (PI)			***N* = 128 centers**
PI 1	The percentage of centers providing opportunities for academic support.[a]	100%	91%
PI 2	The percentage of centers offering students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities (enrichment).[b]	100%	100%
PI 3	The percentage of centers offering families of students served by community learning centers opportunities for active and meaningful engagement in their children's education, including opportunities for literacy and related educational development.	100%	36%
PI 4	The percentage of centers offering services at least 12 hours per week, on average, during the school year.	100%	73%
PI 5	The percentage of centers offering a summer program for 20 hours per week and lasting at least 4 consecutive weeks.	100%	54%
Program quality (PQ)			***N* = 128 centers**
PQ 1	The percentage of centers submitting at least one completed consensus program self-assessment using the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) or the School-Age Program Quality Assessment (SAPQA).	100%	90%
PQ 2	The percentage of centers submitting at least one completed external assessment using the YPQA or the SAPQA.	100%	76%
PQ 3	The percentage of centers participating in either the Planning with Data workshop (live training for new cohorts) or the Advanced Planning with Data training (webinar training for continuing cohorts).	100%	Not available
PQ 4	The percentage of centers submitting at least one program improvement plan annually.	100%	89%
Student program attendance (PA)			***N* = 13,030 students**
PA 1	The percentage of students enrolled in 21st CCLC programming for more than 30 days during the school year and the summer of interest.	80%	53%

Indicator name	Indicator	Target	2022–23 results
PA 2	The percentage of students that attended 21st CCLC programming for more than 60 days during the program year of interest.	60%	32%
PA 3	The percentage of students that attended 21st CCLC programming for a minimum of 10 days in both the fall and spring semesters of the program year of interest.	TBD	40%
PA 4	The percentage of students that attended 21st CCLC programming in the prior program year for 60 days or more that also attended 60 days or more of programming in the program year of interest.	TBD	35%
Student outcomes (SO) *Sample size varies by outcome*			
SO 1	The percentage of students attending 30 days or more of 21st CCLC programming during the program year of interest who were below the median student growth percentile in the prior school year that rose above the median student growth percentile in the current school year in reading. Grades 4–8	Not applicable	Not available
SO 2	The percentage of students attending 30 days or more of 21st CCLC programming during the program year of interest who were below the median student growth percentile in the prior school year that rose above the median student growth percentile in the current school year in mathematics. Grades 4–8	Not applicable	Not available
SO 3	The percentage of students attending 30 days or more of 21st CCLC programming during the program year of interest that scored below standards (Level 1 or 2) in reading on the SBAC assessment in the preceding school year that met or exceeded standards (Level 3 or 4) on the SBAC assessment for the current school year in reading. Grades 4–8	Not applicable	28% (*N* = 1,629)
SO 4	The percentage of students attending 30 days or more of 21st CCLC programming during the program year of interest that scored below standards (Level 1 or 2) in mathematics on the SBAC assessment in the preceding school year that met or exceeded standards (Level 3 or 4) on the SBAC assessment for the current school year in mathematics. Grades 4–8	Not applicable	20% (*N* = 1,728)

Indicator name	Indicator	Target	2022–23 results
SO 5	The percentage of students attending 30 days or more of 21st CCLC programming during the program year of interest that had at least a 10% school-day absence rate in the prior school year who demonstrated a lower school-day absence rate during the current school year. Grades PreK–12	Not applicable	58% (*N* = 1,974)
SO 6	The percentage of students attending 30 days or more of 21st CCLC programming during the program year of interest who are earning less than 100% of credits attempted in the prior school year and demonstrated a higher percentage of credits earned in the current school year. Grades 6–12	Not applicable	74% (*N* = 90)
SO 7	The percentage of students attending 30 days or more of 21st CCLC programming during the program year of interest who earned a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or less in the prior school year and demonstrated an increase in cumulative GPA in the current school year. Grades 6–12	Not applicable	64% (*N* = 71)
SO 8	The percentage of students attending 30 days or more of 21st CCLC programming during the program year of interest who had at least one school-day disciplinary incident in the prior school year and demonstrated fewer incidents in the current school year. Grades PreK–12	Not applicable	77% (*N* = 432)
SO 9	The percentage of students attending 30 days or more of 21st CCLC programming during the program year of interest who were promoted to the next grade. Grades PreK–12	Not applicable	100% (*N* = 5,847)

[a] Tutorial services to help students, particularly students who attend low-performing schools, to meet the challenging state academic standards.

[b] Youth development activities, service learning, nutrition and health education, drug and violence prevention programs, counseling programs, the arts, music, physical fitness and wellness programs, technology education programs, financial literacy programs, environmental literacy programs, mathematics, science, career and technical programs, internship or apprenticeship programs, and other ties to an in-demand industry sector or occupation for high school students designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students.

Summary

The KPIs represent our best thinking on what would be useful for the state, and have recently undergone revisions to ensure they align with changes in state and federal reporting requirements. Results for program implementation, program quality, and student program attendance show strong performance on some indicators, but not on others. This could be, in part, related to a gradual transition back to OSPI expectations that existed prior to the pandemic. We also found that among students who needed to improve, over half in each sample improved for most indicators.

We must also remember the barriers to data availability the pandemic created in relation to accessing the data we originally intended to use for these indicators. For example, student growth percentile has not been calculated since prior to the pandemic, and at this time, no plans exist to return to it. With recent revisions to the KPIs, we recommend that OSPI monitor indicators for the next several years to better understand performance and trends. Use this information to further refine the KPIs as necessary and/or identify areas where grantees and centers could use more support in meeting the stated expectations and goals of the 21st CCLC program in Washington.

Report Conclusion

The findings presented in this report offer important insights and recommendations that can support learning and improvement of the 21st CCLC program in Washington. Specifically, this report aimed to answer questions related to the following:

- The primary characteristics of grants, centers, and the student population served by the program;
- What program attendance looked like and how attendance differed based on students' characteristics and experiences in the program;
- What students experienced in the program, including how they believe the program helped them and how their interests changed after participating in the program;
- Ongoing staffing challenges and innovative solutions to address them.

The information captured in this report is descriptive. A review of findings based on descriptive analyses requires caution when interpreting and using these results because they do not support causal inferences about the impact of the program on youth outcomes; however, they provide a useful starting point for understanding the key characteristics of the Washington 21st CCLC program.

Demographic and baseline outcome data show that the 21st CCLC program in Washington is serving its intended population: youth in lower performing schools who need to improve academically and who experience poverty. Most youth participants in Washington were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch in each year under investigation, and most youth who regularly attended programming were similarly eligible. The youth attending programming were the youth intended to be served by the program, with noteworthy proportions considered academically or behaviorally in need of additional supports.

Since 2017, the number of all attendees and regular attendees in 21st CCLC programming in Washington had been decreasing, reaching a low point during the 2020–21 program year amidst the pandemic. In 2021–22, the total number of all attendees rebounded to levels last seen in 2018–19. Total student attendance in 2022–23 decreased relative to the previous program year; however, the percentage of participants attending regularly (attending 30 days or more) increased slightly from the prior year to 45%. Overall, these findings may indicate that programs are moving toward pre-pandemic functioning, although student attendance is still notably lower than it was 10 years prior, even following OSPI's policy change around student participation thresholds.

We found a range of youth and center-level characteristics to be associated with program attendance. For example,

- Youth who attended programming more frequently tended to spend much of their time in activities such as STEM or art and music.
- Higher overall proportions of school-day teachers employed as center program staff seemed to be associated with higher attendance levels among high school youth but had lower attendance levels among middle school youth.
- Elementary and high school youth who were anticipated by center program staff to need intensive reading and math supports tended to have higher levels of program attendance.

For youth who attended the program and responded to the student survey, we found that a majority of students reported that they really looked forward to attending programming, where they had the opportunity make new friends, discover new interests, challenge themselves, and develop a positive sense of self. Students also reported heightened interest in such topics as art and sports after attending 21st CCLC programming. However, a sizeable sample of survey respondents also noted less-positive experiences and sentiments, including teasing or bullying; limited supportive connections with adult center program staff; and disagreements with positive statements about self-esteem, self-satisfaction, and inherent worth.

With regard to program staffing, survey respondents indicated there are still challenges related to staff turnover, hiring certain types of staff, and mitigating stressful working conditions. Program leaders are, however, implementing innovative strategies to address these challenges, with some working better than others.

Given these findings, the evaluation team recommends further investigation into topics that would be of interest to OSPI and Washington 21st CCLC stakeholders more broadly. The perceptions, needs, and experiences of these students merit a closer look to ensure that 21st CCLC programs in Washington offer socially and emotionally nurturing environments for all participants. Similarly, staffing challenges still persist. Additional data collection with a qualitative approach is likely warranted to dig into these topics further.

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Appendix A. Student Survey

Washington 21st Century Community Learning Centers Youth Survey

The purpose of this survey is to find out more about the afterschool activities provided in this program and how students like you feel about these activities. We care what you think about these types of activities, and your answers will help make afterschool programs better for students in Washington. We need your honest feedback. The questions on the survey ask about what you experienced in afterschool activities offered at this program this school year—activities you went to in person before school, after school, or on weekends and activities you may have attended online. The term *afterschool* used in this survey refers to all these types of activities.

This is not a test. There are no wrong answers. Please choose the answer that best describes your experience attending afterschool activities at your school. It should take you about 15 minutes to answer all the questions on this survey.

This survey is voluntary. You may choose to take the survey or not. Your parent(s)/guardian(s) know you may be taking this survey. You can skip items or stop at any time. This survey does not have your name on it, so everything you write is confidential, which means that no one (not your parents, teachers, school staff, or other students) will be allowed to know how you answer these questions.

You can skip questions you don't want to answer, and you can stop taking the survey if you don't want to finish it. Take your time and read each question carefully, then check the answer that is most true for you.

I have read and understood the above.

1. How much do you look forward to coming to this afterschool program?

a.	Not at all. I don't want to be here.	o
b.	I ***sort of*** look forward to it.	o
c.	I ***really*** look forward to it.	o

2. Young people might describe themselves in many ways. We have listed some things youth might say or think about themselves. How true is each statement for you? Choose the answer that is most true for you for each statement.

		Not at all true	*Somewhat true*	*Mostly true*	*Completely true*
Academic identity					
a.	Doing well in school is an important part of who I am.	o	o	o	o
b.	Getting good grades is one of my main goals.	o	o	o	o
c.	I take pride in doing my best in school.	o	o	o	o
d.	I am a hard worker when it comes to my schoolwork.	o	o	o	o

	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Mostly true	Completely true
e. It is important to me to learn as much as I can.	o	o	o	o
f. I like doing challenging work at school because I know I will learn more.	o	o	o	o
Self-esteem				
a. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	o	o	o	o
b. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	o	o	o	o
c. I am able to do things as well as most other people.	o	o	o	o
d. I feel that I am a person of worth.	o	o	o	o
e. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	o	o	o	o
f. I feel like I have much to be proud of.	o	o	o	o
g. All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a success.	o	o	o	o

3. How has this program helped you specifically? Pick up to THREE areas where you think the program has helped you the most.

This program has helped me . . .	Pick three
a. Feel good about myself	o
b. With my confidence	o
c. Make new friends	o
d. Find out what is important to me	o
e. Find out what I'm good at doing	o
f. Find out what I like to do	o
g. Discover things I want to learn more about	o
h. Learn things that will help me in school	o
i. Learn things that will be important for my future	o
j. Think about the kinds of classes I want to take in the future	o
k. Think about what I might like to do when I get older	o
l. Learn about things that are important to my community	o
m. Feel good because I was helping my community	o
n. This program hasn't actually helped me	o

4. Please indicate if you have had the following experiences in this afterschool program.

In this afterschool program . . .	Not at all	Sort of	Yes, definitely
a. I tried new things	o	o	o
b. I got to do things here I don't get to do anywhere else	o	o	o
c. I set goals for myself	o	o	o
d. I learned to push myself	o	o	o
e. I did things that challenged me in a good way.	o	o	o
f. I worked hard to get better at something	o	o	o

5. Thinking about the adults in this program, how true are these statements for you? In this program, there is an adult here . . .

	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Mostly true	Completely true
a. Who is interested in what I think about things	o	o	o	o
b. Who I can talk to when I am upset	o	o	o	o
c. Who helps me when I have a problem	o	o	o	o
d. Who I enjoy being around	o	o	o	o
e. Who has helped me find a special interest or talent (something I'm good at)	o	o	o	o
f. Who asks me about my life and goals	o	o	o	o
g. Who I will miss when the program is over	o	o	o	o

6. At this program, how do kids get along? Indicate how true each statement is based on your own experience in this program.

	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Mostly true	Completely true
a. Kids here are friendly with each other.	o	o	o	o
b. Kids here treat each other with respect.	o	o	o	o
c. Kids here listen to what the teachers tell them to do.	o	o	o	o
d. Kids here don't tease or bully others.	o	o	o	o
e. Kids here support and help one another.	o	o	o	o

7. Thinking about how you feel today compared to the beginning of the program, how interested are you in the following topics?

	Less interested	About the same	More interested
a. Science	o	o	o
b. Computers/technology	o	o	o
c. Reading	o	o	o
d. Music	o	o	o
e. Art	o	o	o
f. Politics/government	o	o	o
g. History	o	o	o
h. Other countries/cultures	o	o	o
i. Writing	o	o	o
j. Drama	o	o	o
k. Sports	o	o	o
l. Issues in my community	o	o	o

Appendix B. Teacher Survey

Teacher Survey—21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLCs)

This survey is designed to collect information about changes in a particular student's behavior during the school year. Please select only one response for each of the questions asked in the table below. Please note that survey response options are divided into two primary groups: ***(1) Did Not Need to Improve****, which suggests that the student had already obtained an acceptable level of functioning and no improvement was needed during the course of the school year; and* ***(2) Acceptable Level of Functioning Not Demonstrated Early in School Year – Improvement Warranted****, which suggests that the student was not functioning at a desirable level of performance on the behavior being described. If the student warranted improvement on a given behavior, please indicate the extent to which the student did or did not improve on that behavior during the course of the school year by indicating if they demonstrated* ***Improvement****,* ***No Change****, or* ***Decline****. If you believe the behavior described in a given question is not applicable to the student for whom you are completing the survey, please select* ***Not Applicable****.*

Name of student: _____

Grade/school: _____

To what extent has your student changed their behavior in terms of:	Did Not Need to Improve	Acceptable Level of Functioning Not Demonstrated Early in School Year – Improvement Warranted			Not Applicable
		Improvement	No Change	Decline	
Coming to school motivated to learn.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staying focused on the task at hand.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Alertness and focus during group discussions or activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Participation in learning activities (i.e. without needing prompting from adults or peers).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix C. Center-Level Survey on Program Staffing

Washington 21st CCLC Site Level Staffing Survey

The survey you are being asked to complete is part of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers evaluation being conducted by the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®). The Washington Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) has contracted with AIR to evaluate the 21st CCLC programs in order to assess programs, student participation, and outcomes, and to learn more about the activities and supports of high-quality programs. The purpose of the project is to better understand how centers funded by 21st CCLC support positive youth outcomes and the role program quality and different approaches to program design and delivery play in this process.

This survey asks about issues related to **staffing** in your 21st CCLC program at [pipe in center name]. It is intended to be taken by site coordinators of the program; however, program directors may respond to or contribute to the survey. Please note only one survey will be available for each site—program directors and site coordinators should communicate about who will complete the survey.

It is important to note that this effort is not an evaluation of you or your program specifically. All responses you provide in taking this survey will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. No identifiable survey results will be made to anyone outside the study team at AIR. Information you share may have all identifiers removed and may be used in future research without additional consent.

There are no foreseeable risks to you based on your participation in this survey. The survey should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. The survey is voluntary. You can opt not to answer any question and can stop participating at any time.

Any questions about the study should be addressed to Samantha Sniegowski at ssniegowski@air.org. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact AIR's Institutional Review Board (IRB), which is responsible for the protection of survey participants, at IRB@air.org, toll-free at 1-800-634-0797, or c/o IRB, American Institutes for Research, 1400 Crystal Drive, 10th Floor, Arlington, VA 22202.

1. How many years have you worked in your current position for the afterschool program at this site?
    - ○ Less than 1 year
    - ○ 1 to 2 years
    - ○ 3 to 4 years
    - ○ 5 years or more

2. Have you had to change your reliance on different types of staff to lead 21st CCLC programming within the last 1–2 years?

Since the start of the pandemic, I am relying on this type of staff to lead 21st CCLC programming				We have not used this type of staff in our program
Staff type	Less	About the same	More	
School-day teachers	o	o	o	o
School-day paraprofessional staff/teacher assistants	o	o	o	o
Other school-day staff (e.g., counselors, social workers)	o	o	o	o
Retired teachers/other certified teachers not associated with the school day	o	o	o	o
Youth development workers my organization hires directly	o	o	o	o
Youth development workers employed by partners/vendors	o	o	o	o
High school students	o	o	o	o
Parents/other adult family members	o	o	o	o
Volunteers from the community	o	o	o	o

3. What actions have you taken during 2022–23 in your 21st CCLC program to hire additional staff to address student and family needs? *Please select all that apply.*

Staff that provides programming to:	Have hired additional staff to address this need	Relying on partners more heavily to provide staff to address this need	Seeking staff to meet this need but finding it challenging	We have not taken any action to increase staff to address this need
Address academic learning loss	☐	☐	☐	☐
Support student social and emotional needs	☐	☐	☐	☐
Offer enrichment opportunities to students to support youth development	☐	☐	☐	☐
Help meet families' social service needs (e.g., accessing food assistance, rental assistance)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Support parent and family employment needs	☐	☐	☐	☐
Support student employment needs	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. Please describe any changes you have made to staffing this programming year to better respond to the needs of students and their families. (400-character limit)

5. To what extent have you experienced challenges in hiring the following types of staff for your 21st CCLC program at any point in this school year?

Staffing challenges	Not a challenge	Minor challenge	Major challenge	We do not hire this type of staff
Site coordinators	○	○	○	○
Family engagement specialists	○	○	○	○
Certified teachers to lead academic programming	○	○	○	○
Activity leaders for enrichment programming	○	○	○	○
Activity leaders for adult and family programming	○	○	○	○
Assistants to help activity leaders/teachers provide programming	○	○	○	○

6. Please describe any current staffing shortages you are experiencing and for which positions.

7. For different types of staff that work in your 21st CCLC program, have you made any of the following changes during 2022–23 to better attract and find candidates for positions you have open? *Please select all that apply.*

Staff type	Increased the level of pay	Reduced candidate training or experience requirements	Formed new partnerships in order to better identify possible candidates	Reduced the number of hours staff were expected to work in the program	Did not make any of these changes
Site coordinators	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Family engagement specialists	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Certified teachers to lead academic programming	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Activity leaders for enrichment programming	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Activity leaders for adult and family programming	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Assistants to help activity leaders provide programming	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. To what extent have you experienced any of the following challenges with staffing in your 21st CCLC program this school year?

Staffing challenge	Not a challenge	Minor challenge	Moderate challenge	Major challenge
Allocating sufficient time to orient new staff	○	○	○	○
Allocating sufficient planning time for staff	○	○	○	○
Maintaining a work environment that is not overly stressful for staff	○	○	○	○
Maintaining ideal staff-to-student ratios	○	○	○	○
Adequate staff experience in working with youth	○	○	○	○

9. To what extent has turnover in various positions changed this year compared to previous programming periods?

Staffing challenge	Less turnover	About the same amount of turnover	Some additional turnover	Substantially more turnover	Not a position in our program	Unsure
Site coordinators	○	○	○	○	○	○
Family engagement specialists	○	○	○	○	○	○
Certified teachers to lead academic programming	○	○	○	○	○	○
Activity leaders/teachers for enrichment programming	○	○	○	○	○	○
Activity leaders for adult and family programming	○	○	○	○	○	○
Assistants to help activity leaders provide programming	○	○	○	○	○	○

10. What strategies have you tried to reduce staff turnover in your 21st CCLC program, and have any of these approaches helped with staff retention? Please check all that apply.

Retention strategy	Employed this approach, and …				Did not try this approach
	… I'm unsure whether it helped reduce turnover	… it DID NOT reduce turnover	… it helped reduce turnover A LITTLE	… it helped reduce turnover A LOT	
Increased staff salaries	○	○	○	○	○
Provided additional staff benefits	○	○	○	○	○
Added flexibility to the number of hours worked/how long staff are scheduled to work	○	○	○	○	○
Reduced the time staff have to dedicate to certain tasks	○	○	○	○	○

Retention strategy	Employed this approach, and …				Did not try this approach
	… I'm unsure whether it helped reduce turnover	… it DID NOT reduce turnover	… it helped reduce turnover A LITTLE	… it helped reduce turnover A LOT	
Have been more intentional about being supportive and responsive to staff needs	○	○	○	○	○
Provided performance bonuses	○	○	○	○	○
Provided additional training and professional development	○	○	○	○	○
Training on high-quality instructional materials	○	○	○	○	○
Reliance on the Grow Your Own program	○	○	○	○	○
Other—please describe: _____	○	○	○	○	○

11. Which of the strategies you selected above do you believe has been especially effective in supporting staff retention? Why?

12. Overall, during the past year, how has staff turnover impacted the operation of your program?
    - ○ No impact
    - ○ Somewhat of an impact
    - ○ A moderate impact
    - ○ A substantial impact

Demographic Information

This survey has been intentionally designed to be collaborative. If you completed this survey with other people, the person who provided the majority of answers to the preceding questions should provide their demographic information.

13. Which of the following best describes your role in this 21st CCLC program?
    - ○ Project director
    - ○ Site coordinator
    - ○ Project director and site coordinator
    - ○ Other: _____

14. How many years have you worked in the afterschool program at this site in any capacity?
    - ○ Less than 1 year
    - ○ 1 to 2 years
    - ○ 3 to 4 years
    - ○ 5 years or more

15. Have you previously worked for the school district with which your 21st CCLC program is associated?
    - ○ Yes
    - ○ No
    - ○ Prefer not to say

16. Do you live in the community served by the school(s) that your program participants attend?
    - ○ Yes
    - ○ No
    - ○ Prefer not to say

17. What is your gender?
    - ○ Female
    - ○ Male
    - ○ Prefer not to say

18. What is your ethnicity?
    - ○ Hispanic/Latino
    - ○ Not Hispanic/Latino
    - ○ Prefer not to say

19. What is your race? (Select all that apply.)
    - □ American Indian or Alaska Native
    - □ Asian
    - □ Black or African American
    - □ Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
    - □ White
    - □ Prefer not to say
    - □ Other

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