

ANNUAL REPORT

Nebraska 21st Century
Community Learning
Centers



2021-2022

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The contents of this Annual Evaluation Report are available online at
<http://www.education.ne.gov/21stcccl/ProgramEvaluation/EvaluationReport2021-2022.pdf>

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

OVERVIEW OF 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS



The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) is a federally-funded, competitive grant program designed to support the establishment of community learning centers serving students attending schools with high needs. The 21st CCLC initiative was authorized under Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended, which moved the administration of the 21st CCLC program to state departments of education. The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) administers these grants to offer students a broad array of services, programs, and activities aligned to the school day that occur during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session such as afterschool, out-of-school days (full days during the school year when school is not in session), or summer.

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

Nebraska's 21st CCLCs create an afterschool environment focused on three overarching goals:



IMPROVING OVERALL STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS



INCREASING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL INTERACTIONS



INCREASING ACTIVE & MEANINGFUL FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Centers may provide a variety of services to achieve these goals, including remedial education and academic enrichment learning programs, tutoring and mentoring services, services for English Learners, technology education programs, programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy, drug and violence prevention programs, and counseling programs, among other services. The programming offered in a 21st CCLC should be aligned to the school day and in collaboration with other federal and state initiatives.

21st CCLC project directors were instrumental in the development of a document that identifies the intersection between NDE's six tenets of AQuESTT, Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow, and the Nebraska 21st CCLC program. This document

articulates the many initiatives and activities that support Student Success and Access and Teaching and Learning, and the two domains of AQuESTT—a comprehensive system that is designed to ensure the success of all Nebraska students (see Appendix). This resource allows 21st CCLC project directors to effectively engage in conversations at the school and district level related to continuous school improvement and provides them with specific examples of afterschool program activities that align to program, school, and district improvement goals. Examples of afterschool program indicators that support AQuESTT include diverse, prepared program staff, a system that supports students' transitions from grade to grade and across levels, engagement of families and the community in schools and programs, additional learning time, college and career readiness activities, ongoing data collection and analysis, and ongoing professional development for program leaders and staff.

Beginning in 2003-2004, NDE has conducted an annual grant competition to award five-year 21st CCLC federal grants for out-of-school time programming. These 21st CCLC grant dollars are leveraged with other federal, state, and partner/local fiscal support to operate quality afterschool and summer programs.

In 2021-2022, grant awards totaled **\$6.8 MILLION** to benefit students in 149 sites in 40 Nebraska communities.

Typically there are two types of competitive grants available (first-time grants and continuation grants). First-time grants were 100% grant-funded in years one through three, 80% in year four, and 60% in year five. Continuation grants (calculated at a daily rate that is 50% of the amount of the grantee's first-time grant) were awarded to quality 21st CCLC programs with level funding for a five-year grant period, and were available only to school buildings, which have successfully implemented 21st CCLC programming for five years. All data in this report were derived from these grantees. With the continued uncertainties and challenges as the pandemic continued and the difficulties to begin new programs under these circumstances, the state-level management team determined that the February 1, 2021 competition would be available only to eligible Continuation Grant applicants.

Grantees began reporting partner/local fiscal support in 2013-2014. Reports include the amount expended and/or the value of volunteer time and/or donated/discounted goods or services for the school year and, where applicable, summer program. Funding sources include other federal or state funding, community-based or faith-based organization support, parent fees, as well as other sources of funding. Although Nebraska grantees have many commonalities, it is apparent in the collection of this data from over 140 sites that there are also many differences, which makes it difficult to compare data.

For example, resources to operate a small rural elementary site may be quite different from those needed in a large urban middle school site. Some sites offer summer programming, but others do not. Some sites serve over 300 students daily, while others average less than 40. Some sites were provided a wide range of unique partner/community supports, which are difficult to combine for statewide analysis. In addition, many components of a program were difficult to quantify, which resulted in too many variables to yield reliable conclusions. The state-level management team continues to review national data as well as methodologies used by other states in their quest to determine the average

cost per student attending a Nebraska 21st CCLC program.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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



Partners supporting the work of a Nebraska 21st CCLC program include many of those identified as Partner Spotlight Organizations who offer support statewide. In addition, local partners are essential to program success, including local libraries, organizations committed to the health and well-being of members of the community, arts organizations, the local community college, or groups committed to preserving and ensuring an appreciation of the environment.

Examples of program support provided by partners include:

▶ CONTENT EXPERTS PLAN AND LEAD CLUBS FOCUSED ON THEIR AREAS OF EXPERTISE

▶ CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

▶ DONATION OF SPECIALTY MATERIALS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF A CLUB OR ACTIVITY

▶ STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

▶ EXPLORATION OF POTENTIAL CAREERS

▶ PREPARATION FOR A SUCCESSFUL COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

▶ CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Partnerships between 21st CCLC programs and postsecondary institutions across the state are mutually beneficial for both K-12 students and students participating in college coursework. Among the many

benefits of these partnerships is the experience it provides future teachers who gain valuable teaching experience in afterschool programs while receiving support and college credit. These mutually beneficial partnerships exist across the state, making postsecondary institutions valuable partners in the design and implementation of many quality 21st CCLC programs.

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

RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO SERVE AS MENTORS AND ROLE MODELS

EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR 21ST CCLC ATTENDEES AS COLLEGE STUDENTS SHARE THEIR INTERESTS AND PASSIONS IN THE AFTERSCHOOL SETTING

OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN ABOUT THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE AND SEE COLLEGE AS AN OPTION FOR THE FUTURE

Examples of potential benefits for college students include:

OPPORTUNITY FOR FUTURE TEACHERS TO GAIN REAL-WORLD, PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE WHILE WORKING WITH STUDENTS IN AN EDUCATIONAL SETTING

OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE AS ROLE MODELS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN THEIR COMMUNITIES



OPPORTUNITY FOR RECEIVING VALUABLE EXPERIENCE WHILE MEETING COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EARNING COLLEGE CREDIT

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

21ST CCLC PARTNER SPOTLIGHT ORGANIZATIONS

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

“AFTERSCHOOL STAFF TRULY CARE ABOUT THE STUDENTS, SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDENTS.”

~COMMUNITY PARTNER

One new Partner Spotlight organization was added during this reporting period: [Future Kids](#), an organization committed to providing high-quality sports programs to children and youth in Nebraska. Detailed information about all 21st CCLC Partner Spotlight organizations is available at:

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



21ST CCLC RURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The 21st CCLC Rural Advisory Committee was formed in August 2017 to discuss issues relevant to rural Nebraska programs and provide recommendations to the state-level management team. Committee members include representatives from six rural communities, large and small, including programs serving students across all grade-levels and located across all regions of the state. The group meets as needed to discuss topics such as updates to the evaluation and continuous improvement system, professional development needs, and program sustainability through partnering. There were no scheduled meetings during this reporting period.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- Monthly Update Newsletter that includes current and upcoming deadlines as well as professional development resources and opportunities
- Virtual grant management monthly technical assistance meetings
- Required Project Director Annual Meeting held in person at the Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium in Omaha on Thursday, February 24, 2022
- Monthly online meetings for new directors in both new and established programs
- Targeted support for programs with specific needs, including virtual and in-person visits
- Required grant management and evaluation summer regional meetings
- My21stCCLC, a secure website for program directors that includes content focused on Evaluation, Grant Management, Partnerships, and Program Support
- 21st CCLC public website

In the fall of 2021, 21st CCLC Project Directors reported their anticipated professional development plans for the 2021-2022 school year by designating local, regional, statewide, and national offerings. This



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

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

STAY CONNECTED

In an effort to provide ongoing learning opportunities between annual conferences, the StayConnected webinar series began in February 2020. These 30-minute webinars are led by afterschool leaders and community partners, providing information relevant to afterschool program leaders and staff. Fifteen webinars were offered during this reporting period. Examples of topics addressed included afterschool curriculum developed by community partners, staff and student health and well-being resources, staff evaluation examples, and support for planning a school-year and summer program. All webinars were recorded and are available on the StayConnected website:

<https://www.education.ne.gov/21stccclc/stayconnected/>

GETCONNECTED NEBRASKA AFTERSCHOOL CONFERENCE

The annual Nebraska GetConnected Afterschool Conference was held on February 25, 2022, after being postponed due to COVID-19. For the first time, the conference was held at the CHI Health Conference Center in



downtown Omaha with 465 individuals in attendance (332 in-person and 133 virtual). The theme of the conference was Best Summer Ever, and sessions offered focused on five conference themes: full-service community schools, emotional health and wellness, equity and inclusion, environmental education, and innovative programming. Conference highlights included:

- Longevity Awards presented to afterschool program leaders and staff
- Innovation Awards presented to the Norfolk Aftershock program and The Bay
- Hands-on kit workshops providing materials attendees could take back to their programs
- Book and statewide book club focused on the book *The Gifts of Imperfection* by Brené Brown
- 25 Walk 'N Talk Display Tables hosted by statewide community organizations.



Conference Partners included Nebraska 21st CCLC, Beyond School Bells, Click2SciencePD, Nebraska Extension, and the Nebraska Department of Education. The conference was planned and implemented as a result of the ongoing collaboration of these organizations. Detailed information about the conference including recordings of selected sessions are available on the 21st CCLC website.

<https://www.education.ne.gov/21stccclc/nebraska-afterschool-conference/>

PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL INITIATIVES

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

are evidence-based strategies for positive behavior, in participating urban and rural 21st CCLC afterschool and summer programs for students in grades K-8. Due to COVID-19 restrictions and protocols that affected implementation, the Nebraska 21st CCLC program received a one-year no-cost extension to implement the pilot through August 2021. In February 2021, \$150,000 was provided through Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds to continue the pilot through August 31, 2023.

ESSER Collaborative ELO Grants - The Nebraska 21st CCLC program was assigned grant management and fiscal responsibilities to support NDE and their contractor, Nebraska Children & Families Foundation, in the GMS administration of nearly \$11 million in American Rescue Plan (ARP) supplemental funding intended to mitigate the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic through afterschool and summer programming. These two-year grants were titled ESSER Collaborative ELO grants and had a grant period of 05/01/2022-09/30/2024. NDE identified selected school districts to expand or enhance current afterschool and summer programs funded by 21st CCLC, referred to as “Accelerator” sites. Another cohort referred to as “Incubator” sites were identified to use the funds to create first-time afterschool and summer programs.

21ST CCLC PROGRAMMING

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

- 1** IMPROVE OVERALL STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS
- 2** INCREASE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL INTERACTIONS
- 3** INCREASE ACTIVE AND MEANINGFUL FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Program schedules include time for academic support including optional homework help, a healthy meal or snack, time for physical activity, and enriching, hands-on clubs and activities.

HOMEWORK AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT

The majority of Nebraska 21st CCLC programs offered time for homework assistance and/or other activities that address the identified academic needs of students. These planned times and activities were provided daily and were formed for students as a result of consistent, ongoing communication and collaboration between afterschool staff and classroom teachers.



HEALTHY MEAL OR SNACK

Each 21st CCLC site participated in applicable USDA nutrition programs in order to provide students with a healthy meal or snack each day. Students were sometimes involved in planning, growing, and preparing these meals/snacks as part of their regular afterschool and summer learning activities. Afterschool partners such as NDE Farm to School and the Whole Child Initiative, as well as Nebraska Appleseed, provided ongoing support.



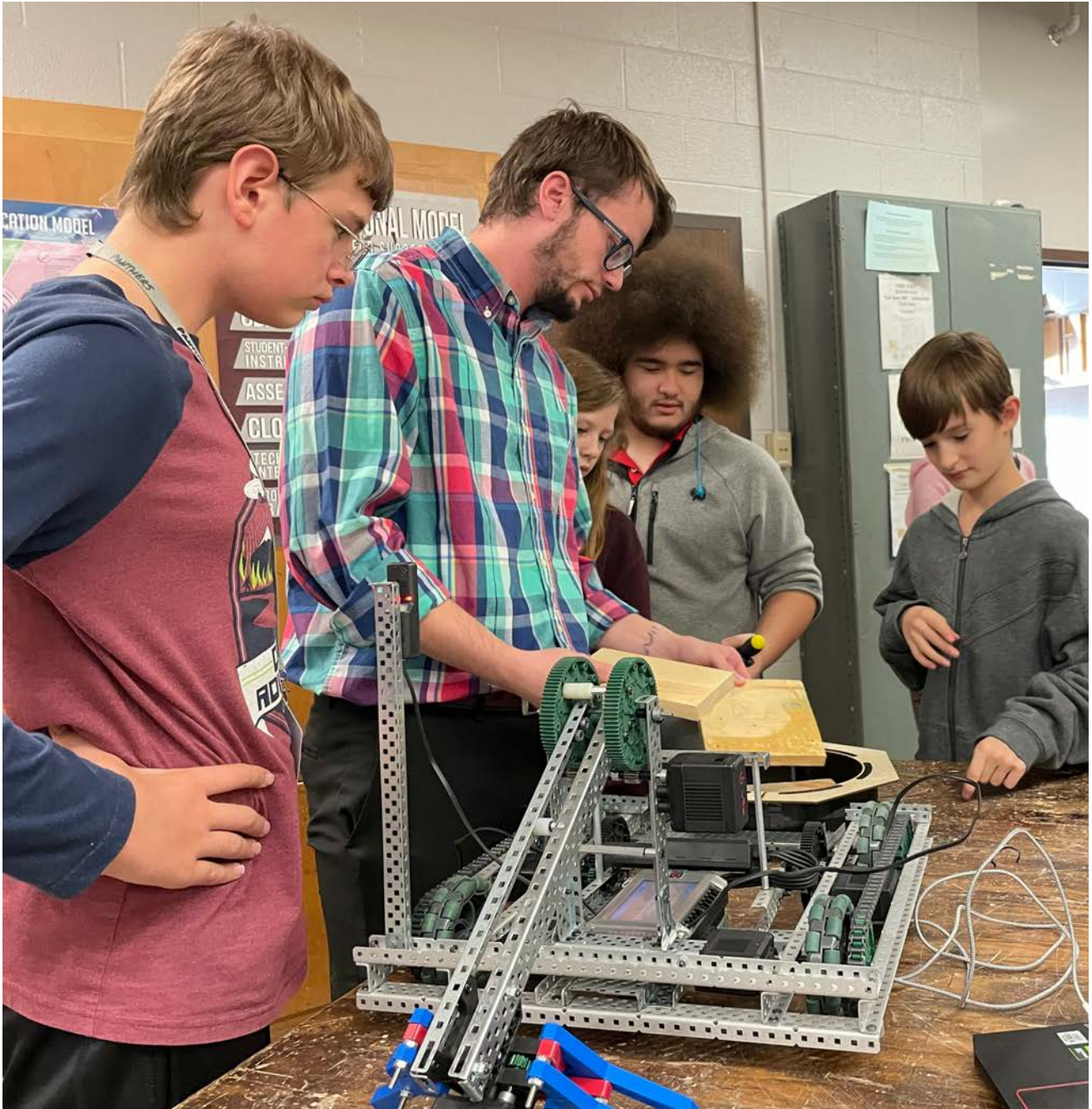
ENRICHMENT AND CLUBS

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

- ART/MUSIC
- COLLEGE/CAREER READINESS

- COOKING
- DANCE
- EXPLORATION OF STEM (INTEGRATED SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS) TOPICS
- FITNESS
- LITERACY
- NUTRITION/WELLNESS
- OUTDOOR EDUCATION
- SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SKILLS
- TECHNOLOGY

EVALUATION PLAN AND ACTIVITIES

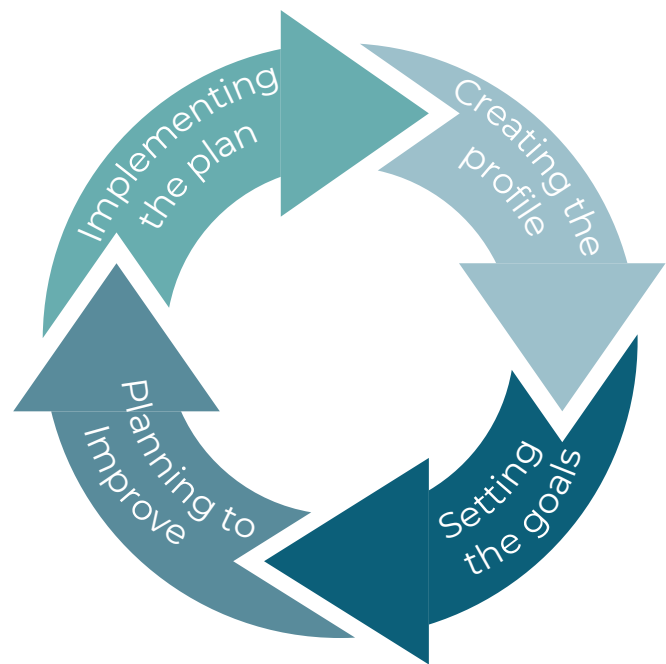


The evaluation plan for 2021-2022 was based upon a continuous improvement model as 21st CCLC sites used data to set goals, develop action plans, implement those plans, and evaluate progress towards goals. Sites utilized data from the self-assessment, teacher surveys, parent surveys, student surveys, afterschool staff surveys, and community partner surveys. In addition, data were collected on student attendance and student demographics, including free/reduced lunch rate, English Learner status, and special education status.

As part of the continuous improvement model, all sites were required to hold Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) meetings in the fall semester of 2021. Attendance at those meetings was required for the building principal, site director, and other members of the management team, including the external facilitator (if contracted by the site). At the CIP meeting, sites reviewed data from 2020-2021 and developed their action plans for the 2021-2022 school year. Action plans were submitted to the state-level management team for review.

For 21st CCLC programs, external facilitators help facilitate the continuous improvement process. External facilitators led the teams through the self-assessment process,

participated in management team meetings, provided guidance for the evaluation process, and facilitated the continuous improvement meeting. While recommended, external facilitators are required only for first-year programs.



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

Parent surveys were disseminated in the spring of 2021 to parents of students who were attendees in the program. While not federally required,

parent surveys provide information on the quality of the program, as well as levels of parent engagement with the program and school system. Parent surveys were administered digitally or with paper copies. Multiple languages were available.



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

An afterschool workforce survey was administered during the 2021-2022 school year. The purpose of the workforce survey is to inform the management team on strengths and challenges, collect feedback on professional development offerings,

and provide a statewide snapshot of the Nebraska afterschool workforce. The workforce survey items ask about reasons for working in the field of afterschool, confidence in skills/abilities needed to work in the program, relationships with students, and professional development. Workforce members are encouraged to provide open-ended feedback on the strengths of the program as well as areas that need improvement. The afterschool workforce survey is administered via Qualtrics, an online survey platform.

For the sixth year, the community partner survey was administered to the partners identified by each 21st CCLC site. Survey items were designed to measure strength of community partner relationships, capacity of each partner to provide supports, relationships with students and families, strengths of the programs, and possible improvements that could be made.



NEBRASKA AFTERSCHOOL QUALITY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (NAQCIS)

The Nebraska Afterschool Quality and Continuous Improvement System (NAQCIS) Self-Assessment (Johnson, et al., 2019) was completed by 150 sites in the fall of 2021.

NAQCIS is purposely aligned with quality framework indicators adopted by the Nebraska State Board of Education and includes a self-assessment, external observation tool with a corresponding feedback form, and a monitoring form.

In addition to completing an annual self-assessment, each 21st CCLC site has two external observations and one monitoring visit within a five-year grant cycle. External observations are conducted by the external evaluation team from UNMC in years 2 and 4 of their grant cycle. Feedback is provided to sites within 2 weeks of the observation. The monitoring visit occurs during year 3 of the grant cycle and is conducted by NDE personnel.

EVALUATION OUTCOMES

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

QUALITY

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





Nebraska Afterschool Quality & Continuous Improvement System (NAQCIS)

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



STUDENT OUTCOMES

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

Rationale: Many student outcomes, including school day attendance, engagement with the school and

peers, and academic achievement have a positive relationship with attending afterschool programming (Afterschool Alliance, 2017). When parents are engaged in their student's education, increased school success and student outcomes, as well as improved attendance, result (Epstein (2005); Mapp & Bergman (2019); Roche (2017); Weiss, Lopez, Caspe (2018); Wood, Bauman, Rudo & Dimock (2017).

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

Belonging: Research on student belonging at school indicates increased positive outcomes for health, well-being, mental health, and academics when compared to students who feel less of a sense of belonging with school (Juvonen, 2006).

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

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

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

Rationale: When parents are engaged in their student's education, increased school success and student outcomes, as well as improved attendance, result (Roche (2017); Weiss, Lopez, Caspe (2018); Wood, Bauman, Rudo & Dimock (2017)). 21st CCLC sites make parent engagement a priority component of their programming. **Parent surveys were completed by over 5100 parents.** Parents recognized the quality of the programs and the support provided by centers for afterschool supervision and support with their students' academics. Overall, the sites were rated very positively and seen as a valued resource for communities.



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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

Rationale: Community partnerships enhance programs in a number of ways: providing programming, resources, training and/or time, and financially supporting the program. Finding and maintaining community partners is essential to program success and sustainability.

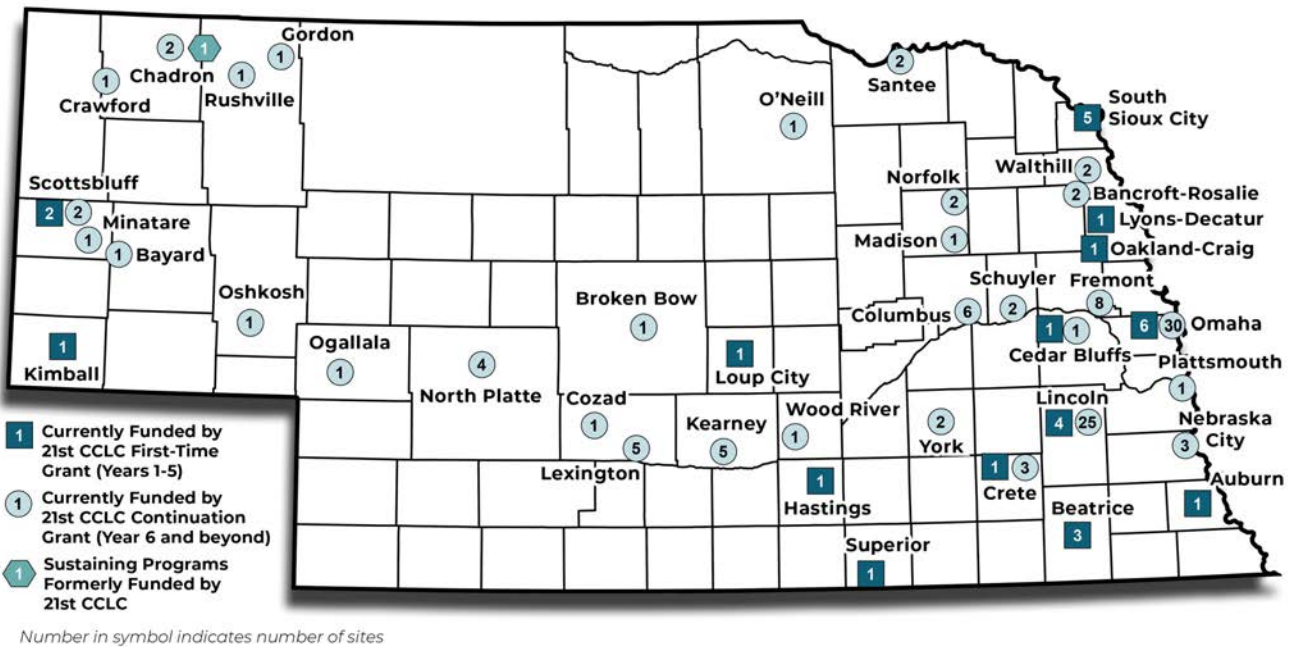
Partner Surveys: Despite the pandemic restrictions and limitations on community partners' participation in programs during the 2021-2022 school year, **423 community partner surveys were completed**. The survey responses indicated strong commitment to programs and a belief that partnering with 21st CLCC programs was mutually beneficial.



“THE STRENGTHS OF THE PROGRAM LIE IN THE COMMITMENT OF THE AFTERSCHOOL STAFF AND AGENCIES TO ENSURE THE STUDENTS ARE PROVIDED WITH DIVERSE, HIGH-QUALITY PROGRAMS.”

WHO ATTENDED 21ST CCLCS?

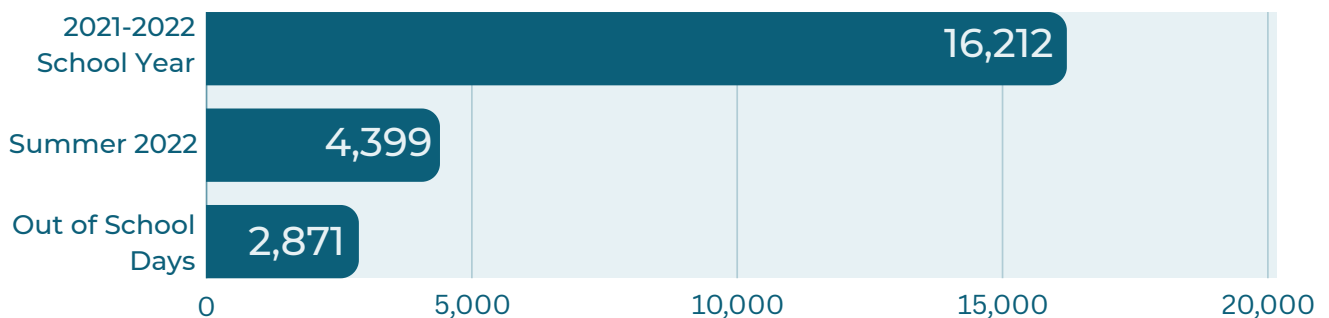




As noted on the map, 29 sites were within their first five years, while 119 were on continuation funding. 21st CCLCs served both rural and urban students in 40 communities.

OVER 16,000 STUDENTS ATTENDED PROGRAMMING DURING THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR.

Both summer and school year attendance increased significantly from the previous year.



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

DEMOGRAPHICS OF STUDENTS ATTENDING 21ST CCLC PROGRAMS

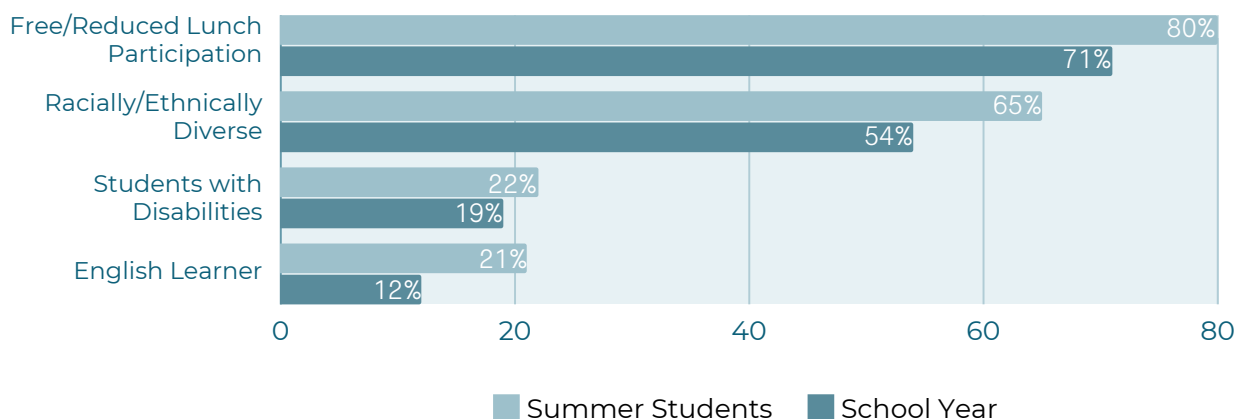
To ensure 21st CCLC programs serve high-need students who could benefit the most from the programming provided, the demographics of afterschool students are required to reflect the school day demographics at each site (within a margin of 5%). Factors include free/reduced lunch participation, race/ethnicity percentages, English Learner status, and students with disabilities. All student demographic and statewide assessment data were obtained and imported directly from the Nebraska Department of Education based on district reporting. As shown below, programs in Nebraska served students with

diverse needs at a rate higher than most statewide percentages, particularly students participating in free/reduced lunch, English Learner students, and students receiving special education.

Programs varied in demographics depending on whether they were urban or rural. In 2021-2022, 65 sites were considered urban, and 85 were rural. Urban programs had higher percentages of students that were racially/ethnically diverse (66% vs. 44%) and participating in the free/reduced lunch program (78% vs. 66%). Urban programs served more students with IEPs (20%) and more students designated as English Learners (15%), than rural programs, with only 4% of students on IEPs and 11% English Learners in rural programs.

NEBRASKA 21ST CCLC SERVED A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN FREE/REDUCED LUNCH

Inclusion was high for students with disabilities.



The Nebraska Department of Education has stressed the importance of decreasing the rates of chronic absenteeism. To this extent, the state-level management team decided to examine attendance rates for 21st CCLC students who were regular attendees. The results of that analysis indicated that 21st CCLC attendees missed fewer school days on average when compared to ALL Nebraska students and Nebraska students attending schools with 40% or greater free/reduced lunch percentage. All 21st CCLC sites are required to have at least a 40% free/reduced lunch rate, so the comparison to those students is most comparable. There were some differences depending on type of program attended. Students in urban settings (Omaha and Lincoln) were absent more days (M=11.14 days) than students attending rural programs (M=7.27 days).



2021-2022 SCHOOL DAY ATTENDANCE	ATTENDED	ABSENT
All Nebraska Students	157.84	13.90
All Nebraska 40% FRL	157.28	16.85
Statewide 21st CCLC Regular Attendees	158.56	12.10

PROGRAM QUALITY



Program quality was assessed through two components of the NAQCIS system, the self-assessment, and an external observation. All sites were required to complete the self-assessment in the fall of 2021. Sites in years 2 and 4 of their grant cycles were required to have an on-site, external observation completed by the UNMC evaluation team during the 2021-2022 school year.

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



The **NAQCIS Site Observation (Johnson, et al., 2019)** was completed by an external evaluation team member(s) and provided feedback on the overall program as well as detailed feedback on two specific clubs/activities selected by the site. The same rating system as the self-assessment was used for the observations, with items scoring as emerging, emerging plus, maturing, maturing plus, or excelling. Observations were completed in person by UNMC evaluators. After the observation, feedback was provided to the site director and management team within 2 weeks of the observation.

NAQCIS SELF-ASSESSMENT

The **NAQCIS Self-Assessment** was designed to be completed by a management team with knowledge and understanding of the goals and daily operations of the program. Members of the team have different roles and may bring different perspectives based on those roles. To complete the self-assessment, members of the management team observed the program within two weeks of the meeting, considered evidence to support their ratings, and came to a consensus on the status of their program across the multiple categories. The Nebraska Afterschool Quality and Continuous Improvement System Self-Assessment is an annual tool designed to assess the program's own evaluation of its performance on domains deemed necessary for a high-quality afterschool program. Individual items in each domain were rated by the program as emerging (1), emerging plus (2), maturing (3), maturing plus (4), or excelling (5).

Sites rated most aspects of their program as demonstrating at least **MATURING LEVELS** of quality.



Sites scoring Maturing or higher for Relationships and Interactions



Sites scoring Maturing or higher for Family Engagement

Relationships and safety/wellness practices were noted as strengths statewide and were a highlight for many sites. Across all areas of the self-assessment, fewer than 5% of sites rated themselves in the “emerging” category, indicating programs implement practices beyond beginning levels. Family engagement and community partnerships were two domains identified by sites as needing additional resources and/or efforts to increase both.



	2021-2022 STATEWIDE SELF-ASSESSMENT RESULTS (N=150)				
DOMAIN	EMERGING	EMERGING PLUS	MATURING	MATURING PLUS	EXCELLING
Administration with Sound Management and Well-developed Systems	0%	0%	13%	20%	68%
Diverse, Prepared Staff including Certificated Educators	1%	2%	19%	43%	36%
Relationships and Interactions	0%	2%	11%	47%	40%
Professional Development	1%	7%	30%	32%	30%
Intentional Programming Aligned with School Day & Engaged Learning	0%	3%	21%	49%	27%
Behavior Management	1%	3%	28%	48%	19%
Family Engagement	3%	16%	35%	32%	15%
Community-School Partnerships and Resource Sharing	1%	9%	20%	42%	27%
Ongoing Assessment and Improvement	3%	3%	22%	31%	40%
Safety, Health, and Wellness	0%	3%	11%	33%	53%

NAQCIS EXTERNAL OBSERVATIONS

External observations were completed during the 2021-2022 year on programs that were in either year 2 or 4 of their 5-year grant cycle. An observation cycle included a pre-observation interview with the site director, collection of artifacts and materials to support the observation, including daily schedules, parent communication materials, and/or activity/lesson plans for the clubs/activities being observed. Within 2 weeks, a feedback call/Zoom session was held with the program to go over what was observed, the scores, and any recommendations for the program. It was also a time for the program team to ask questions or to provide additional information to the evaluation team member.

ACTIVITY AND CLUB OBSERVATIONS

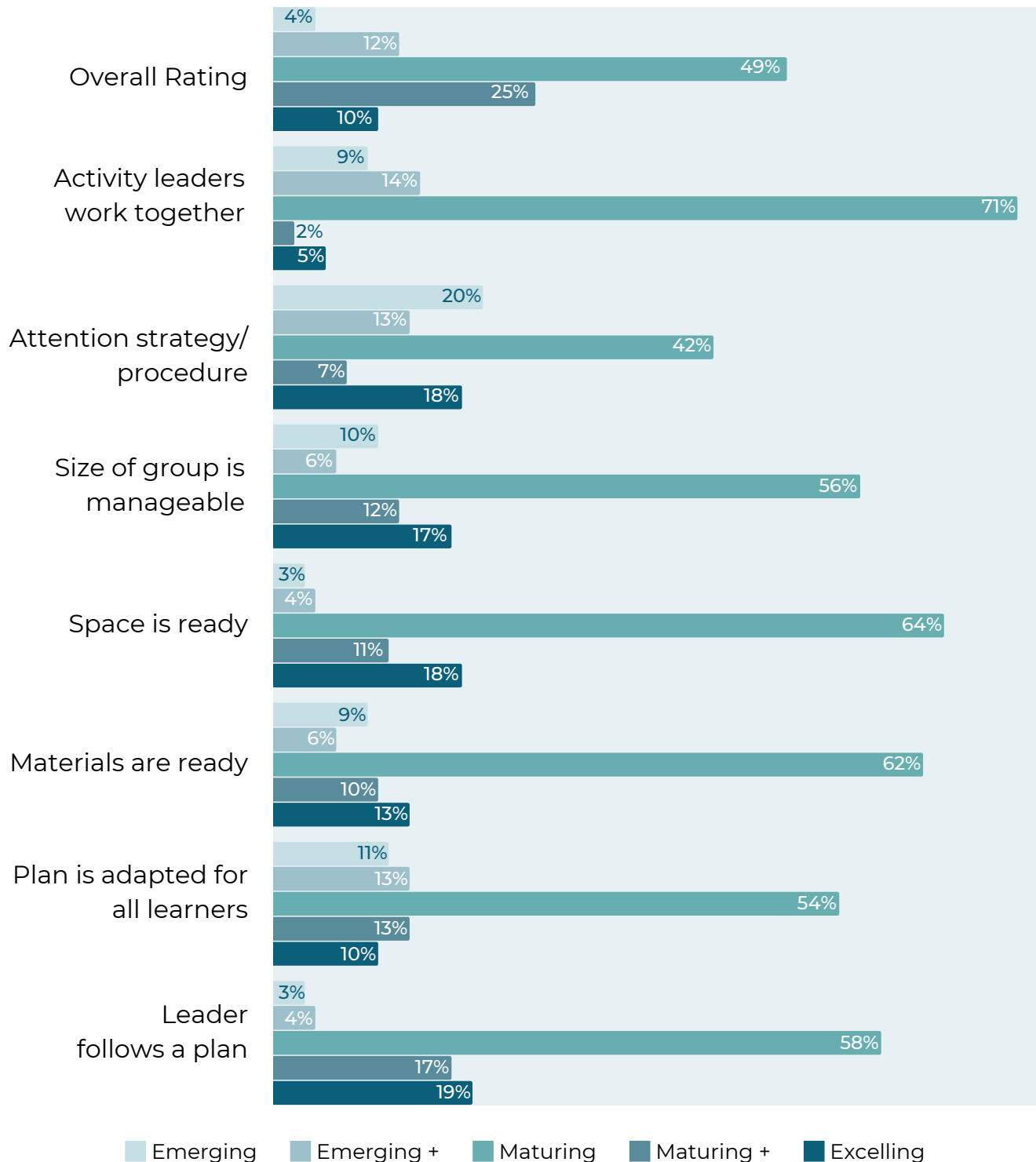
Sites selected activities/clubs for the evaluation team members to observe and provide feedback on preparation, student response, and instructional and engagement practices. It was requested that activity lesson plans be provided during the observation. It was not a requirement to select only exemplar clubs, as the purpose of evaluation is two-fold – to provide information on overall quality and to

promote data utilization and continuous improvement. As a result, some activities were selected because they were new in development and/or needed suggestions for improvement.



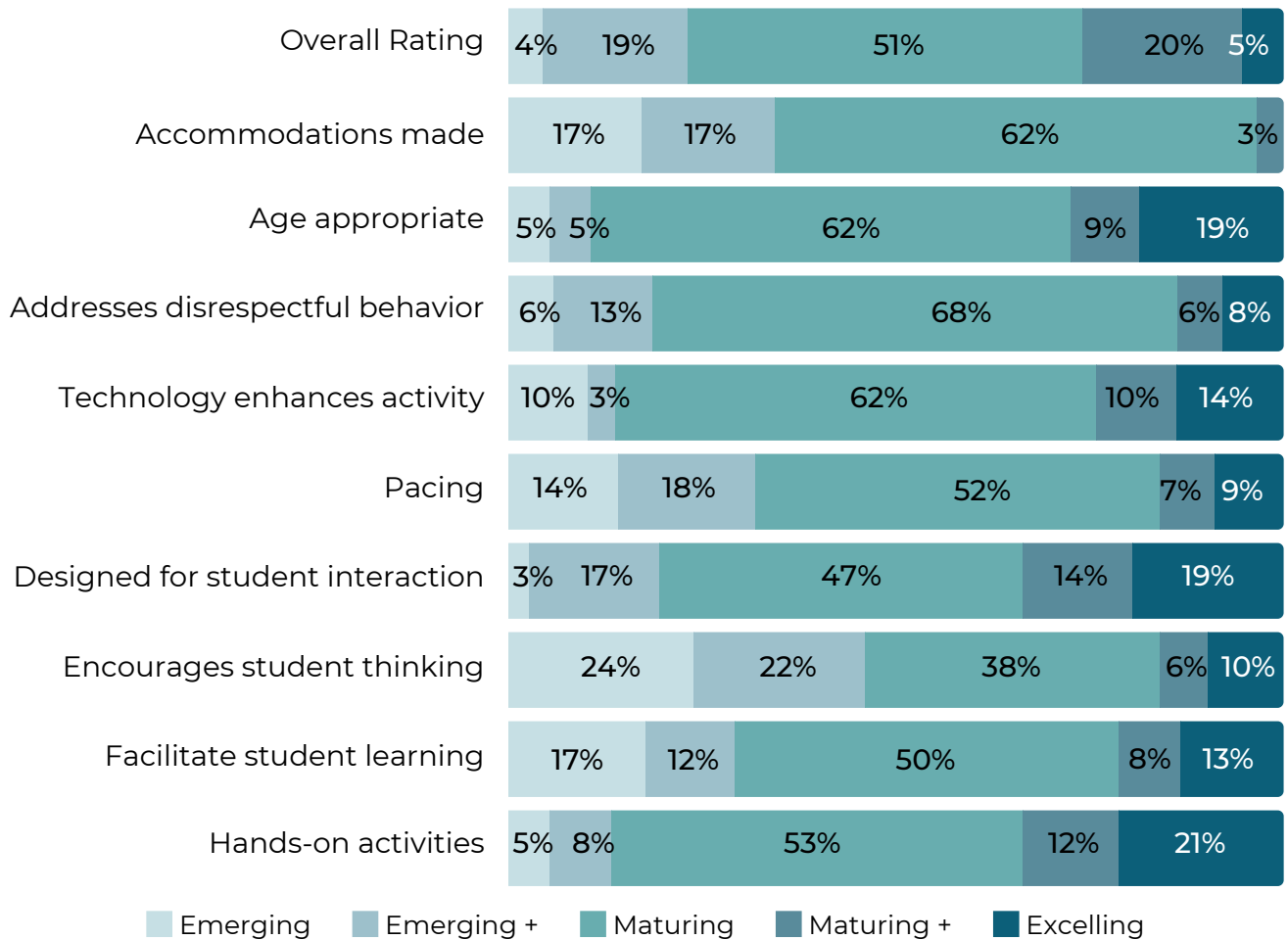
Engagement of students in activities continues to be a goal for 21st CCLC programs. The more engaged a student is, the more likely they are to continue attending the afterschool program and are less likely to engage in disruptive and distracting behavior.

OBSERVATIONS FOUND THE MAJORITY OF CLUBS/ACTIVITIES WERE WELL-ORGANIZED WITH SPACE AND MATERIALS READY FOR THE STUDENTS (N=113)



THE MAJORITY OF ACTIVITIES OBSERVED ENCOURAGED STUDENT INTERACTIONS AND ENGAGEMENT BY BEING HANDS-ON (N=113)

Pacing and encouraging student thinking are areas to improve.



Data from activity observations (N=113) indicated activities had good planning and preparation prior to students attending with 81% of the activities attaining an overall rating of maturing or higher. Areas needing improvement included activities being adapted to meet the needs of all learners participating and for programs to use a consistent attention strategy or procedure.

Student engagement (i.e., interacting with each other, club leaders, interest in activity and learning) is one area to improve. Observations found that 24% of the clubs/activities observed were in the emerging and emerging plus categories. Growth in activities that promote student learning and require students to demonstrate skills would enhance the offerings of afterschool programs.

SURVEY OUTCOMES



SURVEY RETURN RATES

2021-2022 SURVEY RETURN RATES		
SURVEY	RESPONDENTS	RETURN RATE
Teacher	10,010	73%
Parent	6279	46%
K-2 Student	3169	68%
3rd-5th Student	3356	67%
6th-12th Student	1729	44%
Community Partner	423	54%
Afterschool Staff	550	NA

*Survey Return Rate Calculations

The Teacher, Parent, and Student Survey Return Rates are calculated by dividing the number of completed surveys by the total number of students who attended 10 or more hours, who were not opted out of the survey process, and whose information was entered into the database by the February 1st deadline.

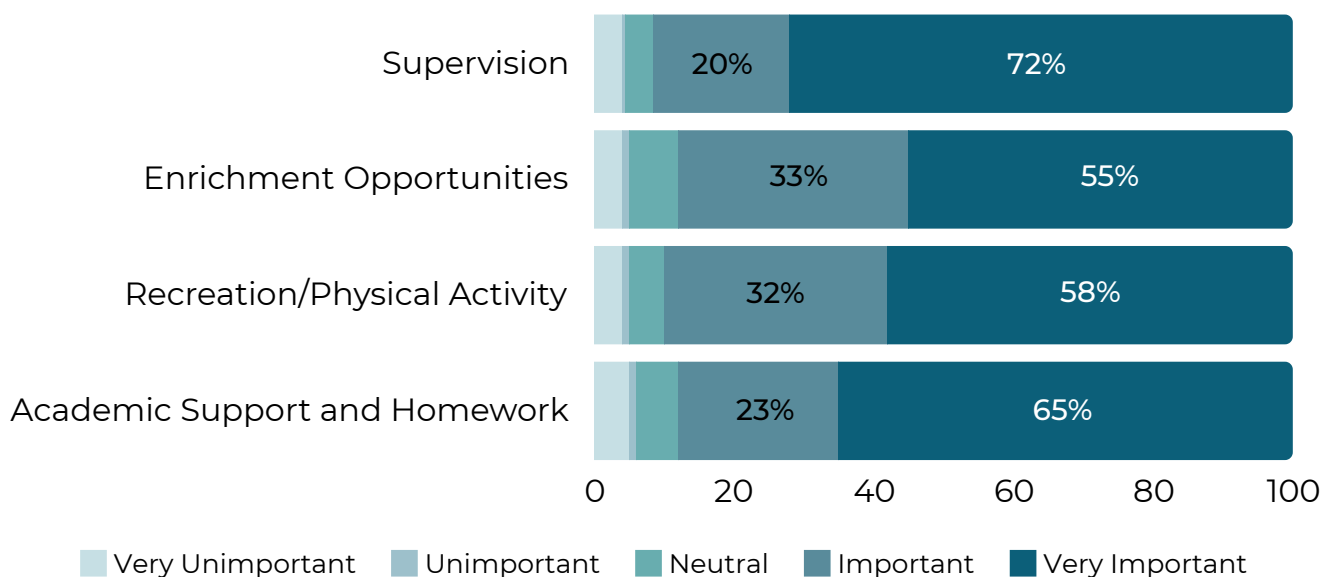
PARENT SURVEY OUTCOMES (N=6,279; 46% RETURN RATE)

The parent survey was provided to parents of all students who were attenders during the 2021-2022 school year. The survey was designed to provide a snapshot of program quality, experiences of the student and reasons for enrolling their student in the program. Parents were asked to rate the following items on a 1 to 4 scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree).



SUPERVISION WAS RATED AS THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON FOR PARENTS ENROLLING STUDENTS IN AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMMING.

Parents also appreciate the engaging activities and excellent staff of the programs.



Parents (N=6279) gave the programs high ratings across all items. In particular, they viewed the program as a benefit to their child, that staff care about their child and that their child enjoys the activities of the program. Parents also viewed the programs as safe places for their child to be and that their child was able to have friends within the program. Parents were asked why they enrolled their students in 21st CCLC programming. They rated each component as being very unimportant, unimportant, neutral, important or very important. Supervision had the most parents (92%) rate it as important or very important, but all of the components

were rated as important or very important by at least 87% of parents.

All parents who completed the satisfaction survey had the opportunity to answer the open-ended question, **“Thinking about your experience with the afterschool program, what are some ways we could best provide support/resources to you as you support your child’s learning?”** In 2022, there were more than 1,600 responses to this open-ended question, ranging from strong support of the program to constructive criticism highlighting areas for improvement.

These comments included commentary on the quality of the programming, the quality of the communication, the quality of the staff, and suggestions for expanded scheduling and opportunities for family engagement. Details on each of these topics are described below.

Overall, parents had a positive view of the afterschool program. Despite the open-ended question prompting suggestions for improvement, over half of the responses were exclusively or included positive comments, praise, and/or thanks to the program, its staff, and/or the programming it offered. Staff members were often called out by name, and parents indicated the staff had great relationships with students and parents alike. Parents reported appreciating the hands-on, engaging, and novel opportunities their students had in the program. They also indicated that their children felt welcomed, were exposed to new experiences through the clubs and activities, had friends, and learned social-emotional skills. Many specifically noted that their children enjoyed the program, sharing stories about how the child would complain if the parents came to pick them up too early. Several parents also commented on the importance of having a safe place for their children to go, especially for working parents or parents who were otherwise

unavailable when the school day ended.

"THE HELP WITH
HOMEWORK IS HUGE.
I AM A SINGLE MOM OF
SEVEN THAT WORKS,
AND IT IS A TRUE
BLESSING TO KNOW MY
CHILD IS IN A SAFE
ENVIRONMENT WHILE I
AM AT WORK."

~PARENT OF 21ST
CCLC STUDENT

Parents appreciated the programming by and large, but many would prefer a focus on homework and tutoring. Many of the responses included specific aspects of the programming that parents appreciated. Parents also had suggestions for improvement. Most of these comments were requests to have students prioritize homework. These parents asked that the students be offered a quiet space with staff available to help students understand the material, and oversight to ensure that students finished their homework before being allowed to play or participate in other clubs.

PARENTS RATED THE 21ST CCLC PROGRAM POSITIVELY ACROSS ALL AREAS (N=6,279)

They view the programs as providing a necessary service to the community.

Afterschool program is a benefit to my child.	3.89
Afterschool staff care about my child.	3.86
I am satisfied with how my child's behavior is handled.	3.85
The afterschool program is a safe place, physically and emotionally.	3.83
My child enjoys the activities offered in the program.	3.82
The afterschool program is of high quality.	3.81
The school and afterschool program have an effective partnership.	3.81
The program helps my child build and maintain friendships.	3.79
My child experiences new things in the program.	3.78
I am satisfied with the level of communication.	3.73
Opportunities to engage in the afterschool program.	3.51

Many parents indicated that their main reason for sending their children to the afterschool program was for homework support, as they did not have the time or the skills to support their children at home. There were a few parents, however, who expressed the opposite preference; these

parents believed that their students were in school all day and needed a release from the more traditional academic demands on their time. Thus, these parents expressed a preference for unstructured play time, outdoor play, and non-school-related activities.

Parents have ideas for additional activities they would like to see offered. In addition to the activities that are already offered, parents had ideas of other programming that would benefit their students. Ideas ranged from physical opportunities (e.g., dance, martial arts, and gymnastics), academic activities (e.g., reading, language courses, advanced academics, and STEM activities), and the arts (e.g., playing musical instruments and theatre), to activities to enrich social-emotional skills and teach life and leadership skills. Field trips, community service opportunities, and partnering with other programs (e.g., 4H) were also recommended.

A small number of parents reported that some activities (e.g., coloring, worksheets, and activities relying on screen time) were overdone, and they requested limiting those activities or providing more diverse options. Some parents noted their students, especially older students, were losing interest in the activities offered and encouraged programs to be more in tune with what students would find interesting to increase engagement. Several parents also requested their students have more choices regarding the activities offered, indicating that some of the preferred activities filled up quickly and the student missed out or that the parents did not know enough about



the options and were not able to help the student make decisions before sign-ups were due.

Communication was identified as an area for improvement. Many of the constructive or critical comments indicated a need for better communication, both between the school day staff and the afterschool staff and between the afterschool program and parents. Parents indicated that having a link between school day staff and the program staff would allow programs to ensure homework completion, help students with homework content, have continuity of care and adherence to behavior plans or IEPs, and pass along any important notes from the school day to parents.

Communication with parents was more commonly mentioned, with improvements needed in communicating about opportunities at the program (e.g., which clubs are available, when clubs meet, and field trip opportunities), details about what the students are doing in each club, sharing about student behavior and needs so the parent can celebrate or address issues at home, scheduling and programming changes (e.g., club closures, policy changes, etc.), and attendance/release expectations.

Several parents expressed concern with the timeliness of communication, especially for changes of plans like program

closures or field trip opportunities; parents reported needing more than a day or two lead time to adjust their family's schedule and indicated they struggled with last-minute (or poorly communicated) decisions to close the program/reduce hours of operation. Parents also indicated they would like a way for them to communicate with the program so they could update program staff on child needs, changes to when and how the child can leave the program, or other one-off events that might impact their student's participation in the afterschool program.

Parents suggested that programs send home regular newsletters or provide information via an online portal for program updates and start sending daily or weekly reports to cover student behaviors/individual communication. Adding the afterschool staff to the school-day communication systems to streamline communication was also recommended. Some parents noted that they did not always receive communication that was shared on social media or was sent home with a child, so it was suggested that information be shared via multiple avenues to ensure parents are aware of updates or important changes. Several also requested that programs have an actively monitored phone number parents could call when necessary.



Parents would like more opportunities for family engagement with the program. Related to an interest in increased communication, parents reported wanting more direct knowledge of how the program was going for their students. Ideas for engagement included encouraging parent volunteers and chaperones for field trips, allowing parents in the building to observe activities and get to know the staff, sending activities/projects home so families can continue the learning together, presentations (e.g., art shows or family nights), fundraising, and classes specifically for parents (e.g., English language or parenting classes).

Parents would like to see expanded programming and club availability. Parents noted that their own availability does not increase when school is closed and emphasized the importance afterschool options any day school was not in session, including over the summer, so their

Parents wanted better
COMMUNICATION
and opportunities for
ENGAGEMENT
with programs.

“THE AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM IS ONE OF THE BEST PROGRAMS MY CHILDREN HAVE BEEN A PART OF OVER THE YEARS. IT IS WELL-RUN, FILLED WITH OPPORTUNITIES AND IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY.”

~PARENT OF 21ST
CCLC STUDENT

students still have a safe, enriching place to go. Many also commented that unplanned closures of the afterschool program, perhaps due to staffing issues, were particularly difficult to accommodate. Some parents also requested additional hours, including both longer availability at the end of the day and adding a morning program to offer more coverage for parents with extended work hours. A handful of parents noted the lack of programming for their preschoolers, pre-teens, and teenagers, and wished similar programs existed for all grades.



Some parents suggested professional development for staff and/or policy changes to address gaps in safety and supervision.

Roughly five percent of the open-ended comments included critical commentary on the staff or supervision. These parents suggested the staff might be under-resourced or otherwise not have the capacity to meet certain challenges. Specific concerns included high staff turnover, low staff patience with students, staff inability to follow IEPs or behavior plans, low knowledge of special needs, low capacity for homework support/tutoring, and an inability to prevent behaviors/keep students safe. Several parents also witnessed or

heard their student report a lack of supervision (e.g., staff focused on devices rather than students, staff not present where students were playing, or reporting that there are not enough staff to meet the students' needs). A small handful of parents reported incidences of peer-to-peer bullying, aggressive play, foul language, and other concerning student behaviors that staff members were either unaware of or unwilling to correct.

However, a majority of the comments that directly commented on staff were praise; parents noted how much their children loved certain staff members or how well directors and other leadership staff were able to handle difficult situations.

A small number of parents had specific concerns. These concerns were typically one-off events that unfolded in a way the parents did not prefer. Concerns included transportation, issues with administration (e.g. confusion over registration), alternative preferences regarding the food, and inclusion of students with special needs.

SUMMARY

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

TEACHER SURVEY OUTCOMES (N=10,010; 73% RETURN RATE)

As one part of the evaluation process, classroom teachers rated individual students on engagement in learning and their social, emotional, and behavioral development. Using grade-level expectations, teachers determine if each student either falls below, meets, or performs above expectations. They then rate the student growth from fall to spring on each survey item. Survey outcomes for grades 1-5 are reported as part of the federal evaluation process.

OPEN-ENDED FEEDBACK

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

Many students reportedly grew socially because of their afterschool experiences. Teachers shared stories of how their students were more engaged with their peers, learned

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

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

Overall, **ATTITUDE**
and **ENGAGEMENT**
increased because of
participation in
afterschool programs.



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

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

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

Students reportedly speak highly of the programs and enjoy attending. Many teacher comments specifically noted how much their students look forward to attending the afterschool

program each day. Students regularly tell their school-day teachers how much fun they have in afterschool programming and brag about the exciting and interesting things they are learning/doing. Teachers also reported several students were advertising the clubs to their peers, encouraging classmates to ask their own parents if they could participate as well.

High school teachers noted slightly different benefits and struggles for their students related to the afterschool programs. Only a fraction of high school teachers answered the open-ended question. These teachers typically described the older students in general terms (e.g., "doing well" or "bright and engaged") and did not often articulate progress the student demonstrated over the year and/or if their participation in the afterschool programs had any impact on the student. Those who did comment on the program noted it often helped students socially, allowing them to advocate for themselves in social situations, develop leadership skills, and "come out of [their] shells." Academic successes, like internships and advances in comprehension of school-day topics, were also noted.

High school teachers also identified continuing struggles some students had and identified areas the

afterschool program could target to see more improvements in the school day. Inconsistent attendance was a common explanation for student struggles, as was missing or incomplete homework. Several teachers noted it would be (or was, for the students who did complete homework at the afterschool program) helpful for school day success if the student had structured homework time during the afterschool program. Some underperforming students, their teachers reported, struggled with attention and engagement, but teachers did not identify how the program could or did help address this concern.

MY SON LOVES THE
AFTERSCHOOL
PROGRAMS. THIS LAST
SEMESTER, HE SIGNED UP
FOR A CLUB EVERY DAY
OF THE WEEK. HE REALLY
LOVED THE ROCK
CLIMBING WALL CLUB,
CHESS, AND DUNGEONS
AND DRAGONS”

~ PARENT OF 21ST CCLC STUDENT

SUMMARY

Overall, comments were balanced between student successes that the afterschool programs supported, and All K-12 students who attended even once during the year were given the opportunity to provide feedback and complete age-appropriate surveys. All student surveys were online and linked to both program and student ID numbers.

STUDENT SURVEY OUTCOMES

K-2 (N=3169, 68% RETURN RATE)

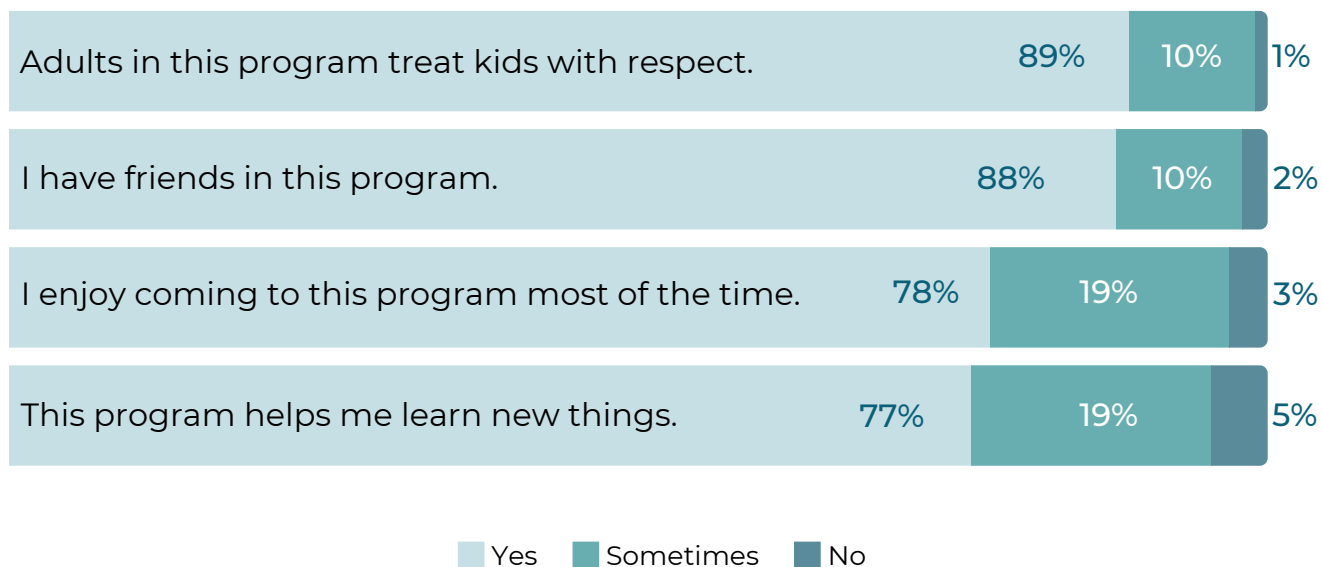
GRADES 3-5 (N=3356, 67% RETURN RATE)

GRADES 6-12 (N = 1729, 44% RETURN RATE)

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

K-2 students completed a four-item survey on their experiences in 21st CLCC sites. Choice options for each item were: Yes, Sometimes, or No. K-2 student responses indicated positive relationships and interactions with staff and other students. Most students reported that they learned new things and enjoyed coming to the program, both key components for student engagement.

NEARLY ALL K-2 STUDENTS REPORTED STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH BOTH PEERS AND ADULTS IN THE PROGRAMS (N=3,169)



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

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

For 3rd-5th grade students (N=3,356), the highest ratings were for **Program Belonging and Engagement** (M=3.41).

Items under this domain ask about having friends (M=3.55), enjoying the program, and adult respect toward students (M=3.59). Students reported they could “learn the things taught at school” (M=3.45) and they work hard to “complete school work” (M=3.34). **Mastery Orientation** continued to be the lowest-rated domain with students having less confidence in their ability to “do my schoolwork because I enjoy it” (M=2.58).

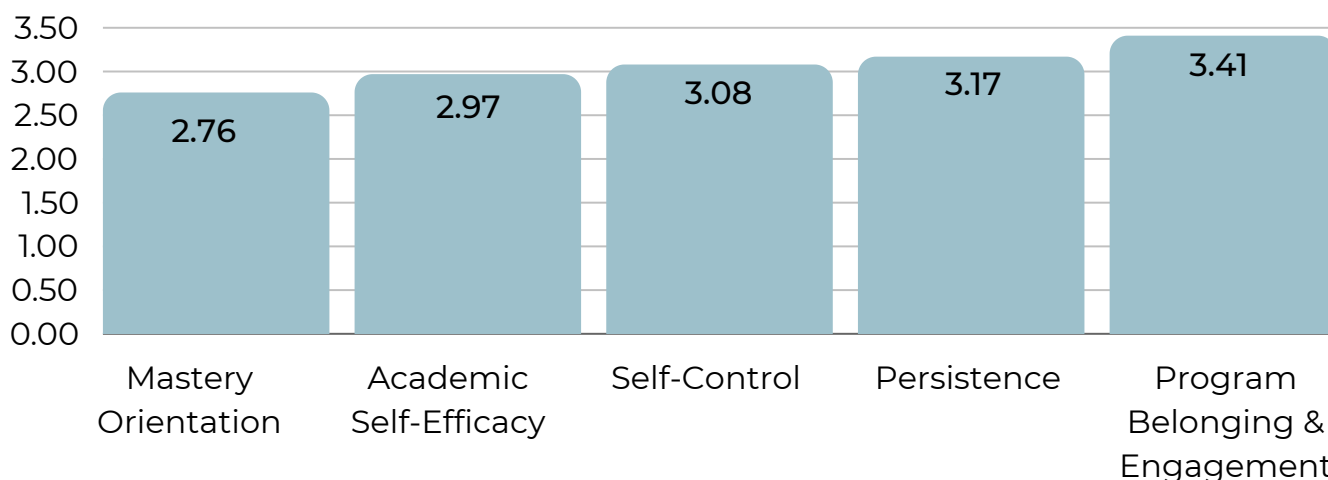
For 6th-12th grade students (N=1,729), **Academic Identity** had the highest average for the sixth consecutive year. Students reported that getting a college education is important (M=3.32), which corresponds to students’ recognition about the

importance of grades as the item **“Getting good grades is one of my main goals”** (M=3.30) was rated positively. Lower-rated items were in the domain of **Mindsets**, with the lowest-rated item being “I stay focused on my work even when it’s

boring” (M=2.75). Students reported that the program has helped them develop self-regulation skills (i.e., making better choices, learning patience, handling stress) in addition to providing academic supports and a supportive environment.

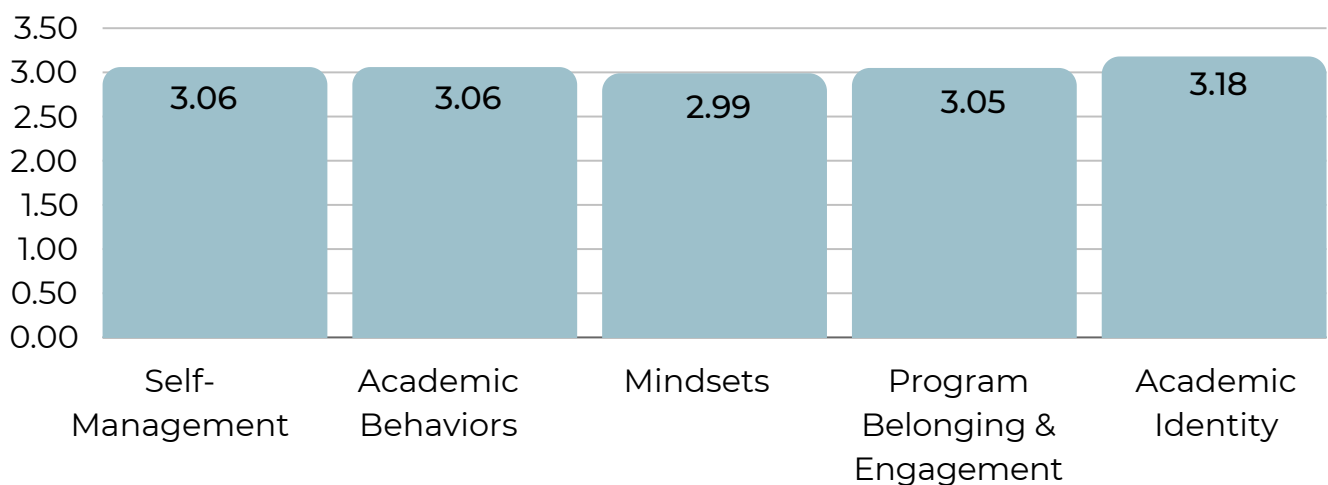
STUDENTS IN GRADES 3-5 SAW HARD WORK AS AN ATTRIBUTE TO GETTING BETTER GRADES

Respondents said afterschool programs helped them learn new things



N=3,356

WHILE 6TH-12TH GRADE PLACED HIGH IMPORTANCE ON EARNING GOOD GRADES IN SCHOOL AND GETTING A COLLEGE EDUCATION



N=1,729

SUMMARY OF STUDENT SURVEY DATA

Across all age groups, program belonging and engagement continues to be rated very positively. As students advance through the grades, academic identity and future planning become more prominent as the focus is on grades, college, and career fields. Across sites, students enjoy coming to the program most of the time, have friends in the program, learn new things, and feel respected by the adults working in the programs. Students report that 21st CCLC programs are helping them develop and improve their self-regulation skills, including both emotional and behavioral regulation.



AFTERSCHOOL STAFF SURVEY OUTCOMES

In 2021-2022, afterschool staff had the opportunity to complete an afterschool staff survey developed by the evaluation team. A total of 550 staff members, including site supervisors and program directors, completed the survey with 79% of respondents working as staff members, 12% as site supervisors, and 9% as program directors.

Statewide, afterschool programming is implemented and delivered primarily by those identifying as female (82%). Demographics reported indicate a diverse workforce for afterschool programs with 71% White, 13% Hispanic/Latino, 10% Black/African American, 1% Native American / American Indian, and 1% Asian with 4% preferring not to answer. Ages of staff tended to be younger with 58% of staff being age 30 or younger, 19% between the ages of 31-49, 17% between the ages of 50-64 and 4% 65 or older.

For some 21st CCLC programs, the majority of afterschool staff are college students, so turnover is expected as they graduate. For education majors, 21st CCLCs provide a training ground for working with students of diverse ages, background and abilities. Partnerships between 21st CCLC programs and



postsecondary institutions across the state are mutually beneficial for both K-12 students and students participating in college coursework.

For program staff, 78% reported attending at least some postsecondary education, with 40% attaining a degree or certificate post-high school. Of the staff working in the programs, 19% hold bachelor's degrees, and 9% have a master's degree. A high percentage of those with some college credits are students currently enrolled in Nebraska colleges and universities and working in the program. **Additionally, 11% of the workforce were current high school students.**

Turnover in afterschool programs is an issue, as seventy-three percent of staff have worked in the afterschool program for three years or fewer. Another 14% have worked in the program for 4-6 years, and 13% have been in the program for 7 years or longer. Top reasons for leaving were graduation, relocation, and retirement, all personal reasons unrelated to the afterschool programming.

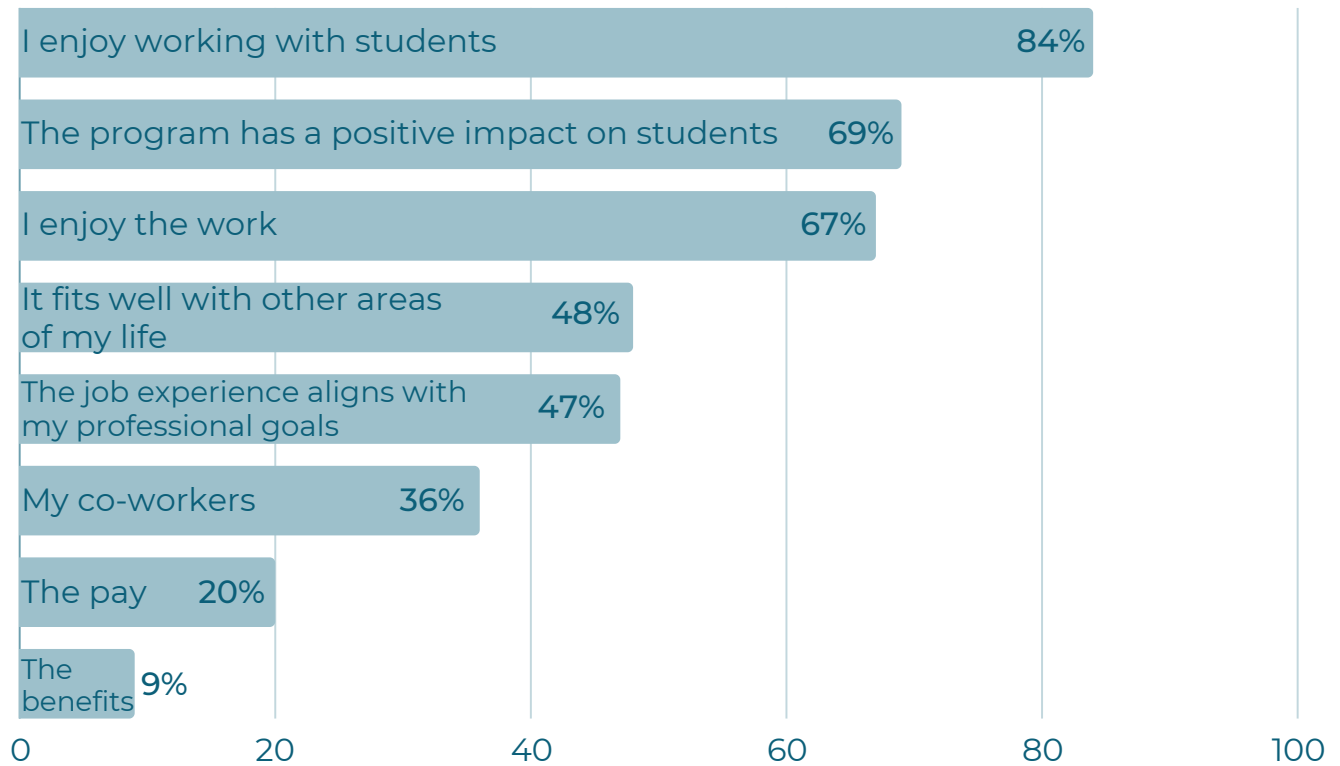
Afterschool staff see their work as valuable and a chance to connect with students, as evidenced by positive feedback on the survey from those working with students. Several commented on the impact they can see on students and how the program engages them in something outside of school. A couple of staff comments are shown below and reflect others from the survey.

"I'M A FAMILY/NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR FOR OUR CLCS, AND I FIND THIS POSITION (AND MANY OTHERS) TO BE AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT WHEN LOOKING AT GROWTH WITHIN OUR PROGRAMS. I HOPE OUR ROLES CONTINUE TO BE LOOKED AT AS PROFESSIONAL AND ESSENTIAL POSITIONS IN THE EDUCATION WORLD."



AFTERSCHOOL STAFF WORK IN AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS BECAUSE OF THE STUDENTS AND WORK ENJOYMENT (N=550)

Less than a quarter of staff work in the program for the pay and/or benefits.



“ I REALLY ENJOY WORKING FOR THE AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM AND WATCHING KIDS START WITH US AND GROW OVER THE YEARS. IT'S AWESOME TO SEE THEM COME BACK EACH YEAR AND PARTICIPATE IN OUR PROGRAM. IT'S GOOD FOR THE STUDENTS SOCIALLY, SINCE IT MAKES THEM ENGAGE WITH STUDENTS THEY MIGHT NOT SOCIALIZE WITH NORMALLY. I ALSO THINK IT'S A GREAT PROGRAM TO GET KIDS WHO MAY NOT DO SPORTS AT LEAST BE INVOLVED IN SOMETHING. ”

AFTERSCHOOL STAFF PREPARATION AND CONFIDENCE

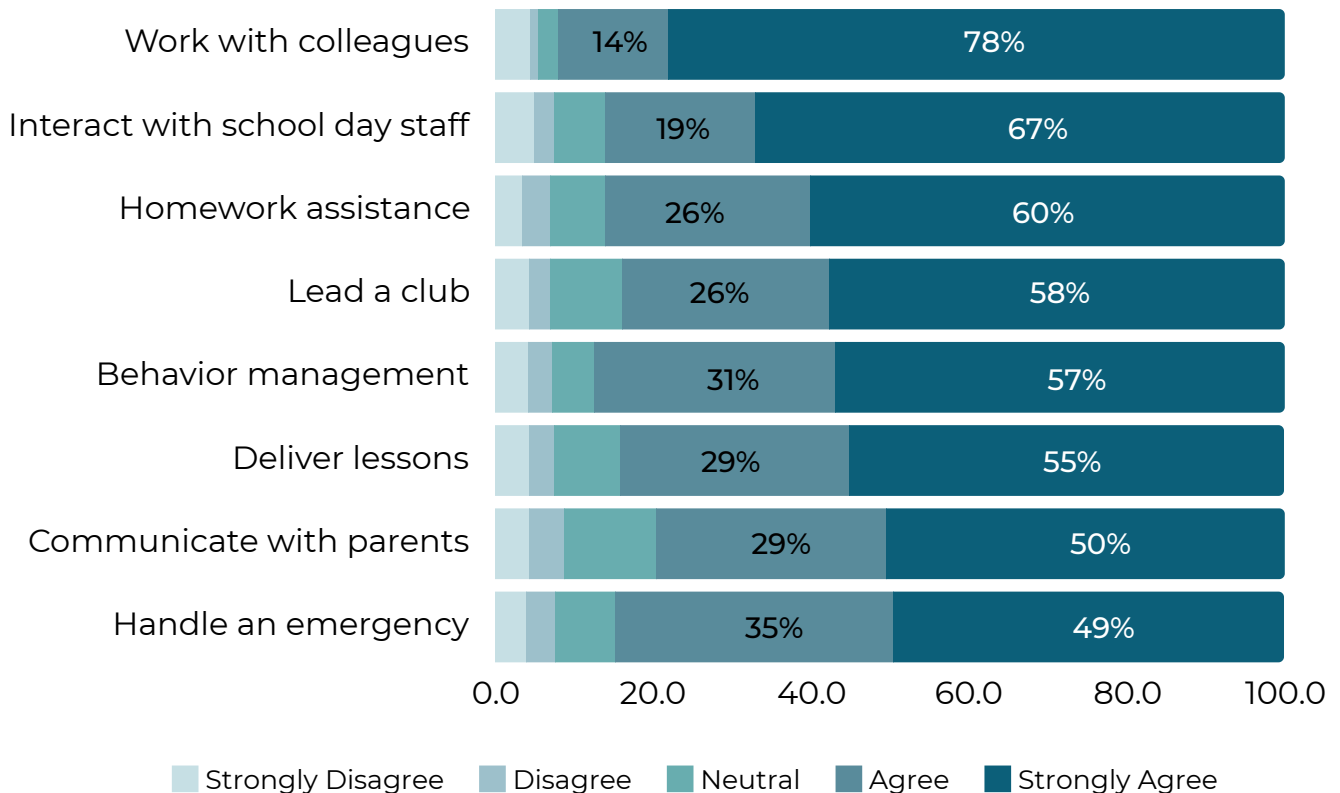
Respondents were asked to rate their levels of preparation for performing many of the job responsibilities involved in an afterschool program, from delivering lessons to managing student behavior to handling an emergency.

Overall, afterschool staff felt prepared to implement and deliver required programming. Staff felt prepared to

work with others (92%), lead a club (84%), interact with school staff (86%), help with homework (86%), and address student behavior (88%). While not a concern, staff were less comfortable communicating with parents. One area needing some improvement was handling emergencies, as not all staff felt prepared. Professional development and training around safety was one of the most frequently requested items for professional development, indicating a need for all staff to be trained.

AFTERSCHOOL STAFF REPORTED FEELING PREPARED AT HIGH LEVELS ACROSS ALL JOB RESPONSIBILITIES (N=550)

Fewer than 10% felt they were unprepared for any of the job responsibilities.



It is possible that all staff were trained at the beginning of the school year, but staff hired after the beginning of the school year did not receive the same level of safety training as part of the orientation process. Embedding safety training within the orientation process and throughout the year would benefit all sites and staff members.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

When asked about future professional development, for the first time since administering the afterschool staff survey, more respondents preferred a combination of in-person and online training (33%). Preferences for other modes of delivery were more than in-person training (31%) and completely online training (17%), while 19% had no preference. The most frequent obstacles to receiving and/or completing professional development continued to be schedules and time. Other obstacles mentioned included no trainers, being in a rural location, and COVID-19.

Afterschool staff and leadership provided input as to which topics would be of most interest and most useful for future training and/or professional development. Interestingly, when asked about

future training, the following topics emerged:

- ▶ BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT
- ▶ SOCIAL EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- ▶ MENTAL HEALTH
- ▶ SAFETY PROCEDURES
- ▶ TECHNOLOGY
- ▶ RELATIONSHIP BUILDING
- ▶ LEADERSHIP/PROFESSIONALISM
- ▶ NEW PROGRAMMING IDEAS



COLLABORATION & COMMUNITY PARTNER SURVEY OUTCOMES

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

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

Responding partners included community-based organizations (37%), faith-based organizations (3%), local school districts (11%), local businesses (4%), universities and colleges (7%), extension offices (6%), arts/creative arts organizations (8%), museums/zoos (2%), and public

libraries (5%) with another 13% falling into the “other” category and were mainly non-profit organizations.

96% OF COMMUNITY PARTNERS BELIEVE THE WORK OF THEIR ORGANIZATION IS ALIGNED WITH THE GOALS OF NEBRASKA 21ST CCLC SITES .

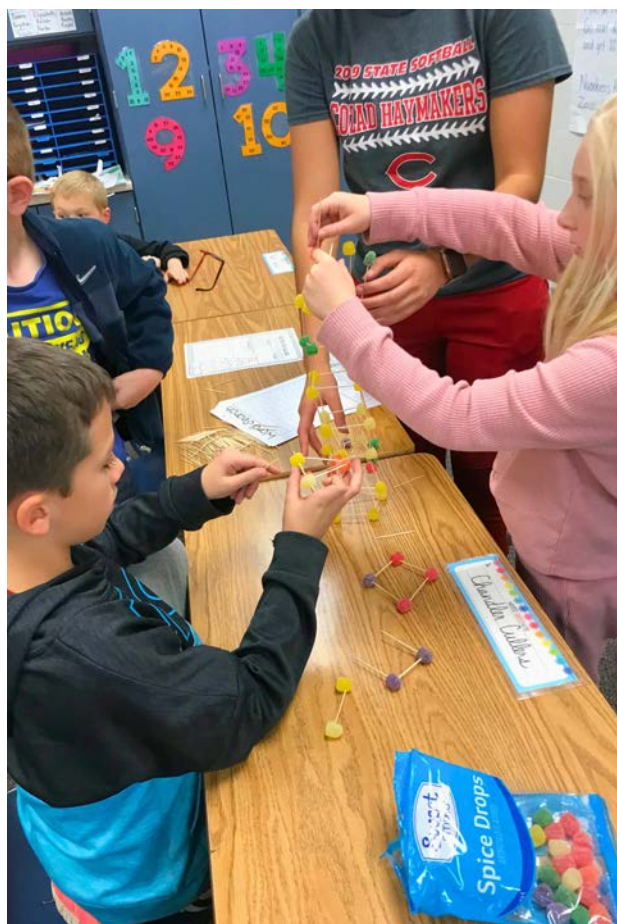
The number of contact hours varied with 56% of the partners reporting that they provided 21 or more hours in a year, 17% reporting they provided 11-20 hours, 13% provided 6-10 hours, 10% provided 1-5 hours and the remaining partners did not provide contact hours during the school year. Far fewer community partners provided contact hours during the summer (57% reporting summer hours) and the contact hours were fewer, with 53 partners reporting 1-5 hours, 39 reporting 6-10 hours, 35 reporting 11-20 hours, and 100 reporting 21 or more contact hours.

COMMUNICATION

When asked about communication, **93% responded that communication with the site was timely and responsive at least most of the time**, with 65% reporting that the communication was always timely and responsive. Eighty-four percent responded that they received adequate information on individual student needs and/or the needs of groups of students at least most of the time. Communication between sites and community partners and among partner organizations continues to be a strength statewide as 88% percent reported knowing some or all of the other partners involved in the afterschool program.

ALIGNMENT OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION AND 21ST CCLC SITE

As in previous years, nearly all (93%) of the partners believed their organization's work was aligned to the school's goals for their students. On a scale of 0-100, partners (n=393) rated the strength of their relationship with the afterschool program, with the mean score being in the mid-high to high range (M=88.00, sd=16). A majority of the partners (65%) indicated they have had a lot or a great deal of opportunity to develop relationships



with students/families, a positive sign given the pandemic and the limited amount of time partners were allowed in sites.

Community partners collaborate with 21st CCLC sites for several reasons. Most of the partners see it as a benefit to students (94%), a way to provide experiences for students (77%), and that the partner has shared goals with the 21st CCLC site (76%). Sixty-six percent reported the partnership meets a need/goal for their organization and seventy-two percent of the partners responded that they “definitely”

understood the vision, mission, and goals of the 21st CCLC program, and 96% said they have a clear understanding of and have fulfilled their agreement with the 21st CCLC afterschool program.

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

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

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



SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

- 1 Programs are of high quality, specifically in the area of building relationships. The results of external observations and the self-assessments revealed relationships between staff and students to be respectful and engaging.
- 2 Programs offered a wide-variety of programming designed to engage students across grade levels.
- 3 Student leadership and voice continues to be an intentional focus for some programs.
- 4 Students attending 21st CCLC programs had high levels of school day attendance particularly in the rural areas.
- 5 Students with historically more obstacles to access and success are served by programs with the FRL rate higher than the state average.
- 6 Parents find the programs valuable not only for their children's academic success but as a safe place for them to be afterschool.
- 7 Students in the programs feel respected, a sense of belonging, and most have friendships within the program.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE PLANS

- 1 Continue building program capacity to use data to inform practices and programming.
- 2 Consider providing training for staff on programming using the observation data for areas of strength and improvement.
- 3 Engage students, families, and community members to ensure the voices of different lived experiences are captured and represented.
- 4 Strengthen the capacity of afterschool staff to provide quality programming and implement new, engaging programming that resonates with students.

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APPENDIX

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

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

The online version of the Nebraska 21st CCLC 2021-2022 Annual Report is

posted at <https://www.education.ne.gov/21stcclc/program-evaluation/> and includes the following survey instruments referenced in this report:

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





For more information, please visit: www.education.ne.gov/21stCCLC

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

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

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

Quality expanded learning principles include the following:

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

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

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



STUDENT SUCCESS AND ACCESS



Positive Partnerships, Relationships and Student Success

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

21st CCLC program indicators:

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



Transitions

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

21st CCLC program indicators:

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



Educational Opportunities and Access

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

21st CCLC program indicators:

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

TEACHING AND LEARNING



College and Career Ready

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

21st CCLC program indicators:

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



Assessment

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

21st CCLC program indicators:

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



Educator Effectiveness

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

21st CCLC program indicators:

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



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

NAQCIS SELF-ASSESSMENT SELF-RATINGS 2019-2022

Administration					
	Emerging	Emerging +	Maturing	Maturing +	Excelling
2019-2020	3%	2%	6%	9%	80%
2020-2021	0%	0%	5%	21%	74%
2021-2022	0%	0%	13%	20%	68%
Diverse, prepared staff					
2019-2020	3%	8%	18%	24%	47%
2020-2021	0%	1%	16%	43%	40%
2021-2022	1%	2%	19%	43%	36%
Relationships & Interactions					
2019-2020	0%	4%	16%	37%	43%
2020-2021	0%	1%	13%	44%	43%
2021-2022	0%	2%	11%	47%	40%
Professional Development					
2019-2020	6%	10%	18%	23%	42%
2020-2021	2%	9%	21%	37%	30%
2021-2022	1%	7%	30%	32%	30%
Intentional Programming Aligned with the School Day					
2019-2020	3%	7%	19%	26%	45%
2020-2021	1%	3%	20%	45%	32%
2021-2022	0%	3%	21%	49%	27%

NAQCIS SELF-ASSESSMENT SELF-RATINGS 2019-2022

Behavior Management

	Emerging	Emerging +	Maturing	Maturing +	Excelling
2019-2020	10%	9%	21%	27%	34%
2020-2021	2%	1%	23%	49%	25%
2021-2022	1%	3%	28%	48%	19%

Family Engagement

2019-2020	18%	11%	17%	19%	36%
2020-2021	4%	17%	30%	34%	15%
2021-2022	2%	16%	35%	32%	15%

Community School Partnerships

2019-2020	10%	8%	16%	20%	47%
2020-2021	2%	6%	23%	36%	33%
2021-2022	1%	9%	20%	42%	27%

Ongoing Assessment and Improvement

2019-2020	9%	7%	15%	16%	54%
2020-2021	3%	3%	21%	37%	36%
2021-2022	3%	3%	22%	31%	40%

Safety, Health & Wellness

2019-2020	2%	3%	13%	19%	63%
2020-2021	1%	2%	9%	26%	62%
2021-2022	0%	3%	11%	33%	53%

