Ohio's 21st Century Community Learning Centers
2021-22 Annual Report

Prepared for:
Ohio Department of Education
Office for Improvement and Innovation

UC EVALUATION SERVICES CENTER
Data Inspiring Change

Executive Summary

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) provide academic enrichment and positive youth development opportunities through expanded and out-of-school time supports for students in Ohio. In the 2021-22 school year, 290 21st CCLC programs provided a wide range of opportunities in the summer and after school focused on supplementing school content, supporting overall youth development, and supporting family engagement in children's education.

Key Outcomes for 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Outcomes for the 21st CCLCs for the 2021-22 School Year include:

Program Participation
63% Programs met goal for at least 60% of students attending 30 or more days

Literacy Achievement
32% Students who were "basic" or "limited proficiency" improved to "proficient" or above in Reading

Math Achievement
28% Students who were "basic" or "limited proficiency" improved to "proficient" or above in Math

School Attendance
62% Students participating in 21st CCLC programs improved their school attendance

Family Engagement
69% Programs reported providing three (or more) evidence-based family engagement opportunities

Career Readiness
33% Programs reported student increases in career readiness

The Future of 21st Century Community Learning Centers

In addition to the outcomes highlighted above, this report summarizes the strategic recommendations from 21st CCLC grantees to address current challenges and improve their programs. Across all programs in Ohio, grantees shared numerous ways to improve the following program areas: student recruitment and participation, family engagement, collaborations with schools and community partners, data collection methods, and utilization. Example recommendations from 21st CCLC grantees include:

Implementation
Prioritize the relationships with community partners to a) provide students with a wide variety of opportunities to explore new interests and learn from diverse individuals and b) assist in the sustainability of programming after grant funding ends.

Data collection
Develop systematic and consistent methods for collecting data and ensuring that multiple individuals have access to data systems to reduce the impact of staff turnover.

The key findings and recommendations aim to support 21st CCLC grantees as they implement their programs and local evaluations, while also serving as guidance for the Ohio Department of Education and other stakeholders to support programs in providing important spaces and opportunities for Ohio's students, families, and communities.

Introduction

The Ohio Department of Education Office for Improvement and Innovation administers the federally funded Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grant program to support out-of-school and expanded learning time opportunities for students in Ohio.

According to the US Department of Education[1] the goal of the 21st CCLC grant program is to:

> ❝ Support the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. The program helps students meet state and local academic standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math; offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs; and offers literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children."
>
> - US Department of Education

The purposes of the 21st CCLC program are to:
- Provide opportunities for academic enrichment to assist students in meeting the state academic standards;

- Offer students positive youth development through positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS), social-emotional learning practices, prevention education programs, mental health programming, civic engagement, nutritional and physical health; and

- Offer adult family members of program participants opportunities for educational development and engagement in their children's education.

Across the state of Ohio, local education agencies (LEA) or community-based organizations may apply for 21st CCLC funds through a competitive bidding process. Eligible organizations include schools, districts, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, institutions of higher education, city or county government agencies, for-profit corporations, and other public or private entities.

> ❝ My vision is that Ohio's 21st Century program is the best in the country and stands as an exemplar for others to follow. I understand the value of afterschool and summer learning.
>
> - Shannon Teague, Assistant Director
> Office for Improvement and Innovation

Report Purpose & Overview

The purpose of the statewide evaluation is to support the Department's goal to provide a nationally-recognized, high-quality 21st CCLC program through offering actionable recommendations that enable program and system improvements to ultimately result in positive outcomes for students and families.

For the 21st CCLC statewide evaluation report, the University of Cincinnati Evaluation Services Center (UCESC) analyzed the available quantitative and qualitative data reported by grantees from their 2021-22 End-of-Year reports. Data are reported in aggregate and are limited to reports from grantees in their 1st-4th year of programming. Relevant quotes from comments provided in grantee reports are included.

This report aims to:
1. Describe the types of programming 21st CCLC grantees provided and the extent to which students participated in programming;
2. Identify the resources and materials currently used to guide 21st CCLC program implementation;
3. Share outcomes related to Ohio's Performance Measures[2] and federal reporting indicators[3];
4. Summarize local evaluation data collection and analysis efforts, including barriers and recommendations; and,
5. Identify opportunities and recommendations to help guide quality improvement for future program implementation.

> "This program is **a vital support** to the infrastructure of the community in which it exists."
>
> - 21st CCLC Grantee

Summary of Data Sources, Methodology, & Limitations

Data from the statewide report are derived from the 2021-22 End-of-Year reports submitted directly to UCESC by 21st CCLC grantees through an online survey system. This was the first year that grantees were asked to report data through this system, and 100% of 1st-4th year programs provided data. Quantitative data were analyzed with descriptive statistics, using SPSS Statistics for Windows v.28. Qualitative data—provided through open-ended comments—were coded, analyzed, and summarized for key themes, using MAXQDA Analytics Pro v.2022.

The primary limitation with these data is that 5th year grantees (closeout grants) were not asked to submit their data through this system, as most did not have personnel available to report data after programming had concluded. Therefore, these data are only representative of grant programs in their 1st-4th years of programming in the 2021-22 school year.

In addition, some programs reported a lack of data availability for some outcomes, by reporting N/A or "no available data." Other limitations stem from suspected data entry errors within the online survey system (i.e., reporting more students improving in literacy than the total number of students served). Finally, programs reported different measurement sources for outcome data, making direct comparisons between programs challenging. These data limitations should be kept in mind when interpreting the findings in this report.
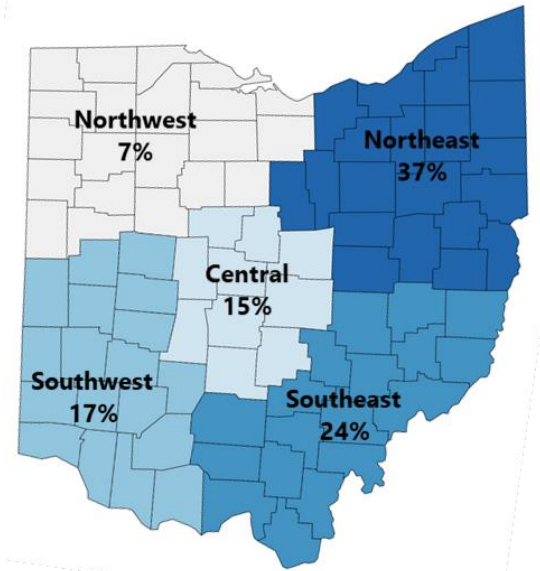
How did Ohio's 21st CCLC programming serve students in 2021-22?

In the 2021-22 school year, a total of **$44,059,069 in federal funds** were provided to **78 grantee organizations**, to provide programming across **290 21st CCLC programs**.

While 21st CCLC serves students across Ohio, the largest proportion of programs were operated in the Northeast (37%) and Southeast (24%) regions. All grantees provided out-of-school time program options—including afterschool and summer programming—with 59% serving elementary students, and 42% serving middle and high school students. (For this grant year, no programs chose to provide Program Option 1, to provide expanded learning time during the school day.)

59%   **21st CCLC Grantees provided Program Option 2: Out-of-School time** (Elementary Students)

42%   **21st CCLC Grantees provided Program Option 3: Out-of-School time** (Middle & High School Students)

Due to the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, 21st CCLC sites could provide in-person, virtual, or hybrid programming for students. In the 2021-22 School Year, most sites operated as fully onsite programming (81%), while some continued to offer hybrid (19%) and fully virtual (1%) options. 21st CCLC complements Future Forward Ohio, the Department's strategic priorities to help students recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on students who experienced the greatest disruptions to learning.

The largest proportion of 21st CCLC grantees serve the Northeast and Southeast regions of Ohio.

Northwest 7%
Northeast 37%
Central 15%
Southwest 17%
Southeast 24%

81%   **21st CCLC Grantees provided fully onsite programming**

19%   **21st CCLC Grantees provided hybrid programming**

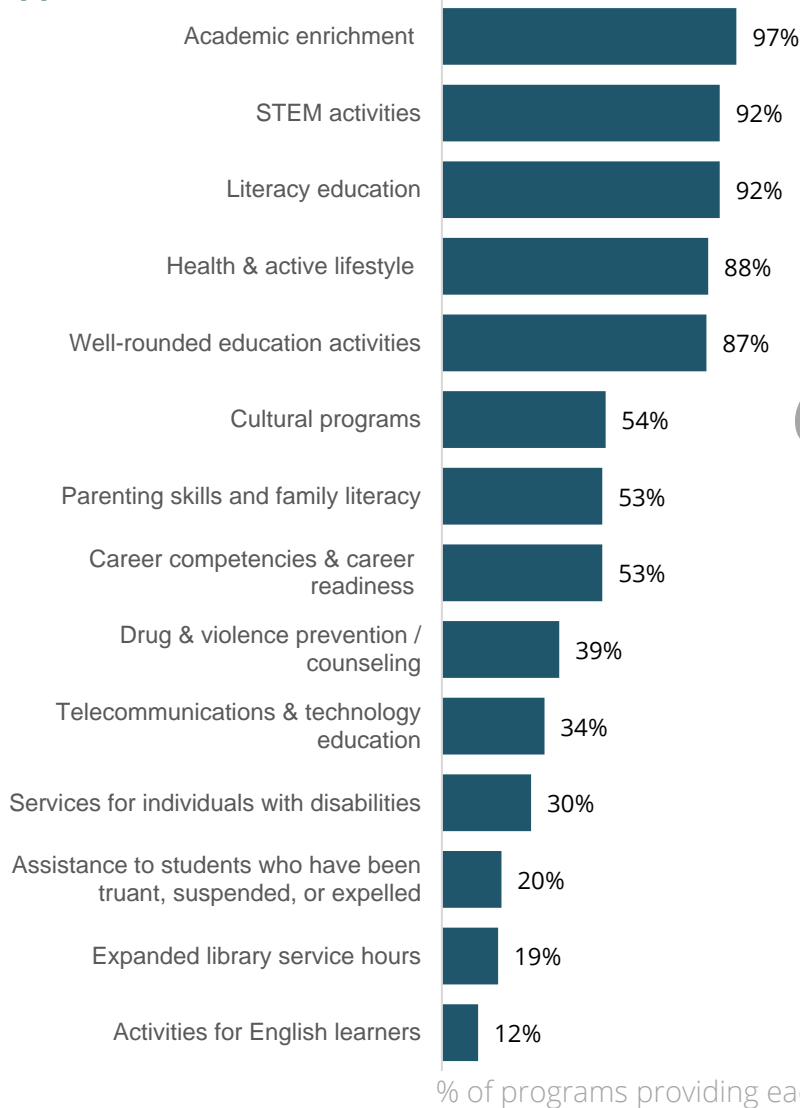**1%**   **21st CCLC Grantees provided fully virtual programming**

Enrichment opportunities

Ohio 21st CCLC programs focused on providing opportunities for learning and enrichment to supplement school day curricula and support overall youth development. Almost all grantees reported providing multiple types of opportunities. These examples represent a small sample of the types of programming provided, including both academic instructional activities and other youth development activities.

Programs provided numerous enrichment opportunities such as:

- Homework help and tutoring
- Coding and programming instruction
- Partnerships with STEAM camps to create product concepts for creating a video game
- Coaching on time management, study skills, and test taking strategies
- ACT/SAT test preparation
- Family literacy and numeracy nights and resource fairs
- Family counseling on college application processes and financial aid applications
- Student advising sessions on exploring the best fit for colleges and careers
- Partnerships with community mental health agencies to provide counseling and resources on drug abuse
- Individualized intervention for students with disabilities

The most commonly provided enrichment opportunities focused on academics and education.

Activity	%
Academic enrichment	97%
STEM activities	92%
Literacy education	92%
Health & active lifestyle	88%
Well-rounded education activities	87%
Cultural programs	54%
Parenting skills and family literacy	53%
Career competencies & career readiness	53%
Drug & violence prevention / counseling	39%
Telecommunications & technology education	34%
Services for individuals with disabilities	30%
Assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled	20%
Expanded library service hours	19%
Activities for English learners	12%

% of programs providing each activity

" The 21st CCLC program met a great need and was essential in the community. When program participants were asked what alternate activities or program existed for them in the community, except for one, none of the kids could think of any other program that would gainfully occupy their after school time, with most indicating they would be at home, most likely alone.

- 21st CCLC Grantee

Program Participation

In the 2021-22 school year, 21st CCLC programs served students in all grade levels, from preschool to grade 12. Students in grades 1-5 were most commonly served.

Across all programs, grantees reported that 64% of students who participated in their programs had regular attendance, suggesting that **the majority of students were receiving the maximum benefits of the program.**

Additionally, 63% of programs met Ohio's goal[2] of having at least 60% of students attend regularly. Some programs reported that despite their best efforts, recruitment and retention continued to be a challenge, in part due to lingering issues from the pandemic and schedule conflicts with sports and other activities.
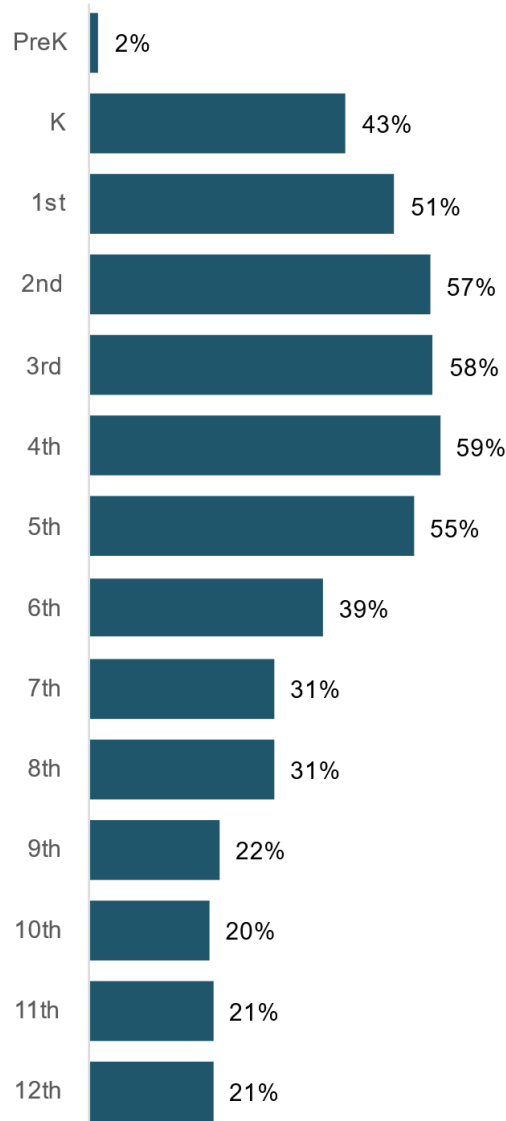
63% **21st CCLC programs met Ohio's regular participation goal** (60% regular attendees)

> "Program attendance was low due to students participating in competing activities. Afterschool sports, jobs, and caring for younger siblings are all happening often during program time. We need to make sure we are letting every student know about the benefits offered through the program as well as reach students who are available after school with no responsibilities."
>
> - 21st CCLC Grantee

While programs served all PreK-12 grades, **grades 1-5 were most commonly served in 21st CCLC programs.**

Grade	%
PreK	2%
K	43%
1st	51%
2nd	57%
3rd	58%
4th	59%
5th	55%
6th	39%
7th	31%
8th	31%
9th	22%
10th	20%
11th	21%
12th	21%

% of programs serving each grade

Grantee recommendations to improve program recruitment and participation
- Promote **visibility throughout the school day** such as at the beginning of class periods or during lunch to show students what the program offers.
- Work with site coordinators to start **recruiting earlier in the year** to identify students with fewer competing after-school activities
- Collaborate with **community partners** to communicate the benefits of the program to a wider audience of potential students
- Present at **staff meetings** to encourage teachers to invite students to participate
- Highlight the program's successes by **sharing data** and other results with teachers, administrators, families, and students
- **Share the program schedule in advance** with students to aid with scheduling conflicts
- Provide **incentives** to students for good attendance

What are the key outcomes for 2021-22?

Ohio 21st CCLC programs are designed specifically to provide academic enrichment and youth development to support participants' academic success. To measure this success, Ohio 21st CCLC programs measure outcomes for participants to meet state[2] and federal[3] outcome reporting requirements.

These outcome measures are intended to inform the extent that programs met the 21st CCLC goals of:
1. Providing high quality enrichment opportunities to positively effect student outcomes; and
2. Demonstrating educational and social benefits for participants.

Of note, the outcome data shared in this report were collected through Ohio's statewide evaluation reporting system and may not match federal Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) outcome reporting[3].

School Attendance

21st CCLC programs encourage school day attendance because students must be present at school in order to participate in afterschool enrichment activities. Therefore, programs specifically aim to recruit students with high absence rates. Federal guidance requires 21st CCLC programs to report on school day attendance using the indicator: "Percentage of students in grades 1-12 participating in 21st CCLC during the school year who had a school day attendance rate at/or below 90% in the prior school year and demonstrated an improved attendance rate in the current school year."[2] 21st CCLC programs collected these data from schools and reported, on average, that 62% of students improved in school attendance.

62%
Students attending 21st CCLC programs **improved in school attendance**
(students who had a 90% attendance rate or below the previous year)

" "Attendance has suffered due to **parents and students being reluctant to extend the school day** since COVID began."

- 21st CCLC Grantee

📖 Literacy Achievement

Literacy improvement is one of the primary goals for 21st CCLC programs. Almost all programs reported providing academic enrichment (97%) and literacy education (92%) opportunities for students. Those that provide literacy activities shared some of the evidence-based literacy programs[4] they were implementing. Examples of literacy programs provided by 21st CCLC programs included: LETRS, Passport to Literacy, MobyMax, and Simple Solutions.

Programs measured student literacy achievement using a variety of data sources – the top sources included Ohio's State Tests, MAP, STAR Reading, and i-Ready. From these statewide assessments, across all programs providing student literacy outcomes, 32% of students moved from "basic" or "limited proficiency" to "proficient" or above.

32%

Students attending 21st CCLC programs **improved their Reading scores** on Ohio statewide assessments (moving from "basic" or "limited proficiency" to "proficient" or above)

Ohio's State Tests were most commonly used to document student literacy achievement.

Assessment	%
Ohio's State Test	56%
MAP	41%
STAR Reading	27%
i-Ready	17%

% of programs utilizing each assessment
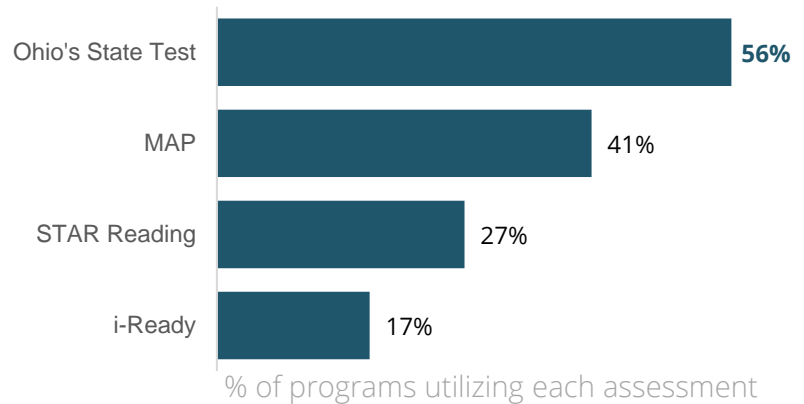
➗ Mathematics Achievement

21st CCLC programs also provide math enrichment opportunities for students. Those that provided math activities shared some of the evidence-based math programs[4] they were implementing. Examples of mathematics programs provided by 21st CCLC programs included: focusMath, PBL Math, Mango Math, and IXL.

Programs measured student math achievement using a variety of data sources – the top sources included Ohio's State Tests, MAP, STAR Math, i-Ready, and other district specific assessments. From these statewide assessments, across all programs providing student math outcomes, 28% of students moved from "basic" or "limited proficiency" to "proficient" or above.

28%

Students attending 21st CCLC programs **improved their Math scores** on Ohio statewide assessments (moving from "basic" or "limited proficiency" to "proficient" or above)

Ohio's State Tests were most commonly used to document student math achievement.

Assessment	%
Ohio's State Test	51%
MAP	38%
STAR Math	25%
i-Ready	15%
District specific assessment	9%

% of programs utilizing each assessment
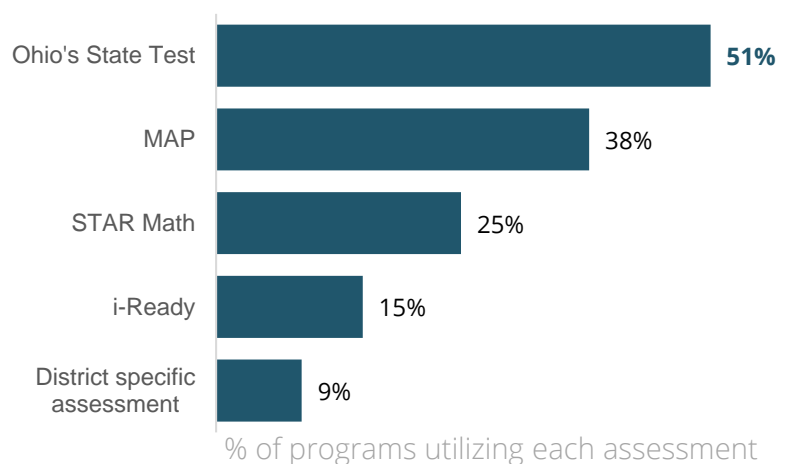
Family Engagement

Another objective for Ohio's 21st CCLC programs is to deliver "evidence-based educational development opportunities that promote family involvement and family literacy, and that result in family members engaging in their children's learning, either at home, at programs sponsored by the center, or elsewhere in ongoing and meaningful ways".[2] Programs were asked to report the number of family engagement opportunities they provided throughout the school year, with the goal of providing at least three evidence-based opportunities to families. 70% of programs reported meeting this goal. While collecting data on the number of opportunities provided to families is an important measurement, programs noted that they wanted to identify better ways to measure the quality and impact of these opportunities.

70%
21st CCLC programs **met Ohio's family engagement goal** (providing three or more evidence-based developmental opportunities)

1011
Family engagement opportunities were provided by 21st CCLC programs (by 1st-4th year programs that provided data)

While most programs reported meeting the goal of at least offering evidence-based opportunities to families, they noted an ongoing struggle with engaging families in meaningful program participation. This was reflected in low response rates to family surveys and overall low attendance at family events. Programs recognized family engagement as an essential goal of 21st CCLC programming; however, the pandemic made it difficult for families to engage in-person and programs noted continuous work on rebuilding relationships with families and engaging in more innovative ways.

> **Grantee recommendations to improve family engagement**
> - Identify which times work best for family engagement opportunities and **provide advance notice** to help families schedule around work and childcare; provide opportunities earlier in the school year to encourage more involvement through the rest of the year
> - **Collect consistent attendance and satisfaction data** at family events as another method to better understand family engagement; consider a survey or focus group for families at the beginning of the year to obtain ideas for preferred activities and times
> - Provide **informal networking opportunities** for families so they can attend events and work on remote activities together
> - **Provide incentives** such as products or food to promote engagement
> - Offer opportunities for **families to come on-site** and volunteer with students
> - **Connect with other programs** facing similar challenges with engaging families to share resources and ideas

" "Look to add additional evidence-based family events where families learn alongside their student or are provided training in an area of interest to them. For example, a series of events could focus on improving student social-emotional well-being, engaging parents in a deeper discussion about social-emotional competencies and skill building while also hosting a speaker to talk about social media awareness."

- 21st CCLC Grantee

⚙ Career Competencies & College Readiness

21st CCLC programs serving middle and high school students are committed to "preparing students for college and careers utilizing evidence-based strategies that connect academic content with careers, promote career technical routes, and provide opportunities for students to develop professional capabilities."[2]

Those that provide college and career opportunities shared some of the programs or activities they were implementing. Examples of college and career programs provided by 21st CCLC programs included:
- College exposure activities: college tours, speakers from colleges, college and career fairs
- College preparatory activities: assistance with college applications, ACT test prep, FAFSA workshops, guidance in interview skills, resume assistance
- Workplace tours
- Development of career skills such as entrepreneurship, creative expression, community service
- Other positive youth development and social emotional activities

Programs were also asked to report how they measured student growth and the extent to which students demonstrated growth in career competencies and college readiness. The majority of programs providing these activities reported they had no formal way to measure student growth in career competencies and college readiness. Some programs identified specific measures (e.g., Ohio Means Jobs Career Assessment, Naviance, DESSA, Achieve 3000), and others described informal measures such as:
- Staff observations of students
- Student reflections on their future careers through journaling or other methods
- Logs of all the activities provided
- Surveys with staff, families, and students often administered at the end of the year to assess preparedness for colleges/careers after school
- Student college and career research projects and presentations focusing on future plans

Of the programs that provided career competencies and college readiness supports, 33% reported that students demonstrated growth. This outcome should be interpreted with caution as there was such variance in measures and reported data. Future evaluations will focus on developing more standardized indicators to measure student growth in these areas.

33%
21st CCLC programs reported **student growth in career competencies and college readiness** (of those that provide these supports)
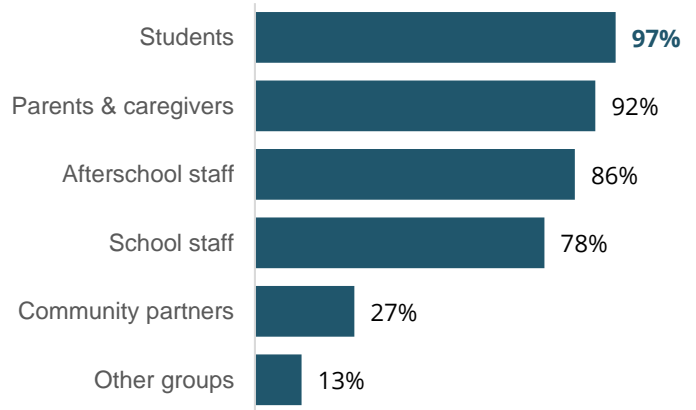
How are 21st CCLCs using evaluation?

All Ohio 21st CCLC programs are required to partner with a local evaluator to "continually examine outcomes and work collaboratively with stakeholders to provide the best opportunities possible for students".[5] Local evaluations help 21st CCLC staff track implementation, measure progress, and recommend strategies for improvement. Local evaluators use a variety of evaluation activities to help programs achieve these goals.

21st CCLC programs recognize that in addition to collecting outcome data (e.g., student assessments), the success of a program should be measured through hearing the voices of stakeholders. Programs use surveys, focus groups, interviews, and other methods to gather input from numerous stakeholders. 97% of programs collect student input and 92% of programs collect feedback from parents, guardians, or caregivers (nearly all through surveys). 86% of programs collect feedback from afterschool staff, though the primary data collection method for this group is through interviews.

Students were the most commonly included stakeholder group in 21st CCLC evaluation activities.

Group	%
Students	**97%**
Parents & caregivers	92%
Afterschool staff	86%
School staff	78%
Community partners	27%
Other groups	13%

% of programs collecting data from each group

Quality Improvement

Quality assessments enable grantees to review, reflect on, and improve their programs. In 2021-22, 59% of grantees used some type of quality assessment tool.

59%
21st CCLC programs reported **measuring program quality**

The majority of programs self-assess their program's quality (64%), and about half (57%) have an external quality assessor. The most commonly used quality assessment tools are: Quality Assessment Tool (QSAT), Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA), AIR Practitioner's Guide, local evaluator developed tool, and Ohio Quality Assessment Rubric (O-QAR). Future statewide efforts will aim to systematically support programs with quality improvement.

What could the future of 21ˢᵗ CCLC programs look like?

21ˢᵗ CCLC grantees were asked to reflect on the challenges they faced when implementing their programs during the 2021-22 school year. Three themes emerged around the context of implementing 21ˢᵗ CCLC programs:

1. Improve communication and collaboration with schools
2. Build and maintain community partnerships
3. Continue to respond to the impact of COVID-19

The next sections describe implementation challenges and key recommendations developed by 21ˢᵗ CCLC grantees.

① Improve communication and collaboration with schools

Programs reported difficulty obtaining complete student data from schools such as attendance rates, disciplinary records, and test scores. This was particularly challenging for programs that serve students from multiple districts. Programs also reported that a lack of communication between schools and the afterschool programs resulted in misalignment of efforts to target student needs. They identified ways to continue building these relationships in order to better serve students.

> "21ˢᵗ CCLC staff should consult students' classroom teachers to inform targeted academic support and enrichment that enhances student's academic achievement. Enhance links with school-day staff by asking them for input with fine tuning after school academic activities and for their participation in joint planning meetings with the afterschool planning team."
>
> - 21ˢᵗ CCLC Grantee

Grantee recommendations to improve school collaborations

- **Consult with classroom teachers** when analyzing assessment data to provide a more comprehensive understanding of students' targeted needs. This could be achieved through convening regular workgroups with afterschool staff and classroom teachers.
- Prioritize establishing positive and collaborative working **relationships with building administrators** to assist in collection of required data. This could be achieved through structured planning meetings with partnering districts occurring prior to the school year.
- Ensure that 21ˢᵗ CCLC programs have access to the necessary **curriculum or technology that is utilized during the school day** to promote continuity in academic interventions.

2 Build and maintain community partnerships

Programs recognized the importance of building relationships with community partners to improve the quality of programs and to plan for sustainability. Programs described numerous relationships with local organizations such as public libraries, universities, local businesses, and other non-profit institutions. They noted that as COVID-19 guidelines evolve, they are trying to re-establish relationships for in-person activities with community partners.

> **Grantee recommendations to improve community partnerships**
> - Partner with local organizations to **offset staffing costs** (i.e., university students providing tutoring to receive volunteer credits).
> - Convene **community partner groups** to identify creative opportunities to support the academic and career readiness goals of the programs.

> Volunteers and community partners are crucial to the sustainability of the program, and the stakeholder group may want to shift some of its focus to developing these relationships. Ensuring students are exposed to visitors or speakers who represent universities, nonprofits, businesses, or other entities and can serve as an information source for college and career planning and help to sustain the program.
> - 21st CCLC Grantee

> "Examine current partnerships to determine which can be developed further and identify partners that should be recruited. Building a broad base of community relationships can provide students with opportunities to explore new interests, identify role models, and become immersed in their community. These partnerships can also help increase the sustainability of after school programs over time."
> - 21st CCLC Grantee

3 Continue to respond to the impact of COVID-19

Programs continued to operate following health and safety guidance, but this sometimes made in-person programming difficult, resulting in lower overall attendance and participation in data collection efforts (i.e., students weren't available to be assessed). Missing or incomplete data was the most common data barrier that programs reported, resulting in difficulties trying to compare student test results with previous years. Programs also reported staffing challenges—both overall hiring and staff absences due to illness—as a continuing result of the pandemic.

> "Although we were in person there were many challenges as COVID was still running it course especially through the winter months."
> - 21st CCLC Grantee

How can 21ˢᵗ CCLCs improve how they show their impact?

21ˢᵗ CCLC grantees were asked to reflect on the challenges they faced when collecting and analyzing data to document the impact of their program. Three themes emerged around the importance for improving systems for data use:

1. Obtain better stakeholder feedback through improved survey methods
2. Implement improved and consistent data collection methods
3. Utilize data effectively to make actionable decisions

The next sections describe data challenges and key recommendations developed by 21ˢᵗ CCLC grantees.

① Obtain better stakeholder feedback through improved survey methods

Programs reported that despite various efforts, the number of responses on student, staff, and parent surveys was often below what would be needed for useful analyses. This data limitation made it challenging to accurately assess satisfaction with program implementation.

> "The importance of returning surveys should be emphasized for all groups (parents, staff, school principal, teachers and staff) or perhaps incentivized. The role of providing feedback in grant funded programs should be clearly explained as both an obligation of funding and to improve programming. This could be done at an in-person program orientation. Higher return rates are crucial to legitimate evaluation."
>
> - 21ˢᵗ CCLC Grantee

Grantee recommendations to obtain better stakeholder feedback

- Facilitate an end-of-year family event and collect student and parent satisfaction surveys. **Provide incentives** for both attendance and survey completion.
- Provide clear communication to all respondents about the importance of survey completion as a **necessary part of grant funding** and critical aspect for program improvement.
- **Identify access barriers** (i.e., modes of administration, technology, language) and develop individualized plans to address these barriers.
- To obtain more baseline data, incorporate pre-surveys and assessments as part of the **registration processes** for students

2 Implement improved and consistent data collection methods

Programs reported that they faced several issues with collecting data, including: a need for better training on how to administer or implement specific measurement tools; inconsistent data collection methodologies; challenges with staff turnover resulting in issues with obtaining necessary data; difficulties with online surveys for families with limited internet access; and other technological issues with online student assessments that resulted in missing or incomplete student assessment data.

> "Getting all data collected via one system will correct data collection issues."
>
> - 21st CCLC Grantee

Grantee recommendations to improve data collection methods
- Involve staff in the decision-making process when selecting measures to **encourage buy-in and fidelity** to a data collection plan.
- Create **simple logbooks** (i.e., Excel files, check-lists) for staff to more easily track and record necessary data.
- Develop **accessible data-bases** and other systems to promote consistent data collection and data entry to reduce errors and enable meaningful analysis.
- Communicate explicit data needs prior to the beginning of the year and **ensure that multiple individuals have access** to data sources.
- Plan regular **data meetings** between key personnel (e.g., program coordinators and local evaluators) to review data collection expectations and updates.
- Consider **alternative data collection methods** to surveys to reduce technological barriers. For example, consider forming student or family advisory groups to obtain regular feedback from students and provide incentives for participation.

> "What data is available often shows remarkable growth, but more standardized data is needed for all students so that the remarkable contributions of the program can be firmly documented.
>
> - 21st CCLC Grantee

③ Utilize data effectively to make actionable decisions

Programs reported that in addition to barriers with data collection, they could benefit from improved processes for analyzing, reviewing, and making actionable decisions. Although programs worked closely with their local evaluators to assist in data analysis, some programs recognized a need to involve other partners to make meaningful implementation changes. Programs shared numerous ways that they review existing data to improve their programming to better meet the needs of their students.

> "For students who made significant improvement from Fall to Winter, it is worth reviewing and identifying what worked for them and adopting the strategy in their intervention to assist them in meeting their specific needs."
>
> - 21st CCLC Grantee

Grantee recommendations to analyze and utilize data more effectively
- Closely examine **data sources** and goals to ensure that they accurately capture the data needed for making decisions (e.g., consider using norms developed locally by the school district which may be more aligned with participating student data)
- Utilize district level assessment monitoring reports (e.g., STAR, etc.) to assist program staff in developing **differentiated academic intervention** strategies for each individual student
- Consider **collecting academic data at the program level** instead of relying solely on data from district assessments
- Increase the amount of time spent on **activities proportional to student need** (e.g., if student scores are declining in mathematics but increasing in reading, consider shifting the focus to math enrichment activities)
- Convene **leadership groups** with key stakeholders to review evaluation results regularly to continuously focus on improvement based on data
- Emphasize the importance of **quality assessment** and utilize appropriate tools to measure the quality of programming

Conclusions & Next Steps

In the 2021-22 school year, Ohio's 21st CCLC programs provided academic and enrichment opportunities within the enduring effects of COVID-19 pandemic. Health and safety restrictions affected implementation, student participation, and data collection efforts. However, programs demonstrated the ability to adapt and support students and families through a variety of academic and youth development activities.

As part of the statewide evaluation and in partnership with the Department, programs were asked to submit end-of-year data through a new reporting survey system. Grantees provided data in a timely and efficient way, enabling the analysis necessary for the results shared in this report. Going forward, the statewide evaluation will continue to collect data from 21st CCLC programs through similar reporting processes, with the addition of goal setting to allow for further analysis on the extent to which programs meet individual program goals along with Ohio's performance measure objectives.

Data collected for this report revealed some areas where the statewide evaluation could be strengthened. Specifically, there is a need for consistent measures across the state focusing on family engagement and career and college readiness to enable meaningful data analysis on the impact of activities in these areas. Furthermore, there is a need for a consistent way to assess program quality, which is essential for achieving positive outcomes for students and their families. Many programs use a variety of instruments to measure continuous quality improvement, however, establishing a greater focus on this area from the Department will better demonstrate the importance of implementing high quality, evidence-based activities.

> " Ohio's 21st Century programs play such an important role in providing academic supports and enrichment opportunities outside of the classroom to students across the state. I am so proud of the great work that grantees have done this year!
>
> -   Shannon Teague, Assistant Director
> Office for Improvement and Innovation

External Sources

[1] [Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers](#) | US Department of Education
[2] [Ohio's 21st CCLC Performance Measures](#) I Ohio Department of Education
[3] [Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Measure Indicators](#) I US Department of Education
[4] [Ohio's Evidence-Based Clearinghouse](#) | Ohio Department of Education
[5] [Ohio's 21st CCLC Local Evaluation Manual](#) | Ohio Department of Education

Suggested citation

About the authors

The University of Cincinnati Evaluation Services Center (UCESC) currently serves as the statewide evaluator for Ohio's 21st Century Community Learning Center program and has served as an independent evaluator for hundreds of projects in Ohio and nationally since its founding in 1996. The UCESC team of specialists has expertise in statistics, measurement, assessment, and qualitative research methods within the fields of education and public health.

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