21st CCLC Community Call: Sustainability

October 22, 2025

AGENDA

01 WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Norms, level setting, objectives, who’s in the room

02 ISBE & SUSTAINABILITY

Definition, goals, and admin decisions

03 SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

Program assessments, partnerships, and funding

04 Q&A

Open floor for questions to ISBE and ACT Now

Use Q&A Function, not the chat.

MEETING NORMS

ENGAGE

Actively engage with us and one another.
Engage with the meeting materials when appropriate

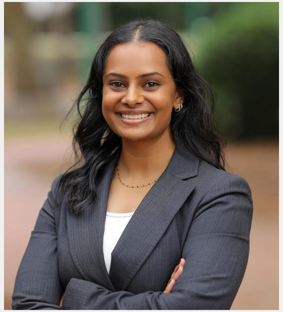
LISTEN

Actively listen to and respect each other's experiences and shares.

BE PRESENT

Put aside other work/devices/etc. and be ready to commit to today's discussion

FACILITATORS



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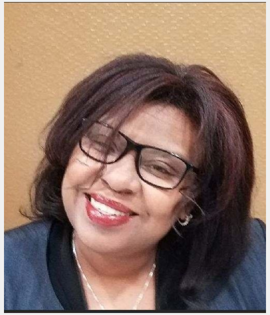

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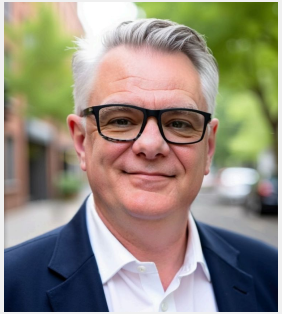

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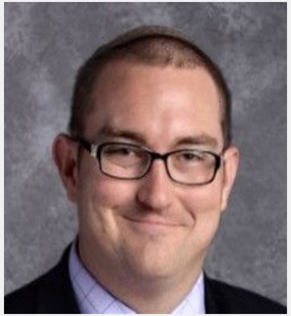

Ryan Levin
(he/him)

ISBE
Supervisor of Wellness and Student Care; 21st CCLC SEA Coordinator

OBJECTIVES

CLARIFY

Clarify sustainability expectations and strategies for implementation

ADDRESS

Analyze and interpret the policy on grant continuations

EQUIP

Provide grantees with practical tools for sustainability

02

ISBE & SUSTAINABILITY

The definition and view of sustainability; what this means for grantees

What Is 'sustainability'?

"Sustainability" refers to the continuation of a project's goals, principles, and efforts to achieve desired outcomes. Although many grantees think that guaranteeing the sustainability of a project means finding the resources to continue it "as is" beyond the grant period, ensuring sustainability really means making sure that the goals of the project continue to be met through activities that are consistent with the current conditions and resources that are available.

(U.S. Department of Labor)

Relative to 21st CCLC, what is sustainability?

- Overarching goals
- Successful components
- Fiscal forethought

Start with Your Overarching Goals

1. Student achievement
2. Attendance and graduation rates
3. Students' social-emotional skills
4. Community collaboration
5. Coordination with schools to determine students with greatest need
6. Professional development
7. Sustainability

What components of your program have contributed most to achieving your goals?

- Specific activities/learning for students
- Community contributions including, but not limited to:
  - Funding
  - Time
  - Services
  - Facilities
- Relationships with school personnel

Fiscal Forethought

- What is possible?
- What is realistic?
- What is needed?
- What is ideal?

21^{st} CCLC AS SEED MONEY

The 21st CCLC Grant:

Is not intended to provide sustained, long-term funding for out-of-school time opportunities.

21st CCLC AS SEED MONEY

The 21st CCLC Grant:

Is intended to provide an adequate level of funding to establish a successful and sustainable program.

21st CCLC AS SEED MONEY

Expectations for program self-sufficiency:

- Continuous self-evaluation of progress toward sustainability plans.
- Adjustment of plans as needs and/or resources evolve.

ISBE's Goals for the 21st CCLC Program When Funding Concludes

What should programs look like?

- In short, sustained programming
- Continued pursuit of goals through the programming and components that were most successful during the funding period.

A Note on "ISBE Expectations"

- After grant closeout, grantees' obligations to ISBE end, relative to the 21st CCLC Grant.

- ISBE *hopes* that grantees continue to pursue the same goals and objectives of the grant, but that is at the discretion of the former grantee once funding ends.

Clarity on Continuations and Renewals

Clarifying "Continuation":

'Continuation' refers to continued funding after the first year of a multi-year grant.

- Example: Cohort 22 is a five-year grant. Successful* applicants had funding continued in each of FY 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026.

  - "Funding in the subsequent years will be contingent upon compliance with federal and state law, state grant-making rules, passage of sufficient appropriations for the program, and satisfactory performance in the preceding grant period."

    (FY 2022 21st CCLC NOFO/RFP)

Clarifying “Renewal/Renewability”:

- Renewal/renewability refers to adding additional years to the lifetime of a grant, in a number of years equal to the original terms of the grant.*
  - All* or none; grantees may opt out.
    - *All <u>successful</u> grantees.
  - Grantee requirements remain in effect through the renewal years.
- Renewability is rare and is *never* guaranteed.

Rationale and Goals Driving Decisions to Not Renew

- Remember, the grant is intended to be seed money, not long-term funding.

- By not renewing, more funds become available to run more frequent and/or larger competitions.
  - Increases the grant’s reach to more communities and students throughout Illinois.

Resources for Sustainability

YOU Are Your Best Resource

- All awarded grantees included Sustainability Plans in their original proposals.
  - Sustainability Plans accounted for 20% of the possible competitive points during the proposal's evaluation in FY 2022, and 25% in FY 2023 and 2025.
  - Refer back to Attachment 7A in your original proposal and your responses to Goal 7 within the IWAS Continuation Application.

Additional Resources

- The resources provided are from third parties that have not been fully vetted by ISBE for applicability to 21st CCLC grantees in Illinois and, in fact, may have been designed for unrelated programs. Nevertheless, the ideas are transferable. These should be used as resources and starting points in development of your own Sustainability Plan. ISBE has been granted permission to share these resources with our grantees.
- Located Under "Resources" on ISBE 21st CCLC Webpage.

03
SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

Prioritizing Program Elements

Why prioritization matters

LONGEVITY

Ensures long-term sustainability

MAXIMIZATION

Maximizes impact with available resources

PREVENTION

Prevents burnout among staff and leaders

ALIGNMENT

Aligns program elements with organizational mission and funding realities

Assessing Program Elements

Key questions to ask:

- **Impact:** Does this component align with our core mission and significantly benefit young people?
- **Demand:** Is there consistent participation and interest from students and families?
- **Resources:** Do we have the staff, funding, and infrastructure to sustain it long-term?
- **Scalability:** Can this program component be adapted or modified to fit available resources?
- **Outcomes:** Are we seeing measurable success or progress?

Methods for Assessment

- **Data Driven Decision Making:** Use attendance, outcomes, and feedback to assess value
- **Stakeholder Input:** Gather perspectives from staff, young people, families, and partners
- **Cost-Benefit Analysis:** Compare investment (time, funds, staffing) to impact
- **Alignment Check:** Ensure each component aligns with strategic goals and funding priorities

Tips for Scaling Down Programming

1. **Prioritize High-Impact Elements:** Keep what directly benefits youth outcomes.
2. **Combine Similar Activities:** Merge overlapping programs to optimize resources.
3. **Reduce Frequency, Not Quality:** Shift from daily to weekly/monthly to sustain engagement.
4. **Leverage Partnerships:** Collaborate with community organizations to fill gaps.
5. **Reallocate Resources:** Shift funding and staffing to the most impactful areas.
6. **Phase Out Low-Value Components:** Gradually sunset activities that show low impact or demand.

ACTNOW Afterschool for Children & Teens
ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Partnerships for Extended Support

The Role of Partnerships in Sustainability

- **Extend program impact** beyond the 21st CCLC funding cycle
- **Leverage shared resources** to reduce operational costs
- **Maintain critical services** for students and families
- **Strengthen advocacy efforts** by aligning with influential community partners
- **Create pathways for alternative funding** through joint grant applications and sponsorships

Maximizing Existing Partnerships for Sustainability

1. **Institutionalizing Support:**
    - Secure **formal agreements (MOUs)** to maintain partner commitments
    - Advocate for program inclusion in **district budgets and school improvement plans**
2. **Expanding In-Kind Contributions:**
    - Shift from financial dependence to leveraging **facilities, transportation, staffing, and curriculum**
    - Identify **co-location opportunities** with schools, libraries, or community centers
3. **Engaging Partners in Sustainability Planning:**
    - Co-develop a **transition plan** with partners to maintain services
    - Explore shared leadership models (e.g., advisory councils, coalition building)
4. **Aligning with Partner Priorities for Mutual Benefit:**
    - Demonstrate how the program **supports school-day goals, workforce pipelines, or community initiatives**
    - Ensure partners see **long-term return on investment (ROI)** in continuing support

Alternative Funding Strategies Through Partnerships

- **Joint Grant Applications:** Leverage partnerships for **collaborative funding opportunities** (e.g., school districts, United Way, corporate foundations)
- **Corporate & Local Business Sponsorships:** Identify businesses interested in **investing in youth workforce development**
- **Community-Driven Crowdfunding:** Mobilize **parent and local support** through fundraising campaigns
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Align with city agencies or universities for **sustained financial and programmatic support**
- **Fee-Based or Sliding Scale Models:** Work with partners to **develop revenue-generating services** (e.g., community classes, paid enrichment programs)

Finding Funding

Sourcing Funding Opportunities

- ACT Now SPEAR
- Afterschool Alliance Funding Toolbox
- Instrumentl
- ACT Now Newsletter

04

Q&A

Questions from Registration

- Please share how other districts/schools have been successful with sustainability of the program after the grant has ended.
- What funding opportunities do schools have once the 21st CCLC grant is over?
- How will the Governor's recent executive order regarding state agencies to identify 4% GRF impact OST/non-essential programs?
- We heard we should not expect any renewals of current 21st CCLC grants. Can ISBE share a plan for ASP funds?
- What is the future of 21st CCLC funds for the state?
- In the current funding economy, how can we manage to secure resources?
- Can we offer virtual programming for students who do not feel safe coming to program in-person?

THANKS

Do you have any questions?
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