Nita M. Lowey

21ST Century Community Learning Centers

Grantee Handbook

May 2022

Soaring Beyond Expectations

SEAL OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS · 1868 1818 · AUG. 26TH 1818

Illinois
State Board of Education

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Overview

Intent of Document

This document is intended to provide guidance and supplemental reference for all Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grantees to maximize the efficacy of grantee programs, reporting, communication, and availability of support where required. **It is not intended to serve as a full reference that grantees would solely rely on.**

While academic services and enrichment opportunities for students and families may be the cornerstone of 21st CCLC programs, it is highly important as well for program directors and site coordinators to consider and plan for the health and wellness of the students, parents, and staff they serve and work alongside. Partnering with school day staff on health and wellness initiatives will support and make possible a high-quality 21st CCLC program. Grantees can find information on developing health and wellness plans for their 21st CCLC program from You for Youth.

Terminology: Grantee/Subgrantee

ISBE receives funding for Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers through a federal grant. ISBE then disburses those monies through subgrants. For the purposes of this handbook, "grantee" and "subgrantee" should be seen as interchangeable, referring to entities (such as Local Education Agencies (LEAs), community-based organizations, etc.) that receive grant funding from ISBE.

Contacts and Support

ISBE Wellness Department 21st Century Community Learning Centers Website and Contact

https://www.isbe.net/Pages/21st-Century-Community-Learning-Centers.aspx

The ISBE Wellness Department may be contacted via email directed to the grantee's principal consultant or by calling (217) 782-5270.

Support

Each grantee is assigned a principal consultant from ISBE's staff who specializes in 21st CCLC programs. The principal consultant should be the first point of contact for grantees for technical assistance and questions related to 21st CCLC grant applications and awards. If, for any reason, a grantee is unable to locate the name or contact information for their assigned principal consultant, they are advised to contact the ISBE Wellness Department at the phone number above.

Grantees that need support with any of the below items/requirements should contact the following people/entities:

- General Inquiries: 21stCCLC@isbe.net
- Benchmarking Data Tool
  - General Support: Kathryn Elvidge at kelvidge@isbe.net
  - Web/Tech Support: Kerry Ralls at kralls@niu.edu
- Evaluations: EDC at 21stCCLC.evaluations@edc.org
- Monitoring
  - Tier I: ISBE-Assigned Principal Consultant
  - Tier II & Tier III: Consult with ISBE-Assigned Principal Consultant
- Expenditure Reports
  - Funding and Disbursements
    - Consultant responsible for Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers

- IWAS Application: ISBE-Assigned Principal Consultant

Peer Mentor Program

ISBE facilitates a Peer Mentor Program in which new project directors are paired with more experienced project directors. Note that the grant does not need to be a new grant, just that the project director is new to the program. This program is one approach in an overall technical assistance initiative to support quality program development and enhance program capacity. The program is designed to identify and build upon the strengths and assets of both mentors and mentees. This mutually supportive relationship allows otherwise unrelated 21st CCLC programs to collaborate and share ideas to strengthen the programmatic, fiscal, and sustainability elements of their programs.

Community of Practice

ISBE launched the Illinois 21st CCLC Community of Practice (CoP) in fiscal year 2018 as an extension to the Peer Mentor Program. The purpose of the CoP is to create local networks of support and resources for Illinois 21st CCLC grantees. The statewide program is organized in four regions -- North, Central, South, and Cook County and Surrounding Areas -- to maximize networking opportunities for grantees. Project directors in each region are identified, vetted, and placed under contract as CoP facilitators using the same criteria and selection process as is used for peer mentors. CoP facilitators serve as arbiters of evidence-based resources and professional learning within their region. They participate in monthly calls to support professional learning opportunities and host at least one face-to-face regional meeting each contract year.

Concerns

The ISBE Wellness Department is committed to open communication with Nita M. Lowey 21st CCLC subgrantees. Disagreements that arise relating to CCLC programs, services, and staff members need to be resolved in a timely fashion. In the rare event that grantees and their partner organizations have disagreements about the execution of the grant, please refer to the following procedures, which have been established to help resolve the disagreements.

1. Grantee must have a meeting with school site to discuss any issues or concerns. This meeting should include the project director, site coordinator, school principal, and a district-level representative. In cases involving a Chicago Public Schools (CPS) school, the CPS Community Schools Manager should be involved in this meeting.
- As a result of this meeting, grantee must create a plan that addresses all concerns and outlines remedies.
2. If the parties are unable to come to a resolution, the project director, school principal, and ISBE consultant must hold a meeting.
- As a result of this meeting, grantee must create a plan that either represents a mutual dissolution of the site or outlines how the partnership will proceed.

In extremely rare cases, a decision will be made to dissolve the partnership. If that is the case, the following must occur:
1. School provides an official letter to grantee stating that the partnership will be dissolved. School acknowledges that it will no longer receive 21st CCLC services for at least one grant year.
2. Grantee will retain a copy of the site dissolution letter for its files and upload a copy to the IWAS application, noting changes on appropriate IWAS application pages. Grantee will also provide a copy via email to ISBE.

The Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers provide a range of high-quality services to support student learning and development, including tutoring and mentoring, homework help, academic enrichment (such as hands-on science or technology programs), and community service opportunities, as well as music, arts,

sports, and cultural activities. At the same time, centers help working parents by providing a safe environment for students during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session.

The law was authorized by Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (20 U.S.C. 7171-7176). Its specific purposes are to:
1. Provide opportunities for academic enrichment, including providing tutorial services to help students (particularly students in high-poverty areas and those who attend low-performing schools) meet state and local student performance standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and mathematics;
2. Offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities. These include youth development activities; drug and violence prevention programs; counseling programs; art, music, and recreation programs; technology education programs; and character education programs that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students; and
3. Offer families of students served by community learning centers opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

Each eligible organization that receives an award may use the funds to carry out a broad array of before-/ after-school activities (or activities during other times when school is not in session) that advance student achievement within this scope as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. The following lists include allowable/non-allowable uses of funds and are not meant to be considered exhaustive.

- Remedial education activities and academic enrichment learning programs, including providing additional assistance to students to allow the students to improve their academic achievement;
- Mathematics and science education activities;
- Arts and music education activities;
- Entrepreneurial education programs;
- Tutoring services (including those provided by senior citizen volunteers) and mentoring programs;
- Programs that provide after-school activities for limited English proficient students that emphasize language skills and academic achievement;
- Recreational activities;
- Telecommunications and technology education programs;
- Expanded library service hours;
- Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy;
- Programs that provide assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled, to allow them to improve their academic achievement; and
- Drug and violence prevention programs, counseling programs, and character education programs.

Allowable Uses of Funds

Grant funds may be used to provide the types of programs and activities explained in the Program Specifications section of the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)/Request for Proposals (RFP). Accordingly, 21st CCLC grant funds may be used for the following costs. (Again, this list is not meant to be seen as exhaustive.)
1. **Program Implementation Costs:** Supplies and materials necessary to implement the program may be proposed.

2. **Indirect Costs:** Indirect costs may be requested for some 21st CCLC activities. Indirect costs are subject to the indirect costs rate established by ISBE. For more information on indirect costs, review the State and Federal Grant Administration Policy, Fiscal Requirements, and Procedures handbook.

3. **Administration Costs:** General administration costs (i.e., Function 2300), which are direct costs associated with the overall administration of the 21st CCLC program, may be proposed. These costs, however, must be

limited to not more than 5 percent of the total funding request. Applicants are advised to refer to the [State and Federal Grant Administration Policy, Fiscal Requirements, and Procedures handbook](#) for budget information.

4. **Professional Development Costs:** ISBE will host the following required professional development workshops:

- New Grantee Workshop for all grantees awarded under the current NOFO/RFP
- Annual Fall Kickoff Workshops
- Annual Spring Workshops
- Other professional development opportunities as they become available

Funds may be requested to provide professional development activities for program staff; however, any out-of-state travel proposed by the applicant must be approved by ISBE 45 days prior to the event.

Funds necessary for attendance at the required professional development workshops and trainings hosted by ISBE must be included in the budget proposal. Grantees should include travel costs associated with required workshops as well as other professional development opportunities they wish to provide for staff.

Travel expenses associated with professional development must be processed in accordance with either the written and official travel policy of the fiscal agent or the state's travel policy. The state's travel policy, including mileage and lodging and per diem (where overnight stay is required), is governed by the Governor's Travel Control Board and is outlined in the [Reimbursement Schedule of the Travel Guide for State Employees](#) and any annual changes found therein.

5. **Instructional Staff Costs:** Funds may be requested to cover expenses for instructional staff who work directly with students. Job descriptions are required for each position that is proposed to be paid with funds from a 21st CCLC grant. Funds may also be requested to pay staff for pre- and post-program planning activities. Payment for pre- and post- planning purposes, however, must not exceed four weeks of work within each fiscal year commensurate to each employee's typical weekly work schedule. In other words, a staff member who works 20 hours per week would be eligible for up to 80 total hours of pre- and post-planning employment with 21st CCLC program funds.

6. **Food Costs:** Funds to purchase food are **only** allowed for the following purposes:

- Meetings that take place during regular mealtime hours **and** include family members. The purpose of this line item is to encourage parent/family participation. The maximum allowable expense is $10 per person served. Food costs may be included in the Federal Budget Summary under Community Services - Function 3000 and Object 400. The Budget Summary Breakdown must include detailed itemization regarding the anticipated numbers of people to be served at each event.
- Use in culinary classes. Food costs may be included in the Federal Budget Summary under Instruction – Function 1000 and Object 400. The Budget Summary Breakdown must include detailed itemization regarding the anticipated costs relative to the proposed courses as described in the Proposal Narrative.

Grantees are encouraged to seek other sources of funding for snacks and meals for students, if necessary. The U.S. Department of Agriculture sponsors the After-School Care Program as part of the National School Lunch Program. The program offers cash reimbursement to help schools serve snacks to children in after-school activities aimed at promoting the health and well-being of children and youth in our communities. More information can be found at:

- http://www.isbe.net/Pages/National-School-Lunch-Program.aspx
- http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd

7. **Transportation Costs:** Program funds may be used to cover reasonable transportation costs for program participants. Requests for transportation costs must be clearly and appropriately related to 21st CCLC program activities.

8. **Technology Costs:** Funds to purchase technology used in 21st CCLC programs are restricted to the purchase of equipment, such as computers, laptops, DVD players, printers, scanners, televisions, digital cameras, or similar items, and must be (1) reasonable; (2) allocable; (3) allowable; and (4) directly related to academics, student achievement, and for student use only. Prior approval from ISBE is required for the purchase of all technology. Computers purchased with multiple licenses are considered to be technology. Applicants are advised that pursuant to Section 80.32 of the [Education Department General Administrative Regulations](#), grantees must conduct an inventory of equipment purchased with grant funds at least every two years and reconcile that information with property records.

9. **Subcontracting Costs:** Funds may be used to enter into subcontracting agreements for the provision of 21st CCLC program activities that are beyond the capacity of the grantee. Subcontracted services may include evaluation services. No subcontracting is allowed without prior written approval of the State Superintendent or her designee. This information must also be provided on the Budget Summary Breakdown for ISBE approval prior to the execution of services.

Funds for services provided by subcontractors typically include direct instruction to students, teacher professional development, and services by a governmental entity. The [State and Federal Grant Administration Policy, Fiscal Requirements, and Procedures](#) handbook provides further information about budget coding.

10. **Program Evaluation Costs:** Funds should be allocated to pay for costs associated with participating in the state evaluation and conducting the local evaluation. Funds proposed for evaluation purposes must be reasonable when compared to other proposed costs. Grant funds should be used primarily to provide services to students, so the cost of the evaluation should not exceed 10 percent of the overall budget. Grantees may subcontract for local program evaluation services (Function 2620, Object 300).

It should be noted that a minimum of 50 percent of funds should be spent on student and family programming.

Non-Allowable Uses of Funds
21st CCLC grant funds may not be used for the following activities. (This list is not meant to be seen as exhaustive).
1.   Proposal preparation costs;
2. Pre-award costs;
3. Overnight or out-of-state travel for students;
4. Food, including daily snacks and/or meals for students other than described under the Allowable Uses of Funds section;
5. Food for professional development events, faculty, staff, administrative meetings, or for staff in any setting other than described under the Allowable Uses of Funds section;
6. Clothing;
7. Purchase of equipment, such as computers, laptops, DVD players, printers, scanners, fax machines, telephones, cell phones, televisions, digital cameras, or similar items, regardless of cost unless prior approval has been given by ISBE;
8. Incentives of cash, clothing, gas cards, gift cards, movie passes, or other incentives that are not reasonable in proportion to the amount of funding;
9. Furniture;
10. Staff events that include retreats, lock-ins, or other events of a similar nature;
11. Field trips that are purely recreational in nature (field trips without academic support will be considered entertainment and cannot be funded);
12. Membership dues to organizations, federations, or societies for students or staff;
13. Promotional or marketing items (e.g., flags, banners, mugs, pens, totes);

14. Decorative items;
15. Capital improvements, such as facility construction, remodeling, or renovation;
16. Classes previously offered and paid for by district or other fund sources; and
17. Supplanting federal, state, or local funds.

Program Hours

Applicants should propose programming based on the needs of families within the community. To that end and to best serve the children of working families, centers should establish consistent and dependable hours of operation. Research suggests that high-quality programs typically provide a minimum of 36 weeks of programming per project year, not including summer programming. **21st CCLC programs, however, must operate a minimum of 12 hours per week for a minimum of 28 weeks per year.** The 12 hours must be asynchronous. (In other words, an individual student must have the opportunity to attend a minimum of 12 hours of programming. If two one-hour courses run simultaneously, it is considered one hour of programming.) Applicants are encouraged to propose services that exceed the minimum operational requirements and aim for the higher standards established by research. Any proposed summer programming would be considered in addition to the 12-hour, 28-week requirement. Grantees that provide summer programming are subject to a three-week minimum on said programming.

Process Overview

Grants can only be awarded to programs that primarily serve students who attend schools with a high concentration of low-income students. This is specifically defined as schools eligible for designation as a Title I schoolwide program. To be eligible for this designation, at least 40 percent of the students must qualify to receive free or reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program. This percentage may be accessed by locating the Illinois Report Card website. To find a school, type in the name of the school, district, city, or county name, and find the school. Choose the school and click "Search." Once on the school site, click on "Students" on the left. Then scroll down to "Low Income Students" graph to find the percentage.

Additional detail regarding the process can be located at ISBE's Illinois State Plan for 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC).

Grant Due Date

Complete and submit the application to ISBE by July 1 to ensure a July 1 start date. An extended due date may be provided as ISBE recognizes the unique challenges LEAs are experiencing and the necessary time needed to prepare a well-defined and complete application. However, ISBE cannot distribute payments until the application is approved and required Expenditure Reports are submitted. If an application is submitted after the due date, the start date of the program will be the date of submission.

Grant Period

The grant period will begin no sooner than July 1 of the calendar year preceding the grant's fiscal year (e.g., an FY 2022 grant will begin no sooner than July 1, 2021) and will extend from the execution date of the grant until June 30 of the grant's fiscal year.

Grantees may apply to extend the grant's end date until August 31 of the following fiscal year if their funded activities take place beyond the original July 1 end date. To do so, grantees may select "Extended Project Year" and change the end date in the grant application. (See image below.)

Activity Period:

○ Regular Project Year - activities completed through June 30. No new obligations/activities after June 30 except to pay outstanding obligations made prior to June 30 or to pay for teacher salaries for activities completed prior to June 30 (teachers paid on a 12-month basis, but working only 9 months).

◉ Extended Project Year - activities occurring between project begin date and August 31. In the rare event that the project must be extended, contact your grant coordinator before selecting the Extended choice.

Grant Period:
Begin Date: July 1, 2020
End Date: 08/31/2021

Successful applicants may reapply via continuing application for additional years, the number of which is specified in the NOFO/RFP. 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. Funding in subsequent years will also be contingent upon a grantee's ability to spend 85 percent of its funds in Year 1 and 92 percent in Year 2. Grantees that fail to meet identified thresholds may be subject to defunding. Grantees failing to submit all required application materials within 30 days may be subject to defunding. No promise or undertaking made in any NOFO/RFP is an assurance that a grant agreement will be renewed, nor does any NOFO/RFP create any right to or expectation of renewal.

Fiscal Information

ISBE receives a finite amount of federal funding for each grant period to disburse through the Nita M. Lowey 21st CCLC Grant Program. The subgrants that ISBE issues to local grantees range between $50,000 and $600,000, with a maximum of $150,000 being awarded per site to local grantees (a site is the physical location where grant funded services are provided to participating students and adults; a grantee may provide programming at multiple sites).

Funding is awarded initially for a one-year period and may be extended (e.g., through the summer) or continued (e.g., for subsequent years) through processes as previously described. Funding in subsequent years will be contingent upon state grant-making rules; a sufficient appropriation for the program; and satisfactory progress in the preceding grant period, including the grantee's ability to spend 85 percent of their funds in Year 1 and 92 percent in Year 2. Grantees that fail to meet identified thresholds may be subject to defunding.

All grant funds disbursed to administer the 21st CCLC program and all related services must be handled in accordance with:
- The authorizing legislation
- The corresponding federal guidance
- The State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures handbook
- 23 Illinois Administrative Code 100.

Grantees' budgets must align with proposed activities, number of students and families to be served, staffing levels, goals and objectives, and evaluation services. Appropriate Function and Object codes should be used as outlined in the fiscal policy and procedures handbook.

Grantees **must** use funds for the purpose intended and to supplement and not supplant other federal, state, and local funds. This does not prohibit 21st CCLC funds from being used to continue programs where a previous grant has ended and other federal, state, or local funds are no longer available.

Each applicant must be a good steward of public funds and take action to prevent the duplication of services. Applicants should identify other federal, state, and local programs that offer before and after school and summer services and work to coordinate and/or combine efforts for the most effective uses of public resources.

Under ESSA, LEAs are provided certain flexibilities in the use of 21st CCLC funds as described below.
- Consolidation of local administration funds

- Allowable ESSA programs
- Rural education initiatives

All applicants and co-applicants must individually comply with all applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and executive orders, including without limitation those regarding the confidentiality of student records. Further, all co-applicants participating in a joint application must certify that they are individually and jointly responsible to ISBE and to the administrative agent for the grant.

Faith-Based and Other Neighborhood Organizations

Please refer to the U.S. Department of Education's principles and policies for information specific to faith-based and other neighborhood organizations. The purpose of this webpage is to provide faith-based and other neighborhood organizations grantees, subgrantees, and contractors that provide program services to beneficiaries under a grant or subgrant with a clear and uniform understanding of the fundamental principles that apply to their awards, along with guidance and regulations for implementing their awards. Additional detail can be found on the webpage.

Equitable Participation of Private Schools

As a federally funded program, 21st CCLC programs are legally required to be available to students attending private schools. As such, 21st CCLC grantees are required to make a good-faith effort to engage area private schools in their programming. Private school participation requirements cannot be satisfied by simply inviting Private schools to participate in programs and/or activities designed for public school students, teachers, or other educational personnel. Consultation must occur before ISBE or the grantee makes any decision that affects the opportunities of eligible private school children, families, teachers, and other educational personnel. Further, each grantee must provide ISBE with a written affirmation signed by officials of each participating private school that such consultation has occurred. The current Equitable Participation of Private Schools document can be found under the **Forms** tab on the ISBE 21st CCLC webpage.

School districts and eligible local entities must engage in timely and meaningful consultation with appropriate private school officials during the design and development of programs and continue the consultation throughout the implementation of these programs. School districts and local entities must provide, on an equitable basis, special educational services or other benefits that address the needs under the program of children, teachers, and other educational personnel in public schools in areas served by the districts and local entities. Expenditures for educational services and other benefits for private school children, families, teachers, and other educational personnel must be equal, taking into account the number and educational needs of the children to be served, to the expenditures for participating public school children.

The law requires the consultations to address:
- How children's needs will be identified;
- What services will be provided;
- How, where, and by whom services will be offered;
- How services will be assessed and how results of the assessment will be used to improve those services;
- The size and scope of the equitable services to be provided to the eligible nonpublic school children, families, teachers, and other educational personnel and the amount of funds available for those services; and
- How and when the grantee will make decisions about the delivery of services, including a thorough consideration and analysis of views of nonpublic school officials on the provision of contract services through potential third-party providers.

Legislation, Regulations, and Guidance
- [Program Authority: Title IV, Part B of the ESEA, as amended by ESSA (20 U.S.C. 7171-7176)](#)
- [21st CCLC Non-regulatory Guidance](#)
- For additional detail and references regarding legislation, regulations, and guidance please access the [ISBE 21st CCLC webpage](#).

Cohort Grantee Sites
A list of schools served can be found through [ISBE's website](#).

Expenditure Reporting
Expenditures may only be claimed during the assigned grant period. If you have a start date of July 1 and end date of June 30, you may only claim expenditures that occur during that time period.

Reports are required on a quarterly basis. Quarters end on:
- Quarter 1 (Q1): September 30
- Q2: December 31
- Q3: March 31
- Q4: June 30
- For Extended Year Projects: August 31
  - The dates of this reporting period fall into the previous fiscal year (for extended year projects) as well as Q1 of the next fiscal year, so Expenditure Reports may be submitted for either fiscal year during this time. Grantees should submit them for the fiscal year that applies to when the expenditures are made. For example, an FY 2022 grantee that has an extended year project would report expenditures for activities in the previous year under FY 2022. If the expenditures are related to preparations being made for FY 2023 programming, they would be reported under FY 2023.

Quarterly reports are due at ISBE by the 20th of the month following the end of the quarter for which the report is being submitted (e.g., Q3 reports report on the quarter ending March 31 and must be submitted by April 20). In order for ISBE to receive reports by the 20th, they must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on the 19th.

Grantees are required to submit at least one Expenditure Report on a quarterly basis. Grantees may submit more than one Expenditure Report in a reporting period; however, entities may only **submit one Expenditure Report per project per day**.

When an Expenditure Report is delinquent (i.e., past due), the system will automatically apply a freeze to the funds; no payments will be vouchered until the delinquent report is submitted.

Submitting Expenditure Reports
Grantees should log into their IWAS accounts to access the Electronic Expenditure Reporting (EER) System. Select "System Listings," where grantees will find the EER System. Grantees can start a new report, edit information previously saved, and view submitted expenditures in this system. There is a drop-down menu that is used to select the project and through date of the report being submitted. Grantees may select a month-end through date or the current date (if applicable).

Correcting Quarterly Expenditure Report
ISBE does not have the ability to reject a quarterly Expenditure Report once it has been transmitted to ISBE and loaded into the Financial Reimbursement Information System (FRIS) system. If a grantee realizes that it needs to make changes to an Expenditure Report, it must go into the EER System and file an additional Expenditure Report

with the corrections. When doing this, select the **"Thru: Today's Date"** option. Once that report is submitted and uploaded to the EER System, the FRIS System will automatically update with any changes that were made.

Correcting a Final Expenditure Report
Final Expenditure Reports are the only Expenditure Reports to which grantees may make corrections after submission. If a grantee needs to make changes to a FINAL Expenditure Report, it is required to send an email to the consultant in Funding and Disbursements who handles its project. (Consult the "Support" section on pages 5 and 6 for contact information.) That email MUST include the following information:
- RCDT#
- Project code
- Fiscal year of the project
- The reason you are requesting to have the final flag removed to make changes.

Once the consultant receives an email request with the required information, they will then request approval from their supervisor. If the supervisor gives the approval to remove the final Expenditure Report, the system will automatically freeze project funds until the final report is resubmitted. Grantees **must** resubmit the corrected final Expenditure Report within two business days.

Outstanding Obligations
Grantees may only list outstanding obligations on their FINAL Expenditure Report. Outstanding obligations should be filed for any expenditure that was **obligated before** the project end date, but not yet paid. Grantees have 90 days to liquidate any outstanding obligations they list. Once the obligations have been liquidated, grantees **must** submit an additional Expenditure Report within that 90-day time period to show all the outstanding obligations have been fulfilled. The project will not be marked as *Final* until all outstanding obligations have been liquidated. If a grantee does not submit an Expenditure Report by the 90-day mark, the system will automatically freeze the funds; no payments will be vouchered until the report is on file.

Evaluation and Monitoring
State Evaluation
States must conduct a comprehensive evaluation (directly or through a grant or contract) of the effectiveness of programs and activities provided with Nita M. Lowey 21st CCLC funds. States are required to describe the performance indicators and performance measures they will use to evaluate local programs in their applications to ED. States must also monitor the periodic evaluations of local programs and must disseminate the results of these evaluations to the public. Statewide Evaluations for Illinois can be located on the ISBE 21st CCLC webpage.

Program Evaluation
Each grantee must undergo a periodic evaluation to assess its progress toward achieving its goal of providing high-quality opportunities for academic enrichment. The evaluation must be based on the factors included in the measures of effectiveness. The results of the evaluation must be made available to the public upon request and be used to refine, improve, and strengthen the program and to refine the performance measures.

Local grantees, working with the ISBE Wellness Department, must evaluate the academic progress of children participating in the Nita M. Lowey 21st CCLC program. A template for local evaluations, which is designed to align with the Statewide Evaluation, can be found under the Forms tab on the ISBE 21st CCLC webpage.

Monitoring

In addition to the required local grantee evaluation and the annual Statewide Evaluation, grantees are monitored by ISBE through an annual three-tiered monitoring and compliance process. All grantees will receive Tier I monitoring. A Risk Analysis composed of several weighted elements and criteria will be used to determine the level of additional monitoring for each grantee.

The three-tiered monitoring process is outlined below.

Tier I Biannual Calls

Annual completion of two biannual calls by each grantee will be required to satisfy Tier I monitoring. The ISBE principal consultant will send an email to each grantee informing them when to sign up for their biannual call. Sign-ups will be scheduled through a method that ISBE deems most appropriate. Grantees will submit in advance a Biannual Communication Form, which will serve as the talking points of the biannual call. The principal consultant will determine if additional technical assistance is needed based on the call. This will be communicated to the 21st CCLC Technical Assistance team to address.

Tier II Desktop Monitoring

A desktop audit may occur when a grantee receives a medium-risk score on the Risk Analysis or due to additional requirements from a Corrective Action Plan that is in place.

Tier III On-Site Monitoring

An onsite visit may occur when a grantee receives a high-risk score through a random selection process or for a specific identified reason or concern by ISBE. All grantees will receive Tier III monitoring at least once during the life of the grant. A request for documentation and a review of such documentation will take place before the visit. All onsite visits will minimally consist of an initial interview with grantee administrators and managers, program observation, staff interviews, an exit interview, and a final report.

The onsite visit will review the following:
- Program Organization
- Project Design
- Academic Programming Practices and Quality of Activities (Programming information demonstrates alignment to the Illinois Learning Standards)
- Building Supportive Relationships After School
- Data Collection
- Fiscal
- Quality Assurance

Benchmarking Data Tool

The benchmarking tool and an accompanying resource guide is used by grantees to report data. See access directions.

Participants: Report the number of students who enrolled and participated in the program during the selected term and year. There are two categories, each of which is broken down by attendance and demographic data:
- Pre-K to Grade 5
- Grade 6 to Grade 12

Activities: Describe programming, which includes
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

- Literacy Education
- Academic Enrichment
- Activities for English Learners
- Well-rounded Education Activities
- Healthy and Active Lifestyle
- Drug and Violence Prevention and Counseling
- Assistance to Students who have been Truant, Suspended, or Expelled
- Career Competencies and Career Readiness
- Services for Individuals with Disabilities
- Telecommunications and Technology Education
- Expanded Library Service Hours
- Parenting Skills and Family Literacy
- Cultural Programs

Staffing: List the types of people who provide support to the program:
- Paid
- Volunteer

Outcomes: Report data that demonstrates if and how the program objectives have been met:
- State Assessment (only appears after assessment results are available from the state)
- Reports Made by Teachers (broken down by Grades 1–5)

Student attendance time should be counted in whole hours. ED guidance indicates that if a student's participation does not equal whole hours, grantees should report the following:
- 29 minutes or less, round down to the nearest hour.
- 30 minutes or more, round up to the nearest hour.
- For example, if a student has cumulative participation of 20 hours and 45 minutes, the grantee should round up to 21 hours.

Grantees should report cumulative student attendance as opposed to student attendance per term.

Student Attendance in Hours	Justification for Collection
Less than 15	Will help capture intensive programs like credit recovery.
15–44	Captures students who under previous GPRA were "not regular students."
45–89	Captures range of regular students towards research-based dosage band.
90–179	Captures range of students at and above research-based dosage band
180–269	Captures students who attend beyond research-based dosage band.
270-plus	Captures students who attend majority of year.

These data are reported for each site at the conclusion of the fall, spring, and summer terms. The data from the benchmarking tool are then transmitted to the federal government for the purposes of the Annual Performance Report.

Related Resources

Webinars, Presentations, and Training Content

ISBE maintains an archive of current and past webinars, trainings, and presentations. Navigate to **Webinar Archive** tab on the ISBE 21st CCLC webpage.

21st CCLC Non-Regulatory Guidance

21st CCLC Non-Regulatory Guidance can be found here.

Every Student Succeeds Act

21st CCLC Non-Regulatory Guidance can be found here.

ISBE 21st CCLC Home Page

ISBE's home page for 21st CCLC programs can be found here.

External Support

Technical assistance is available to grantees from ISBE principal consultants or an outside provider determined by ISBE.

You for Youth, an excellent resource for 21st CCLC grantees, provides free online professional learning and technical assistance exclusively for Nita M. Lowey 21st CCLC Grant Programs.

Appendices

Glossary of Frequently Used Terms and Acronyms

21st CCLC refers to the [Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program,](#) which is a federally funded program that supports 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.

Academic enrichment are opportunities that enable students to practice new knowledge and skills in real-life, relevant ways.

Advisory boards are a group of stakeholders that include project directors, teachers (those involved in program and those who teach at schools), school administration, partner representatives, funders, parents, and students that provide support and feedback by monitoring progress toward meeting program goals, supporting continuous improvement, and sustainability.

After school is a term often used to describe programs that offer student instruction and enrichment activities during non-school hours. (Also see out-of-school time, increased learning time).

Applicant refers to the primary or lead agency or organization requesting funding through the NOFO/RFP. If awarded, the applicant will be the organization that serves as the fiscal agent and will be responsible for the programmatic and fiduciary management of the grant.

Attendance area refers to the boundaries of the school district.

Authorized signature refers to the signing executive of the organization. Authorized signatures from the following individuals are also acceptable:
1. Local Education Agency (LEA): Superintendent of an LEA, Regional Office of Education or school district, or charter school governing board
2. School: Principal or executive director of a school
3. Non-LEA co-applicant: The chief executive officer of the nonprofit or government agency (a county board of supervisors or city council)
Note: Designees **will** be accepted with a copy of a recent governing board's resolution or minutes authorizing them to sign as a proxy for financial statements and legally binding documents.

CBO refers to a community-based organization.

Co-applicant is an entity (other than the named applicant) that provides a significant level of support during the pre-grant design, planning, and application phase, followed by material involvement during the post-award program delivery of grant-related services. The co-applicant is equally responsible for the implementation of the grant and will sign off on all certifications and assurances. A co-applicant is required in order to receive priority points as a jointly submitted application. An organization may provide support in monetary form, but in order to be considered a co-applicant it must play an ongoing continuous role throughout the grant period. So much so, that without such support the applicant would not have pursued a 21st CCLC grant. A co-applicant that is a subcontractor should be clearly contributing a greater amount to the grant than it may receive from grant funds.
Cohort is the set of 21st CCLC programs funded throughout the same three-/five-year grant period.

Community learning centers are safe learning environments for students that are open during non-school hours (before and after school, summer breaks, and other periods when school is not in session).

Disqualifications refers to the ineligibility of an application or site if requirements are not met in accordance with the instructions as established in this NOFO/RFP.

Eligible entity refers to all public and private entities, including LEAs such as public school districts; public university laboratory schools approved by ISBE; state-authorized charter schools; area vocational centers; Regional Offices of Education; Intermediate Service Centers; community-based organizations, including faith-based organizations; Indian tribes or tribal organizations (as such terms are defined in section of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act); and other public and private entities or a consortium of two or more such agencies, organizations, or entities that are eligible to apply for the NOFO/RFP.

Equitable participation of private schools is a requirement in Subpart 1 of Part E of Title IX of the ESEA that applies to the 21st CCLC program. Nonpublic school participation requirements cannot be satisfied by simply inviting nonpublic schools to participate in programs and/or activities designed for public school students, teachers, or other educational personnel. Consultation must occur before ISBE or the grantee makes any decision that affects the opportunities of eligible nonpublic school children, families, teachers, and other educational personnel. Further, each grantee must provide ISBE with a written affirmation signed by officials of each participating nonpublic school that such consultation has occurred. These forms are updated for every fiscal year and are located under the Forms tab on the [ISBE 21st CCLC webpage](#).

Expanded Learning Time is the time that an LEA or school "extends its normal school day, week, or year to provide additional instruction or educational programs for all students beyond the state-mandated requirements for the minimum number of hours in a school day, days in a school week, or days or weeks in a school year." [ESSA](#) includes language that would allow 21st CCLC funds to be used for specific "after-school-like" activities as part of expanded learning programs in cases where at least 300 hours are added to the school day during the year. Additional language directs schools to work with community partners and to ensure activities do not supplant existing programs.

Family services are opportunities for educational development, such as literacy and financial courses, that 21st CCLC program can offer adults.

[Federal debarment](#) refers to any applicant that has been banned, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any federal department or agency. Agencies that are on the federal debarment list are excluded from federal procurement programs and from receiving federal grants or contracts.

Fiscal year refers to the time period of July 1 through June 30 of the same calendar year (e.g., fiscal year 2022 refers to the time period of July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022.)

Function and Object codes are the numerical coding system used to classify where grant funding is spent in the budget. The Function code is the action or purpose for which a person or thing is used or exists. This includes activities or actions that are performed to accomplish the objectives of the project. The Object code is the service or commodity obtained as a result of a specific purpose. A detailed listing of Function and Object codes can be found beginning on page 66 of [ISBE's State and Federal Grant Administration Policy, Fiscal Requirements, and Procedures.](#)

Geographic funding distribution refers to the six geographic categories of the state used for equitable funding determination.

Goals are broad, measurable statements representing the long-term impact of the program (increase academic achievement among participating youth). All program goals are to be written as [SMART goals](#) to ensure they are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound.

Good standing refers to the status of a current grantee's completion of program reporting requirements.

Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) was enacted in 1993 and updated in 2010. The legislation was designed to improve program management throughout the federal government. GPRA guides how 21st CCLC program results are measured and reported to the federal government via the 21st CCLC Annual Performance Report website system. Every year, grantees and the U.S. Department of Education must report on the five GPRA measures for the 21st CCLC program.

Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) was created by Public Act 098-0706 (30 ILCS 708/1). The purpose of the act is to:
- Develop a coordinated, non-redundant process for the provision of effective and efficient oversight of the selection and monitoring of grant recipients, thereby ensuring quality programs and limiting fraud, waste, and abuse;
- Increase the accountability and transparency in the use of grant funds from whatever source and to reduce administrative burdens on both state agencies and grantees by adopting federal guidance and regulations applicable to such grant funds, specifically, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards;
- Improve performance and outcomes while ensuring transparency and the financial integrity of taxpayer dollars through such initiatives as the Management Improvement Initiative Committee created by Section 1-37a of the Department of Human Services Act, the state-prioritized goals created under Section 50-25 of the State Budget Law (also known as Budgeting for Results), and the Grant Information Collection Act.

Grant cycle is the period of time over multiple fiscal years between the initial project beginning date and the final project completion date.

Grantee refers to an applicant who has a current, approved grant for 21st CCLC grant funds.

Grant period is the period of time between the annual project beginning date and the project ending date for each fiscal year of the grant cycle.

In-kind contribution refers to resources contributed to the program, such as goods, commodities, or services instead of money (e.g., staffing, discounts, or supplies paid for by a partner).

ISBE refers to the Illinois State Board of Education.

Joint application/submission refers to at least two organizations collaborating to submit a single application and share equal responsibility in implementing the grant-funded programming. Joint submission requires at least one of the organizations to be a school or district; the other organization must be an entity other than a school or district. Both entities must co-apply and sign all required documents as applicant and co-applicant, indicating their intent to and acceptance of the responsibilities of the grant requirements as stated in the NOFO/RFP. Co-applicants must collaborate in the planning and design of the project and, if awarded, must have significant ongoing involvement in the management and oversight of the project. An application that is jointly submitted with another qualifying entity may be eligible for priority points.

LEA refers to a Local Education Agency, which consists of Regional Offices of Education, school districts, and direct-funded charter schools.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a document signed by the authorized representative(s) of each collaborative partner that clearly specifies the role, services, contributions, expertise, and funding of each partner. The district superintendent or their designee *and* the principal of each participating school must sign an MOU regarding the proposed 21st CCLC program that includes all roles and responsibilities associated with the partnership.

Merit-Based Review Policy refers to a policy put in place by 2 CFR 200 and GATA legislation describing how competitive applications are received, processed, reviewed, and awarded. It also provides a process for appeals.

NOFO/RFP refers to a Notice of Funding Opportunity/Request for Proposals for a new 21st Century grant cohort. RFPs for all programs are posted on ISBE's Funding Opportunities website.

Non-LEA refers to nonprofit and for-profit agencies, city and county government, and community-based organizations (including faith-based organizations, private entities, private schools, and consortia of two or more of the above agencies).

Non-regulatory guidance is information that helps practitioners interpret legislation and regulations; it is not legally binding but used to guide decision-making for programs supported by the federal law.

Original signature refers to an original "wet" signature, using blue or black ink, from an authorized signee, designee, or co-applicant.

Out-of-school time is hours outside of the regular school day; they are often used for student enrichment activities that augment regular school-time instruction. Out-of-school time can occur before or after school, or in the summer.

Partner is a non-applicant/co-applicant entity that provides varying levels of support and/or enhancement to the grant-related programming. The support may come in multiple forms that include financial contribution, in-kind contribution, volunteer participation, or provision of program components directly connected to the fulfillment of the partner organization's mission. Both the co-applicant and partner relationships should include material in-kind contribution to the program, which should be clearly demonstrated in the content of the application.

Performance measures assess a program's progress on the implementation of strategies and activities. Performance measures should, in part, be selected because they will yield useful information for program improvement as well as to fulfil accountability requirements.

Program elements are the strategies and activities supporting attainment of outcomes reflecting progress toward the goal.

Project director is the point of contact between ISBE and a grantee. Project directors are responsible for meeting all reporting requirements and deadlines of the grant in addition to their daily responsibility for the 21st CCLC program (such as overseeing site coordinators, etc.).
RCDTS code refers to the Region-County-District-Type code assigned by ISBE. The ISBE Key to Coding Illinois Public School Districts and Schools document provides more information on the meaning of RCDTS codes.

School(s) served refers to the school(s) where students served by a 21st CCLC program attend during the regular school day. These schools must meet the eligibility requirements identified in the NOFO/RFP and be clearly identified in the approved application. Serving students not attending an indicated school served are considered serving non-eligible students. Applicants *must* coordinate with the school students attend to ensure connection between the school day and after-school programming.

Site is the *physical location* where grant-funded services and activities are provided to participating students and adults in the 21st CCLC program. All licenses, inspections and certification required to operate a 21st CCLC program must be for this location. The site may be a public school, a community-based location, a recreation facility, or other location that complies with the requirements identified in the NOFO/RFP.

Site coordinator has daily responsibility for a site and its staff. He/she facilitates the day-to-day running of programming at a specific location. The site coordinator reports to the project director.

Sustainability plan refers to a written plan to be disseminated through community outreach and engagement strategy that communicates the benefits of programs and persuades community leaders and entities to provide in-kind and/or financial support to sustain and expand access to community learning centers to low-income students when grant funding ends.

Uniform Guidance provides definitions for commonly used terms, offers general guidance, and outlines how funds may or may not be spent. This guidance applies to all federal grants, including 21st CCLC.

Youth voice refers to the active engagement, representation, and participation of youth in the decision-making process.

ISBE Principal Consultants List for 21st CCLC

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