

**Illinois State Board of Education
Nita M. Lowey
21st Century Community
Learning Centers Program**



**Statewide Program Evaluation
FY20**

June 2021



**Education
Development
Center**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The U.S. Department of Education's Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers program (21st CCLC) is designed to: 1) Provide students opportunities and access to academic resources; 2) Provide students in grades K-12 with youth development services, programs, and activities; and 3) Provide families served by the 21st CCLC programs opportunities for literacy and related educational and personal development. To this end, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has implemented the statewide 21st CCLC program since 2003. The state program has 7 goals.

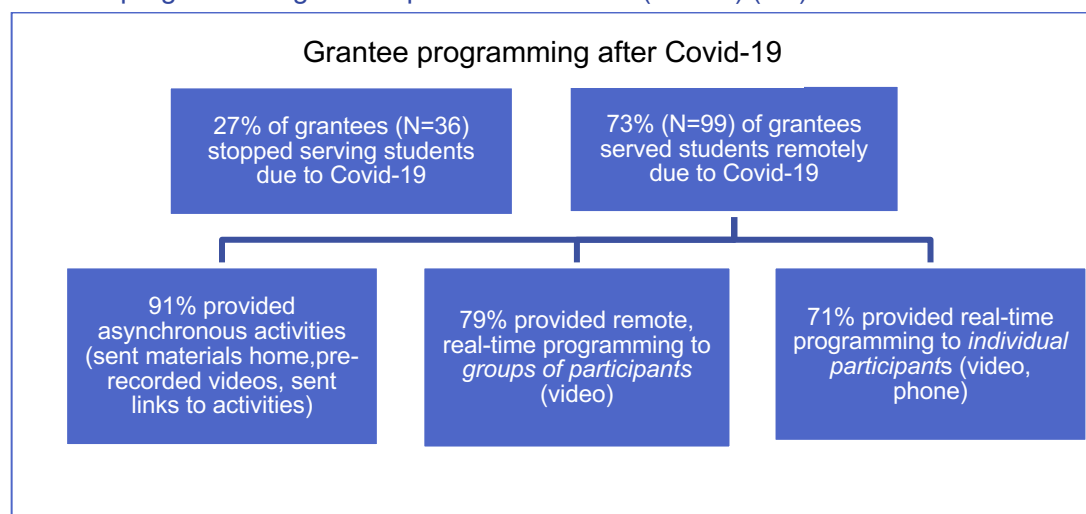
- Goal 1: Schools will improve student achievement in core academic areas.
- Goal 2: Schools will show an increase in student attendance and graduation from high school.
- Goal 3: Schools will see an increase in the social emotional skills of their students.
- Goal 4: Programs will collaborate with the community.
- Goal 5: Programs will coordinate with schools to determine the students and families with the greatest need.
- Goal 6: Programs will provide ongoing professional development to program personnel.
- Goal 7: Programs will collaborate with schools and community-based organizations to provide sustainable programs.

IMPLEMENTATION

During FY20 (July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020), Illinois had 134 active 21st CCLC grants from three funding cohorts (FY13, FY15, and FY19). These grantees operated 422 sites and served 51,504 students, with 47% of students reaching the regular attendance (30+ days) threshold.

Program implementation was interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020. A number of grantees (27%) were forced to stop programming all together at this time. Those that continued transitioned to virtual programming.

Grantee program changes in response to Covid-19 (N=135) (AS)



PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

In addition to providing academic support, grantees provided variety of programming and activities.

- 96% of grantees serving elementary and middle school students offered STEM programs, and 88% of grantees serving high school students did.
- 65% of grantees included a service-learning component as part of their program, and 6,455 students participated in service-learning activities, and the same percent offer robotics activities.
- 91% of grantees included arts programming among their activities, with the majority of these being in the visual or performing arts.
- 76% of grantees serving high school students offered career development and job skills activities.
- Over 65% of grantees offered computer programming, coding, or other computer literacy activity.

Grantees provided programming and supports for students with the greatest needs.

- 80% of participants qualified for free or reduced lunch.
- 45% of grantees serving elementary students provided bilingual education or ELL programs.
- 39% of grantees provided programming for special needs students, including targeted supports and dedicated staff.
- According to attendance data, 19% of participants were limited English proficiency and 14% were designated special needs.

Most grantees offered a social-emotional learning component, and also more than 70% provide some sort of behavior support and prevention program. The majority of regular participants were reported by their teachers to have improved their behavior. According to teacher surveys:

- 60% of elementary and 58% of middle/high students improved with respect to getting along with other students.
- 60% of elementary and 58% of middle/high students improved with respect to behaving well in class.

Due to Covid-19, academic achievement data and grades are not available for FY20. According to teachers, regular program participants did improve with respect to their academic performance. Teachers indicated that:

- 75% of elementary and 70% of middle/high school students improved their academic performance.
- 72% of elementary and 70% of middle/high school students improved with respect to completing homework to the teacher's satisfaction.

Grantees provided a wide variety of programming and activities to parents and families of program participants. The most common type of activities were family nights, followed by health, nutrition and wellness activities. Grantees reported that 17,581 family members participated in programming during the year.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Over 15,000 staff worked at 21st CCLC program sites during the year. School staff comprise the largest proportion of staff, with school-day teachers accounting for 30% of the staff. Fifty-five percent of grantees indicated that they reduced staff due to Covid-19. In response to Covid-19, grantees offered targeted training and professional development to teachers, particularly in the areas of technology and online learning.

CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Covid-19 presented challenges to all grantees. However, grantees worked to adapt and prioritize the needs of their program participants. Aside from the specific issues presented by Covid-19 and remote learning, challenges and recommendations for program improvement remain consistent with previous years' evaluation findings.

- Inconsistent student attendance continues to be an issue, particularly at the middle and high school levels; 74% of grantees serving high school students indicated that competing responsibilities because students must work is a barrier. Fifty-one percent of grantees noted the need to address recruitment and retention issues in their recommendations for program improvement.
- Poor parent involvement remains a top-three barrier with respect to program implementation, and 56% of grantees included the need to improve or increase parent programming and parent engagement in their recommendations for program improvement.
- Evaluation, data collection, and data use also continues to be an area for program improvement. This year, data collection was particularly challenging with the transition to remote programming.

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INTRODUCTION

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has implemented the United States Department of Education-funded Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers program (21st CCLC) since 2003. According to ISBE, the program:

- 1) Provides opportunities and access to academic resources designed for students, especially those from underrepresented groups, high poverty areas, and low-performing schools. These activities are focused on core academic areas, as well as extra-curricular subjects and activities. Programs and sites use strategies such as tutorial services and academic achievement enhancement programs to help students meet Illinois and local student performance standards in core academic subjects such as reading and mathematics.
- 2) Provides students in grades K-12 with youth development services, programs, and activities, including drug and violence prevention programs, counseling programs, art, music, and recreation programs, technology education programs, and character education programs designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students and their families.
- 3) Provides families served by the 21st CCLC programs opportunities for literacy and related educational and personal development.

ISBE has identified seven statewide goals and corresponding objectives for the 21st CCLC program.

	Goals	Objectives
1	Schools will improve student achievement in core academic areas.	Participants in the program will demonstrate increased academic achievement
2	Schools will show an increase in student attendance and graduation from high school.	Participants will demonstrate an increased involvement in school activities and in participating in other subject areas such as technology, arts, music, theater, sports and other activities.
3	Schools will see an increase in the social emotional skills of their students.	Participants in the program will demonstrate social benefits and exhibit positive behavioral changes
4	Programs will collaborate with the community.	The 21 st CCLC programs will provide opportunities for the community to be involved and will increase family involvement of the participating children.
5	Programs will coordinate with schools to determine the students and families with the greatest need.	Programs will provide opportunities, with priority given to all students who are lowest performing and in the greatest need of academic assistance.
6	Programs will provide ongoing professional development to program personnel.	Professional development will be offered by the programs and ISBE to meet the needs of the program, staff, and students.
7	Programs will collaborate with schools and community-based organizations to provide sustainable programs.	Projects will create sustainability plans to continue the programs beyond the federal funding period.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This statewide evaluation report addresses the programs and activities implemented by the 134 grantees active during FY20 (July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020). These grantees include awards given in 2013 and 2015 (and given extended funding at the end of their 5-year awards), as well as 2019. Grantees are referred to by their award year as Cohort 13, 15, and 19 throughout this report.

This report provides a summary and analysis of data collected by and made available to EDC for FY20. These data include:

- EDC’s annual grantee survey, administered in May-June 2020, indicated throughout this report as AS. All 134 active grantees completed the survey.
- Grantees’ individual annual evaluation reports, submitted by December 2020, indicated throughout this report as LER.
- Illinois Report Card data (IRC), which are the data provided to the federal APR system and includes student attendance and achievement information for the 2019-20 school year, indicated throughout this report as APR.

Schools and afterschool programs confronted the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, and the 2019-20 school year was both disrupted and interrupted. Grantee programs were forced to either end early or shift to online or other remote programming strategies. EDC modified the annual grantee survey to learn about the disruptions and strategies deployed by the grantees.

Grantees are expected to administer a teacher survey to the teachers of regular program participants (30+ days attendance), and these data are reported to the evaluation via the annual survey (AS). Covid-19 disrupted many grantees’ ability to administer or collect completed teacher surveys.

- 22% (92) of grantees indicated that they did not administer the teacher survey in spring 2020, largely due to Covid-19.
- Of the grantees that did administer the teacher survey, 69% (228) indicated that they received fewer completed surveys than normal, due to Covid-19.

The number of teacher surveys reported this year is significantly less than last year; last year grantees reported data from over 22,000 surveys. The low number of teacher surveys must be considered when reviewing and interpreting these data.

Table 1. Teacher survey administration and response reported by sites (N=258)¹

	Teacher Surveys		
	Distributed	# Received	% Received
Elementary school participants	9,043	5,928	66%
Middle/High school participants	5,837	3,732	64%
Total	14,480	9,660	65%

¹ N reflects the number of sites that indicated that they distributed at least one survey to either elementary or middle/high participants’ teachers

This report is organized into the following sections. Information about the impact of Covid-19 is included throughout the report, where appropriate.

- *Program Implementation:* This section includes information about grantees' implementation of programs for the year. It includes program totals for attendees and sites, as well as information about organizations and staffing, recruitment and retention, and program components.
- *Participant Outcomes:* This section provides data about student participation in activities, attendance in school, student behavior, and student and family inclusion.
- *Organizational Capacity:* This section provides information about the organizational capacity of grantees, including staff development, progress toward meeting stated program goals, program evaluation, and sustainability.
- *Program Challenges and Recommendations:* This section summarizes the challenges that grantees experienced during implementation of the program, as well as recommendations for program improvement as offered by grantees' local evaluations.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

GRANTS, SITES, AND ATTENDANCE

During FY20, Illinois had 134 active 21st CCLC grants operating 422 sites. These sites served over 50,000 students over the course of the year. The total number of students and the number of regular participants (those attending programming for 30+ days) decreased from the previous year. While last year 54% of students reached the 30-day attendance threshold, this year, only 47% did. This is not surprising given the disruptions caused by Covid-19.

The vast majority of grantees operated between 1 and 4 sites. The number of participants served by a grant ranged from 24 to 5,517. On average, grantees served 376 students per grant. Approximately three-fourths of grantees operate sites that serve elementary and middle school students, while just over half of grantees serve high school students.

Table 2: Grantees, sites, and students served, 2019-20 (AS, APR)

	2019-20
Grantees	134
Sites	422
Total # students served	51,504
Regular attendees (30 days or more)	24,158
Average # students per grant	376
Median # of students per grant	312

Table 3: Number of sites per grant, 2019-20 (AS)

	Grantees	
	Number	Percent
1 site	25	19%
2 sites	26	19%
3 sites	23	17%
4 sites	46	34%
5 sites	9	7%
More than 5 sites	5	4%

Table 4: Grants by grades they served, 2019-20 (AS)

	Grants	
	Number	Percent
Elementary School Students (Grades PreK-5)	97	72%
Middle School Students (Grades 6-8)	105	78%
High School Students (Grades 9-12)	74	55%

Half of 21st CCLC program participants in Illinois are in grades 3 through 7. As noted above, less than half of students were considered regular participants, and the concentration of regular participants are in grades 2 through 6. When considering school grade level, 59% of elementary participants were regular attendees, while 44% of middle school participants and only 26% of high school participants were regular program attendees. The larger proportion of elementary grades reaching the 30+ day attendance threshold is consistent with previous years. The proportion of students reaching 90 days of attendance is markedly smaller than last year, most likely due to Covid-19 and program interruptions.

Figure 1. Program attendance levels for all participants, 2019-20 (APR)

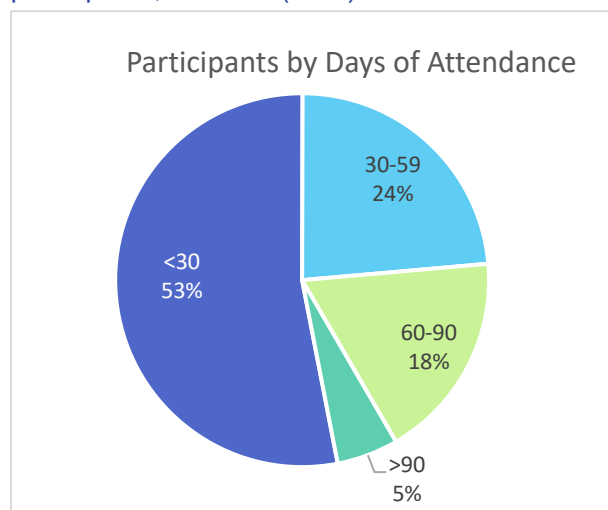
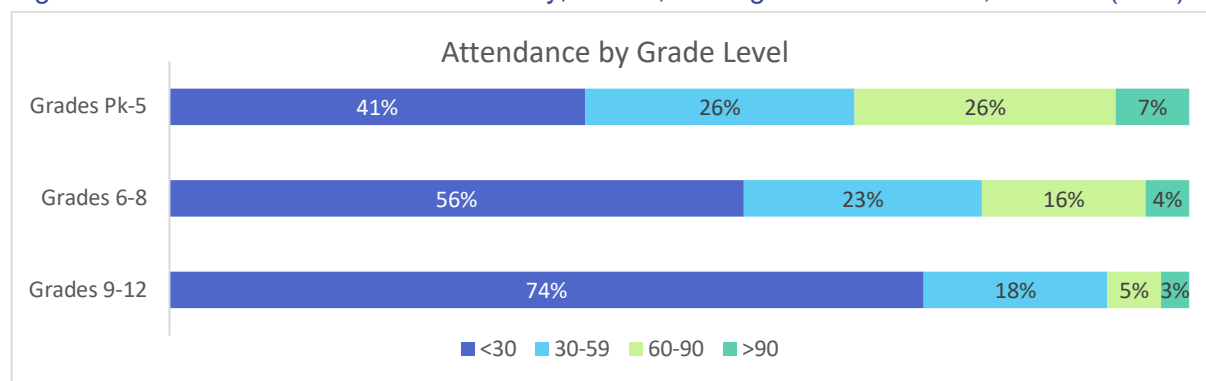


Table 5: Grade level of participants, 2019-20 (APR)

	All Participants		Regular Participants	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Pre-Kindergarten	232	0.5%	105	0.4%
Kindergarten	1604	3.1%	910	3.8%
1 st grade	2945	5.7%	1848	7.6%
2 nd grade	3948	7.7%	2552	10.6%
3 rd grade	5042	9.8%	2998	12.4%
4 th grade	5247	10.2%	3087	12.8%
5 th grade	5429	10.5%	2985	12.4%
6 th grade	5189	10.1%	2457	10.2%
7 th grade	5177	10.1%	2132	8.8%
8 th grade	4522	8.8%	1915	7.9%
9 th grade	3297	6.4%	796	3.3%
10 th grade	3363	6.5%	852	3.5%
11 th grade	3052	5.9%	825	3.4%
12 th grade	2457	4.8%	696	2.9%
Total	51504	100%	24158	100%

Figure 2. Student attendance for elementary, middle, and high school students, 2019-20 (APR)



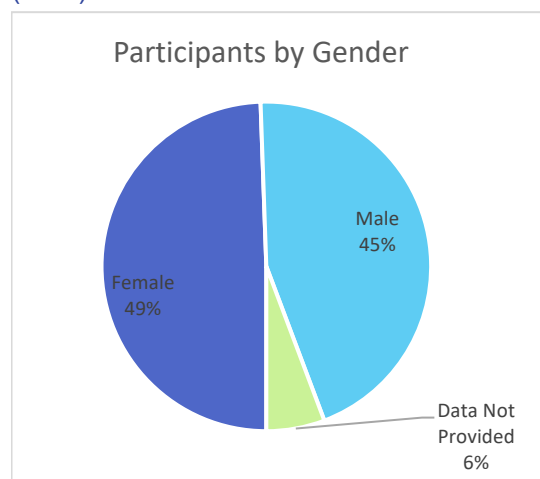
Participant Demographics

Approximately 74% of the students participating in 21st CCLC programs were identified as Hispanic or Black. With respect to gender, participants were almost split 50/50 between males and females.

Table 6: Race/ethnicity of all program participants, 2019-20 (APR)

Race/ethnicity	Percent of all participants
Hispanic	40.0%
Black	33.8%
White	15.4%
Multi-Racial/Ethnic	2.8%
Asian	1.9%
Native American	0.2%
Pacific Islander	0.1%
Data not provided	5.7%

Figure 3: Gender of participants, 2019-20 (APR)



PROGRAM OPERATIONS

Recruitment and retention

Grantees continue to rely on school staff to refer students to their programs, along with parents/guardians and student self-referrals when recruiting program participants. Grantees also received referrals from community partners and other agencies on site. Half of grantees report providing transportation to participants in elementary and middle school, while 41% provide transportation to participants in high school.

Table 7: Program referral sources, by age group, 2019-20 (AS)

Type of Referral	% of grantees indicating referral method for:		
	Elementary School Participants	Middle School Participants	High School Participants
School staff referrals (e.g., teachers, administrators, etc.)	99%	97%	99%
Parent/Guardian or self-referrals	96%	95%	95%
Internal program referrals	91%	87%	82%

Table 8: Grantees providing transportation by grades served, 2019-20 (AS)

Availability of Transportation	% of grantees
Elementary school (N=97)	50%
Middle school (N=105)	53%
High school (N=74)	41%

Progress in Program Implementation

The majority of grantees (75% or more) met or exceeded their goals in implementing program activities. The area in which grantees indicate making less progress is in coordinating their afterschool program activities with school day programming. Grantees indicated making less progress with respect to this indicator than in previous years, and this may be due in part to covid-19

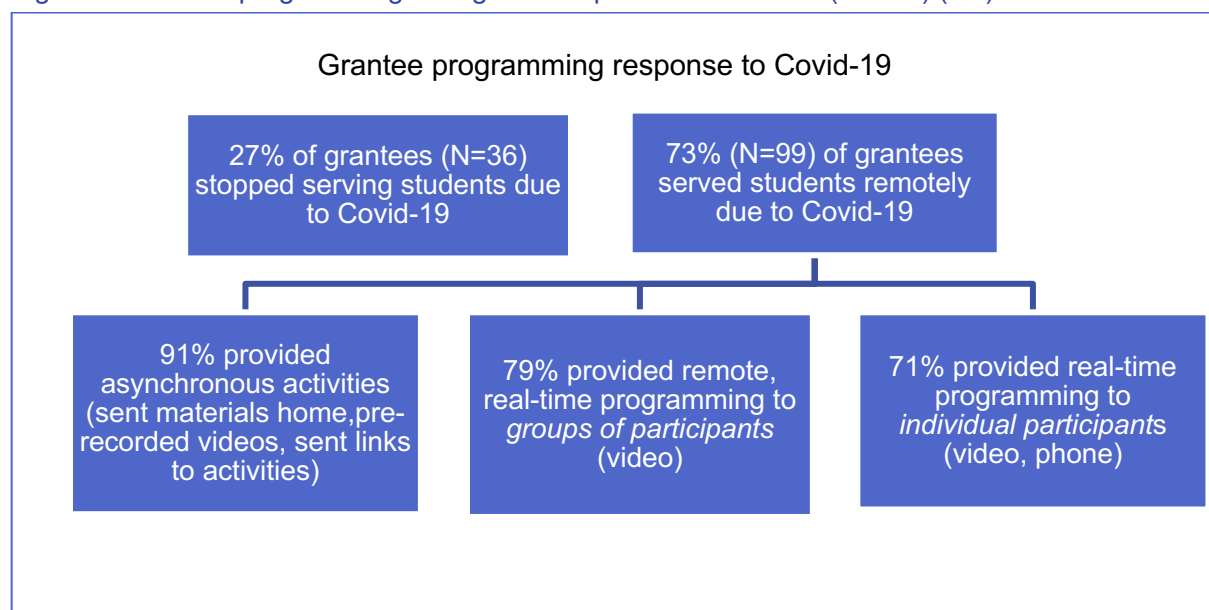
Table 9: Grantee progress in implementing program activities, 2019-20 (AS)

		Did not meet goals	Partially met goals	Met goals	Exceeded goals
Elementary (N=97)	Implemented academic activities	0%	8%	66%	26%
	Implemented other enrichment/recreation activities	0%	5%	55%	40%
	Coordinated afterschool program with school's day programs	3%	21%	57%	20%
Middle (N=84)	Implemented academic activities	0%	6%	68%	27%
	Implemented other enrichment/recreation activities	0%	3%	60%	37%
	Coordinated afterschool program with school's day programs	1%	11%	63%	25%
High (N=55)	Implemented academic activities	0%	7%	69%	24%
	Implemented other enrichment/recreation activities	0%	3%	68%	28%
	Coordinated afterschool program with school's day programs	1%	16%	58%	24%

COVID-19 INTERRUPTION

By mid-March, most schools had transitioned to remote programming due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and consequently 21st CCLC programs were either ended or moved to remote programming. This transition forced grantees to improvise and employ a range of new strategies for programming, retention, and communications. Twenty-seven percent of grantees stopped their 21st CCLC program with the onset of the pandemic, while 73% continued to offer some form of remote programming, by providing activities and materials for participants to do on their own, or by offering group and/or individual real-time programming via video or phone. Grantees that continued to offer programming directed students to online program materials that they themselves developed (87%), to existing online programming such as Khan Academy (71%), and also sent materials such as kits, worksheets, and book to students' homes (69%).

Figure 4. Grantee programming changes in response to Covid-19 (N=135) (AS)



Grantees that continued to serve students indicated the kinds of activities that they provided when they transitioned to remote programming. These included online materials developed by the grantee, directing students to existing online materials (developed by others), and hard copy materials sent home to students. Other materials and activities included:

- Materials and supplies sent home to students, including art supplies and kits (9 grantees)
- Online programming provided by external providers (3 grantees)
- Food (2 grantees)
- Suggestions for activities students could do at home with materials around their houses (2 grantees)

Table 10. Materials/activities offered by grantees during Covid-19 (AS)

	Grantees continuing to serve students during school year (N=99)	
	%	#
Staff directed participants to online program materials that were developed internally	87%	86
Staff directed participants to online program materials that were developed externally (including web-based activities, videos like Khan Academy)	71%	70
Staff sent hard copies of program materials to participants' homes or made them available for pick-up (including books and worksheets)	69%	68
Other	19%	19

Grantees relied heavily on email and phone calls to maintain communications with students and their families when they transitioned to remote programming. Grantees also used text messaging and video calls, and “other” methods that included:

- Social media (10 grantees)
- Zoom meetings (7 grantees)
- School communication systems, such as Class Dojo (5 grantees)
- In person during material pickups (4 grantees)

Table 11. Grantee communication strategies during Covid-19 (AS)

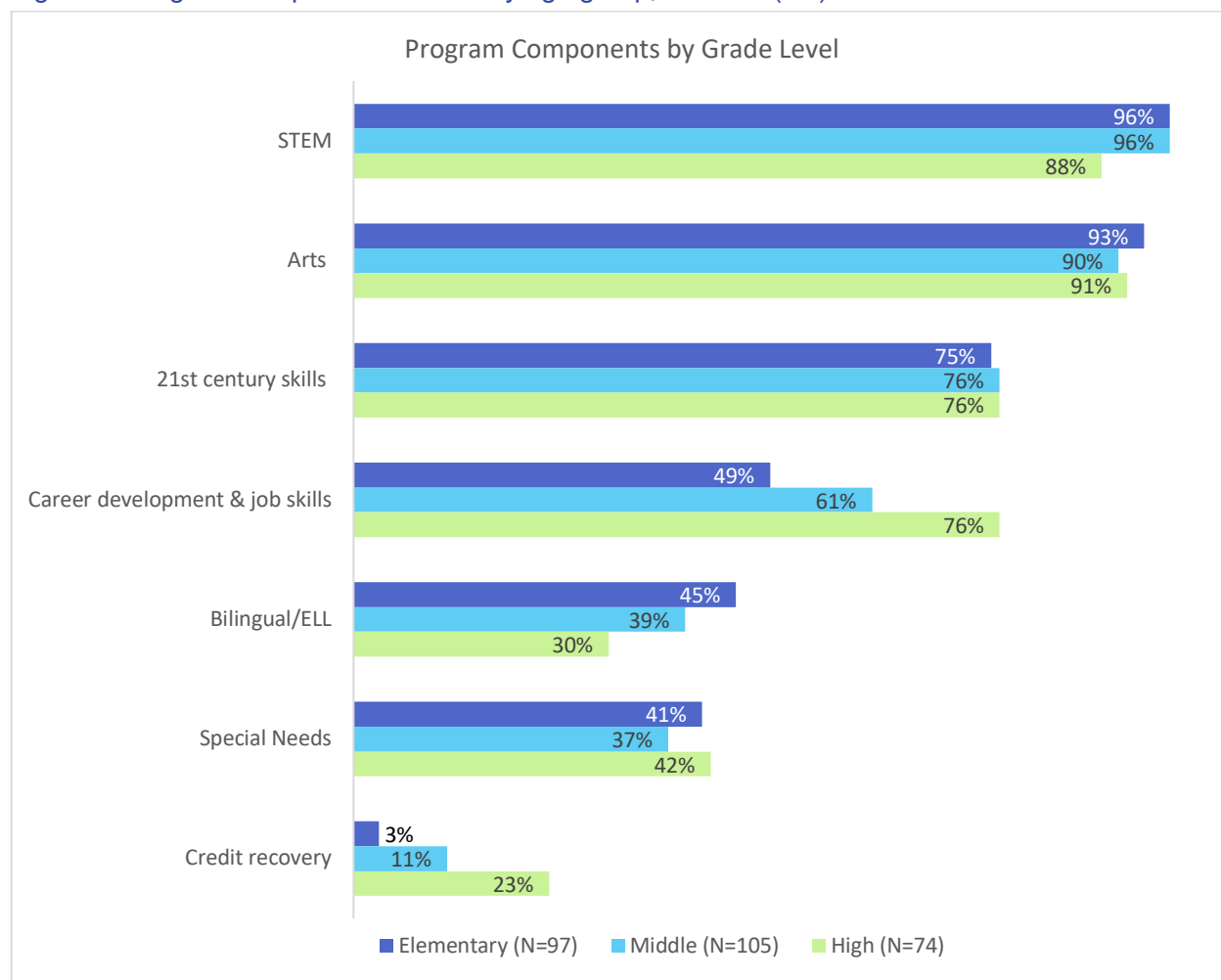
	Grantees continuing to serve students during the school year (N=99)	
	%	#
Email	98%	97
Phone	88%	88
Video	75%	74
Text messaging / Chat	72%	71
Other	23%	23
Discussion board	19%	19
N/A - students and families did not communicate with program staff	2%	2

PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES

In addition to academic programming, 21st CCLC grantees offer a variety of other program components that provide enrichment and support to program participants. Consistent with previous years, STEM and arts programming continue to be the most common program components. Some program components, such as career development and credit recovery programs, are more frequently provided to high school participants. Details about specific offerings in some of these program areas is included below.

Figure 5. Program components offered by age group, 2019-20 (AS)



STEM Programming

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) programming has grown to become the most common type of programming over the past several years across age grade levels. When asked to indicate specific kinds of STEM programming, STEAM is the most common with 73% of grantees offering something that integrates arts into STEM activities. Robotics and computer programming or coding activities are also popular among grantees offering STEM programs.

More than half of grantees providing STEM indicate that they use school day science teachers to support their programming, and more than half also indicate that they partner with other organizations and program providers.

Table 12: STEM programming activities and strategies, 2019-20 (AS)

	Grantees offering STEM Programs (N=131)	
	Percent	Count
STEAM activities or programming	73%	95
Robotics clubs or activities	66%	87
Computer programming or coding activities	63%	83
School-day science teachers to support activities	60%	79
STEM kits provided by vendor	58%	76
Activities aligned with school standards (NGSS)	57%	75
Partnerships with STEM organizations or program providers	55%	72
Family STEM nights or activities	53%	70
Environmental science activities	51%	67

Arts Programming

Arts programming also continue to be one of the most common program components in 21st CCLC programs across grade levels. Most grantees offering arts programming include visual arts among their activities. Performing arts (theater and dance) and music are also very common.

Table 13: Types of arts programming and activities, 2019-20 (AS)

	Grantees offering Arts Programs (N=122)	
	Percent	Count
Visual Arts (photography, drawing, sculpture)	89%	109
Performance Arts	82%	100
Music	77%	94
Decorative Arts (Ceramics, Jewelry)	54%	66
Applied Art (Architecture, Fashion design)	40%	49
Art History (Visiting art museums)	36%	44

Entrepreneurship, Career Development, and Job Skill Programs

Entrepreneurship, career development, and job skill programs and activities are most commonly offered by grantees serving high school age students (76%). Most of the grantees offering these activities included career exploration activities with skill/interest inventories, job fairs, and guest speakers, along with clubs or programs that allow participants to explore careers and support skill development. More than half of these grantees offered financial literacy programming and/or entrepreneurship activities such as business planning or running school store.

Table 14: Types of entrepreneurship, career development and job skills programs, 2019-20 (AS)

	Grantees offering entrepreneurial, career development, and/or job skills Programs (N=95)	
	Count	Percent
Career exploration (skills/interest inventories, guest speakers, job fairs, field trips)	81%	77
Clubs/programs that explore careers and support skill development	74%	70
Entrepreneurship activities (business planning, school store)	61%	58
Financial literacy	60%	57
Job seeking skills (e.g. resume writing, interview skills)	51%	48
Online programs/resources (e.g. Career Launch, Career Cruising)	41%	39
Career and technical student organization activities	40%	38
Junior Achievement program	33%	31

Special Needs Programming

Less than half of grantees indicated that they provide special needs programming. Most of the grantees that do so provide accommodations for special needs students and supports to include and integrate them into program activities.

Table 15: Strategies for special needs programming, 2019-20 (AS)

	Grantees offering Special Needs Programs (N=52)	
	Percent	Count
Necessary and appropriate accommodations for special needs students	94%	49
Supports to include and integrate special needs students into program activities	90%	47
Activities to support students with learning deficiencies	87%	45
Dedicated staff to support special needs students (paraprofessional, special education teacher)	73%	38
Access to and use of students' IEPs	71%	37

Bilingual/ELL Programming

Less than half of grantees indicated that they provide a bilingual/ELL program component, and more of the grantees that serve elementary students (45%) do so than those serving middle (39%) and high school students (30%). For most of these grantees, this program component includes having bilingual staff available to support students along with specific activities or tutoring to help ELL students.

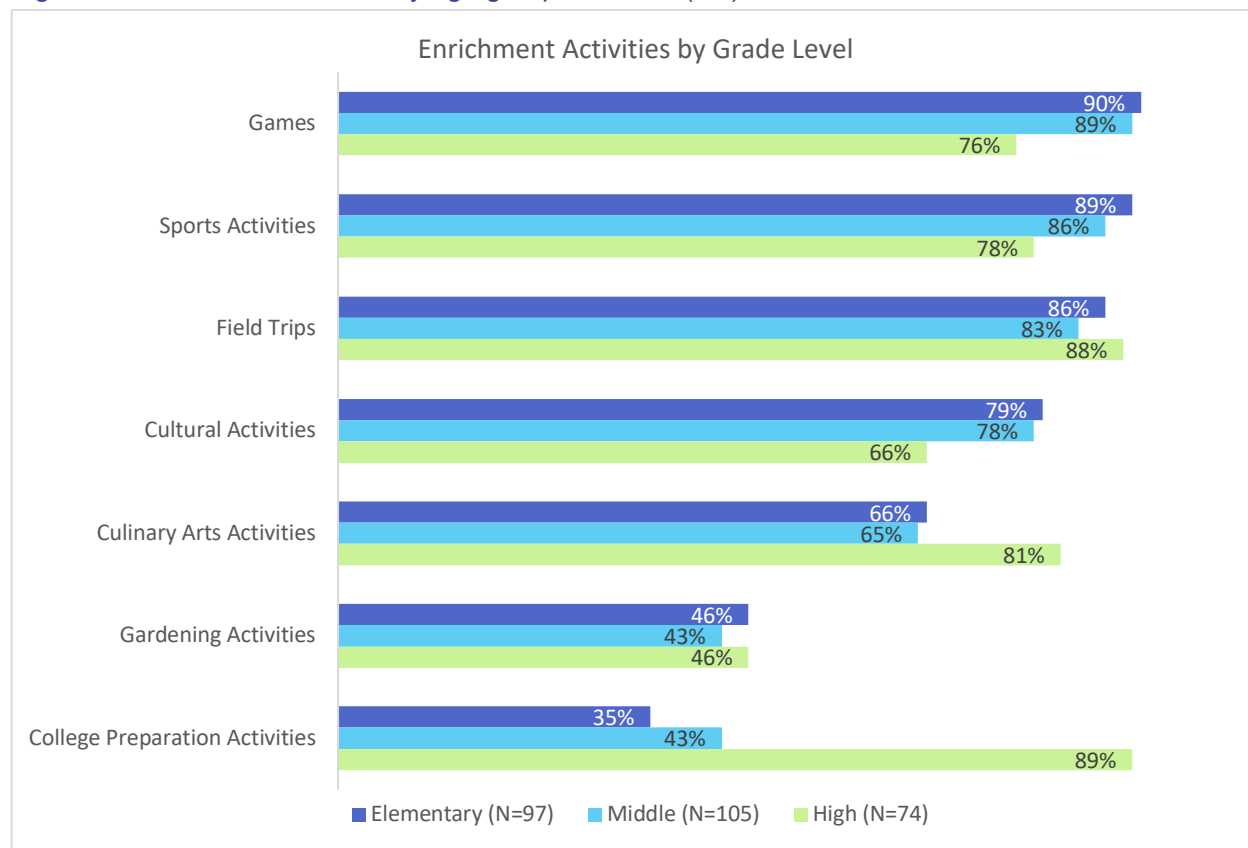
Table 16: Types of bilingual/ELL program activities and supports, 2019-20 (AS)

	Grantees offering Bilingual/ELL Programs (N=60)	
	Percent	Count
Bilingual staff to support students (instructors, tutors, or volunteers)	92%	55
Activities, tutoring, or other support for ELL students	88%	53
An established curriculum for ELL students with a bilingual teacher	35%	21
Language-learning activities for all students	68%	41

Additional Enrichment Activities

Most grantees serving elementary and middle school students include games and sports as part of their programming. These grantees also more commonly provide cultural activities. Grantees serving high school students more frequently provide college preparation activities as well as enrichment in culinary arts. Most grantees across age groups also include field trips in their programming.

Figure 6. Enrichment activities by age group, 2019-20 (AS)



Service-learning programs

Sixty-five percent of grantees (87) indicated that they included service-learning as part of their programming. Service-learning activities ranged from single day community clean up days to extended projects such as food drives or beautification projects, to periodic activities such as serving senior citizens. Some grantees report having specific clubs focused on service learning, and others report service learning happening through partner programs such as Girl Scouts.

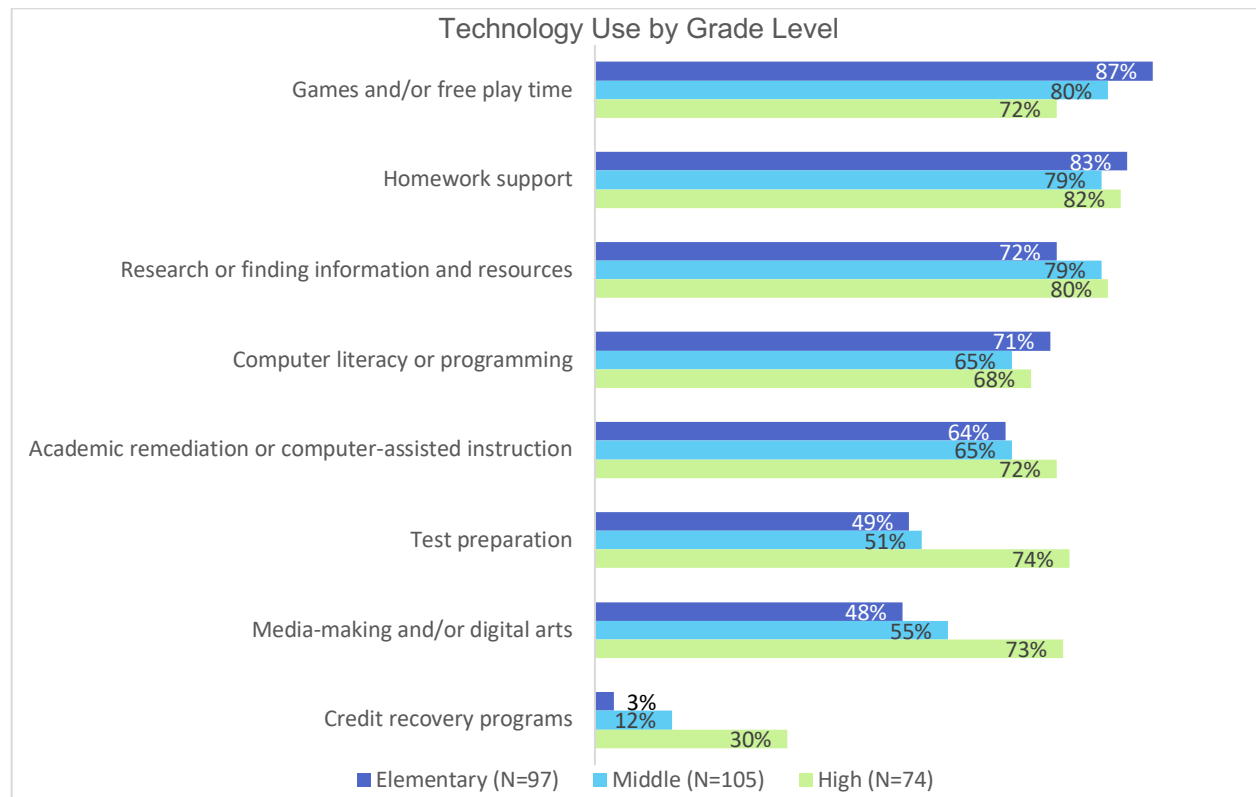
Table 17. Number of participants involved in service-learning activities, 2019-20 (AS)

Grade level	Percent	Number
Elementary school participants	2,700	42%
Middle school participants	1,326	21%
High school participants	2,429	38%
Total	6,455	100%

Technology

Technology is an important part of 21st CCLC programming both as a means for providing academic support and enrichment, and as an area for students to build skills in through programming and activities. The ways that technology is used in programs varies by age group. Grantees serving elementary and middle school students are more likely to use technology for games and free time and basic computer literacy, while those serving high school students use technology for test prep, media-making, and credit recovery.

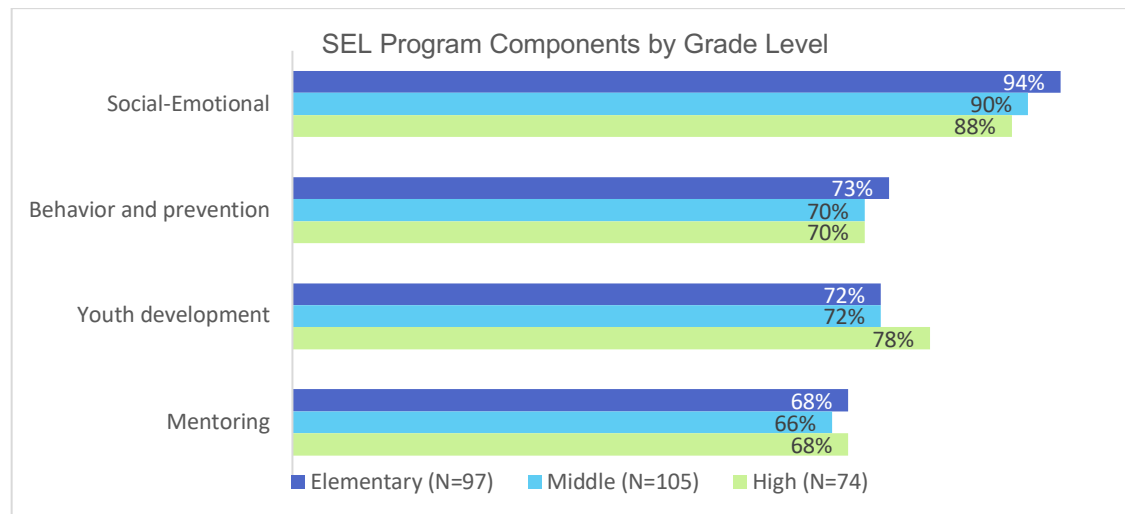
Figure 7. Technology use in program by age group, 2019-20 (AS)



BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Improved student social emotional skills is one of Illinois’ goals for the 21st CCLC program. Grantees support participants’ social emotional learning (SEL) through a range of programming and activities. These include SEL curriculum components along with behavior and prevention efforts, youth development programming, and mentoring.

Figure 8. Social-emotional related program components by age group, 2019-20 (AS)



When indicating the specific SEL programming and curricula, more than half of grantees indicate the use of a positive behavior intervention and supports system (PBIS). This is a common SEL framework used in schools, and for sites that are based in schools, it is a way for programs to use strategies that align with school-day expectations and norms. As we have noted in previous evaluations, PBIS is a system for communicating about and managing behavior, and not a curriculum or program that builds SEL skills among students. Similarly, more than half of grantees indicated that they use trauma-informed practices in their programs.

When it comes to specific curricula to help participants develop SEL, there is no one common program. In addition to the options listed in the survey, grantees shared “other” programs they use, including: Connecting the Pieces to Stop Violence, Character Counts, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, Zones of Regulation, Capturing Kids Hearts, Peace Circles, Project Wisdom, Passports to Success, and various curricula aligned with the CASEL Framework.

Seventy percent of grantees indicated that they provide some form of prevention programming or behavior support. This most frequently includes violence prevention programming (76% of grantees offering these types of programs). Sixty-one percent of grantees that indicated that they provide behavior supports provide mental health services to program participants.

Table 18: Social-emotional programs and curriculum, 2019-20 (AS)

	Grantees offering social-emotional programming (N=124)	
	Percent	Count
Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)	63%	78
Trauma-informed Practices	56%	69
Restorative Justice Practices	32%	40
Other	29%	36
Second Step Curriculum	14%	17
Aggression Replacement Training	11%	13
Stephen Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People Program	10%	12
Means and Measures of Human Achievement Labs (MHA) Tools	4%	5
Botvin Life Skills Training Curriculum	2%	2
Lions Quest Curriculum	2%	2

Table 19: Prevention programming and behavior supports, 2019-20 (AS)

	Grantees offering behavior and prevention programs (N=93)	
	Percent	Count
Violence prevention	76%	71
Truancy prevention	63%	59
Drug prevention	61%	57
Mental health services	61%	57

Assessment and measurement of SEL and behavior changes is challenging across the 21st CCLC program, given the wide range of activities and curriculum and the lack of common assessments. Therefore, the 21st CCLC program relies on teacher-reported changes in behavior as a way to describe program outcomes in the aggregate. Based on teacher report, 58% or more regular program participants improved in various behavior and SEL indicators, including getting along with other students and behaving well in class. And 55% or more of regular program participants improved with respect to indicators related to engagement in learning.

Figure 9. Teacher reported changes in behavior of regular student attendees, 2019-20 (AS)

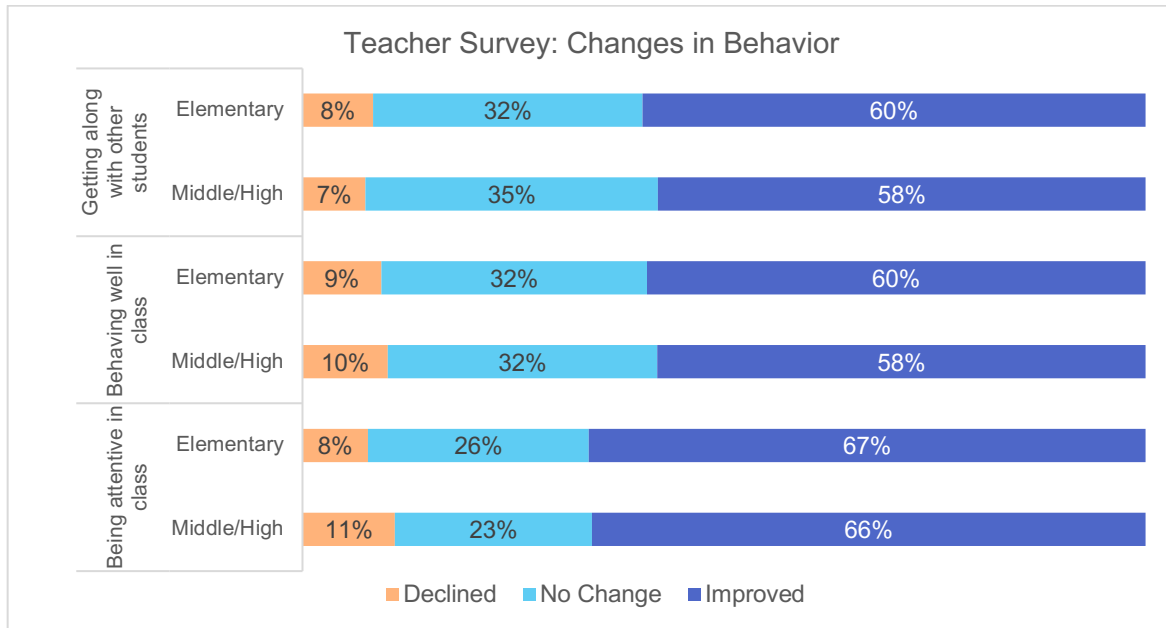
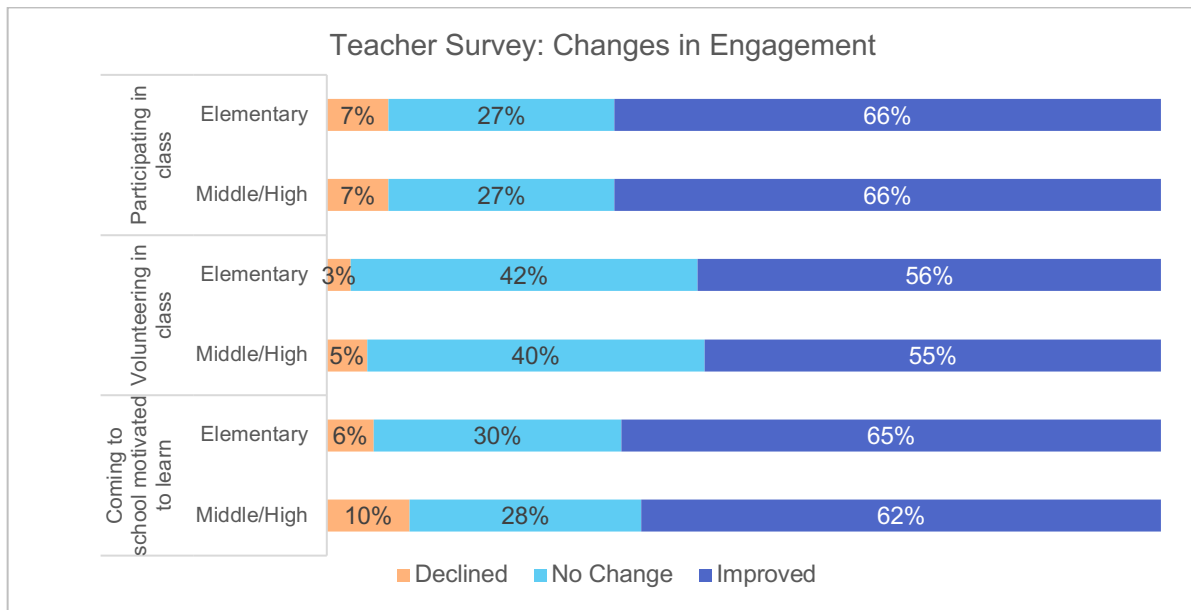


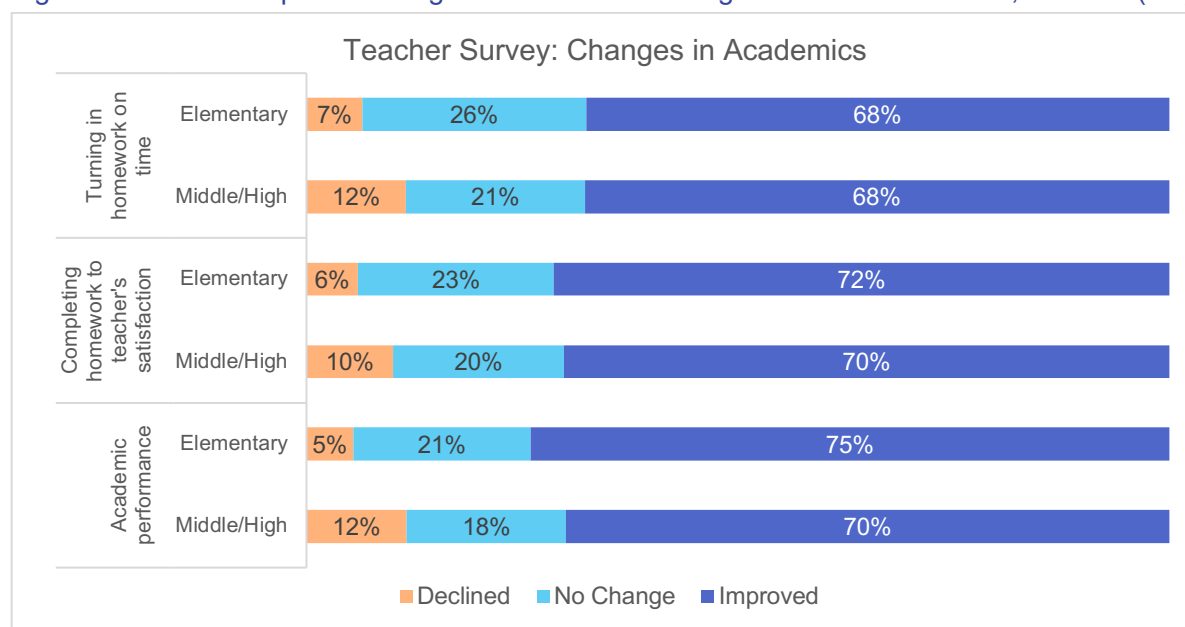
Figure 10. Teacher reported changes in engagement of regular student attendees, 2018-19 (AS)



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Due to Covid-19, Illinois' standardized testing and other standardized tests such as the SAT were not administered in the Spring of 2020. Many schools conducted the spring term using a pass/fail designation instead of their normal grading systems. Therefore, there are little to no data on student achievement for the 2019-2020 school year. Grantees and this evaluation both must rely exclusively on teacher-reported changes, indicated by the teacher survey. Student academic performance was no doubt impacted by the transition to remote schooling in March 2020. Despite that, 68% or more of students improved with regard to certain indicators of academic achievement, according to their teachers.

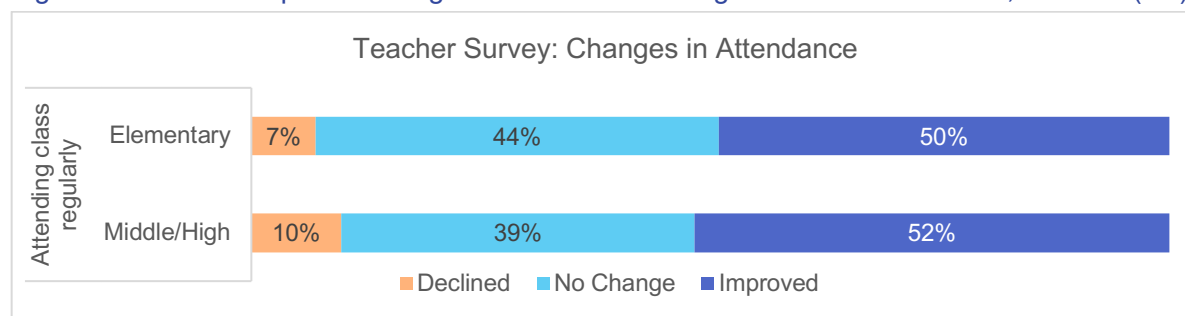
Figure 11. Teacher reported changes in academics for regular student attendees, 2019-20 (AS)



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Improved school attendance is also a state goal and objective of the 21st CCLC program. While some grantees do track and report program participants' school-day attendance, these data are not consistently reported across grantees. Again, the teacher survey is the common instrument available to report changes in this area across the state. As reported on the teacher survey, fifty percent of elementary participants and 52% of middle/high participants improved with respect to attending class regularly. These percentages are slightly lower than in previous years (54% for elementary and 58% for middle/high in FY19). However, given the impact of Covid-19 on schooling, this small decrease is no surprise.

Figure 12. Teacher reported changes in attendance of regular student attendees, 2019-20 (AS)



STUDENT AND FAMILY INCLUSION

The 21st CCLC program includes the goal of providing services to students and families with the greatest need. Grantees largely identify those students through achievement data, free and reduced lunch status, and social emotional needs. In addition, grantees reported relying on teacher and staff referrals identifying high-need students.

APR Student data from the IRC data warehouse indicate that over 80% of elementary and middle school participants qualify for free or reduced lunch. The proportion of limited English proficiency students is highest in the elementary grades—24% compared with 16% of middle school and 11% of high school participants. In contrast, programs serving middle and high school students have a slightly higher proportion of special needs students (15%) than elementary programs (12%).

Figure 13. Methods of identifying high need students by age group, 2019-20 (AS)

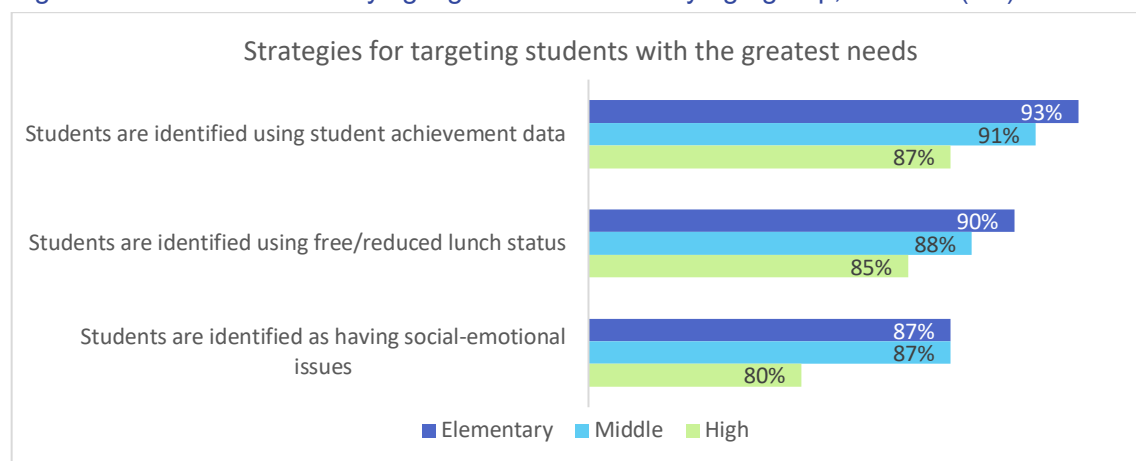


Table 20: Population information of all participants, 2019-20 (APR)

Student Population	preK - 5	6 – 8	9 - 12	Total
Free/Reduced Lunch Status	82%	81%	72%	80%
Limited English Proficiency	24%	16%	11%	19%
Special Needs	12%	15%	15%	14%
Data Not Available	3%	3%	7%	4%

Family Programming

Family engagement and programming have consistently been a challenge for 21st CCLC grantees. This year was no different, particularly with the impact of Covid-19. Many grantees indicated in their local evaluation reports that even if they continued student programming, they ceased family programming in March of 2020.

Approximately 75% of grantees indicated that they met or exceeded their goals with respect to providing services to students' families this year. However, APR data provided through the IRC data warehouse on the number of families served paints a different picture. Compared with FY19, grantees served more than 20% fewer family participants. In addition, we noted that:

- 45 grantees reported zero family participants
- The 13 Chicago Public Schools 21st CCLC grantees had a total of 12,440 family participants (over 70% of all family participants)

Figure 14. Grantee progress in providing services to students' families by grade level, 2019-20 (AS)

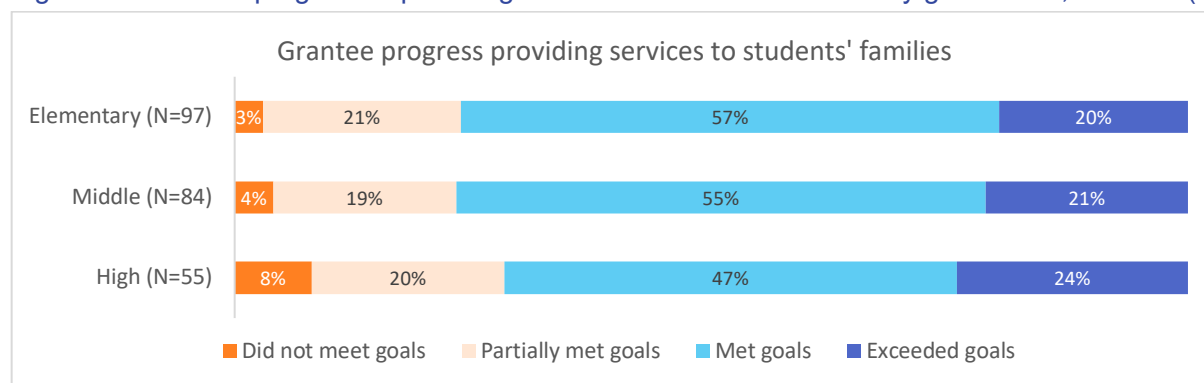


Table 21: Number of family participants across grantees, 2019-20 (APR)

Student Grade Level	Number of Family Participants	
	FY19	FY20
Grades PreK-5	13,262	9,502
Grades 6-12	9,721	8,079
Total	22,983	17,581

In their local evaluation reports, grantees described a variety of family programming. Family nights or celebration events continue to be the most common type of family programming. These include events with themes (arts night, STEM night) as well as cultural celebrations and performances. In terms of programming designed to build the skills of parents and families, the most common types of activities address health, nutrition, and wellness, or school information and skill-building workshops (such as those related to supporting parent-teacher conferences).

Table 22. Types of family activities reported by grantees (LER)

Types of activities	Grantees (N=107)	
	Number	Percent
Family events (social and academic)	65	61%
Health, nutrition & wellness	48	45%
School informational sessions and skill-building workshops	32	30%
Arts, dance and music	23	21%
Parent cafes, parent nights and meet and greet	19	18%
Higher education support	17	16%
Career/job development	15	14%
Adult education	13	12%
Family field trips	7	6.5%
Parent leadership and mentoring	4	4%

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

STAFFING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Grantees provided data on their staffing via the IRC data warehouse, indicating staff who were paid or who volunteer at their programs. Over 25,000 staff worked at ISBE’s 21st CCLC programs in FY20; 30% of staff are school-day teachers, with an additional 17% indicated as non-teaching school staff. This indicates the strong connections that many programs have to the schools that they are affiliated with. School-day staff help programs build connections to participants’ school-day learning, and also can provide academic content expertise.

Table 23: Staffing types of all grantees, 2019-20 (APR)

Staff Type	Paid	Volunteer	Total	Percent
School-Day Teachers	4440	276	4716	30%
Other Non-Teaching School Staff	2359	268	2627	17%
Subcontracted Staff	1767	60	1827	12%
Community Members	598	812	1410	9%
Administrators	1130	167	1297	8%
Other	1112	56	1168	8%
College Students	720	445	1165	7%
High School Students	390	338	728	5%
Parents	118	492	610	4%
Grand Total	12634	2914	15548	100%

In the annual survey, we asked grantees how Covid-19 affected their staff. More than half of grantees reported that they reduced staff due to Covid-19. However, nearly all grantees (94%) engaged remaining staff in professional development and training when Covid-19 hit. When asked to describe the PD and training staff participated, common responses included:

- District trainings on processes and procedures
- District/school sponsored training on technology tools and online learning resources
- Community of practice, learning groups, or staff meetings via Zoom
- Webinars and training provided through Y4Y, ACT Now, Teach Illinois, particularly those on online learning
- Training on delivering mental health services virtually
- Training on technology tools for developing videos and vlogging

Table 24. Grantee staff reductions due to Covid-19 (N=135)

	Number	Percent
Reduced staff due to Covid-19	74	55%
Did not reduce staff due to Covid-19	61	45%

Table 25. Grantee report of staff development or training in response to Covid-19 (N=135)

	Percent	Count
No	6%	8
Yes	94%	127

Aside from and before Covid-19, nearly all grantees take advantage of the specific professional development opportunities offered through ISBE for the 21st CCLC program, such as the annual conference or periodic webinars. Beyond that, the most common areas in which grantees provided professional development were in social-emotional learning, trauma informed practices, discipline and behavior strategies (including PBIS), and STEM.

Table 26. Types of professional development provided, 2019-20 (AS)

	Grantees (N=134)	
	Percent	Number
21st CCLC Program-Specific Training (e.g. ISBE conferences, ISBE webinars)	96%	129
Social and Emotional Learning Training	84%	112
Trauma Informed Practice Training	77%	103
Disciplinary and/or Behavioral Training (e.g. Anger Management, Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS))	72%	96
STEM Training	70%	94
Youth Development Training	65%	87
Illinois Learning Standards Training and/or Common Core Training	62%	83
Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity Training	57%	76
Media/Technology Training	53%	71
Team-Building Training	52%	69
Safety Training (e.g. First Aid, CPR training)	51%	68
Health Training (e.g. nutrition education, fitness education, sexual education)	49%	66
Youth Program Quality Assessment Training	39%	52
English Language Arts Training	37%	50
Other	16%	22

EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

As with much of their programming, most grantees described significant interruptions to their evaluation and continuous improvement efforts due to Covid-19. As made evident in this state-wide evaluation, many data were not collected in the spring of 2020, and dramatic changes in programming and activities made it difficult to identify areas in need of improvement.

According to our review of grantees' local evaluation reports, at least 69% of grantees have an external evaluator. (Some grantees did not indicate whether their evaluator was internal or external.) In their local reports, 72% of grantees included some sort of evaluation plan, which may have included guiding questions, a logic model, or a list of data collection methods and indicators.

When reporting progress in the annual survey, 69% or more of the grantees indicated that they met or exceeded goals related to evaluation activities. However, in their local evaluation reports, grantees reported limitations and challenges in their evaluations due to Covid-19. These included: lack of student grades or achievement data, inability to send out parent and student participant surveys, and challenges with documenting program activities and attendance once the shift to remote programming occurred. This difference in perspective on evaluation progress could be due to the timing of data collection (June 2020 vs October 2020) and/or the difference in person reporting progress (project director vs. evaluator).

Figure 15. Progressing in using data to improve the program, by cohort (AS)

		Did not meet goals	Partially met goals	Met goals	Exceeded goals
Elem (N=97)	Implemented evaluation activities	4%	21%	55%	21%
	Used data to improve the program	1%	25%	51%	24%
Middle (N=84)	Implemented evaluation activities	4%	21%	54%	21%
	Used data to improve the program	2%	23%	53%	23%
High (N=55)	Implemented evaluation activities	5%	15%	54%	26%
	Used data to improve the program	1%	30%	45%	24%

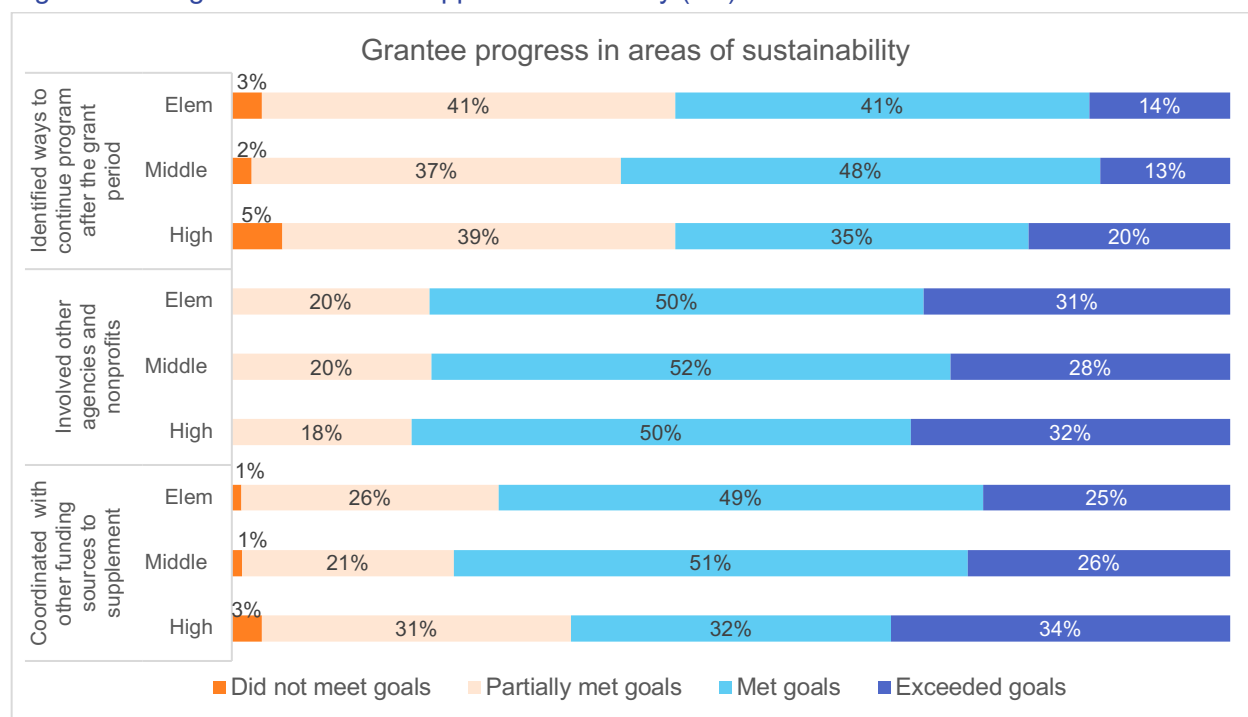
FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY

Some grantees had their funding impacted by Covid-19, with 38% reporting that their funding was decreased due to the pandemic and associated closures. However, grantees reported progress in different efforts to support program sustainability. At least 55% of grantees reported that they met or exceeded goals in identifying ways to continue the program after the grant period. Grantees also report meeting goals related to partnerships and coordinating supplemental funding.

Table 27. Grantee report on funding impacted (decreased) by Covid-19 (AS)

Was your funding impacted by Covid-19?	Grantees (N=135)	
	Percent	Count
No	72%	97
Yes	38%	38

Figure 16. Progress activities to support sustainability (AS)



PROGRAM-REPORTED CHALLENGES & RECOMMENDATIONS

BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

Grantees confronted a new set of challenges and barriers this year due to Covid-19. Nearly all grantees reported that student access to technology and/or the internet was at least somewhat of a challenge. Student ability to use technology and availability of appropriate resources and activities was also a common challenge.

Beyond Covid-19, many of the challenges and barriers that have been reported in previous years persisted. The two most common barriers to implementation were parent involvement and inconsistent attendance. The top challenges are the same as last year. Other challenges offered by grantees included: language barriers, staff retention, time available for staff development, and student motivation/engagement.

Figure 17. Grantee reported challenges related to Covid-19 (N=99)

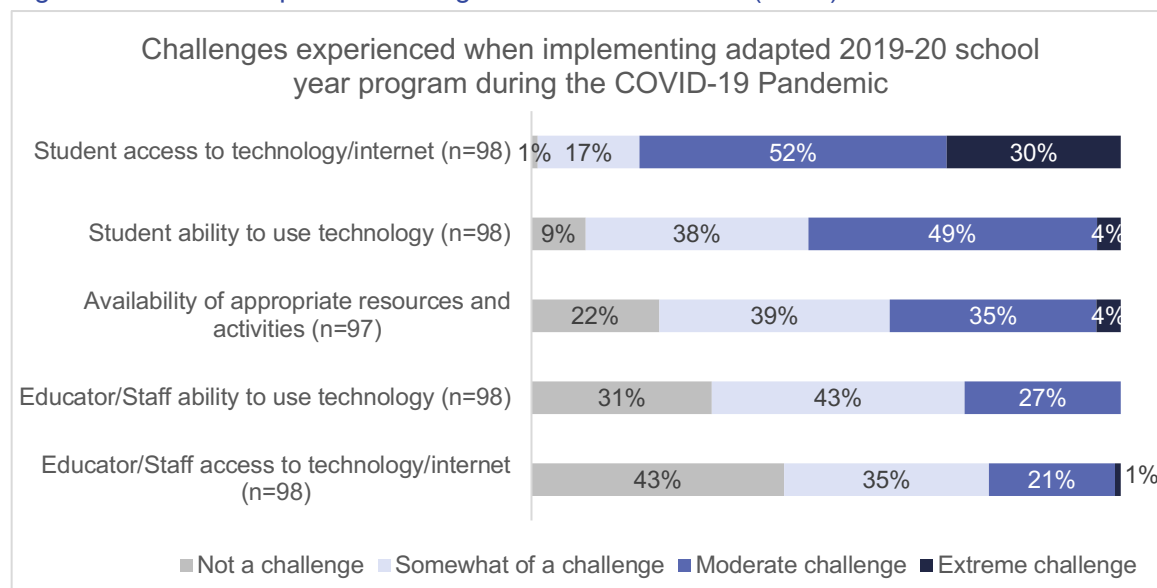


Table 28: Barriers to program implementation by age group, 2019-20 (AS)

Shaded cells indicate top three barriers for age group

	Elementary (N=97)	Middle (N=105)	High (N=74)
Inconsistent attendance of students	68%	80%	94%
Poor parent involvement in activities	80%	76%	90%
Competing responsibilities because student must work	8%	21%	74%
Competing responsibilities at home, such as the need to babysit siblings	35%	63%	73%
Competing activities at school in which the students want to participate	46%	61%	69%

	Elementary (N=97)	Middle (N=105)	High (N=74)
Difficulty in recruiting students	38%	52%	64%
Negative peer pressure and/or gangs influencing students	25%	43%	42%
Difficulty in maintaining a safe environment for students when coming/going from site	20%	22%	32%
Difficulty in maintaining/identifying partners	32%	33%	31%
Too little time with students	23%	25%	30%
Poor cooperation from day teacher	28%	32%	27%
Difficulties in transporting students (cost, logistics)	17%	15%	20%
Difficulty in communicating with school	15%	13%	19%
Poor cooperation from school in obtaining necessary information	14%	12%	17%

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

Grantees are encouraged to identify areas for program improvement in their local evaluation reports. In reviewing these reports, the evaluation codes and aggregates these recommendations to offer a broad snapshot of the areas that grantees are most concerned with and in need of support.

The most common recommendations that were included in the grantees' local evaluation reports were consistent with previous years: improving parent involvement and programming and attending to student recruitment and retention. It is useful to note that these align with the top two barriers identified in the survey. However, there were some new challenges compared with previous years, and these may stem from Covid-19. More than in previous years, grantees cited the need to expand or change the range of activities they are offering to students. For the first time, a number of grantees also specifically cited the need to increase student engagement. These two evaluation recommendations are closely related, as offering new and different activities that better align with students' needs and interests can support engagement.

Another new recommendation in this year's local evaluation reports was the idea of implementing staff team building activities. This was mentioned separately from (and often in addition) staff training and professional development. The need for team building could be a result of Covid-19 and the shift to remote programming.

However, very few reports identified specific recommendations that were described as being in direct response to Covid-19. It is not clear, at the time of the reports, the extent to which grantees were focused on program improvement (that is, they were focused on keeping their programs operating) or whether they had the necessary data and feedback to identify such recommendations.

Table 29. Local evaluation report cited recommendations for program improvement (LER)
 Shaded cells indicate top four recommendations each year.

Recommendation	% of Grantees including this in local evaluation report			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Increase/improve parent/guardian/family programming and involvement	53%	63%	56%	56%
Address recruitment, attendance, and/or retention issues	43%	44%	51%	51%
Expand or alter the range of activities being offered	33%	29%	28%	48%
Increase/improve the use of data, data collection, and/or evaluation	55%	50%	51%	46%
Increase/improve further staff training and professional development	46%	39%	36%	36%
Address program sustainability	35%	42%	34%	34%
Increase/improve connection to school day and school day teachers and/or administrators	22%	23%	23%	27%
Increase/improve social emotional learning supports and activities	27%	25%	18%	27%
Increase/improve partnerships and/or community outreach opportunities	25%	17%	34%	25%
Increase student engagement efforts	0%	0%	0%	20%
Adjust staffing composition or hire staff for specified needs	17%	13%	15%	18%
Increase/improve attention to and support for positive student behavior	4%	11%	9%	14%
Focus on staff team building efforts	0%	0%	0%	5%
Provide (additional) youth development programming and opportunities	13%	14%	1%	0%
Increase/improve support for college and career readiness	8%	0%	0%	0%

CONCLUSION

The impact that Covid-19 had on the 2019-20 school year cannot be overstated, and 21st CCLC programs experienced significant collateral damage as schools had to quickly transform into remote learning environments. It is clear that many 21st CCLC programs were creative and committed to their students and families as in their response. Inevitably, grantees were hampered in their efforts to address many of 21st CCLC goals. The evaluation was also impacted, there is a lack of achievement data and other data are limited and unreliable.

Given and despite these limitations, the evaluation is able to report on the progress of ISBE's 21st CCLC program in meeting its objectives.

Objective #1: Participants in the program will demonstrate increased academic achievement. Given the lack of standardized testing and end-of-year grades, the only measure of academic achievement available in FY20 is teachers' report of regular participant improvement. Teacher surveys indicate that the majority of regular attendees (68%+) improved with respect to academic indicators. These survey data indicate less progress than in the previous year, which is likely a result of Covid-19. With a much smaller proportion of teachers reporting this year, the evaluation offers caution in interpreting these data and making judgements.

Objective #2: Participants will demonstrate an increased involvement in school activities and in participating in other subject areas such as technology, arts, music, theater, sports and other activities. Grantees continue to offer a range of programming and activities, with nearly all grantees indicating they include STEM and arts programming along with academic support. Grantees reported using technology both as a tool for learning and as a subject through activities like coding, robotics, and media-making. With the transition to remote programming, many grantees reported sending home materials and kits, including art supplies, to students' homes. Covid-19 forced many grantees to innovate and develop or locate new activities that could be done remotely, and this was a challenge for many grantees. While it continues to be a challenge to evaluate whether participants are increasing their involvement, it is clear that 21st CCLC programs were vital in keeping some students connected and involved with their education.

Objective #3: Participants in the program will demonstrate social benefits and exhibit positive behavioral changes. Nearly all grantees offer some sort of SEL programming, and the majority also offer a range of youth development and prevention programs and activities. As the evaluation has shared in previous years, evaluating this objective is challenging given the variety of activities and specific goals and outcomes that grantees strive for within the broad category of social benefits and positive behavior. The teacher survey is the only common measure across grantees, and according to these surveys, 58%+ of regular participants improved with respect to various behavior indicators. The percent of students improving with respect to behaving well in class was notably lower than last year; this is likely another casualty of Covid-19.

Objective #4: The 21st CCLC programs will provide opportunities for the community to be involved and will increase family involvement of the participating children. Grantees response to Covid-19 may be most remarkable with respect to the efforts they made to maintain communication with students and their families. Grantees described employing new strategies to maintain communication with families, and provided valuable services and supports including

technology, supplies, and food. However, Covid-19 also had a negative impact on grantees' ability to provide parent programming and activities, as the number of family members that participated in activities was significantly lower than last year. Grantees continue to report that lack of parent involvement is a significant barrier to achieving their program goals and identify parent programming and engagement as an area for program improvement.

Objective #5: Programs will provide opportunities, with priority given to all students who are lowest performing and in the greatest need of academic assistance. Grantees continue to target and serve students in the greatest need. Grantees report that they recruit students based on those that are in need of academic and/or social emotional support. The majority of students qualified for free or reduced lunch, and is notable that 24% of elementary school participants designated Limited English Proficiency.

Objective #6: Professional development will be offered by the programs and ISBE to meet the needs of the program, staff, and students. Staff development and training was critical as grantees pivoted their programs to online, and nearly all grantees (94%) indicated that they provided specific training in response to Covid-19. Training focused on technology and online learning, and grantees took advantage of professional development offered by ISBE and Illinois Quality Afterschool as well as other organizations included Y4Y, ACT Now, and Teach Illinois.

Objective #7: Projects will create sustainability plans to continue the programs beyond the federal funding period. Grantees continue to work toward program sustainability. The progress that grantees reported making in this area was consistent with previous years, with approximately 40% of grantees indicating that they partially met their goals in identifying ways to continue to program after the grant period. Many grantees indicated that their funding was impacted by Covid-19, adding to the challenges in this area. The majority of the grantees included in this report are operating under extensions, and therefore have been in operation for more than 5 years, and it will be important for these grants to focus on sustainability as their second grant period comes to an end.

APPENDIX A: LOCAL EVALUATION REPORT SUMMARY

ISBE requires all active grantees to submit an annual local evaluation report. The same report template has been used by the grantees since 2015 with minor updates to reflect changes in grant duration. Over the past five years, EDC has provided technical assistance and guidance related to the requirements for the local evaluation reports, so that grantees are now familiar with the report templates and report expectations.

Reports for FY20 (reporting on activities and data from July 2019 through June 2020) were received by ISBE from grantees in the 2013, 2015 and 2019 Cohorts in November 2020. While grantees have been instructed to submit one report per grant, a few grantees either submitted one report for multiple grants or multiple reports (one report for site) for one grant. Local evaluation reports were submitted for all active grants, and 128 reports were reviewed for this summary².

While the report template has improved the consistency of the reports, the quality and substance of the local evaluations vary. Most grantees adhered closely to the report template, ensuring that they addressed the basic and fundamental questions about grant progress and outcomes. However, the extent to which they provided data to support their claims ranged from extensive analysis to minimal reporting.

EDC reviewed all of the submitted reports³. EDC does not code the reports in order to aggregate specific outcome findings; EDC relies on the annual survey as well as the IRC data warehouse to collect those data. Instead, the evaluation review focuses on the categories of data included, the extent to which the evaluations addressed the statewide goals, and the recommendations for program improvement. EDC's review serves several functions: it allows EDC to quantify how grantees are evaluating their programs and what kinds of data they offer as evidence of their programs' success; it provides EDC with a deeper understanding of the progress, successes, and challenges of the grantees and enables EDC to identify trends across the state; and it provides EDC with data to inform future evaluations as well as technical assistance efforts.

ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY

The report template asks grantees to provide information on program implementation and progress toward each of the 7 statewide program objectives. It also asks grantees to describe their evaluation plan and data collection. Seventy-two percent of grantees identified an external evaluator in their report.

The reports were reviewed and coded to gain a high level understanding of grantees' progress toward meeting the statewide objectives. Reviewers noted whether information and data were provided to address each of the objectives, and if there were data, made a judgement as to

² The number of reports is not the same as the number of active grants because of these reporting issues.

³ Three members of the evaluation team reviewed and coded reports. Reviewers coded three reports together, and then coded two additional reports separately which were then compared and cross-checked for consistency. The remaining reports were then divided among the reviewers; regular meetings during the coding process allowed reviewers to raise questions and ensure consistent coding across the complete set of reports.

whether those data provided evidence that progress was being made. Estimation of progress was a judgement call on the part of the reviewer; in some cases, activities were described and output or outcome data were not provided, or data were included but did not directly indicate that gains were made.

Table A1: Grantee reports on statewide objectives (N=128)

Statewide Objective	Not reported	Reported progress with no evidence	Reported progress with inconclusive evidence	Reported progress with evidence
1. Participants in the program will demonstrate increased academic achievement	8%	6%	27%	59%
2. Participants will demonstrate an increased involvement in school activities and in participating in other subject areas such as technology, arts, music, theater, sports and other activities.	3%	6%	30%	60%
3. Participants in the program will demonstrate social benefits and exhibit positive behavioral changes	5%	5%	23%	66%
4. The 21 st CCLC programs will provide opportunities for the community to be involved and will increase family involvement of the participating children.	4%	6%	29%	61%
5. Programs will provide opportunities, with priority given to all students who are lowest performing and in the greatest need of academic assistance.	14%	6%	13%	67%
6. Professional development will be offered by the programs and ISBE to meet the needs of the program, staff, and students.	3%	5%	22%	70%
7. Projects will create sustainability plans to continue the programs beyond the federal funding period.	13%	6%	19%	63%

Implementation Data

Implementation information included in the local evaluation reports consisted of enrollment and attendance data; student demographics; information about family participation and activities; program hours and operations; and information about staffing and staff training. Nearly all grantees (128, 100%) included enrollment and attendance data along with student demographic data (127, or 99%). Similarly, most grantees provided data on their program operation and hours (125,98%), their staff (118, 92%), and staff professional development (120, 94%). While most grantees provided some description and account of family activities (91%), only 52% of grantees provided participation data for their family programs.

Table A2: Types of implementation data reported (N=128)

Implementation data	Grantees	
	Number	Percent
Recruitment, enrollment, and attendance	128	100%
Student demographics	127	99%
Family activities	117	91%
Family participation	67	52%
Program hours and operation	125	98%
Staff information	118	92%
Staff professional development	120	94%

Even though parent and family engagement has consistently been a challenge for 21st CCLC grantees, local evaluation reports can be a useful source of data in understanding the kinds of family programming grantees provide. Descriptions of activities in this area show that grantees provide a variety of workshops, classes, showcases, theme nights, fitness and field trips to parents and families. For example, most of the sub-grants reported family engagement activities (61%) that centered around social and academic-themed events such as STEM night, family nights and showcases, game nights, literacy nights and a variety of family celebrations. Grantees also reported that they provided skill-building and/or education related activities (30%) which consisted of financial literacy, resume workshops, GED/ESL classes, and computer classes. Another 45% of grantees offered activities and workshops related to health and wellness, which included weekly wellness days, cooking classes, meditation, and fitness classes. A smaller portion of grantees provided arts, music, and dance classes (21%) and college and career readiness activities (13%) to parents and families.

Additionally, the report review revealed that while a large portion of the grantees reported that they offered events to parents and families, some grantees simply stated that they did so with little to no specific information about what those activities were. A very small portion of grantees (8%) did not provide any information on family activities or noted that family activities were not offered.

Table A3: Types of family activities reported (N=107)

Types of activities	Grantees	
	Number	Percent
Family events (social and academic)	65	61%
Health, nutrition & wellness	48	45%
Adult education	13	12%

Types of activities	Grantees	
	Number	Percent
Informational sessions and skill-building workshops	32	30%
Higher education support	17	16%
Parent cafes, parent nights and meet and greet	19	18%
Family field trips	7	6.5%
Arts, dance and music	23	21%
Career/job development	15	14%
Parent leadership and mentoring	4	4%

Outcome Data

Collecting outcome data—and particularly data on student academic achievement—was a challenge for many grantees this year. One of the main data points that grantees use to determine progress with respect to student academic achievement is standardized test scores. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, standardized state assessments were not administered. The SAT is now used as the standardized test for high school students and those tests were also not administered during Spring 2020. Due to the lack of achievement data, many grantees were not able to make comparisons of the standardized test data with the previous year and instead had to use grades as an indicator. However, many grantees also indicated that due to Covid-19 and the implementation of remote learning, school employed pass/fail grading instead of the usual grading system. This further inhibited grantees’ ability to measure change in academic achievement.

The APR Teacher Survey was the most frequently utilized source of outcome data in FY20 local evaluation reports, which was also the case in FY19. This survey asks each regular participant’s school day teacher to indicate positive and negative changes in behavior and achievement; 85% of grantees included findings based on these data in their reports.

Fifty percent of grantees provided data on participants’ grades and/or changes in their grades over the course of the year, which is a decrease from the 75% that reported these data in 2019. Despite Covid-19, many grantees were still able to utilize surveys of youth and parents as part of their evaluation, with 53% utilizing youth surveys and 70% utilizing parent surveys which is a decrease from the 75% (parent surveys) reported in 2019. A small proportion of grantees provided other outcome data, including indicators such as disciplinary rates, grade promotion/retention rates, and graduation rates. In addition, some sites reported that they use the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) instrument.

Table A4: Types of outcome data reported (N=128)

Outcome data	Grantees	
	Number	Percent
Teacher APR survey	109	85%
Youth participant survey	68	53%
Student grades/grade changes	64	50%
Parent survey	90	70%
IAR/PARCC scores	0	0%
Other assessment/outcome data	6	5%

Other assessment data: In some cases, some grantees (5%) provided data on alternative standardized assessment. The most frequently used assessment was NWEA's MAP interim assessment.

Youth participant surveys: As indicated above, more than half (53%) of grantees included data from student surveys, contributing to findings with respect to one or more program outcomes/statewide objectives:

- Quality and satisfaction with respect to programming and activities. Example: When I'm at the afterschool program I feel challenged in a good way; When I'm at the afterschool program I learn new things.
- Quality and satisfaction with respect to environment, other students, and staff. Example: Kids treat each other with respect at this afterschool program; Kids at this afterschool program are friendly.
- Self-report on changes in behavior, attitudes, and achievement. Example: Due to my participation in the afterschool program it has helped me do better in math; Due to my participation in the afterschool program it has helped me be more involved in school activities.
- Some sites reported that they surveyed students on social and emotional learning (for example, using the Panorama assessment) Example: I feel good about my future and myself; I stand up for what I believe in.

Parent surveys: Almost three quarters of the evaluation reports (70%) included data from parent surveys contributing to findings with respect to one or more program outcomes/statewide objectives:

- Parent perception of changes in their child's behavior, attitudes, and skills. Example: Because of participating in the [afterschool program], my child cares more about school.
- Quality and satisfaction with respect to programming and activities for their child. Example: My child enjoys the afterschool program. Example: Since attending the program, my child has improved his/her grades in school.
- Quality and satisfaction with respect to programming and activities for parents and families. Example: The family activities offered by [afterschool program] are fun and/or informative.
- Parent engagement in their child's education. Example: I feel comfortable assisting my child with their homework.
- Suggestions for improving offerings provided to parents and families.

REPORTED RECOMMENDATIONS

The majority of grantees (94%) concluded their evaluation reports with recommendations for program improvement or suggestions for program development and enhancement. The three most common areas of recommendations were to increase or improve parent involvement and programming, improve student recruitment and retention and expand or alter program offerings and activities, with at least half of the grantees including a recommendation in these areas (56%, 54% and 48% respectively). Additionally, another area in which almost half (46%) of the grantees included a recommendation was related to data collection and use.

In reviewing recommendations for program improvement, it was noted that many recommendations do not address just one challenge or issue. Programs are systems, and components are interconnected and influence one another. For example, a recommendation for staff hiring may in fact be a response to the need for better supports for youth during out of school time. A recommendation for improved community outreach may be the strategy to address sustainability or family involvement. Recommendations were coded in multiple categories if appropriate, and a best effort was made to consider and understand the focus of the various recommendations as a way for the evaluation to describe and analyze the challenges facing programs across the state. Descriptions and examples of the recommendations are provided below.

Table A5: Recommendations (N=128)

Recommendation	Grantees	
	Number	Percent
Improve/increase parent and family Involvement and programming	72	56%
Address recruitment, attendance, and/or retention issues	70	51%
Expand or alter the range of program offerings and activities	62	48%
Improve/increase data collection, data use, and/or evaluation	59	46%
Increase staff professional development or provide professional development to address a particular need	46	36%
Address program sustainability	43	34%
Increase/improve the connection between program and program staff and school day activities and/or teachers	35	27%
Increase/Improve social-emotional program components	35	27%
Increase/improve partnerships and/or community outreach efforts	32	25%
Increase student engagement efforts	26	20%
Adjust staff composition, hire staff, or address other issues through program staffing strategy	23	18%
Address issues of student behavior in programs	18	14%
Focus on staff team building efforts	6	5%
No recommendations offered	7	6%

Parent and family programming and involvement (56% of grantees): Almost three quarters of the grantees’ local evaluation reports included a recommendation with respect to parent and family involvement and programs to facilitate that. Recommendations addressed several aspects with respect to parent and family involvement, such as soliciting input on parent interests and needs to plan more relevant or appealing programs, continue to offer parent programming on a more consistent basis, offering more virtual parent programming, and employing new strategies or methods to improve communication with parents and to increase interest and participation. Specific recommendations included:

- “Engage families in virtual focus groups to support feedback collection during District mandated Virtual Learning.”
- “When schools reopen for in-person learning, CASA can continue to provide online learning for parents.”
- Continue to align parent and family engagement programs for greater continuity of experience and information, increasing points of entry and access for parents to be aware of the range of opportunities for involvement.”

- “Continue to survey and take polls regarding parent interest in workshops, seminars, and family engagement activities.”
- Provide workshops and activities on varied dates and times to increase accessibility for families.”
- “The evaluators suggest a sharing of parent/community connections strategies amongst all program coordinators in order to learn from each other and continue supporting the goal of increasing parent/community involvement.”

Recruitment, attendance and retention (51%): About half of the evaluation reports indicated in their recommendations that programs need to address issues with respect to recruitment, attendance, and retention. Some reports recommended offering incentives to promote participation in programming. Others recommended improved attendance monitoring, making sure that the students with the greatest need are targeted and prioritized, such as increasing enrollment for middle and high school students. Examples of recommendations:

- “Focus on students with the greatest need for program enrollment and focus on activities that will draw in students, especially at the high school level.”
- “Develop student advisory to expand recruitment, retention and incentive plans.”
- “Survey students who have participated in the 21st CCLC program for 3 or more years to ascertain why they stayed in the program and what they think could be changed so other students would also remain in the program and increase their attendance.”
- “More activities that build an attitude of connectivity and attachment to the school should be provided to students to increase class attendance.”
- “It is recommended that additional incentives be developed in year three to increase the level of involvement for those participating 30 days or more, and also to increase the overall participation of high school students.”
- “All sites should continue to work with families and students to encourage high rates of attendance and implement YPQI practices to support engaging and positive youth development opportunities for students that incentivize regular attendance.”
- “Continue efforts to increase participation for middle and high school students and for 2020-2021 school year either remotely or in-person if that option exists.”

Expand program activities (48% of grantees): Almost half of the local evaluations that suggested that programs offer additional activities and programming for participants made this recommendation in conjunction with or as a strategy to address other issues—mainly to strengthen the program or expand programming in certain areas, such as STEM, technology and mentoring. In some instances, the recommendations suggested on the need to improve student engagement at different levels. Examples of recommendations:

- “Continue dual credit, credit, and credit recovery courses and add enrichment activities.”
- “Technology-related programming should be offered more frequently at most sites in order to address the home-access technology gap that exists between the 21st Century target population and the general population of students. Lack of access to or use of technology at most sites has been an ongoing issue for several years and continued to be in 2018-19.”
- “Continue offering academic activities ranging from tutoring, to reading and math clubs.”
- “Sponsor long-range Service Learning/Community Service projects—that can build a bridge between the community and the 21st CCLC—to encourage students to become more comfortable with volunteering.”

Data collection, data use, and/or evaluation (46% of grantees): About half of the grantees’ local evaluations cited the need to improve or increase the data being collected, collecting data for

program effectiveness or program impact, the use of data in making decisions, or the use of evaluation in understanding their programs. Evaluations described the need to collect more and different types of data in order to determine areas of improvement and in accessing data to improve and guide instructional and program changes, and to develop or improve their own surveys to better meet the needs of their students and families. Examples of specific recommendations in this area:

- “Consider implementing a more streamlined data management and survey process.”
- “Develop more effective program and performance measures and assess results more continuously throughout the year.”
- “Create a new process for collecting teacher surveys - including for student surveys.”
- “Survey those students who attended < 10 days during the fall semester to determine cause(s) that prevented students from reaching regular attendee status (30 + days).”
- “Make changes to the parent and student surveys on program satisfaction and impact.
- “Data need to be collected on what children parents have in the after-school program so that a two- generational impact assessment can be undertaken.”
- “Continue to survey and take polls regarding parent interest in workshops, seminars, and family engagement activities.”

Staff training and professional development (36% of grantees): A good number of grantees mentioned the need for staff training and professional development within their recommendations. In some cases, the recommendation mentioned specific skills or program areas that needed to be addressed through staff development, especially more training on effective remote learning practices. In other cases, the recommendation suggested the need to assess staff’s professional development needs. For example, recommendations included building staff capacity to support student social-emotional development and academic skills. Recommendations also cited the need to gather staff input on training. Examples of recommendation in this area included:

- “To build a stronger team—and retain instructors for several years—CASA should organize a quarterly inter-school workshop and summer “institute” for Instructors that will provide them with growth opportunities.”
- “It is recommended that a similar approach to designing a PD program for staff be conducted in the third project year, but that there also be more offerings and additional hours invested by the staff in PD.”
- “Increased training for all staff to access available student data to support academic monitoring and needs identification.”
- “Offer professional development on behavior management.”
- “BPNC will continue to seek opportunities for its RC and parent coordinator to participate in relevant and timely professional development trainings.”

Sustainability (34% of grantees): Sustainability is an area of concern for many grantees, and about one third of the local evaluation reports included the need to attend to sustainability as part of their recommendations. Recommendations, for the most part, were fairly generic and most often included a statement that grantees should, “The site will need to continue to build relationships with the school and community organizations to plan for sustainability,” or review their sustainability plan. Some recommendations included specific calls to develop specific partnerships or otherwise engage others to address the challenge of sustainability. Examples of recommendations included:

- “Target sustainability by adding more partners, working to document indirect funding.”
- “Track the effect of this component to help demonstrate the need and effectiveness for funders to further increase sustainability.”

- “Work with program partners, including Metis Associates and the United Way, to update program sustainability plans and to identify and pursue additional sources of funding to support components of the 21st CCLC program.”
- “The project’s Governance Council in consultation with the Management Team and the After-School Coordination Council should continue with their planning to develop strategies for supporting the project as it continues to move through its new five-year cycle with supplemental funding and in-kind services.”
- “Continue to work with the Advisory Board on a sustainability.”

Connection to school day and school day teachers (27% of grantees): Some local evaluations recommended that sites develop or improve communication methods and strategies to help program staff and school day teachers and staff share information and update one another about progress and issues with specific students. Recommendations also included improving communication with school administrators to help program activities better align with school-day academic content. Recommendations included:

- “Link to school-day academics, standards-based learning.”
- “...Collaborate with building/district administration to determine, prioritize, and incentivize areas for focused intervention based on site need.”
- “Greater communication with school day teachers.”
- “The evaluators encourage the programs already in place to foster that school connection.”
- “Explore other ways to create stronger partnerships with teachers and parents.”

Social emotional learning (27% of grantees): Some evaluations noted the need for enhanced or increased efforts to improve the social emotional learning of program participants, especially during the pandemic. In some instances, the recommendation focused on the need to improve program capacity to help students develop social emotional competencies by training and hiring staff. In other cases, the recommendation was to consider administering a student assessment focused on social emotional learning. Examples of recommendations include:

- “Provide social skills training in a range of topics provided by highly qualified staff to “at-risk” students and those with low levels of engagement.”
- “Consider participating in knowledge-sharing activities with other after-school program providers to learn best practices in incorporating social-emotional learning activities, engaging older students in after-school programming, and providing remote instruction.”
- “Consider adding a social emotional assessment.”
- “The grantee will continue their efforts to incorporate SEL into all of their program offerings and provide pathways for youth participants to engage with the counseling team.”

Partnerships or community outreach (25% of grantees): Recommendations related to developing better and stronger community partnerships or improving outreach efforts often were connected to the need for expanded program activities for students or sustainability efforts. These recommendations encouraged grantees to seek out community or school partnerships to provide programming, provide professional development or to strengthen and improve relationships such as parent engagement and work towards sustainability of the program. Examples of recommendations:

- “Identify District personnel or program partners (e.g., the United Way) to provide training for staff in the areas requested (e.g., social-emotional learning, project-based learning, etc.).”

- “Establishing and strengthening of advisory councils and creating a shared vision among partners was also a focus of CQIP efforts.”
- “Community outreach and engaging stakeholder committee.”
- “[The grantee] should continue to participate in school community groups and partners.”
- “It is recommended the program continue to reflect on how to consistently provide diverse and enriching afterschool experiences for DREAM students, continuing to build relationships with and utilize partner organizations in such programming.”

Increase student engagement efforts (20%): Some local evaluation reports recommended that grantees need to implement strategies to increase student engagement in programming. Some grantees specifically want to focus on engaging youth to increase attendance. Other evaluations recommended targeting low attendance students and provide interventions to engage them more.

- “Increase youth engagement and co-creation of programming.”
- “Continue offering academic activities ranging from tutoring, to reading and math clubs to increase engagement.”
- “Continuing to identify students with increased rates of absences, increased numbers of disciplinary infractions, or low levels of engagement for mentoring or intervention.”
- “Identification of students with high rates of school-day absences and implement after school attendance incentives.”

Adjust staff composition, staffing strategies or hire staff (18%): Some local evaluation reports recommended that grantees address staffing issues, such as the need to hire more staff for program offerings. Other evaluations mentioned the need for a change in the types of staff that should be hired and trained. Specific recommendations included:

- “Prepare to provide additional stipends or hazard pay to part time instructors as transitions to in- person classes or instruction occur throughout the year. Provide staff with classroom assistants to help the instructors with classroom management issues.”
- “Seeking tutors that feel comfortable with higher level math and other high school subject areas and utilization of peer tutors at this level should be considered.”
- “Site coordinators recommended increasing support staff.”
- “Continue recruiting and training adult volunteers and/or high school students who have been recommended by teachers as tutors for students struggling with mathematics.”

Student behavior (14%): A very small number of reports included recommendations related to student behavior. Some reports cited the need to increase the communication between the students and staff to address behavioral issues. Other reports cited identifying students specifically with disciplinary infractions and provide additional supports to address behavioral problems. Specific recommendations included:

- “Continue efforts to improve student behavior and school attendance.”
- “Continue to work to address issues of student behavior.”
- “Continuing to identify students with increased rates of absences, increased numbers of disciplinary infractions, or low levels of engagement for mentoring or intervention.”
- “It is recommended that the Program continue to build on and use the Restorative Practices model while continuing to collect data to gain more Restorative Practice information.”

Staff team building efforts (5%): A very small number of evaluations recommended strategies for staff team building efforts, such as having teacher teams work together to develop program measures.

- “Staff team building (especially with virtual programming).”
- “Increase the communication between the school disciplinarian and principal and the community school resource coordinators during weekly community school leadership meeting.”
- “Work with teacher teams and school administrators to develop site-specific measures of 21CCLC learning aligned to school assessments and curriculum.”

CONCLUSION

Grantee utilization of the annual local evaluation report template continues to improve the overall consistency of reporting, and clearly encourages greater reflection on progress being made toward program objectives. Even though this last year was very challenging due to the pandemic, grantees continued to reflect on their program and identify recommendations for program improvement. **Eighty-six percent of grantees provided evidence of progress for at least one of the statewide objectives, and 30% provided evidence of progress for all 7 objectives.**