

1. Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers [Goals 1, 2 and 5]

Identify the percentage of students participating in 21st Century Community Learning Centers who meet or exceed the proficient level of performance on State assessments in reading and mathematics. The State must collect baseline data for the 2002-2003 school year, and submit all of these data to the Department no later than early September of 2003 or by a date the Department will announce.

ISBE is designated as the agency responsible for the administration and supervision of programs assisted under Title IV, Part B, 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC).

Use of Funds

ISBE will use funds received under this part as follows:

- 2% of the total will be used for administration, peer review of applications, and grant procedures.
- 3% of the total will be used for monitoring and evaluation of programs and activities; providing capacity building, training and technical assistance to grantees; evaluating the effectiveness of programs and activities; and providing technical assistance to eligible entities.
- Remainder of funds (95%) will be awarded to eligible applicants through a competitive grant process.

Size and Scope of Grants

ISBE will issue grants to grantees that are of sufficient size and scope to support high-quality, effective programs and that will assure reasonable success of achieving the goals identified in the application and those activities necessary to achieve those goals.

ISBE will guarantee a minimum grant of \$50,000 to successful applicants. This information will be clearly communicated to all eligible entities both through pre-application informational meetings and within the application guidelines. No grant will be awarded for less than \$50,000.

ISBE will communicate program and fiscal information during pre-application sessions by providing a sample budget in the application guidelines and during the final negotiation sessions prior to approving the final budget. In addition, ISBE has established a 21st CCLC Web site that contains budget information and suggestions, as well as the application for funding, guidelines, and other sources of information helpful for the preparation of the application.

Application and Review Process

Because FY03 is the first year for state administration of 21st CCLC at the state level, under *NCLB*, ISBE plans to issue an RFP as quickly as possible after receipt of funds. The anticipated release date is August 2002. Proposals will be returned to ISBE within 45 days after the RFP is released.

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated according to the criteria outlined in Table 7 by a panel of peers selected to represent the geographic regions of the state and LEAS, community-based organizations, and other public and private entities, including faith-based organizations.

Implementing Effective Strategies

ISBE will conduct initial information sessions for all new grantees within 30 days of announcing the awards. During these sessions, grantees will be made aware of the nature and scope of resources available through the ISBE, introduced to other statewide resources (e.g., Illinois After-school Initiative Task Force, Illinois Department of Public Health), and linked with education/business/industry partnerships (e.g., Illinois Learning Partnerships, Center for Educational Change).

All new grantees also will be partnered with an existing 21st CCLC grantee. It is expected that this partnership will allow new grantees to utilize the experience of current centers, resulting in a network of centers demonstrating effective practices and allowing for the mentoring of new centers. ISBE, utilizing a portion of the 3% reserved for capacity building, training, and technical assistance, could then call upon mentor or demonstration centers to provide assistance in response to ongoing identified needs. This network would also be in place after funding has ended, allowing for an ongoing resource for all 21st CCLC programs.

To enhance the capacity and effectiveness of the centers, ISBE has established a partnership with NCREL to provide for ongoing technical assistance and training in response to locally identified needs. Through this partnership, ISBE will be able to address individual center needs, as well as offer broad-based assistance on a regional and statewide, basis. To further enhance opportunities, ISBE will also engage the National Center for Community Education (NCCE), the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, and the National Technical Assistance Center for Community Schools to support the implementation of effective strategies and practices. NCCE has agreed to provide training with national experts in management, evaluation, collaboration, programming, K-12 integration and communication, as well as staff from Illinois' funded programs. The training is similar to the training provided to federally-funded 21st CCLC projects. Illinois' RFP will require applicants to include in their budget proposals "travel funds" for two NCCE trainings per project year.

ISBE, as part of its overall plan to implement *NCLB*, has established a System of Support to assist schools and school districts identified as low-performing and in need of improvement under Title I. The 21st CCLC centers will have immediate and priority access to all resources available through the System of Support, such as effective school practices, parent involvement opportunities, organizational support, data analysis, evaluation strategies, to name a few.

Further, through the System of Support, ISBE will determine whether LEAs, schools, and other subgrantees are making satisfactory progress in meeting State and local performance goals and desired program outcomes (refer to System of Support, Appendix K). ISBE will use performance data gathered from subgrantees to determine appropriate interventions for any LEAs, schools, and other subgrantees that are not making substantial progress

Needs and Resources for Before- and After-School Activities

The Illinois After-school Alliance, a coalition of private and public entities with a vested interest in After-school, was established in August 2000. The mission of the Illinois After-school Alliance is to ensure that high-quality after-school programs are available for all of Illinois' children and youth. According to the Alliance, Illinois faced many challenges in the after-school arena despite the

organizations that do exist in Illinois to strengthen and expand opportunities for school-age children during out-of-school time.

To address issues, the Illinois After-school Alliance began a comprehensive assessment of after-school services in Illinois and the development of a strategic plan for ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality after-school program. The resolution proposed that the strategic planning process should be driven by the two state agencies having the most vested interests in after-school services -- the Illinois Department of Human Services and ISBE.

In 2001, the Illinois General Assembly passed House Resolution 63 and Senate Resolution 70, which created the Illinois After-school Initiative. The Illinois Department of Human Services and the Illinois State Board of Education, as the appointed co-chairs of the Initiative, launched the Illinois After-school Initiative, comprised of dynamic leaders from across the state that have a vested interest in high-quality after-school services. The Initiative's members are working diligently to meet the goals of the resolutions, which call for the first-ever study of after-school programs and the development of a strategic plan that will ensure high-quality programs for all Illinois' children and youth. Details of the work of the Task Force and highlights of the project's first four months are reflected in the Mid-Progress Report of the Initiative (see Appendix U).

The charge of the Illinois After-school Initiative is outlined below in an excerpt from the resolution:

That the activities of the Illinois After-school Initiative shall include (i) an assessment of the state of after-school services in this state, including identification of the number of children and youth served statewide in after-school programs, identification of the number and location of children and youth who are in need of after-school programs, and identification of the various funding streams currently supporting after-school programs, and (ii) the development of a plan for coordinating after-school services and for achieving a goal of providing after-school services for every school-age child in this state; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Illinois After-school Initiative plan shall include strategies for this State to promote best-practice models for after-school programs and to promote coordination and collaboration of after-school services at the local level; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Illinois After-school Initiative shall engage children and youth in development of the plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Illinois After-school Initiative shall review and report to the General Assembly on model programs operating in this state and other states and that the review shall look at program components identified as best-practices and based on proven research.

The Illinois After-school Initiative has identified core programmatic elements for after-school programs (see examples in Table 27). These suggested core elements serve as a foundation for building best practice programs. The group is currently exploring how many and which of these core elements constitute the minimal level of programming needed to serve as a best practice program. Those principles identified as "best practices" will be ones that are "attainable" by all after-school organizations and/or tailored. Recommendations will promote programs that are culturally sensitive to the specific community where they are located. Further, recommendations

will employ aspects of positive youth development, family involvement, and a service-learning component, and will be coordinated at the community level across programs.

Table 27. Identified Core Elements of After-School Programs

Academic Enrichment	Life Skills Building
Health and Nutrition Support	Transportation Support
Staff Training and Development	Safe and Appropriate Environment
Community Collaboration	Mentoring Opportunities
Management/Structure Commitment	Outcome Measures/Evaluation of Goals
Sustainability Plan	Positive Youth Development
Family Involvement	Technology to Support Academics

In a time when the national call is to “leave no child behind” and Illinois is being increasingly “looked to” for leadership on this issue, the work of the After-school Initiative Task Force is even more crucial.

The Need for High-Quality After-school Services

Nearly 28 million school-age youth across the United States have working parents, with an estimated seven million receiving no adult supervision during their the time they spend out of school.

Between 1985 and 1996, the percentage of children ages 6-17 with parents in the labor force increased from 59% to 70%.

More than two out of three school-age children are in households where both parents, or the only parent (caretaker), are in the workforce. In Illinois, that translates to 1,412,098 children. Even with a generous estimate of 360,000 available slots for Illinois school-age children in after-school programs, thousands of these children are left unsupervised in the hours after school.

Ensuring the quality of after-school opportunities is critical to the healthy development of young people. Research shows that high-quality after-school programs can produce a range of outcomes for its participants, including:

- A reduction in the number of children who use drugs and become teen parents. Research shows that children and youth who spend no time in extracurricular activities are 49% more likely to have used drugs and 37% more likely to have become teen parents than those who spend one to four hours per week in extracurricular activities.
- Students in high-quality after-school programs have better academic performance (math, reading and other subjects), behavior, and school attendance, and greater expectations for the future.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Programs and Activities

Grantees are required to submit an annual performance report (APR) that describes participants' information, project activities, accomplishments, and outcomes. The dual purpose of the APR is to: 1) demonstrate that substantial progress has been made toward meeting the goals and objectives

of the project, and 2) collect data that addresses the performance indicators for the 21st CCLC program. This should align with the integrated evaluation system that ISBE is currently developing.

Grantees are also required to conduct needs assessment, parent and student satisfaction surveys, and self-assessments. ISBE will provide the guidelines for the family and student satisfaction surveys and self-assessment. In addition, grantees are required to attend workshops and training offered by the state agency or contracted for the state, which are designed to improve the quality of the program and give technical assistance to the staff for continuous improvement.

The evaluation would involve quantitative and qualitative data collection; the findings will be used for continuous improvement of the program and for measuring its achievement and effectiveness.

The following is a general guideline of the objectives, the indicators and the data source for the measurement of progress and effectiveness.

Table 28. Objectives, Indicators and Measures for 21st CCLC

<p>Objective 1: Participants in the programs will demonstrate increased academic achievement.</p> <p><u>Performance Indicator 1a:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ISAT test scores of the participants will show an increase in performance. • Participants will show progress in reading and mathematics scores on the ISAT. <p><u>Source for Measurement 1a1.</u> The individual student's scores on ISAT and other tests.</p> <p><u>Performance Indicator 1b:</u> Participants would show improvement in academic achievement.</p> <p><u>Source for Measurement 1b1.</u> The retention rate and/or the promotion of the participants.</p>
<p>Objective 2: Participants will demonstrate an increased involvement in school activities and in participating in other subject areas such as technology, arts, music, theater, and sports and other recreation activities.</p> <p><u>Performance Indicator 2a:</u> Students participating in the program will have a higher attendance rate and a change in their attitudes toward school.</p> <p><u>Source for Measurement 2a1.</u> Attendance rates.</p> <p><u>Performance Indicator 2b:</u> Students participating in the program will graduate from school.</p> <p><u>Source for Measurement 2b1.</u> Dropout rates/graduation rate.</p> <p><u>Source for Measurement 2b2.</u> Parent survey.</p> <p><u>Source for Measurement 2b3.</u> Student survey.</p>
<p>Objective 3: Participants in 21st CCLC program will demonstrate social benefits and exhibit positive behavioral changes.</p> <p><u>Performance Indicator 3:</u> Students participating in the program will show improvements in measures such as increase in attendance, decrease in disciplinary actions, less violence, and a decrease in other adverse behaviors.</p> <p><u>Source for Measurement 3.1.</u> The number of instances of student violence and suspensions.</p> <p><u>Source for Measurement 3.2.</u> The number of students using drugs and alcohol.</p> <p><u>Source for Measurement 3.3.</u> Teacher/parent survey, student survey.</p>
<p>Objective 4: The 21st CCLC will work toward services that benefit the entire community by including families of participants and collaborating with other agencies and non-profit organizations.</p>

Performance Indicator 4a: The centers (grantees) will offer enrichment and other support services for families of participants.

Source for Measurement 4a1. The activities offered.

Performance Indicator 4b: The families will get more involved in their children's education and become more responsible citizens benefiting the whole community.

Source for Measurement 4b1. The type and extent of collaborations.

Source for Measurement 4b2. Parent/adult satisfaction survey.

Objective 5: These programs will serve children and community members with the greatest needs for expanded learning opportunities:

Performance Indicator 5: Majority of grants will be awarded in high-poverty communities.

Source for Measurement 5.1. Free and Reduced-price lunch eligibility of participants.

Source for Measurement 5.2. Test scores, grades, and promotion rates.

Objective 6: 21st CCLC program personnel will participate in professional development and training that will enable them to implement an effective program.

Performance Indicator 6: All centers' staff will participate in a variety of training/workshops provided to improve and maintain the quality of the program(s).

Source for Measurement 6.1. The number of workshops and topics addressed by each.

Source for Measurement 6.2. Attendance at workshops; evaluation of workshops' effectiveness.

Objective 7: 21st CCLC projects will use the funding most efficiently by coordinating and collaborating with other Federal and state funding sources, agencies and other community projects to supplement the program and not supplant the funds, and to eventually become self-sustaining.

Performance Indicator 7: All grantees will provide the detailed plan of coordination and collaboration efforts.

Source for Measurement 7.1. List of coordinating/collaborating agencies and the type of services, with letters of agreement from collaborating agencies.