THESIS
3
2007

This is to certify that the
dissertation entitled

FINDING THE LINK BETWEEN 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS AND SCHOOL DAY CLASSROOMS: EXPANDING THE POLICY COHERENCE PARADIGM IN EDUCATION

presented by

TARA DONAHUE

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Doctoral degree in Educational Policy

Christopher Dede
Major Professor's Signature

8/10/06
Date

MSU is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

LIBRARY
Michigan State
University

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.
MAY BE RECALLED with earlier due date if requested.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
NOV 1 6 2009		
07 09 11		

2/05 p:/CIRC/DateDue.indd-p.1

FINDING THE LINK BETWEEN 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS AND SCHOOL DAY CLASSROOMS: EXPANDING THE POLICY COHERENCE PARADIGM IN EDUCATION

By

Tara Donahue

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Educational Policy

2006

Professor Christopher Dunbar, Jr.

ABSTRACT

FINDING THE LINK BETWEEN 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS AND SCHOOL DAY CLASSROOMS: EXPANDING THE POLICY COHERENCE PARADIGM IN EDUCATION

By

Tara Donahue

The purpose of this study was to explore 21st CCLCs as academic support systems. Expanding upon previous theories that analyzed coherence among educational systems, this study sought to understand how 21st CCLC after-school programs throughout Michigan aligned their academic program to what students learned during the day and how programs provided complementary activities to the school day curriculum. Analyzing the perspectives of program directors, site coordinators, and teachers in the daytime classrooms, this study found that the after-school programs formed, at best, a weak link with the school day in terms of collaboration, communication, consistency, and coherence. Without these structures in place, after-school programs most likely will not demonstrate large academic gains with its participants.

Aside from various evaluation reports, no academic study has examined if a coherent link exists between the after-school programs and what students experience in the regular school day. For that matter, few studies closely examine the academic tasks that students engage in during these programs. Consequently, policies concerning after-school programs make few references to how they connect to what students do during the school day. The purpose of this study is hence to explore 21st CCLCs as academic support systems. Expanding upon previous theories that analyze coherence among educational systems, this study seeks to understand how seven 21st CCLC after-school

programs throughout Michigan align their academic program to what students learn during the regular school day and how programs complement or supplement activities to the school day curriculum. The centers offer a unique program to meet the needs of the individual school each serves such as specific student demographics or particular academic challenges students face.

Using the Four C framework defined as collaboration, communication, consistency, and coherency, this study analyzes how the 21st CCLC programs throughout Michigan integrates each of these into its daily routines to connect to the school day. By collaborating and communicating with teachers, after-school program staff learn about what students are doing in classrooms during the day and can devise program strategies to effectively complement and enrich the children's academic learning. Coherence and consistency needs to occur between the after-school program and the school day program so students understand the expectations and receive the most benefit from both programs.

Throughout a day, students must adjust to a variety of environments from their home and school to some sort of after school environment. When students find themselves in one environment, however, they draw on the experiences from the other communities in which they interact. Since students may spend an additional three hours at the after-school program, linking the after-school program instructional policies to the school day policies develops this dynamic and offers students a more coherent academic atmosphere to spur more cognitive development.

Copyright
TARA DONAHUE
2006

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A project of this undertaking does not happen without support from many different people. First, I would like to thank the members of my committee—Christopher Dunbar, Jr., Michael Sedlak, David N. Plank, BetsAnn Smith, and Celeste Sturdevant Reed for their dedication and time not only to this dissertation but for their guidance and dedication over the past five years. My experience at Michigan State University, because of these people and many others, has truly helped me grow as a professional and as a person.

Second, I need to acknowledge the 21st Century Community Learning Center statewide evaluation team—Celeste Sturdevant Reed, Laurie VanEgeren, Laura Bates, Beth Prince, Megan Platte, Jamie Wu, and Dyane Hawkins. Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to do an intensive statewide study on the program, for your endless support, and friendship. It was an unforgettable experience!

Third, this dissertation would not have come together without the support and guidance of my Writing Group—Marisa Cannata, Yongmei Ni, and Troy Hicks. For the endless hours of reading, critiquing, and providing the most insightful and helpful suggestions, I owe you my eternal gratitude. I am proud to call you both my colleagues and my friends.

For all the others who offered their support, I also owe you a debt of gratitude. Behind each transcript is a great transcriptionist and Karla Bellingar is one of the best. To everyone at the Michigan Coalition of Essential Schools, thank you for allowing me into your "family." Your support, love, and guidance will never be forgotten. And to my

family—Mom, Dad, and Tanya, thank you for your support and understanding during those times when I just couldn't get away.

Finally, this study certainly would not have taken place without the support of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers across Michigan. It was a privilege to visit your programs and observe the work you do on a daily basis. Your support and dedication to the students is admirable, and I wish you and your students continued success.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES....x
LIST OF FIGURES....xii
CHAPTER 1
DEFINING 21ST CCLC PROGRAMS AS ACADEMIC SUPPORT SYSTEMS....1
Placing After-School Programs into a Contextual Framework....6
No Child Left Behind and 21st Century Community Learning Centers....8
Policy Coherence Framework....11
21st CCLCs and Policy Coherence in Michigan....20
21st CCLCs as a Matter of Policy and Practice....24
Evaluating 21st CCLCs in Michigan....27
Conclusion....29

CHAPTER 2
AFTER-SCHOOL ACADEMICS AND METHODOLOGY....31
Characteristics of Students in After School Programs....31
Criteria defining academic achievement in after-school programs....33
School Attendance/Absenteeism....34
Attitude Toward School, Student Engagement and Motivation....37
Classroom Grades in the Content Areas of Math and Reading....41
Standardized Test Scores....44
Methodological Problems of the Evaluations....47
Types of Programming....51
Links to School Day....53
Where do we go from here?....55
Methodology....56
Using a Mixed Methods Approach....57
Sampling....58
Case Study....61
Qualitative Research....62
Interview....62
Observations....63
Document Review....65
Bias of Qualitative Research....66
Quantitative....67

CHAPTER 3
TIED TO THE SCHOOL DISTRICT: CASE STUDIES OF 21ST CCLC PROGRAMS CLOSELY AFFILIATED WITH THE HOST SCHOOLS' DISTRICTS....69
A Snapshot of Waterford RESD....70
School Demographics....72
Goals of the Program....75
Communication Among After-School and Daytime Staff....82
Academic Progress of 21st CCLC Participants....90

Whitetail Elementary....90
Schooner Middle School....93
Data Used for Continuous Program Improvement....96
Summary of Waterford RESD....97
A Snapshot of Webster Public School District....99
School Demographics....102
Goals of the Program....107
Communication Among After-School and Daytime Staff....113
Academic Progress of 21st CCLC Participants....121
Data Used for Continuous School Improvement....124
Summary of Webster Public School District....127

CHAPTER 4
A SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP....129
A Snapshot of Anchor Public Schools....129
School Demographics....132
Goals of the Program....135
Communication Among After-School and Daytime Staff....139
Academic Progress of 21st CCLC Participants....148
Robin Elementary....148
Hancock Middle....148
Data Used for Continuous Program Improvement....149
Summary of Anchor Public Schools....153

CHAPTER 5
EXTERNAL GRANT PROVIDERS: THE *COMMUNITY* ASPECT OF COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS....160
A Snapshot of the Boys & Girls Club in Anderson School District....161
School Demographics....164
Goals of the Program....165
Communication Among After-School and Daytime Staff....171
Academic Progress of 21st CCLC Participants....175
Data Used for Continuous Program Improvement....179
Summary of the Boys & Girls Club....180
Lake Middle School....182
Community Background and Changing Goals of the Program....182
Why the Boys and Girls Club Failed in this Setting....184
Working with School Staff....186
Summary....188
A Snapshot of Schools Being Served by Center Village University....190
School Demographics....192
Goals of the Program....194
Communication Among After-School and Daytime Staff....198
Academic Progress of 21st CCLC Participants....206
Apple Elementary School....207
Neptune Middle School....209

Data Used for Continuous Program Improvement.....211
Summary of Center Village University.....213

CHAPTER 6
EFFECTIVE AND NON-EFFECTIVE AFTER-SCHOOL PRACTICES.....216
Goals of the Program.....216
Communication Among After-School and Daytime Staff.....220
Academic Progress of 21st CCLC Participants.....228
Data Used for Continuous Program Improvement.....230
Summary.....232

CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS.....235
Goals of the Program.....235
Recommendations for Setting Goals.....236
Communication Among Daytime Staff.....237
Recommendations for Communicating with Daytime Staff.....238
Academic Progress of 21st CCLC Participants.....240
Recommendations for Improving the Academic Achievement of 21st CCLC Participants.....240
Data Used for Continuous Program Improvement.....241
Recommendations for Using Data for Continuous Program Improvement.....242
Challenges and Solutions.....243
Sustaining the Field.....246

APPENDIX A.....251

APPENDIX B.....254

APPENDIX C.....257

REFERENCES.....259

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Program and Activities as Defined by Michigan Model Standards.....25

Table 2 State Evaluation Proposed Outcomes.....28

Table 3 Grantees and Selection Criteria 59

Table 4 School Affiliated Grantees and Sites 70

Table 5 Number of Participants per Grade Level at Whitetail Elementary 2004-2005.....72

Table 6 Number of Participants per Grade Level at Schooner Middle 2004-2005.....73

Table 7 Change in Reading Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Whitetail Elementary.....91

Table 8 Change in Math Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Whitetail Elementary.....91

Table 9 Change in Reading Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Schooner Middle.....94

Table 10 Change in Math Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Schooner Middle.....104

Table 11 Number of Participants per Grade Level at Clark Middle School 2004-2005.....104

Table 12 Change in Reading Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Clark Middle School.....122

Table 13 Change in Math Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Clark Middle School.....123

Table 14 Number of Participants per Grade Level at Robin Elementary School 2004-2005.....133

Table 15 Number of Participants per Grade Level at Hancock Middle School 2004-2005.....134

Table 16 Percentage of Students at MEAP Reading Proficiency Levels.....148

Table 17 Percentage of Students at MEAP Math Proficiency Levels.....149

Table 18 Percentage of Students at MEAP Reading Proficiency Levels.....149

Table 19 Percentage of Students at MEAP Math Proficiency Levels.....149

Table 20 Organization Affiliated Grantees and Sites.....160

Table 21 Number of Participants per Grade Level at
Victory Middle School 2004-2005.....165

Table 22 Number of Participants per Grade Level at
Apple Elementary School 2004-2005.....193

Table 23 Number of Participants per Grade Level at
Neptune Middle School 2004-2005.....193

Table 24 Change in Reading Classroom Grades for
Participants and Non-Participants at Apple Elementary.....208

Table 25 Change in Math Classroom Grades for
Participants and Non-Participants at Apple Elementary.....209

Table 26 Change in Reading Classroom Grades for
Participants and Non-Participants at Neptune Middle School 2004-2005.....210

Table 27 Change in Math Classroom Grades for
Participants and Non-Participants at Neptune Middle School 2004-2005.....210

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Each stakeholder must enact the policies at the federal, state, and local levels to ultimately reach increased student achievement.....19

Figure 2. Percentage of students meeting proficiency on the 2002 Math and Reading statewide assessment.....60

CHAPTER 1: DEFINING 21st CCLCs PROGRAMS AS ACADEMIC SUPPORT SYSTEMS

After-school Programs: Yesterday and Today

From approximately 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. each day, schools take responsibility for the safety, well-being, and education of the majority of children ages 5 to 18. But what happens to students once the dismissal bell rings? Statistics indicate that over 11 million children have no adult supervision after school and that violent juvenile crime is most likely to occur during the hours of 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Newman, Fox, Flynn, & Christeson, 2000). Therefore, keeping students engaged in productive activities for these three essential hours has become a primary concern to education stakeholders, youth development workers, and policymakers.

One way to keep students engaged during these hours is by enrolling them in after-school programs. The concept of after-school programs dates back to the latter part of the 19th century (Halpern, 2000) when the number of students attending schools began to grow, in part because of the declining need for child labor (Halpern, 2002). After-school programs continued to grow in numbers as more immigrant populations moved into the cities. Middle-class workers worried that low-income children, particularly those of immigrant families, would be enticed by the lure of the streets, so they set up after-school programs to keep these children safe and out of trouble (Halpern, 2002).

Over time, the focus and intent of after-school programs has changed in concurrence with historical context. For instance, during World War II, after-school centers took on a dual-role of helping children cope with the stresses of war while at the same time ensuring their safety by practicing air raid drills (Halpern, 2002). Protection,

care, opportunity for enrichment, play, socialization, acculturation, training, and problem remediation are some of the purposes attributed to after-school programs (Halpern, 2002, p. 179).

In addition to the aforementioned purposes of after-school programs, another theoretical view of after-school programs has them providing academically enriching activities that extend and enrich the school day. Many after-school programs follow in the tradition of school reformists such as John Dewey, Theodore Sizer, and Howard Gardner (Noam, Biancarosa, & Dechausay, 2003). These leading school reformists argued for a school system that focuses on the whole child. Instead of rote memorization of facts, they believed that experiential project-based learning provided more incentives for student learning. After-school programs are ideal places for using these types of teaching and learning techniques because the programs are not limited by traditional classroom norms. Moreover, a traditional classroom setting may not meet the needs of every student. As an additional academic support system, after-school programs can help students reach their potential by providing students opportunities to learn outside the normal school day. Ideally, after-school programs offer students academically focused programs but in a manner that is different from the traditional grammar of schooling (Cuban and Tyack, 1995).

To return to the idea of reform for a moment, a *Principal Bulletin* brief argued for after-school programs as an integrated component of whole school reform (Butty Manswell, LaPoint, Thomas, & Thompson, 2001) implying that as schools undergo major changes to how they approach teaching and learning, after-school programs are a natural extension of whole school reform. Again, one unique aspect of after-school

programs is the fact that they can be less structured than the typical school day; consequently, students who may have a hard time working within the confines of the traditional school day may find that after-school programs support them with instruction that better fits their learning needs. Although the programs have evolved throughout the years in response to the prevailing political and educational climate, the essential purpose has remained the same: keep kids safe during hours in which they would most likely be unsupervised at home. In other words, students can continue to learn academic subjects but in an informal environment between the hours of 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

During President Clinton's term in office, out-of-school time activities became a primary focus, and in 1998, President Clinton announced the award of $40 million in new grants to 98 communities to establish 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLCs). At the same time, President Clinton released a U.S. Department of Education-U.S. Department of Justice report, *Safe and Smart: Making After-School Hours Work for Kids*. In the report, President Clinton cites his reasons for the purpose of high-quality after-school programs: "We must make sure that every child has a safe and enriching place to go after school so that children can say no to drugs and alcohol and crime, and yes to reading, soccer, computers and a brighter future for themselves" (Safe and Smart Schools, 1998, http://www.ed.gov/pubs/SafeandSmart/chapter1.html). The press release that accompanied the announcement stated that the 21st CCLCs program "will enable schools to stay open longer, providing a safe haven for children, intensive tutoring in basic skills, drug and violence prevention counseling, and opportunities to participate in supervised recreation, chorus, band and the arts, technology education programs and

services for children and youth with disabilities" (http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/06-1998/21grnt1.html).

With the passage of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB), academic standards and the need to have every child achieve 100% proficiency in reading and math has become a primary objective for all schools and educators. Posted on the U.S. Department of Education website, the description for 21st CCLCs has changed somewhat since the programs originated under President Clinton:

> The focus of this program, re-authorized under Title IV, Part B, of the No Child Left Behind Act, is to provide expanded academic enrichment opportunities for children attending low performing schools. Tutorial services and academic enrichment activities are designed to help students meet local and state academic standards in subjects such as reading and math. In addition 21st CCLCs programs provide youth development activities, drug and violence prevention programs, technology education programs, art, music and recreation programs, counseling and character education to enhance the academic component of the program.

Previously, the programs had included some mention of supplementing the student's academic experience. With the reauthorization of NCLB, the shift in focus toward a more academic role for after-school programs became clear. Specifically, changes to the program's authorizing statue include implementing activities based on rigorous scientific research and focusing services on academic enrichment opportunities (MDE, 2003). Programs and activities must also be based on "an established set of performance measures aimed at ensuring high-quality academic enrichment opportunities" (Non-Regulatory Guidance, 2003:31). For the first time, after-school programs must implement

activities based on sound research that will help students achieve academically rather than activities that simply fill the after-school hours. The reauthorization of 21st CCLCs holds after-school programs accountable for increasing student achievement—an unprecedented evaluation component of the national program. This indicates a move from the more youth development focused programs where students develop friendships with peers and adults and learn about life skills to programs that have a more academic focus and goals to help students achieve academically.

Although the research on after-school programs is limited and the results—particularly on academic achievement—are inconclusive, proponents of after-school programs argue the programs do make a difference, especially for disadvantaged students. Aside from keeping students off the streets and out of trouble during hours when they would typically be unsupervised, after-school programs actually work to promote academic achievement, life-long learning, and youth development skills (Newman, Fox, Flynn, & Christeson, 2000).

Although after-school programs cannot solve all the problems of today's youth, conclusions from one of the leading after-school research programs reached four general conclusions on potential positive effects of after-school programs: 1) Youth benefit from consistent participation in well-run, quality after-school programs; 2) After-school programs can increase engagement in learning; 3) After-school programs can increase educational equity; and 4) After-school programs can build key skills necessary for success in today's economy (Miller, 2003).

Placing After-School Programs into a Contextual Framework

In recent years, out-of-school time programs have often focused on youth development measures, giving students a safe place to go during hours when they were likely to be left unsupervised, and in some cases, giving them a balanced, nutritious meal that they may not have otherwise received at home. In order to accommodate an academic agenda, the after-school program must walk a careful line in its programming decisions. Because students have already spent six or more hours in school, the after-school program activities need to look quite different from what students have done during the school day (Noam, 2004). If students feel forced to come to the program or bored after they arrive, they are unlikely to engage or to attend on a regular basis because they could be doing something more recreational on their own. After-school programs located in the same building where students attend during the school day face this challenge especially. Thus, questions concerning the role of after-school programs and how they fit into the institutionalized structure of education need to be raised. Does the after-school program become an extension of the school day? Or can the program be different enough that it is seen as an activity separate from the regular school day? Where do after-school programs fit in as an extension of the traditional 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. school day, and can after-school programs continue to build upon the education students are receiving at the school?

Studying after-school programs and finding the answers to these questions is no easy task. Often, little information is provided on programming goals and objectives. In addition, lack of data makes it difficult for programs to work toward continuous program improvement. Many programs have incomplete student attendance records that may

examined as part of the evaluation process to determine which activities are effective and which ones need to be changed in some manner. The little research that has been done usually consists of evaluation reports on specific programs. Despite the lack of data from after-school programs in general, the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) (2003) has compiled a list of potential academic performance measures, including attendance/absenteeism, cognitive improvement, homework improvement, and grades. Noam, Biancarosa, and Dechausay (2003) have also begun to develop a framework that describes and explains what types of academic activities after-school programs offer based on their initial grounded theory research in terms of curriculum and instructional alignment.

Aside from the various evaluation reports, however, no academic study has examined if a coherent link exists between the after-school programs and what students experience in the regular school day. For that matter, few studies closely examine the academic tasks that students engage in during these programs. Consequently, policies concerning after-school programs make few references to how they connect to what students do during the school day. Since after-school programs, specifically the federally funded 21st CCLCs, will be evaluated, in part, by how well students increase their academic achievement as measured by standardized tests and classroom grades[1]. This gap in the knowledge base of after-school programs is significant. Thus, policies supporting after-school programs need careful analysis to determine what effects after-school programs could potentially have on the institution of schooling and consequential outcomes for students.

[1] Due to many internal and external variables that lead to such success, I would argue that solely attributing a student's academic performance to an after-school program—regardless of whether achievement increased, decreased, or remained stable—would be erroneous.

The purpose of this study is to explore 21st CCLCs as academic support systems by expanding upon previous theories that analyze coherence among educational systems (Honig & Hatch, 2004; Cohen & Spillane, 1992; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993; Newmann, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001). This study seeks to understand how twelve 21st CCLCs after-school programs throughout the state of Michigan align their academic program to what students learn during the regular school day and how programs complement or supplement activities to the school day curriculum. Although national 21st CCLCs funds are restricted to certain activities, each state can define its own specific guidelines. Michigan's program, to be described in more detail in later chapters, has few specific requirements for the programs; consequently, each center offers a unique program to meet the needs of the individual school each serves, such as specific student demographics or particular academic challenges students face.

Moreover, while this study discusses student outcomes as measured by classroom grades and standardized test scores, academic outcomes are not its primary focus. Instead, it looks at the processes used by 21st CCLCs to form academic support systems in the host schools they serve with the understanding that one intervention cannot contribute solely to a student's academic performance. Before looking further at the alignment between 21st CCLCs and the regular school day programs, it is worth looking more closely at the policy itself and the tensions that are present between it and NCLB.

No Child Left Behind and 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Several academic supports have been proposed to help low-achieving students, including many components of NCLB. Title IV of NCLB specifically provides funding

for 21st CCLCs. Currently, over 10,000 students are enrolled in 21st CCLCs in Michigan. NCLB directed 21st CCLCs to become academic support systems targeted for Title I schools serving disadvantaged students. The 21st CCLCs target Title I students to help them improve their academic achievement. The legislation describes three purposes for 21st CCLCs:

- to offer opportunities for academic enrichment particularly in core academic subjects such as reading and mathematics;
- to provide additional services such as drug prevention and youth development activities;
- to serve families of student participants in literacy and educational growth (U.S. Department of Education, Title IV, Sec. 4201).

Although the federal government provided some guidelines, for the most part, states designed their own methods for disbursing the grant money.

According to the *21st Century Community Learning Centers Non-Regulatory Guidance* (U.S. Department of Education, 2003), applicants for the 21st CCLCs grant in each state received priority consideration if the following two conditions were met: 1) students being served at the center attended schools identified for school improvement, and 2) at least one Local Education Agency (LEA) and at least one public or private community organization jointly submitted the proposal. Although states developed more specific guidelines for awarding the grants, the federal non-regulatory guidelines specifically provided the funds for a broad list of activities:

- Remedial education activities and academic enrichment learning programs, including providing additional assistance to students to allow the students to improve their academic achievement;
- Mathematics and science education activities;
- Arts and music education activities;
- Entrepreneurial education programs;
- Tutoring services (including those provided by senior citizen volunteers) and mentoring programs;
- Programs that provide after-school activities for limited English proficient students that emphasize language skills and academic achievement;
- Recreational activities;
- Telecommunications and technology education programs;
- Expanded library service hours;
- Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy;
- Programs that provide assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled, to allow students to improve their academic achievement; and
- Drug and violence prevention programs, counseling programs, and character education programs (26).

Because programs have 12 comprehensive categories allowed to be funded by 21st CCLCs, they have many options in how they wish to provide services to its students and families. Although 21st CCLCs obviously serve a multitude of purposes, this study focuses on those activities with the specific purpose of providing academic support to

participants, such as academic enrichment activities and smaller group or one-on-one tutoring type services. To help student successfully make academic gains that are measured through standardized tests and classroom grades, it is important that the after-school program aligns itself closely with what students learn during the day.

While some of the traditional goals for after-school programs remained the same, clearly NCLB has placed academics in the foreground in a manner unlike previous policies. Because of this, much of the evaluative work being done on 21st CCLCs use student academic achievement, such as standardized test scores and classroom grades to measure the progress of the participants as opposed to students who are not in the programs. If after-school programs are to make a measurable impact on student outcome measures, programs need to align academic activities with the curriculum that the students experience during the day. Analyzing how programs and schools accomplish this can be done through a the framework of policy coherence.

Policy Coherence Framework

From an institutional perspective, after-school programs do not fall into the traditional definition of the "grammar of schooling" (Cuban and Tyack, 1995), which makes defining their place in the field of education difficult. Historically, after-school programs have fallen outside the realm of schooling, and did not necessarily serve an academic purpose. Mainly, the programs served as a place to keep children safe and out of trouble rather than considered an integral part of the education system. With the increased emphasis on academic achievement, however, after-school programs are beginning to be viewed as an extension of the school day. Yet, most after-school

programs are separate entities from the schools. In fact, community-based programs may not be located in the schools but held in a separate building.

Using the policy coherence framework described below to examine the role of after-school centers, as education policy makers who implement after-school programs, we can begin to analyze how they function in the greater education system and what effect the programs have on education programs. The field of education is based upon layers of policies beginning at the federal level. Then, state sets its own policies, which school districts must implement. School districts and school governance structures, however, look different in each state. For instance, in Michigan, 55 Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) oversee 555 school districts. Also, districts may implement policies for each building to follow. Regardless of the governance structure, the eventually policies are interpreted and implemented at the classroom level by teachers.

The policy coherence framework argues that the education programs most likely to show success are those that are based upon policies that supplement or reinforce one another at each level. Policy coherence can be viewed as a jigsaw puzzle with each piece representing a policy that supports some type of a program. Although they come in different shapes and sizes, the complete picture can be seen only if they all interlock. The puzzle may consist of an array of colors, shapes, and objects, but once placed together, each piece has a place and a role to play. In a school setting, federal, state, and local policies create this jigsaw puzzle, and, to extend the metaphor, sometimes educators are left holding all the pieces without being able to get the big picture.

The field of education has only begun to look at school policies through a policy coherence framework. In Honig and Hatch's (2004) beginning work on analyzing policy

coherence between the school building level and school districts, they describe policy coherence as a process rather than an outcome:

> We argue that coherence might provide a more productive organizing construct for policy if researchers and practitioners viewed it as a process by which schools use multiple external demands to strengthen students' opportunities to learn (16).

They term this process "crafting coherence" and base their work on literature from "decision-making, organizational-environmental relationships, and organizational learning" (17).

According to Honig and Hatch (2004), this literature defines coherence in two different ways: 1) from the outside in, generated from external agencies and 2) from the inside out, relying more on local or building wide initiatives. For example, standards-based reform is an example of coherence from the o*utside in*. In an effort to raise student achievement, standards-based reform is a top-down policy that schools must find a way to implement. In contrast, coherence from the i*nside out* consists of policies, such as Comprehensive School Reform. *Inside out* policies involve schools deciding what changes need to be made and how to make them. Because neither of these types of coherence has made dramatic impacts on schools, Honig and Hatch propose crafting o*utside in* and i*nside out* theories together to look at policy coherence as negotiation of policies by stakeholders.

The theory Honig and Hatch propose centers on the relationship between the school building and the district. It is also important to understand what is happening within the individual classroom in relation to the school and/or district policies. Newmann, Smith, Allsworth, and Bryk (2001) offer a framework for studying

instructional program coherence. Instructional coherence is defined as "a set of interrelated programs for students and staff that are guided by a common framework for curriculum, instructional, assessment, and learning climate and that are pursued over a sustained period" (297). In the case of after-school programs, the programs have certain federal and state guidelines to follow but to have a successful program certain program elements must also follow the policies of the host school in which the program serves.

In the above examples, coherence is examined from a district to a building perspective and from an instructional perspective. This study proposes to look at the policies of a specific after-school program to determine exactly how policy coherence and instructional coherence affect the relationship between after-school programs and the regular classroom. The 21st CCLCs after-school programs fits into the definition of being both an *outside in* and *inside out* policy and the local, state, and national requirements complicate how programs are enacted. The funding for the program comes from the federal government, and the states decide who gets the money; thus, the distribution of funds and who qualifies are top-down decisions. Once the money is awarded, however, programs directors have freedom in deciding how to enact their programs making it an *inside out* policy. These distinctions are significant to note because as a federal policy the programs are responsible for certain outcomes. Simultaneously, the programs must also be held accountable at a local level and for individual program goals. How programs find a balance within these tensions is a fundamental question to explore.

Because the focus of 21st CCLCs is primarily to increase academic achievement in low-performing students, this particular after-school program connects strongly to the instructional coherence framework. Newmann et al. (2001) argue "administration of state

categorical aid programs could require that funds be used to support not just school wide programs but school wide programs that are focused and sustained over multiple years and that serve a clear instructional framework" (316). The 21st CCLCs after-school programs fit into this definition of a "categorical aid program" since they are focused and sustained over multiple years. Yet, defining and analyzing the instructional frameworks of various after-school programs' remains a task to be completed. This study will begin to explore the different instructional frameworks used around the state of Michigan.

Previous work on policy coherence indicates that the stronger the policies align or complement one another, the more likely the programs are to succeed. Honig and Hatch (2004) found that some schools thrived when forced with meeting multiple policy demands because of the additional resources that supported school improvement. In the instructional coherence research, Newmann et al. (2001) found a positive relationship between schools that improved their program coherence and student achievement. In a case study example of an after-school program, Noam (2004) discovered that the lack of clear collaboration, communication, and content alignment of the after-school program with the school and other stakeholders made policy coherence impossible to achieve.

Given the emphasis placed on increasing student achievement, the ultimate end result of a study on after-school programs would be to look at student outcome data such as grades and test scores. This study examines the key intermediate step between the implementation of the program and the test score results—what happens within the programs and how the programs connect to the regular school day. How the programs cohere with the regular school, both in terms of common instructional frameworks and communication with the regular classroom teachers, is crucial to understanding what is

actually happening within the after-school program. Noam et al. (2003) describe the importance of this step:

> Our research suggests that, in attempting to bridge school and after-school contexts, partnerships must safeguard after-school environments from the increasingly high-stakes atmosphere of the regular school day. The challenge is to effectively bridge school learning while protecting the after-school environment's ability to provide differentiated developmental opportunities that build young people's competencies (4).

Thus, learning what types of programming various after-school centers have instituted and how that program supports student learning from the regular school day is critical information needed to fully understand what happens in after-school programs and what constitutes effective programming.

For several reasons, 21st CCLCs is an ideal policy to study through the framework of policy coherence. Because 21st CCLCs can be funded through a variety of sources, they are a natural extension of Honig and Hatch's policy coherence framework. To explain, 21st CCLCs funds come from an external agency (not the district or the school); consequently, the policy must bridge the individual school to a program not necessarily related directly to the school. Honig and Hatch (2004) argue that when viewed as a process, policy coherence looks at all the dynamics affecting students' lives from what happens during the school day and their relationships with teachers to what happens before and after-school. Each of these "worlds" that the students live in play a role in determining their achievement (Noam et al., 2003). Since students may spend an additional three hours at the after-school program, linking the instructional policies of the

after-school program to the school day policies develops this dynamic and offers students a more coherent academic atmosphere to spur more cognitive development.

The academic effects of after-school programs, consequently, will not be measured solely through the after-school program itself; however, because of the emphasis on standardized testing and accountability measures, the impact of 21st CCLCs will most likely be gauged through how participants do on standardized tests compared to their peers who have not participated in the programs. Looking at Newmann et al.'s (2003) framework on instructional coherence, we see that the most successful schools were those that had higher levels of instructional coherence. As such, we would next hypothesize that after-school programs which work more closely with school day teachers and regular instructional programs would have higher levels of student achievement. Although this study does not intend to be a study of effects, it will ask teachers for their perceptions of the cognitive development of after-school participants as one way to discuss coherence between the programs.

Probing into the instructional frameworks that guide what is taught in after-school programs and how those policies are formed offers a new way of analyzing this emerging field. By looking at after-school programs through this lens, we can begin to gauge what is actually happening within programs in order to better inform policy decisions. According to Newmann et al. (2000), instructional coherence is one method of improving academic achievement. Thus, this research addresses the question of whether after-school programs lead to increased student achievement. Although it will not be a longitudinal study of student outcomes, it will look at how teachers, program administrators and

program staff perceive the academic support of the after-school program. In order to address that question, however, we first need to know what is going on in the programs.

Essentially, the 21st CCLCs policy is being interpreted at various levels—federal, state, and program by several actors. Somehow, that policy must be applied to the school day as well as the after-school program both in a way that will help reach higher student achievement levels. This is accomplished by analyzing what the programs originally stated in their grant proposals as compared to what is actually happening through a policy coherence framework. First, did the programs have clear and concise goals upon implementation? Did a plan exist to communicate or link up with the regular school? Was a specific curriculum designated in the original plan? Since the programs have been running for at least two years, have the 21st CCLCs been able to implement those plans or have they had to adjust their plans? By answering these questions, we can then examine their effectiveness.

The following conceptual framework (Figure 1) visually depicts what the theory explains. The policy of 21st CCLCs as academic support for low-performing students is an *outside in* policy that influences policy at the state, district, and program level. How administrators and staff choose to bridge to the school day is an *inside out* policy, but in order to meet academic goals, some sort of instructional coherence must also happen. Crafting these policies together forms an intricately designed policy coherence framework, which should, ultimately, lead to increased student achievement.

Based on this framework, the following research questions will be tested:

1) What is the nature of the relationship between after-school staff and daytime staff in terms of instruction, curriculum, and individual students?

Figure 1. 21st CCLCs Policy Hierarchy

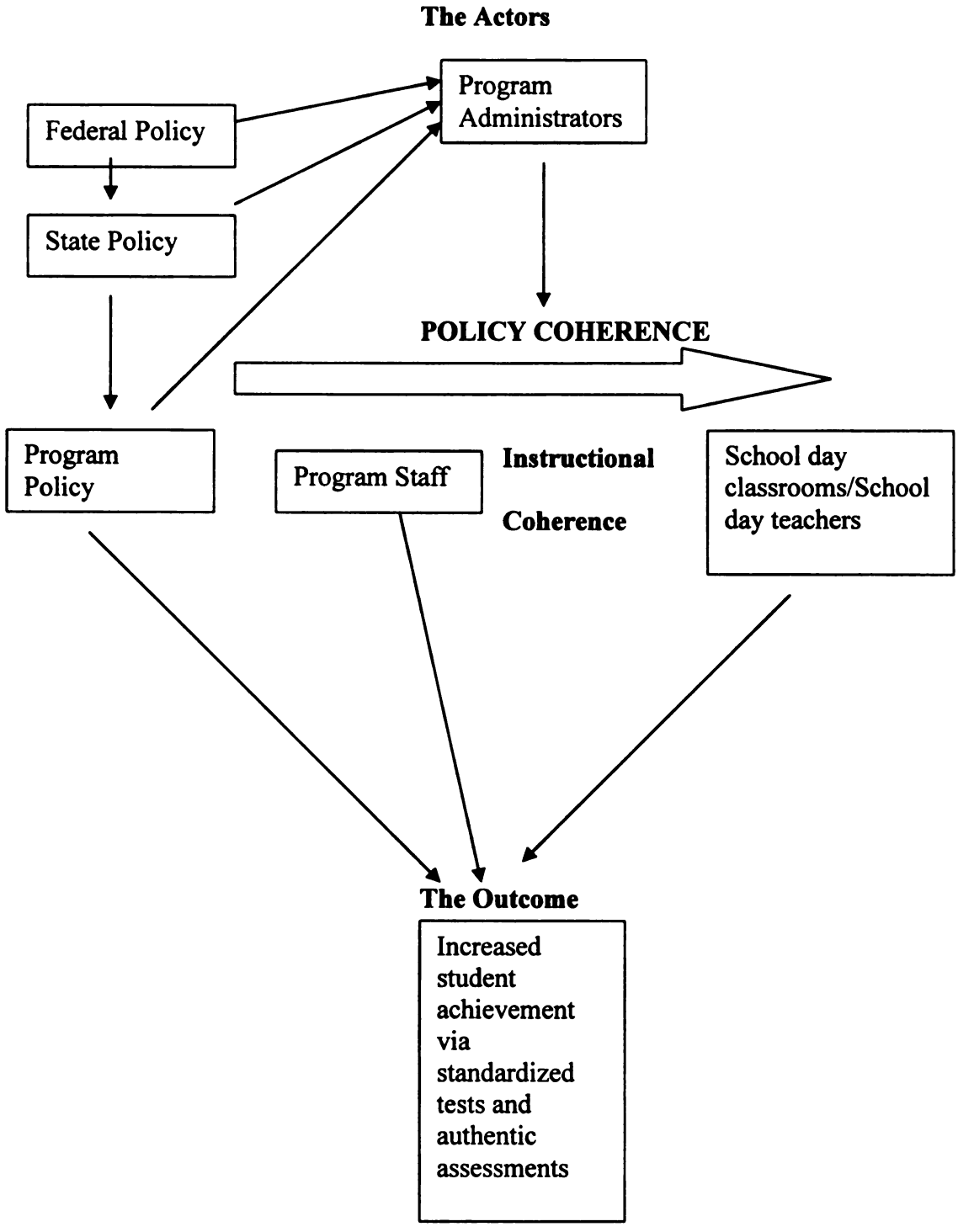


Figure 1. Each stakeholder must enact the policies at the federal, state, and local levels to ultimately reach increased student achievement.

2) How do after-school programs' instructional activities cohere with the school day's activities?
3) What curriculum do 21st CCLCs programs use in their programs and how does it relate to the curricula used during the school day?

An analysis of how program directors, site coordinators, and daytime teachers view the communication and collaboration between after-school staff and daytime staff will be used to test these hypotheses.

21st CCLCs and Policy Coherence in Michigan

Of the one billion dollars granted for 21st CCLCs in fiscal year 2002, Michigan received $11,748,583 to divide among applicants across the state. Beginning in February 2003, the money was distributed over a period of three years, establishing three cohorts of 21st CCLCs. Applicants needed to meet the following requirements:

- residing in high-poverty areas;
- targeting students in low-performing schools;
- facing other contextual factors such as high unemployment rates, single parent households, and teenage pregnancies (MDE, 2002).

Currently, the state has 30 grantees and nearly 200 sites being served by 21st CCLCs funds. Although most of the programs are directed by a school district, some are run by community-based organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Club, and others are under charter school authorization. Regardless of the grant manager, Michigan has several documents and policies in place to help 21st CCLCs support the school day curriculum.

For instance, in 1996, the MDE published the *Michigan Curriculum Framework* (MCF). MCF details what students should learn at specific points in their education. For example, the first Content Standard for English Language Arts is, "All students will read and comprehend general and technical material" (MCF, 1996: 8). In the early elementary years, the framework offers a benchmark in which students should "Use reading for multiple purposes, such as enjoyment, gathering information, and learning new procedures" (8). It continues defining objectives in a similar manner through the later elementary, middle school, and high school years. By the time the student reaches high school, reading should be used "for multiple purposes, such as enjoyment, learning complex procedures, completing technical tasks, making workplace decisions, evaluating and analyzing information and pursuing in-depth studies" (8), according to the MCF. The document proceeds as such in all core academic areas.

In theory, the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), an assessment that covers the four core curriculum areas—English language arts (ELA), math, science and social studies—is aligned to the MCF. If districts align their local curriculum with the MCF, then it theoretically aligns with the MEAP. Thus, if teachers are effectively teaching in alignment with the MCF, then the students should reach proficiency on the MEAP.

Most of the Michigan 21st CCLCs will mark their student achievement by student gains on MEAP. Using the process of backward mapping where one begins with the end result in mind and plans backward on how to achieve that goal, where the after-school staff knows that the end result is increased student achievement as assessed by the MEAP, then aligning the after-school curriculum with the daytime curriculum or the

MCF provides a coherent link among the programs; consequently, the end result is student achievement. After-school programs can work toward this by aligning their specific curriculums and activities to the school day curriculum provided by the students' daytime teachers. In turn, this curriculum maps back to the state designed MCF. In the end, each student taking the MEAP should show gains, if all these entities work together. Due to multiple factors, this is not happening in the majority of 21st CCLCs sites in this study, which will be discussed in the case studies. This can also be explained by looking at the challenges posed by bureaucratic structures or any type of organizational structure that involves multiple layers. In the case of education, this is particularly important when working with and developing instructional frameworks.

Cohen and Spillane argue "instructional frameworks are general designs for instruction (i.e., broad conceptions of the purposes, structure, and content of academic work)" (1992: 13). They also state that frameworks, up until the early 1990s, have been unusual in the United States but do claim that some states, including Michigan through MCF, have begun to establish frameworks to stimulate intellectually challenging teaching and learning. As the many layers of bureaucracy indicate, however, having an instructional framework in place does not necessarily guarantee that the work can be aligned consistently among the many institutions involved. When viewing 21st CCLCs as an academic support system to help supplement the school day, this coherency link between the daytime program and the after-school program weakens. There are several reasons for this.

The federal government has issued the call that states provide 21st CCLCs to improve academic achievement in the populations the state deems most necessary. To

supplement this legislation, the U.S. Department of Education has issued a 51 page *Non-Regulatory Guidance Document* to help states implement their programs that includes guidance on everything from who qualifies for the grant, local use of funds, and evaluation and accountability. Second, this document reaches the state. Each state can analyze the *Non-Regulatory Guidance* document to establish 21st CCLCs that fit within their own state structures. Thus, consistency does not exist among states. As long as they meet the evaluation and accountability requirements, it does not matter how they set up their programs.

In Michigan, the Early Childhood and Parenting Programs of MDE and the Family Independence Agency (FIA) funded a Super Pilot Out-of-School Time (OST) project. From this project, a task force developed "Model Standards for Out-of-School Time Programs in Michigan," which the State Board of Education adopted in February of 2003. The Model Standards document highlights six standards for program administration: Health, Safety, and Nutrition; Human Relationships and Staffing; Indoor and Outdoor Environment; Program and Activities [the academic component]; Administration [of the After-School Program]; and Single-Purpose Programs.

These standards relate to all out of school time programs, not just 21st CCLCs. Ironically, in an age where it seems as if everything in education focuses primarily on student academic achievement, only one standard actually relates to program initiatives.[2]

[2] The Human Relations and Staffing standard could also reflect on the quality of the program, but the standard does not mention anything about "Highly qualified staff" in after-school programming. The site supervisor/director must have a bachelor's degree and some experiential work or experience in education, child development/psychology, recreation, social work, etc. but not necessarily an education background. Although this paper focuses on the instructional guidance, educator quality is another perspective of after-school programming that should not be overlooked.

Of the eight standards under Program and Activities, four relate to linkages to the school day curriculum. The report also looks at the Quality Indicators (see Table 1):

Even though linkages between the school and the after-school program are mentioned here, this document does not say anything about the MCF. If school day curricula align to MCF, then it should be easy to align the after-school programs with the MCF, as long as more academic enrichment programs were included in the after-school program and assuming the staff was aware of what teachers were regularly teaching. The Out-of-School time model neglects to mention the MEAP or any other assessment measure for how OST programs fare.

Although the MDE has begun to set guidelines for linking after-school programs to the regular school day, we do not know if and how after-school programs truly align themselves with these standards. Learning how after-school programs incorporate the standards with the other requirements they face is another critical question that must be answered in order to fully understand how these standards fit into the policy coherence puzzle.

21st CCLCs as a Matter of Policy and Practice

In the past, the American education system has been marked by its dependency on local authority. Even with NCLB, the states have the final authority on what happens within their individual education systems. Cohen and Spillane (1992) explain how these interactions between federal, state, and local governments work in the U.S. education system:

> Despite growing state and federal power, local government still is the key element in U.S. Schooling. And the relations between policy and practice are framed by

sprawling government structures in which fragmented power and authority express a considered mistrust of government (7).

Table 1
Program and Activities as Defined by Michigan Model Standards

Standard	**Quality Indicators**
Activities are planned and supported through resources that reflect the interests and abilities of the children enrolled and provide support for the school-day activities, especially supplementing the areas of development not regularly provided during the school day.	Resources are available and utilized to provide a variety of child-centered activities that increase the opportunities for children to develop in all areas (social, emotional, intellectual, academic, physical, and cultural).
The comprehensive curriculum addresses the needs of the whole child, individual as well as group needs, and supports the school curriculum	1) Staff members demonstrate awareness of children's individual daily needs and learning styles and plan to accommodate them in daily programming. 2) There is a clear rationale for the activities chosen. 3) The program supports the school's School Improvement Plan. 4) Activities have educational, socio-emotional, physical or life-skills outcomes.
Materials are of sufficient quantity and type to support the curriculum for all ages.	A minimum of three developmentally appropriate activity choices are available for each child daily. The enriched environment includes a wide variety of multiple materials and equipment, which are available to children.
School day and OST activities are linked in ways that support the academic development of each individual child.	1) OST programming includes developmentally appropriate academic support and enrichment activities that complement the school curriculum. 2) OST staff members work with individual teachers and parents to support children's homework needs. 3) OST staff members participate in school-wide activities and goals.

21st CCLCs exemplify this process. Although the money comes from the federal government, the states have control over which applicants receive the money and how much they get. In the past, only school districts were eligible to apply for the grant, but they are now open to other agencies, such as community-based organizations. Still, each grant proposal is written with specific reference to the context of a particular school district or community, for instance, a rural district may look considerably different from an urban district.

In terms of coherence, then, this creates new situations that policy makers and researchers need to account for when analyzing them. The needs of each grant depend upon the situational context of that grantee; consequently, each grantee will be different causing variation across the sites. If the design put into place for each grantee works for that area, the variation may be seen as a great way of implementing diverse programs that ultimately reach the final goal.

Therefore, after-school programs should be working towards instructional program coherence. Newmann, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk (2001) define instructional coherence as "A common instructional framework [that] guides curriculum, teaching, assessment, and learning climate. The framework combines specific expectations for student learning, with specific strategies and materials to guide teaching and assessment" (299). The after-school literature does not offer any sense of what kinds of instructional programs are actually being offered in after-school centers. Do staff members have specific curriculum guidelines to follow? Are all activities somehow connected back to the regular classroom or are they randomly put together? Who selected the after-school curriculum?

Because of the different types of programs, the multiple goals that programs try to reach, and the various policy decisions made regarding types of programming and implementation of the program, measuring the outcomes of programs is a difficult task:

> One of the drawbacks of this lack of coherence, however, is that OST providers and advocates still have not reached full consensus on what constitutes "quality" in terms of identifying either which among differing program models works well or what components within them, like staffing or dosage, have the greatest impact. The issue is extremely complicated because it challenges a very diverse field to develop some standard measures by which to assess what programs and features have the most influence on children (Farbman, n.d.).

To analyze how various 21st CCLCs sites throughout Michigan have addressed these various issues, each site will be examined through Cohen and Spillane's (1996) five features of instructional guidance: 1) Instructional Frameworks; 2) Instructional Materials; 3) Assessment of Results; 4) Monitoring Instruction; and 5) Teacher Education and Licensing. The assessment of results, however, can be examined through multiple perspectives and deserves more discussion.

Evaluating 21st CCLCs in Michigan

The evaluation of 21st CCLCs programs is two-tiered. MDE has hired an outside evaluator to conduct a state level evaluation, and the outside evaluator works closely with MDE personnel. Each program also must hire a local evaluator to deal with specific programming issues related to their individual programs. At the state level, the Outreach and Engagement Office through Michigan State University (MSU) has been hired to do

the evaluation. This evaluation team is looking for immediate, intermediate, and ultimate outcomes. See Table 2 for a full description of these outcomes. The MSU team writes evaluation reports that inform MDE of the strengths and weaknesses of the 21st CCLCs and to provide them with recommendations for improvement. For local evaluation purposes, the program directors have different areas of concentration among the programs. Some may want to do a continuous focus on academic achievement whereas others may concentrate more on behavioral outcomes such as attendance.

Table 2
State Evaluation Proposed Outcomes

Immediate Outcomes	**Intermediate Outcomes**	**Ultimate Outcomes**
Utilization of Programs	Increased Academic Engagement	Improved Academic Outcomes
Engagement with Staff	Increased Valuing of Education	
Family support of involvement	Improved Social Functioning	Improved Behavioral Outcomes
Linkages within school	Improved Emotional Functioning	

Although it sounds as if the monitoring tools are in place because the local evaluators do not have a plan on how to share the information, both local and state stakeholders receive it to improve the program for all. Though each evaluation may be able to provide information to the other and because each evaluation looks at various components of the programs, there may be some overlap of information, thus wasting the available time and resources of the evaluators. The state has one evaluation going while at the grantee level another evaluation is systematically in process too. By not overlapping the results from both evaluations, some valuable information may be lost for the 21st CCLCs as a whole.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to explore 21st CCLCs as academic support systems. Expanding upon previous theories that analyze coherence among educational systems, this study seeks to understand how 21st CCLCs after-school programs throughout Michigan align their academic program to what students learn during the day and how programs provide supplemental activities to the school day curriculum. Each 21st CCLCs site throughout Michigan offers unique programming to meet the needs of the individual school each serves, such as specific student demographics or particular academic challenges students face. Although the study discusses student "outcomes" in terms of classroom grades and standardized test scores, academic outcomes are not the primary focus of this study. Instead, the study examines the process of how 21st CCLCs are viewed as academic support systems in the schools to which they provide services, understanding that one intervention cannot contribute solely to a student's academic performance.

Currently, the research on after-school programs is limited, and the results of academic achievement on after-school programs have been mixed. Before a judgment can be made on the ultimate effects of academic achievement in after-school programs, more work needs to focus on the decision-making process and programming efforts of the programs. After-school programs have several layers of policies and administrative levels where decisions are made that affect everything from what curriculum is used in the programs and who is hired to staff the programs to how the after-school programs connect to the school day. This research examines after-school programs as academic support systems and analyzes how they coherently link to the school day. Because this

type of work has not been done with after-school programs in the past, it is a beginning step at looking what is happening instructionally through after-school programs.

CHAPTER 2: AFTER-SCHOOL ACADEMICS AND METHODOLOGY

Characteristics of Students in After School Programs

Before reviewing the current after school literature on academic outcomes, it is important to understand where students are likely to go after school and in which activities they are likely to be engaged. NCES recently released *Before-and After-School Care, Programs, and Activities of Children in Kindergarten Through Eighth Grade: 2001.* This report analyzes demographic characteristics of families and students and looks for trends on where demographically similar students are likely to go after school. Because the survey was conducted in 2001 and because increased numbers of students attended academically focused programs due to the increase of after-school supplemental service providers are not included in these numbers.

Ultimately, the report demonstrated that parents have a multitude of choices when deciding how children should spend their after school hours. Children may go to a home setting after school with supervision provided by either a relative or a non-relative. Other children, especially older ones, may be responsible for themselves after school or even take care of younger siblings. Another option is that students attend a center based or school-based after school program. The survey focused on families with students in grades K-8. For all grades, approximately 19% were enrolled in center or school-based after school programs. Of those, 55% were enrolled in programs in a public school.

Students in grades 6-8, the middle school years, were less likely to be in the care of a relative, a non-relative, or in a center or school-based program than students in grades kindergarten through fifth (Kleiner, Nolin, & Chapman, 2004). Instead, they were most likely to be in an unsupervised setting. Demographically, the survey found

differences across racial/ethnic groups for all grades. Black children were the most likely to be cared for by a relative or be in self-care both before and after school. Children whose mothers worked full time were more likely than children with mothers who were unemployed or worked part-time to be in the care of a relative, non-relative, or a school or center-based program. Based on household, income, however, the only significant difference was for incomes of $75,000 or over, where children were less likely to be in the regular care of a relative after school.

The kinds of activities children engage in after school are also pertinent to understanding which activities could potentially lead to increased academic outcomes. For students attending a center- or school-based program, 56% reported engaging in homework/school-related/educational activities. Compared to students who were in other types of care (i.e., relative care, non-relative care, and self-care), program participants were also more likely to engage in activities related to the arts. Fifty-five percent participated in an after school activity taking place in a public school, such as a club or sports activity.

The results of this survey can be interpreted in several different ways raising significant questions regarding after-school programs. First, are the appropriate students being targeted for after school programs? The survey indicates that students in the middle school years are less likely to be supervised after school, yet this is the age group that would be most likely to experiment and participate in unsupervised activities during this time. Second, Black students were most likely to be unsupervised during this time. One of the primary foci of NCLB is to close the achievement gap and often, minority students are the group of students showing the lowest achievement. Third, just over half the

students enrolled in after school programs report participating in homework/school-related/educational activities. This survey raises questions about the academic abilities of the students coming to the program and the types of activities offered once they attend. Without answers to these questions, after-school programs may not be able to make noticeable improvements, particularly for students most in need of assistance.

Criteria defining academic achievement in after-school programs

After-school programs tend to target specific groups of students, usually students from high-poverty backgrounds and minorities. Each program has multiple foci. The Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) uses the term "performance measure" to indicate different variables that can be used to measure the impact of particular outcomes on after-school programs. HFRP defines performance measure in the following manner: "Performance measures assess your program's progress on the implementation of your *strategies and activities*" (Harvard, 2003). HFRP divides performance measures into three areas: 1) academic performance measures; 2) youth development performance measures; and 3) prevention performance measures.

With the growing emphasis on academic performance for all students, the following literature review focuses on measures of academic achievement. HFRP lists several performance measures related to academics ranging from the ability to get along with others in school, general academic knowledge, and special education placement. Because of the limited literature evaluating the academic effectiveness of after-school programs, this study defines academic achievement using criteria from HFRP: attendance/absenteeism, attitude toward school (including engagement in school and motivation), grades in the content areas of math and reading, and standardized test scores.

Although some after-school programs focus on specific content areas or activities (i.e., language arts only, enrichment only, recreation only), this literature review focuses on programs and studies that were more comprehensive in nature by offering multiple activities for students.

These criteria were chosen for several reasons. Overall, these were the outcomes analyzed in the literature using a variety of methodologies. Examples of different methodological techniques include surveys given to students, parents, and teachers that measured the individual's perceptions on how the after-school program was affecting the students' school performance and attitudes toward school. For instance, in the studies students and parents were asked to report on how the students' attitudes toward school changed over the time they were actively enrolled in the after-school program. When researchers surveyed teachers, the teachers were asked to comment on the after-school program participants' engagement in class and the quality of schoolwork of the participants from after-school programs. Finally, when standardized test scores were available, comparisons were made between students participating in after-school programs and groups of students who did not participate.

School Attendance/Absenteeism

School attendance and absenteeism are outcomes that can easily be measured and collected through school and/or teacher attendance records. Even though school attendance may not be indicative that the student was learning or engaged during the school day, the argument can be made that students who have higher attendance rates have a better chance of making better academic progress than students with lower rates of attendance (McComb & Little-Scott, 2003). The attendance results in after-school

evaluations generally show that students in the programs tend to have higher school attendance rates than those not enrolled.

In a meta-analysis conducted of 27 after-school evaluations, Scott-Little, Hamann, & Jurs the found the results on increasing school attendance were mixed, with some studies finding no attendance effects while others found slightly positive ones. Even when the trend was towards more positive attendance rates, the results were not necessarily significant (2003).

Similarly, the first evaluation of 21st CCLCs came out in 2003, and the second wave of results was just published in 2004. The data was taken from programs in 2000-01 and 2001-02 for each year of the study, respectively. [3] Both years of the evaluation found positive results regarding student attendance. Participants in the after-school program had fewer days absent and fewer days tardy than non-participants during the first year of the study (Dynarski, Moore, Mullins, Gleason, James-Burdumy, Rosenberg, Pistorino, Silva, Mansfield, & Levy, 2003)). For the second year, participants in the program were absent less than non-participants in the comparison group (9 versus 10 days, effect size=0.09) (Dynarski, James-Burdumy, Moore, Rosenberg, Deke, & Mansfield, 2003).

Child Trends conducted a baseline report for 15 programs from DC (District of Columbia) Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation (DCCYIT) as a starting point for reaching the five outcomes of the program. Academically, baseline information was collected on students in grades 7-12, their school grades, their scores on the Stanford 9 test for reading and math, and school attendance. One of the programs in the study, the

[3] After NCLB allowed for states to distribute funds to schools for 21st CCLCs, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. was contracted to do a comprehensive evaluation across the country. Results from the first year of the study were provided in 2003 and the results from the second year of the study came out in the fall of 2004. Because the data collected came from 2001 and 2002 before NCLB was fully implemented, they may not accurately reflect the newly defined 21st CCLCs.

Boys and Girls Clubs of America Educational Enhancement Program, showed higher attendance rates for members of the program than for a comparison group (Redd, Cochran, & Moore, 2002).

Another Child Trends study compared participant groups to the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1997 (NLSY97) since Child Trends had adopted many of its survey questions from the NLSY97. The Child Trends survey showed that 95% of the students participating in after school programs reported being absent during school 0-4 days compared to 66% of the students in the national sample (Guzman, Redd, Matthews, Moore, and Bronte-Tinke, 2004). Similarly, participants in LA's BEST program showed fewer absences in grades 6 and 7 than a comparison cohort group of students. In the eighth and ninth grade, however, no significance difference regarding attendance was found indicating the program may have had less of an effect on older students than on younger students (Huang, Gribbons, Sung Kim, Lee, & Baker, 2000).

In a study from an elementary, middle, and high school 21st CCLCs in inner city Louisville, KY, a preliminary analysis was done to look at the demographic characteristics of program participants and non-participants. The findings, although not statistically significant, found a positive correlation between relationships with students who had higher attendance in the after school program and an increase in their attendance at the school across elementary, middle, and high school (Munoz, 2002).

Although not all evaluations or programs collected school level data to analyze the effects of after school programs on regular classroom attendance, the programs that did measure the outcome showed small positive differences for students in the programs. Few of the results proved to be significant for middle school students.

Attitude Toward School, Student Engagement and Motivation

Because attitude toward school, student engagement, and motivation are internal variables that can only be measured through student, parent, and teacher self-reported assessments, these variables are grouped together. Zaff and Redd define these factors as student "connectedness" to school and to a student's academic motivation (2001: 13). The more engaged a student is in school, the more likely he or she will be more academically inclined. These factors serve as predictors of how successful a person may be upon completion of high school. Students start developing them as early as elementary school.

They are included as academic outcomes because they do reflect upon the mindset of students and their perspective on school often serves as an indicator on the student's likelihood to succeed academically. Additionally, much of the after-school literature focuses on youth development and youth development assets which tend to focus more on variables such as youth social development rather than academic effects.

Completion of homework also serves as an indicator of academic success. In general, if students complete their homework, they are more likely to receive higher grades in the subject. Whether or not homework serves as an effective instrument of academic competence is currently a debate in the education field, but it can be an indicator of academic engagement.

Thus, based on the available literature, outcomes of academic engagement need to be reviewed in order to receive a more comprehensive picture of potential outcomes for after-school programs that may be indicators of school engagement and, ultimately, academic achievement.

Larson's research centers on intrinsic motivation in the lives of American youth and offers structured voluntary activities as potential ways of keeping the minds of students actively and positively engaged. Schools rarely have the opportunity to promote or encourage student motivation due to limitations imposed upon teachers because of the institutional structure of schools, such as large class sizes and large amounts of content to cover (Larson, 2000). In a previous study conducted by Larson where youth were responsible for reporting several times throughout the day on how they were feeling during a particular moment, they reported being bored 27% of the time (cited in Larson, 2000).

"Bored" adolescents need activities to keep their minds and bodies occupied. Larson argues that "structured voluntary activities" or "youth activities" fill one category of activities that allow students to develop intrinsic motivation. He defines youth activities in this way:

> It includes activities that are organized by adults, such as extracurricular school activities and community youth activities, as well as structured activities that youth participate in on their own—such diverse things as hobbies, writing poetry, constructing a web site, or playing in a band with a group of friends. Our defining criteria for this category [are] activities that are voluntary (i.e., not required for school) and involve some structure, that is, where students' participation occurs within a system involving constraints, rules, and goals (http://gateway.ut.ovid.com/gw1/ovidweb.cgi, p. 7).

After-school programs easily fit into this definition of a structured voluntary activity. Although parents or teachers may recommend that a child participate, the programs are

not mandatory. Secondly, programs offer structured activities whether they are academic in nature or of a more social order. As Larson comments, however, the outcome research on these types of activities is quite limited with several methodological and theoretical flaws. In general, studies indicate positive correlations between structured youth activities and outcomes, such as intrinsic motivation and, to some extent, academic achievement.

In their study of impact evaluations, McComb and Scott-Little (2003) found positive psychosocial outcomes, such as positive attitudes toward school and lower aggression levels. The 21st CCLCs evaluation found that over half of the participants felt more comfortable about schoolwork and felt more confident about solving math problems, 62.1% and 57.6%, respectively, during the first year of the study. In the first phase of the evaluation, teachers reported that youth participants were showing more effort than non-participants (Dynarski et al., 2003). In the second year of the study, however, effort did not differ between the two groups (Dynarski et al., 2004).

In contrast, the Beacons evaluation found that participants were more likely to report having feelings of greater efficacy. Also, the after-school participants were more likely to report putting greater effort into school (Walker & Arbreton, 2004).

Schinke, Cole, and Poulin (2000) did a time series study on various attitudes of students in Boys and Girls Clubs across America. The results showed that youth, teachers, and school data consistently showed that participants were more likely to report more positive academic outcomes. For instance, participants reported greater engagement and enjoyment of reading, verbal skills, and tutoring and engagement in writing than students in both a comparison group and control group. Teachers also reported the

participants as showing higher reading, writing, and game skills, overall school performance and interest in class material.

In another Boys and Girls study, focus groups reported increased academic performance (Herrara & Arbreton, 2003). The group attributed the increase in academic performance to the club changing their attitude toward school. Child Trends released a report in 2002 that looked at 10 different after school evaluations, both experimental and quasi-experimental, in order to synthesize the results from middle childhood programs. The studies that focused on multivariate, longitudinal measures suggested several factors that may play a large factor in academic achievement, including: prior achievement and ability levels, school engagement, academic self-concept, global self-esteem, and students workloads (Redd et al., 2002).

The Extended-Service Schools (ESS) Initiative created 60 after school programs in 20 different communities around the country. The 60 programs followed four different models, including Beacon, Bridges to Success, Community Schools, and West Philadelphia Improvement Corporation. From these models, school attitudes and behaviors tended to improve with 65% of the youth involved responding that ESS helped them do better in school, and 50% stating that it help them like school better, while 71% responded that the program help them learn that hard work pays off. Additionally, the more days the student attended an ESS program, the more likely they were to report that they paid attention in class (Baldwin Grossman, Price, Fellerath, Jucovy, Kotloff, Raley, and Walker, K. E., 2002).

Although the studies may not demonstrate significant results in their initial findings, the trend does seem to have a more positive impact on the participants in terms

of attitudes toward school and the positive consequences of portraying a good attitude toward school. These studies, however, are primarily evaluations of specific programs. No extensive research has been done to analyze what types of programming in after-school programs may help students perform better during the day. This gap in the literature is something this study begins to fill.

Classroom Grades in the Content Areas of Math and Reading

As measures of whether teachers see after-school participants as performing better in classes than non-participants, or if students improve over time using pre-and post-test strategies, classroom grades can be used to measure student progress. The studies either reported on grades in general, or because of the emphasis on math and literacy in NCLB, classroom grades in the evaluation studies tended to focus on these core subject areas.

McComb and Scott-Little's (2003) analysis revealed that in general, the results on after- school grades were inconclusive. Although several of the studies reviewed did find positive correlations between participating in after-school programs and grades, none of the results were significant. Based on survey responses, however, the majority of students reported that the after-school program did make a difference in their grades. Parent and teacher respondents reported similar results attributing student academic progress to the after-school programs.

The 21st CCLCs evaluation found mixed results when analyzing grades. During the first year of the study, program participants showed marginally significant higher math scores than non-participants, (80.3 versus 79.5). Teachers also indicated that the

quality of the homework turned in was of higher quality for participants than non-participants (Dynarski et al., 2003).

Results from the second year of the evaluation differed significantly. Social studies was the only subject in which participants showed a significantly higher grade (81.6 versus 79.8). Completion of homework to the teacher's satisfaction for participants actually declined with non-participants now being more likely to meet teacher satisfaction levels (53.4 versus 55.2) (Dynarski et al., 2004).

When analyzing subgroup populations in the first year, teachers reported increased effort, less tardiness, and a growth in math scores for Black students, while Hispanic students also showed gains in math scores and less tardiness. In contrast, no effects were seen for White students. Across all subgroups, students with a baseline of fewer disciplinary problems increased math and social science grades (Dynarksi et al., 2003). The second year of results did not show any significant differences for any subgroup.

The Beacons study found similar results. Despite participants' feelings of greater efficacy as discussed above, their GPAs did not reflect this difference. Participants had an average GPA of 3.0 while non-participants averaged 3.2 (Walker & Arbreton, 2004).

Hudley (2001) compared a group of students living in the same housing complex but not members of the 4 H program to a group of students residing in public housing and participating in a 4 H after-school activity program, a program that focused on academic competence as one outcome. The children participating in the program were given 90 minutes of homework assistance each day in addition to 30 minutes of recreation activities. Academic competence was defined by a modified version of the Self-

Perception Profile for Children with both students and teachers filling out individual versions. Upon completion, students in the program indicated higher academic competence, particularly the girls. Teachers did not report any difference between either group. Hudley argues that these are still positive findings as they support the notion that minority girls are more likely than boys to continue in school, especially if they perceive themselves as academically competent.

In a study done on after-school programs across the state of Massachusetts, concerns were raised regarding the students who were actually participating in the program and how that affected the academic achievement measures for subgroups. Although students participating in the programs are reporting positive results, not all students in need of extra academic help are participating. The specific example used is the Academic Support Services Program, which provides intensive English and math skills for students. Several barriers exist though in recruiting students most in need of the programs. Sessions often are only offered for a few hours per week. For older students, especially those in high school, other after-school commitments such as jobs, interfere with participation in after school programs. For the students who did attend, 61% scored higher on an English post-test while 62% showed gains on a math post-test (Mass, 2002).

A program receiving very positive feedback was the Boys and Girls Club report on older youth in New York and Boston (Herrera & Arbreton, 2003). Academic risk factors for the youth in the study included poor grades ranging from C's to E's and F's, skipped at least one day of school in the previous month, or repeated a grade. In follow-up surveys, approximately 75% of the youth reported that the clubs had helped them improve their academic grades, and at least one after-school staff member knew how they

were doing in school. However, only self-reports were available in the study so perceptions by teachers were not measured.

Although most of the research has not begun to analyze subgroup populations at the middle school level, evidence regarding the achievement gap is beginning to emerge. For instance, in the Child Trends study, the baseline grades of the students participating in the program were lower than the national sample of students from the NLSA97 survey (Guzman et al., 2004). LA's BEST did find evidence of the closing of the achievement gap. Initially, LA's BEST students had lower math scores. By the 1997-98 school year, those gaps had disappeared (Huang et al., 2000).

Again, although few of the results were significant, several of them did show indications of after-school programs having a positive impact on school academic outcomes, including overall GPAs as well as subject-specific grades.

Standardized Test Scores

Standardized testing is used across the country as a way of assessing student achievement. The reliability and validity of standardized testing, is an on-going debate in education circles, however. Part of the problem in using standardized test scores as a measure of after-school outcomes is exemplified in LA's BEST example. Because the evaluation reviewed several different programs, they found that several of them used different tests. Despite few significant results, the trend leaned towards positive results (Huang et al., 2002).

Other studies, though, have found evidence that after-school programs lead to increased standardized test scores. After-school programs in Massachusetts were seen to

have several impacts on school reform, particularly in the areas of standardized testing. In 2001, every school district raised their scores on the Massachusetts state wide standardized test, MCAS, especially students in the 10th grade. After-school programs were credited with three major impacts in accomplishing this goal: 1) by helping students improve their academic and intellectual skills; 2) by raising the MCAS scores for low-achieving students; and 3) by providing activities in after-school programs that are often presented differently than programs offered during the school day, which, in turn, gives students new skills and more confidence in their own academic abilities. (Mass, 2002).

In Scott-Little et al.'s (2003) review of 27 impact evaluations of after-school programs, results on standardized achievement tests did not provide conclusive evidence. The evidence reported greater effect sizes for limited English proficient students as well as other students who were "low achievers" on the initial baseline.

In another meta-analysis that focuses on low-achieving students in reading and mathematics, Lauer, Akiba, Wilkerson, Apthrop, Snow & Martin-Glenn analyzed 27 studies that met several criteria, including a disaggregation of students performing at a low-achievement level (2004). Their definition of low-achieving included performance on standardized tests, classroom assessments, and classroom grades or teacher recommendations. Lauer et al.'s results, however, found that the effect sizes for math achievement among low-performing elementary school students were more effective than for middle school students.

One goal of the Beacon Initiative in San Francisco was to correlate whether youth positive developmental experiences lead to improved academic performance (Walker & Arbreton, 2003). Using the Stanford 9 standardized achievement test to mark academic

progress, participants in the Beacon project started out with substantially lower scores than nonparticipants. Ultimately, the report states that students in the Beacon centers did not end up with better grades, higher test scores, or a lower record of absences from school. The evaluators cite two reasons for these results: "Although the academic support activities were generally well structured and managed, they tended to consist of homework help or tutoring. Second, even though young people attended regularly over time, the average number of days a youth attended each week was low" (v). Thus, instructional strategies related to academic assistance and the recruitment of low-performing students are two issues that need further study.

Based on the mixed and inconclusive results from the meta-analyses and studies conducted on after school programs, it is quite obvious that the literature lacks several key pieces for fully understanding how after school programs affect student academic outcomes. The Harvard Family Research Project raises the question in the following manner: "How much participation, in what kinds of programs, and for which participants is necessary to improve outcomes for youth? Implicit in this overarching question is the need for accurate and meaningful ways to assess youth participation in OST programs" (Harvard, 2004: 1). Gaps in the literature can be broken into two main categories: program design and context/external variables. Attendance and dosage effects in programs and methodological difficulties in studying after school programs falls under program design. Context and external variables include lack of consistent standards across programs, types of programming, and links to the school day.

Methodological Problems of the Evaluations

The methodology of the reports is not consistent. Although several of the evaluations have tried to set up quasi-experimental designs, comparison students often have higher socioeconomic backgrounds and/or higher baseline achievement status than students in the after school program; consequently, comparing the groups of students may not be an accurate measure of deciding how effective after school programs are for participants.

There may also be selection bias with the students who choose to participate in the programs. As noted previously, after-school programs are generally voluntary. Presumably, students choosing to participate in the programs may have particular characteristics that make them more likely to want to attend, such as a stronger motivation to do well in school. Even though participants often have lower baseline grades than non-participants, students attending the program may still not be the students most in need of help.

Programs being evaluated based on how much they increase standardized academic scores also raise questions. Debates have heated up in the past couple of years regarding the validity of using standardized tests to compare students, particularly tests showing a bias against minority students or high-poverty students. For instance, it is very difficult to control the effects of the regular classroom. Kane (2004) proposes a methodology that would account for a reasonable standard deviation for standardized tests if the tests analyzed how many hours of schooling a student received per year and how many standard deviations, on average, the score would increase by. Then, an

analysis would indicate how many additional hours should be provided that could increase standardized achievement scores even more.

Aside from the problems doing a comparison study of after-school programs, many other external variables cannot be accounted for when doing this type of study. The literature also focuses heavily on self-reports by students, and perception surveys by parents and teachers. Again, selection bias limits the generalizability of the results. Perceptions between what students reported they did after-school and what parents reported they thought students were doing after school were also different indicating that adults and students may have different definitions of different types of after-school activities (Cooper, Valentine, Nye, & Lindsay, 1999)

As with any self-reporting system, respondents may mark answers in a way that will present themselves in a more favorable light. For instance, students may be more prone to say that they have a positive attitude toward school on a survey than they may actually feel. Self-reports, however, are an effective way of analyzing what those involved in the programs really think of the program.

Additionally, with different program goals, evaluations tend to focus on different indicators, and they will often measure the indicators using different performance measures (Scott-Little et al, 2002; Lauer, Akiba, Wilkerson, Apthrop, Snow, & Martin-Glenn, 2004). This is especially true in terms of academic achievement. Some after-school programs may choose to look at individual student grades, while others may aggregate the grades across all participants. Doing program comparisons using standardized testing can also be complicated. Currently, the use and effectiveness of standardized testing is being debated, especially for minority students who may be at a

cultural disadvantage. For national comparisons, states often use different standardized tests, which limits comparisons.

Many of the studies address their own limitations, which need to be heeded. The previously mentioned study focusing on Boys and Girls Club members living in public housing in New York City, Cleveland, Oakland, and Tampa from ages 10-14, cautions researchers about the flaws of the study by stating it may not be possible to generalize the results. Although the study focused on several geographic areas across the United States, many regions serving different types of students were not represented. More importantly, the study did not account for dosage effects. Not knowing which participants received how much of an activity over time does not contribute to program knowledge on what works and what does not work.

Aside from describing the participating students to the non-participating students, the 21st CCLC study does not describe how correlations were calculated. KidTrax is named as the attendance record-keeping system, but it does not describe whether the system keeps track of attendance by day or by activity and session. When looking for dosage effects, this information is pertinent to see whether relationships exist between the amount of a certain activity the student is receiving and its academic impacts. Another criticism of the study is the fact that when analyzing the results, the author combines the entire sample size by placing elementary, middle, and high school together. Because students at each of these grade levels are at different developmental levels, analyzing a study across multiple types of programs does not effectively measure what is happening at each of those programs (Munoz, 2003).

The Mathematica report has come under heavy criticism for its methodology, especially for the middle school students. First, the researchers used data collected in 2000 for the first year of the report. This data does not reflect the revised 21st CCLCs goals and purposes as set forth in 2001 by NCLB. Prior to the change in legislation, centers were not required to focus on academic goals; therefore, the evaluation is looking for an outcome that may not have been an original focus of the programs.

Further, the sampling for middle school students raises questions about the validity of the study. Elementary schools were selected if they were oversubscribed in order to set up a random assignment experiment. Because middle schools rarely have such a waiting list, random assignment was not possible, so a probability sample of grantees was used instead. Within those grantees, the treatment group was selected in the fall of 2000, and propensity score matching techniques were used to select the comparison students. Comparison students came from the school where participants attended, and in other cases, they came from other schools in the district so teachers who were reporting on participants and non-participants were not the same (Dynarski et al., 2003).

The same design methodology carried through to the second year of the study. In the second study, the authors explain that these types of designs often have lower validity than experimental studies involving random assignment (Dynarski et al., 2004). Complicating year two of the study was the fact that 59% of the students attending in the first year either moved up into high school or transferred out of the school, thereby reducing the number of attendees. Of the 41% who still had access to the centers, only 47% continued to attend, so the sample size decreased dramatically.

Because of the complications of external variables in after-school programs, studies need to be carefully designed to consider these other factors:

> In evaluating the effects of programs on children's school performance, it is important for researchers to consider the individual, family, or community differences in children participating in programs in their research design so that the effects of those preexisting differences among participants and nonparticipants are not mistakenly attributed to programs. The research on program effects cited here does consider possible selection effects but is based on small, nonrepresentative samples of children (Shumow, 2001).

Thus, after school programs do not stand in isolation to the intellectual growth of the regular school program, nor do other factors, such as family background. Although these can never be controlled for entirely, by understanding how they limit the study, they can be taken into consideration.

Types of Programming

The variety of programs also makes it hard to research after-school programs. Each program has a different target and a different focus. In fact, 21st CCLCs are the only programs required by law to provide academic services and to show growth in academics by students. In fact, they may not even define "homework help," "homework assistance," or "tutoring" in the same way. Thus, evaluations may be measuring different outcomes. Even when they measure similar outcomes, such as standardized tests, the test being used may not be consistent across sites. Again, there is also the confounding factor of the regular classroom. When students have six or more hours of instruction with a

particular teacher that is bound to have some effect. Comparing programs across states or nationally, then, may not carry much validity.

Because of this lack of a guiding program structure in the literature, the question is raised of what types of after-school activities lead to improved academic achievement? Defining five types of after school activities: homework, television viewing, extracurricular activities, other types of structured after school groups, and jobs, Cooper et al. compared what students and parents reported they did after school to their scores on standardized test scores and class grades. Homework activities, structured groups, and less time in jobs and watching television tended to have higher correlations with better grades (Cooper, Valentine, Nye, & Lindsay, 1999). In fact, the results showed that after-school activities increased the prediction of achievement test scores by 7% and grades by 11%. The implications of this study indicate the importance of homework assistance, but it still fails to describe what types of homework assistance—time to do it, actual tutors, small groups—proved to be the most effective.

Cosden, Morrison, Albanese, & Macias (2001) report that literature on homework help in the middle school grades is limited. Although the outcomes indicate that homework assistance is stronger for older students, the majority of the literature discusses homework assistance for the younger grades. Thus, Cosden et al. argues that the question to ask becomes how does a mix of homework assistance and academic enrichment influence the achievement outcomes noted in school by teachers and on standardized test scores? Cosden et al. group after school homework assistance into two categories: 1) programs that assist with homework assigned by the teacher and 2) activities that involve academic enrichment but do not necessarily tie in with the regular classroom curriculum.

Without a better understanding of the kinds of assistance and curriculum being offered in the programs, this question on what types of instructional strategies used in after school programs cannot be answered.

In a presentation given by the 21st CCLCs Evaluation Team out of Michigan State University, the general conclusion was that a combination of academic, academic enrichment and youth development activities were linked to learning and school improvement. Students reported more academic learning when they received high levels of academic or enrichment activities as opposed to students who attended sites with more non-academic offerings. When analyzing reading grades, most changes came when the student participated in both academic and enrichment activities (VanEgeren, Wu, Hawkins, & Sturdevant Reed, 2006).

Links to School Day

Few of the studies mention anything about programs linking back to the school day, although several mention that this is an area of concern and one that should be explored further. In the Scott-Little et al. meta-analysis, connecting the after-school program to the regular school program or curricula was one of the most cited challenges. If academic outcomes are going to be measured by outcomes, such as grades and achievement test scores, then students will only improve if there is some linkage between the after-school program and the regular school day activities.

Several barriers, however, exist to actually achieving this goal. Miller (2003) explains the problem:

Linking to School- Although creating linkages between in-school and after-school programs is a common goal, most programs have great difficulty in achieving it. Differences in institutional cultures, instructional orientation and schedules, coupled with challenges related to staff turnover and poor communication can hinder linking in-school time with after-school programs.

Often, teachers become overwhelmed with their own classroom work. Although they may support the idea of students receiving extra help after school, they do not necessarily want to put the effort into making connections with the after-school staff. From an institutional perspective, some teachers may feel adverse to after-school programs. As an extended educational institution, teachers may feel that targeting low-performing students means that they are not doing their jobs adequately. The staffing problem that Miller talks about is also of concern. Many after school staff are part time and therefore do not have time to work with school day teachers on a more regular basis.

Several reasons exist for the limited research on after-school programs. Schools are under increasing pressure to be "results-oriented" using a research-based approach. Thus, the concept of "scientifically-based" research in terms of an evaluation context is new to many people responsible for their programs. Scott-Little et al. describe these new programs as "'flagship' out-of-school time programs, i.e., large-scale out-of-school time programs and initiatives that include rigorous evaluations that will support a data-driven case for the development and sustainability of a quality out-of-school time programming" (2002:1). Unfortunately, many of the programs have limited resources in terms of capacity and capital to follow-through on such a rigorous evaluation plan.

Where do we go from here?

The field of after-school research has been dubbed an "emerging field." Thus far, the most decent research currently available about the programs stem from evaluation reports, often with inconclusive results and questionable methodologies. Several measures can be taken to ensure that we have quality after-school research in the future, which this study attempts to address. First, the need is to look more in-depth at after-school programs attendance and dosage effects. Second, the need is for more consistent evaluation guidelines for the programs focusing on academic outcomes, so there is more consistency across the board. Third, the design of after-school research and evaluation needs to change to more effectively measure outcomes. Fourth, the need is for more research showing how after-school programs link to the regular classroom.

Currently, the research on all after-school programs is limited. Given the political context of education under fire and budget crunches throughout the nation and the state, results from after-school programs must be shown as soon as possible, even though as a capacity building instrument, this will be extremely difficult. Because of dwindling resources, however, if 21st CCLCs want to stay funded, they must show some tangible results and sustainment. All 21st CCLCs have a challenge before them—they work with the students who need the most help academically in communities that often face severe economic problems. As Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) scores start to define schools over the next few years, the future of 21st CCLCs may also be at stake. 21st CCLCs are unmistakably tied to federal, state, and local policies, but without strong alignments among these agencies and institutions, 21st CCLCs may not be able to provide the results that politicians need to see in a timely fashion to maintain the programs. Thus, this study

places after-school programs within the context of the broader educational system as a capacity-building instrument and begins to look at how after-school policies align or supplement school day policies through a policy coherence and instructional framework design.

Methodology

Since the field of after-school research is an emerging one (Noam, 1996), theories are under development that will link effective after-school interventions to specific, positive outcomes (Weiss, 2000). To develop theories that will lead to better after-school programming, however, a much more concerted research effort needs to be undertaken. Suggestions are provided for specific research studies:

> The studies that should be conducted are ones that look at the whole ecology of the program—the quality, the activities, etc.—not just at educational outcomes. The definition of desired outcomes should be broad so that one does not look only at test scores, but also the social and emotional development of the child, which is tantamount to doing well in school and in life. Different models and approaches should also be evaluated, because there isn't only one approach in terms of content (Hart, 2000).

Examining the entire ecology of the program is an intensive process that involves looking at data concerning staffing, activities, and student participants. Without question, the social and emotional development of the child are central aspects of after-school programs; yet, given the current educational political climate, without evidence of positive educational results, namely test scores and classroom grades, funding for after-school programs could likely be eliminated.

Thus, the following study attempts to analyze after-school programs as academic support systems through a mixed methods approach. Although the study focuses on 21st CCLCs as academic support systems (intentionally not including the social-emotional aspects of the programs), the programs are being studied comprehensively by looking at issues of quality through staffing, activities, and targeted students. To explain, the majority of the data comes from qualitative interviews conducted with a variety of actors within the programs. Additionally, programs were observed, and staff who were not interviewed were asked to fill out surveys in order to receive a more comprehensive understanding of how others working directly with the students experience the program. Finally, outcomes such as classroom grades, standardized test scores, and survey information collected by the statewide evaluation team were analyzed to look for differences across sites.[4]

Using a Mixed Methods Approach

Most of the research on after-school programs focuses on quantifiable outcomes as determined by surveys, standardized tests, and classroom grades. These are the same sort of outcomes that teachers are being evaluated on through their everyday practice. Although these indicators are important components of the program evaluations, the success or failure of a student to gain academically cannot be attributed to one lone

[4] Before continuing, there are certain terms specific to the 21st CCLCs programs in Michigan that will be referred to several times throughout the study. These terms and their definitions include:

- Grantee: The education agency and/or community organization(s) that applied for and were awarded the grant.
- Program Director: The individual(s) overseeing the administration of the grant.
- Site Coordinator: The individual who runs a specific 21st CCLCs site.
- Host School: The school of the students being served by the 21st CCLCs.

intervention. Yet, few studies have taken a qualitative approach to determine what programming decisions were made and why. Talking to teachers about the after-school programs serving their own students also offers a unique perspective into the field of after-school research. What do teachers know about the program? Do they recommend students? Do they tell the after-school staff what the students should be studying?

This study uses both methods to draw a more comprehensive picture of what is actually happening in after-school programs. Mixed methods research is formally defined as "the class or research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts, or language into a single study" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Although this study does use survey, standardized test, and classroom grade data in its outcomes discussion, the majority of the data comes from qualitative interviews with program directors, site coordinators, and classroom teachers as well as observations of the programs and the classroom teachers.

Sampling

Because this study will offer important guidance and insight on the design, development, and management of academic supports, it was important to use programs and sites that were perceived as successful by the MSU evaluation team. Working with the program directors at six grantees across the state, sites within chosen grantees were selected based on stable leadership over time, access to the host school, and the program director's sense that the site has been accountable to meeting program goals with a mix of elementary and middle schools.

This sample of programs is generally representative of the geographic and demographic diversity of the Michigan 21st CCLCs grantees. It also contains a mix of program models and associations (with national organizations, school districts, community organizations, and universities). Table 3 details the selection criteria for each grantee[5]:

Table 3
Grantees and Selection Criteria

Grantee	Geographic Location	Program Association	Sites in study	Specific Interest in the Grantee and/or unique characteristics
Anders Club	Southwest Michigan	Boys and Girls Club	Anders Club	❑ A Community Based Organization ❑ Almost 100% African American
Webster Public Schools	Mid-Michigan	School District	Hancock Elementary Clark Middle	❑ Solely a school district grantee ❑ Diverse demographic population
Waterford RESD	Northern Michigan	RESD	Whitetail Elementary Schooner Middle School	❑ RESD grantee covering various school districts ❑ Rural and low-ses demographics
Center University	Southeast Michigan	University	Apple Elementary Neptune Middle	❑ Only university based grantee ❑ University-designed Curriculum
Anchor Public Schools	Western Michigan	Public Schools and CBOs	Robin Elementary Hopkins Middle	❑ Diverse program management ❑ Strong curriculum links to public school curriculum through Extended Learning Initiatives
Avonlea Area Public Schools	Northern Michigan	Four district consortium/Boys and Girls Club	Lake Middle	❑ Compare two of the same CBO's in one sample ❑ Geographic location

[5] In order to maintain confidentiality of the sites, the names being used are pseudonyms.

At Webster Public Schools, Waterford RESD, Center Area Schools, and Anchor Public Schools, both an elementary school and a middle school were selected as part of the sample. Since Anders and Avonlea Area Schools were part of the sample because of their affiliation with a community-based organization, they consisted only of a middle school. Thus, four elementary school and six middle schools were part of the end sample.

In order to receive funding, programs needed to serve students who attended schools in need of school improvement. All but one of the schools qualified for schoolwide Title I services. Additionally, the 2002 MEAP Reading and Math scores (the scores which were used to determine eligibility) for each of the schools had a small percentage of students meeting proficiency (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. 2002 MEAP Math and Reading Proficiency Results for Targeted Schools

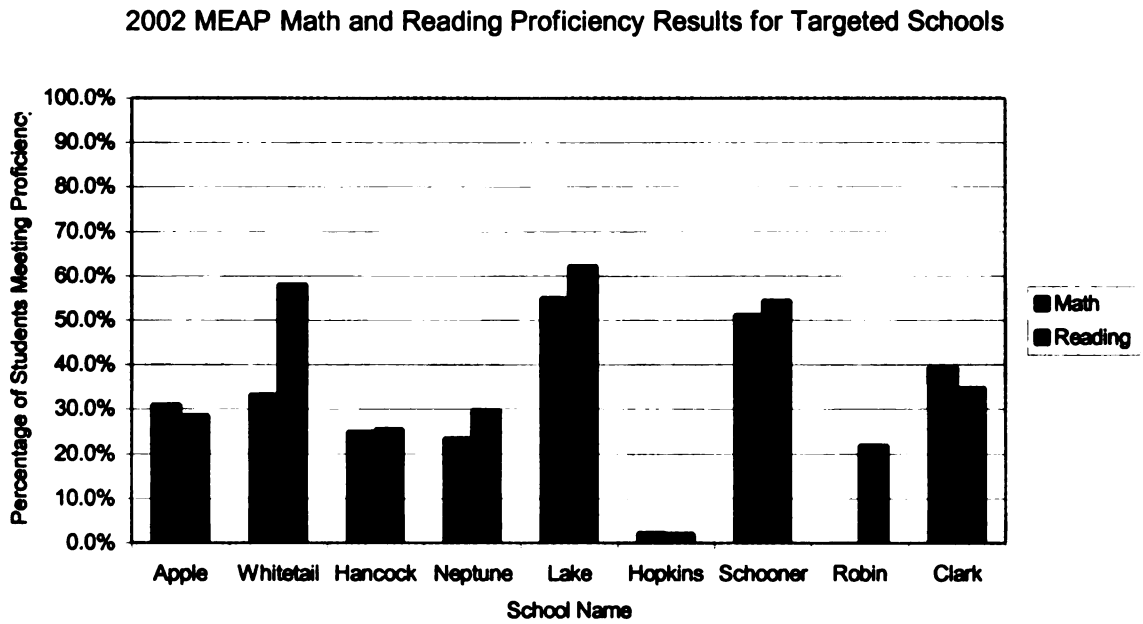


Figure 2. Percentage of students meeting proficiency on the 2002 Math and Reading statewide assessment.

Whitetail is the only elementary school with more than half of its students who met proficiency. Both Lake and Schooner middle schools showed its students reaching more than 50% proficiency in math and reading. In contrast, Hopkins Middle School had fewer than 3% of its students reaching proficiency on either test. Hence, the majority of the schools targeted had large percentages of students not reaching levels of proficiency on the MEAP test.

Case Study

The data from the samples is presented through case studies of each of the grantees. Chapter three will look at the sites directly connected to school districts, while chapter four will look at those affiliated with organizations outside of schools. The study of after-school programs, by Noam et al. (2004) states that the case study is an appropriate way of analyzing after-school programs:

> The case study approach seems particularly well suited to the task of analyzing and clarifying the social and organizational complexities involved in afterschool settings. The case study method, unlike experimental or quasi-experimental methods, rarely produces definitive results, but it does offer valuable ways to enter into complexity of human situations, develop strong hypotheses, and bridge the qualitative-quantitative schism (1-2).

Stake defines a case study as "a bounded system" where multiple parts work together as a system. In the case of the after-school programs, the parts include the multiple policies that the programs must adhere as well as the various actors, including the program directors, the site coordinators, the teachers, and even the students.

Qualitative Research

Interviews

Qualitative research can take many forms (Creswell, 1994) and can include many different approaches, including interviews, observations, and document analysis (Patton, 1997). First, because the study aims to analyze various levels of policy implementation and coherence, it is necessary to learn how the after-school policies are interpreted by various actors within the CLC program and the school itself. Therefore, interviews were conducted with program directors, site coordinators, and teachers in the host school using open-ended, standardized interview protocols tailored for school building teachers, after-school site coordinators, and after-school program leaders (see Appendices A, B, and C). This type of interview allows participants to answer the same questions and, thus, differences in the answers are due to their source rather than the interview structure (Denzin, 1989).

As questions are designed to help understand how others interpret a specific phenomena, the interview is the "main road to multiple realities" (Stark, 1995:64). Because the main purpose of the study is to see if program directors, site coordinators, and classroom teachers view after-school programs as academic support systems, the interview is crucial to gaining a better understanding of how they interpret their program. Because it was standardized, any differences among results came from the program itself and not the interview questions. Questions centered on six focused themes: 1) demographic information of the participant; 2) context of the after-school program; 3) links to the school day; 4) management of the program; 5) student participants and general academic supports; and 6) literacy curriculum. Within each domain, subquestions

emerged that attempted to get at the "Four Cs of Afterschool Programming" (Noam et al., 2004): collaboration, communication, content, and coherence.

Each program director was interviewed (n=6) and each site coordinator from the selected sites was interviewed (n=10). A total of 17 teachers from the host schools were also interviewed. Program director and site coordinator interviews ranged from 20 minutes to an hour, while teacher interviews ranged from 10 minutes to 30 minutes. The interviews were conducted in the offices of the program directors and site coordinators and in school classrooms for the teachers. Teachers volunteering to participate were offered $10 gift certificates to Barnes & Noble or Borders bookstores.

The interviews were transcribed by a transcriptionist and field notes were added when appropriate. Next, each interview was coded using pattern coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The coding pattern that emerged somewhat followed the Four C framework. A specific code emerged for communication, while other codes, such as relationship to school day staff and links to the school day included coherence, collaboration, and consistency.

Observations

Observations of each site and sample classrooms were conducted. Originally, a time-log observation tool was proposed; however, because of the way programs run (through rotation schedules or having special events), this was found to be an impractical way to observe the sites. The purpose of the after-school observation is to document what actually happens at the program level. Thus, the activities observed in both the classrooms and the after-school program were recorded through detailed field notes to

have a comparison for how the daytime learning environment differed from the after-school environment.

Typically, programs begin and end in a similar manner. Students come to a common meeting place to sign in for the program and eat a snack for approximately 15 minutes. The academic hour follows the snack. The academic hour usually begins with a homework assistance time for 15 to 30 minutes. During this time, students work on their homework assignments. Smaller programs tend to group multiple grade levels together while larger programs often have one grade level together. Once students finish their homework, the teacher reviews a lesson or conducts an activity with the students. Enrichment or recreational activities follow the academic hour. Sometimes the students go on field trips to local museums or to recreation centers. Other times, community members may come into the sites and show the students how to do a project, such as an art project.

An alternative to the above schedule is to have students in rotations where the students engage in a variety of activities, such as technology, art, language arts, writing, math, and recreation throughout the evening. The students may attend each activity every night, or they may go to some activities on particular evenings. For instance, the second grade class may have math on Mondays and Wednesdays while the fourth grade class has math on Tuesdays and Thursdays. With both types of scheduling, at the end of the evening, students ride buses home, or parents sign the students out and take them home.

Often, the observation begins to tell the story of the case (Stake, 1994). In the case of 21st CCLCs, the observation of the program became the final validation. Interviews and descriptions of the programs provided by the staff and teachers allowed this

researcher, to observe what the staff described during the program. Classroom observations served as a means of comparison to better understand the differences between the daytime environment and the after-school 21st CCLCs environment.

Document Review

Additionally, this study involved an intense document review. A primary document in this collection were the initial proposals that the 21st CCLCs sent to MDE to be considered for the grant money. These proposals listd the initial program goals and plans for bridging the after-school program with the school day and served as an initial point of reference. Beyond the proposals, grantees were asked to provide information regarding their curriculum, lesson plans, and other documentation they planned to use to implement and run their program, including reports from local evaluators.

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) granted an independent evaluation contract to Michigan State University to study the implementation and outcomes of the 21st CCLCs in the state using a quasi-experimental design. The evaluation study propose to complete four major components, including an implementation study, program outcomes study, briefing report studies, and post-program analysis of strengths and weaknesses. Data from that study will be analyzed in this research primarily through the Annual Report Forms. Grantees and sites were required to complete a self-reported Annual Report for the state evaluation as well as the federal evaluation. From these reports, additional information about the links to the school day were included.

Bias of Qualitative Research

Within qualitative research, however, the researcher becomes part of the research process (Creswell, 1994). Because the researcher has a prominent role in doing qualitative research, it is pertinent that issues of biases and assumptions are addressed early on in the process. Thus, I will explain my relationship to the chosen sites.

From May 2003 to May 2005, I worked with the 21st CCLCs sites as a liaison between the grantees and the Michigan State University 21st CCLCs Evaluation Team. In working with the grantees and sites, my role was primarily to offer technical assistance for the 21st CCLCs database EZReports. Through this process, I gleaned small pieces of information about the workings of each program for which I was responsible, and invited those I was working with to participate in my study.

In this capacity, working with the sites helped me to build relationships with the grantees and the site coordinators, and it allowed me access into their sites. Though the sites entered information onto the database about student attendance and different activities and programs, the data was often too vague to develop a fully comprehensive view of what the programs were actually offering to students. Each program invited to participate in the study, was more than willing to open their doors and share their experiences with me.

Because of a previous relationship with some of the participants in the study, I bring certain biases and assumptions to the study. For example, I believe that each program director and site coordinator truly wants what is best for the students. Every effort was made, to analyze the data objectively without allowing personal perceptions about the participants coming into play, however.

Up to this point, research on after-school programs up to this point has been limited. Many evaluation studies exist, but few academic studies have closely analyzed how programs work, why certain curricula were chosen, and how after-school staff make connections to the school day staff. The majority of the studies on after-school programs tend to focus on youth development aspects, not the academic portions. Every effort was made to analyze the after-school programs through the lens of an academic support system while recognizing that the programs serve many other important functions. To view after-school programs from multiple perspectives, several data collection processes were used.

Quantitative

Site coordinators were asked to distribute additional surveys to their program staff to record the staff's perceptions of the after-school program. The survey asked questions about specific responsibilities of the program staff, how they communicate with other program staff and school staff, what are goals for the students, as well as who constructs their lesson plans. Survey responses were entered into an SPSS database for analysis.

Many of the questions on the staff survey evolved from the typology proposed in a study by Noam et al. (2000). A grounded theory approach was used to examine if and how after-school programs connect to the school-day, which resulted in the formation of three prominent themes. The first theme involved how after-school programs connect to the school day, called "domains of bridging." From interviews and observations, the researchers determined that after-school programs usually connect to the school day in one of three ways: interpersonal, curricular, or systematic. Interpersonal is simply

communication among staff; curricular involves a conscious attempt to link the school day curriculum with the after-school curriculum; and systematic is a formal collaboration between the two. The second theme, homework support, examined how after-school programs provided homework assistance to the participants. Types of assistance included task completion, opportunities for relationship and skill building, and a springboard for achievement. Finally, the types of curricular options the programs chose, whether they were prepackaged or project-based, was the third theme.

Quantified outcome data from the Annual Report Forms was used in the study. The annual report included surveys results from student participants in the program regarding their perceptions of the academic activities at the 21st CCLCs program. (See appendix for the original survey). Additionally, the report also included the results of the MEAP test and classroom grades using students who had attended the program for fewer than 30 days as a comparison group. These results will also be discussed at the end of each case study.

The concluding chapter will be a cross-case comparison of the programs based on similarities across each program as well as contradictory patterns that emerged. Additionally, policy recommendations and promising practices of successful after-school programs will be discussed in light of 21st Century Community Learning Centers in Michigan.

CHAPTER 3: TIED TO THE SCHOOL DISTRICT: CASE STUDIES OF 21st CCLCs PROGRAMS CLOSELY AFFILIATED WITH THE HOST SCHOOLS' DISTRICTS

In Michigan, 21st CCLCs funds are awarded to local and intermediate school districts and other public agencies, or private profit or non-profit community-based agencies, organizations, and programs (http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-5234_6809-39974--,00.html). This chapter presents two case studies of 21st CCLCs programs where the proposals were submitted via the public school system through a Regional Education Service District (RESD) or directly through the school district. Chapter 4 provides a case study of a 21st CCLCs program that has both a school run component and a community-based component. Chapter 5 describes two case studies of 21st CCLCs programs submitted by community-based organizations. The case studies—primarily built upon interviews with program directors, site coordinators, and school day teachers as well as program and classroom observations—focus on four components of each site:

1) the goals of the 21st CCLCs program
2) how communication takes place between the after-school program and the school day
3) the academic progress of 21st CCLCs participants as measured through the MEAP and classroom grades
4) types of data program staff use for evaluation purposes.

The three cases presented in this chapter present a variety of 21st CCLCs programs located across the state of Michigan in terms of geography, student demographics, and

program organization. The names of the 21st CCLCs grantees and sites follow (see Table 4).

Table 4
School Affiliated Grantees and Sites

Grantee	Elementary School	Middle School	Program Affiliation	Geographic Area
Waterford RESD	Whitetail Elementary	Schooner Middle	RESD*	Rural Northern Michigan
Webster Public School District	Hancock Elementary	Clark Middle	Public School District	Urban Central Michigan

*RESD—Regional Education School District

A Snapshot of Waterford RESD

Waterford has one program director overseeing seven 21st CCLCs sites located throughout three separate school districts across two counties in a high-poverty, rural region of northern, lower Michigan. Susan, the Waterford program director, volunteered to participate and selected Whitetail Elementary School and Schooner Middle School for participation. Both schools began the program in 2003.

A major challenge for the Waterford 21st CCLCs programs has been gaining the trust of parents of the participants. Across all seven sites, 21st CCLCs staff have found parents reluctant to sign consent permission slips allowing the students to participate in the statewide evaluation of 21st CLCCs, which they attributed to a lack of trust by parents in any institution outside of the home. The proposal submitted by Waterford RESD indicated that many of the problems facing the community affected student achievement levels: "The high poverty rates, rural setting, and low levels of education for adults combine to put children at an immediate academic disadvantage to their peers who live in locations where more employment and cultural opportunities exist."

Because of the small size of the community, an "everybody knows everybody" attitude prevails. For instance, during one of my two visits to Waterford, people in one of the counties serviced by the RESD were being asked to remain indoors because policemen had been involved in a shoot-out the previous night, and the perpetrator was still at large. That evening, informally talking to one of the middle school teachers, she joked that it was probably someone they all knew, and he was hiding out at a friend's house. Despite the potential seriousness of the situation, community members joked about it and did not seem concerned, possibly indicating a rather cavalier attitude toward violence in the community.

Within this small close-knit community, several underlying factors pose challenges for the students living in the area. For example, one concern of the program director has been the absence of cultural activities to expose the students to new ideas and diverse ways of living. At the elementary school, Kaitlyn, the site coordinator told the story of how taking the students on a field trip to the local cinema was a major event for some of the students and how the program positively impacts students' relationships with adults:

> We went to a movie theater last week and I had a 5th grade student tell me this was the first movie theater he's ever been to in his life. How wonderful it was. And just positive interaction with adults outside of school. They're beginning to realize that the [21st CCLCs] staff is working with them and for them and not against them and it's, even though it's at school, it's still different than school.

Students and families living in Waterford have limited resources to travel outside the boundaries of their towns. Because many of these students have not been exposed to

diverse ways of thinking or living, the 21st CCLCs staff face a challenge in teaching students about the world beyond this small area of northern Michigan, a stated goal of the program at both the elementary and middle school levels.

School Demographics

At the elementary school, students in grades two through five are invited to participate in the after-school program. According to the attendance data entered into the EZreports database, at some point during the 2004-05 school year, over a third of the second and third graders had attended the program, while 52% of the fourth graders, and 75% of the fifth graders attended the 21st CCLCs program (see table 5).

Table 5
Number of Participants per Grade Level at Whitetail Elementary 2004-2005

Grade	Number of 21st CCLCs Students	Total Number of Students per Grade	Percentage of Class Enrolled in 21st CCLCs
2	30	81	37%
3	29	83	35%
4	63	122	52%
5	57	76	75%

Note. Host school information is from the National Center for Education Statistics Database for 2003-04; information on number served is from EZreports as entered at the site. The attendance information includes all students enrolled at some point during the 2004-05 school year; some may have dropped from the program and others were enrolled to replace those students.

The 21st CCLCs legislation requires the programs to attract the most at-risk populations, which according to the Annual Report Form submitted by Whitetail Elementary is who the program aims to serve; "Our target population is at-risk students. The majority of the school's population is at-risk" due to the area's high-poverty and low adult literacy rates, as well as a dearth of cultural or enrichment resources for families. When directly asked if Whitetail tried to a recruit a specific target population for the program (i.e., those most academically at-risk), the site coordinator wavered on the issue.

For recruitment purposes, Kaitlyn said she tries to reach those most academically at-risk, but at the same time, she stated that the program works on a first-come first-serve basis.

To circumvent this policy, Kaitlyn takes advantage of the waiting list. The program currently has a capacity of 90 students. Because there is a waiting list, the site coordinator indicated that she uses her own discretion to determine which students should be invited to participate. For example, she may purposefully seek out the students deemed to be struggling the most in school and extend the first invitations to them. Although there is no official attendance policy, if a student has missed several days, a phone call is made to the family to see why the student has not been attending. If the child will no longer be coming to the program, he or she is dropped in order to allow someone else to attend. Because Whitetail Elementary is in a rural district, transportation issues have been a problem for recruiting some of the students. The program uses a county transit authority to bus students home from the program.

All the students from Whitetail Elementary feed into Schooner Middle School; thus, the demographics in terms of poverty levels, race, and ethnicity are similar. In the middle school, however, only 18% of the school's population attends the 21st CCLCs program. Consequently, recruitment and retention are major goals of the program, although recruiting students at the middle school level is usually more difficult due to conflicts, such as athletic events, other extra-curricular activities, or family obligations. Of the students who do attend the program at Schooner Middle School, there are an almost equal percentage of sixth and seventh graders, 18% and 20%, respectively. At the eight grade level only 7% of the population attends (see table 6).

Table 6

Number of Participants per Grade Level at Schooner Middle 2004-2005

Grade	Number of 21st CCLCs Students	Total Number of Students per Grade	Percentage of Class Enrolled in 21st CCLCs
6	31	172	18%
7	33	165	20%
8	13	186	7%

Note. Host school information is from the National Center for Education Statistics Database for 2003-04; information on number served is from EZreports as entered at the site. The attendance information includes all students enrolled at some point during the 2004-05 school year; some may have dropped from the program and others were enrolled to replace those students.

Similar to the elementary school, the program tries to recruit the students most at-risk, according to the Schooner Middle School site coordinator, Ken. In order to do so, teachers are asked who they would recommend for the program in the fall. A letter is sent home with the student with recommendations from the teachers who states this child could benefit from the extra help or support in some subject areas. Ultimately, the student and parents decide whether or not the student will attend. According to a sixth grade teacher interviewed, in addition to a high-poverty rate where over half the students receive free and/or reduced lunch, a broad range of learning abilities can be seen across the student body. She said in her general education class reading levels range from a 3rd grade reading level to a college level.

Keeping these contextual factors of Waterford RESD in mind, the next four sections will address the essential components of the program: program goals, communication, academic progress, and use of data for program improvement. The next section examines what goals the staff has for the program and how they attempt to accomplish those goals. An analysis of communication between the staff of the after-school program and the school day teachers will determine coherence or lack of it within the program. The third section examines outcome data such as classroom grades and

MEAP assessment scores. Finally, the types of data program staff use for evaluation purposes and continuous program improvement will be discussed.

Goals of the Program

Despite the many daunting challenges of working with students coming from high-poverty backgrounds with few resources, academic success falling below the state average, and low adult education levels that further perpetuate the cycle of poverty (Payne 1998), Waterford proposed nine comprehensive goals for its program in the original grant application. These goals included:

1) 90% of students served will be reported as exhibiting fewer behavior problems while in school.
2) 90% of students served will demonstrate at least one new skill or interest.
3) 90% of students served will demonstrate improved achievement in the areas of Math and Reading on student report cards.
4) 90% of students served will demonstrate improved achievement in the areas of Math and Reading assessments.
5) 90% of students served will exhibit regular and sustained attendance at enrichment activities.
6) 90% of students served will miss fewer school days.
7) 90% of students served will participate in at least one community involvement activity.

8) 90% of students served will demonstrate improved achievement on the Math and Reading sections of the MEAP assessments in appropriate grades.

9) 90% of families surveyed will indicate a positive relationship with school.

These goals are comprehensive ranging from academics to family involvement. Using the definition of S.M.A.R.T. goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Tangible), the goals cannot be considered S.M.A.R.T. goals. In general, the goals are vague, not specific. For example, what exactly is a new skill or interest that the student is supposed to demonstrate? None of the goals indicate how it will be measured. Given that the program is less than three hours long each day and some students may not attend every day, the goals seem unlikely to be attainable or realistic. Without determining how the goals will be measured, tangible results will be difficult to demonstrate.

Additionally, if these are the program goals, how do they relate to the school's goals? There was no evidence that the grant proposal aligned with specific school improvement goals, other than the increased academic achievement of students. If the after-school program links coherently to the school day in terms of providing academic support, then the goals of the program should align somewhat with the goals of the school. Research on school leadership argues that goals should be specific and challenging for the school, and each student should have individually set goals (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty 2005). The Waterford 21st CCLCs goals, although comprehensive, are vague and difficult to achieve. When looking at the school goals at the middle school,

they too, seem vague and difficult to achieve. According to the 2005 Annual Report, the middle school's goals include:

- Establish what we expect students to know by grade level, content area and unit.
- Determine how we will know when students have learned.
- Determine how we will respond when students do not learn.

Based on the goals of the Annual Report, it seems that the middle school is beginning to determine what is important to the school in terms of teaching and student learning. The 21st CCLCs goals may or may not align with what the school is trying to accomplish. There is also no evidence that goals exist for individual students in order to help them make progress, which becomes a significant issue in knowing which students need help and how they learn best.

Although the previously mentioned goals are the ones that are reported for the federal evaluation of 21st CCLCs, the program staff's individual goals differed significantly. The program staff who participated in this study were hired after the original grant proposal was written, so when asked about how they would classify the goals of the programs, their current goals differed from the original stated program goals. Susan, the program director, places safety as the primary goal of the after-school program followed by academics. She summed up her goals of the program in this way:

> I am wanting to provide the best program for kids that I can. And that means using money wisely, hiring qualified staff that are energetic. [Providing] [i]nteresting activities for kids after-school and running a very focused summer school. Accountability and also, I can't say which is more or less, but also

providing a place for parents to put their children in hours that they need some care for the children that aren't just daycare. It's daycare with an academic focus.

Susan has two distinct goals for the program. As an administrator, she is concerned about the administrative aspects of the program, such as budget and hiring a qualified staff. Susan's use of the word *daycare* is perhaps the most significant piece of her goals for the program. Despite all the discussion concerning the academic piece, Susan's primary concern is that students have a safe environment to go to after school. Within 21st CCLCs, that environment happens to have an academic focus, but the academic outcomes are not the most important part of the program. As long as the students have "interesting activities" and aren't getting into trouble, then the program is meeting its goals.

When asked what her specific goals of the program were, Kaitlyn, Whitetail Elementary's site coordinator, responded, "I would say first of all, it's a safe place after school for the kids. And then, secondly, I would say just to reinforce their academic learning." For Kaitlyn, like Susan, the academic part of the program is second to providing a safe and structured environment for students to go after school. Instead of sending students to empty houses after school or, in some cases, to unsafe and perhaps even hazardous home environments, the school provides them with a place to go, and it provides them with safe and enriching activities.

When examining the link between the after-school program and the school day, interviewed classroom teachers had different views on which goals an after-school program should focus. Sarah, a second grade teacher, and Anne, a fifth grade teacher, were asked what they believed the goals of the 21st CCLCs program were in their building. A bit hesitant in her answer, Sarah responded that she thought enrichment was

the main focus of the program and re-teaching time to help students practice skills that they had not yet mastered. Anne, who was the former site coordinator of the 21st CCLCs program at Whitetail Elementary before accepting a fulltime teaching position, had a different view of the program. Her perception of the goals of the programs differed from both Sarah, a teacher with no actual affiliation with 21st CCLCs, and Kaitlyn, the current site coordinator.

Anne placed academics first, and talked more about the social aspects of it second, with no mention of safety. When explaining what she thought the goals of the program were, Anne said:

> To keep, to take those kids that are grade borderline or just below grade level and try to give them that extra support, to pull them up, to boost them up, to be at grade level or you know, just above what they're used to doing. Give them that extra support after school with the subject area content and also the social part of it too. Building friendships and working with older kids and younger kids and it's a little bit more of a relaxed atmosphere with the regular school day.

Anne, with experience as both a site coordinator and a classroom teacher, actually saw the program with more of an academic focus than any other staff member at the after-school or school day level. She also focused more on the social aspect among the students themselves.

Anne's focus on academics makes an interesting contrast between her goals and Kaitlyn's goals. Several reasons could account for this difference. When Anne was site coordinator, the academic portion of it may have been more of her own personal goals. Or, now that Anne is a classroom teacher, perhaps her perceptions of what the program

could accomplish to support or aid her students has changed. This supports Sarah's remarks when she says that she, as a classroom teacher, would like to see the after-school program have a more academic focus. Kaitlyn, in contrast, deals directly with the students after they have been in classrooms all day long and need to expend some energy. Without having the direct pressure of seeing them succeed academically, like the classroom teachers, she is able to focus more on their safety and socio-emotional development and not just the academic factors.

Thus, the after-school staffs' relationships with the students are different from the relationship students have with their daytime teachers. Because of the less formal environment in the after-school program, it seems natural that this is the case. Students and the 21st CCLCs staff have more of a mentor/mentee, or perhaps, more of a friend relationship than that between teacher and student. The after-school staff do not have the stresses that face the daytime teachers in terms of assuring increased student achievement. Because of this, the after-school staff perceive the goals of their program differently from how the daytime staff perceive the goals of the program. Or, the daytime teacher's ideal goals for the program may be different from what is actually happening within those after school hours. When the daytime teachers' goals differ so significantly from the after-school staff's goals, there is a lack of coherence between the programs.

At the middle school, there seemed to be a slightly stronger focus on the academics. When asked what his goals of the program were, Ken responded that the goals were academics, recreation, and mentoring. Ken believes that the youth development portion of the program is the key ingredient to a successful after-school program. Ken states, "I think with the youth development, it improves academics as well.

It builds on the academics, makes them more responsible and a better student." He further stated that the mentoring portion of the program is also important. Although there is no official mentoring component of the program, Ken believes that by listening to students' problems and talking with them the staff person is helping students and teaching them to become better people. Although mentoring is usually done on a more formal basis, mentoring programs that have long-term relationships have proven to demonstrate increased academic and socio-emotional skills in the participants (DuBois et al. 2002; Jekielek, Moore, & Hair 2002; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002).

For the most part, teachers who were interviewed agreed that the program is to offer support to at-risk students. Sonya, a seventh grade language arts teacher who is in her first year of teaching, concurred, "I think the goals of the program are to target the at-risk students which in our area, we have many of them and basically to supplement and enrich what's happening in classrooms." Sonya, however, qualified her remarks by stating that she was not positive what activities were actually happening in the after-school program other than that they target the specific subject areas. Again, similar to the elementary school, teachers not involved in the program offer what they perceive or guess to be the goals of the program with no actual knowledge of what the 21st CCLCs programs actually try to accomplish. This unawareness on the part of teachers indicates a clear lack of coherence and communication between the programs.

Karen, an eighth grade language arts teacher, who is in her fifth year of teaching, described the program with a little more detail; "they do a general homework session and there are, of course, experienced teachers in there helping them with that. And they always do a recreation portion as well." What Karen sees most beneficial about the

program is that students receive an additional three hours of support, especially when they would receive no support from their home environments. A major benefit is just to provide students time to increase their academic and life skills in a supportive environment.

Communication Among After-School and Daytime Staff

A key component to analyzing the level of coherence between the after-school program and the daytime program is to determine what communication structures have been established between the two programs. When asked about communication between the after-school staff and daytime teachers, Susan responded that daytime teachers have a lot going on, and they are not just going to drop in on the after-school programs to see what is happening. She also mentioned that it is sometimes stressful because the after-school program uses the classrooms of the daytime teachers, and sometimes teachers are still in the room when the after-school program begins.

On the other hand, after-school program staff have also asked teachers for information and it has not been forthcoming:

> Well, we've tried lots of ways to get information from the schools. And probably the best information we get is from the site coordinators having their ear to the drum. We ask teachers to tell us monthly what they're teaching. Doesn't come from everybody by far. Doesn't come from everybody. We've asked teachers to give us what types of homework we might be, we should be looking for particular groups. What 5th graders might have this month in reading for homework. We don't get very much of it. We've asked, we've asked for simple things like

spelling sheets and that kind of thing. We don't get it very often. But in general, our site coordinators are understanding the broader curriculum. And they're some site coordinators are attending math committee meetings and this and that so we're getting closer to knowing what's going on in the classroom.

Essentially, as the 21st CCLCs staff have asked for teachers to become more cooperative and explain their processes more, the school staff have not honored those requests; consequently, site coordinators must also take on the burden of discovering what the student should be learning in each grade level. While the 21st CCLC program staff understands the importance of communication, no efficient plan has been developed to assist in this process. According to Susan, when the teachers are still in their classrooms after school, it causes more stress for the 21st CCLCs staff as they try to set up their lessons and begin the afternoon session. A tension seems to exist between wanting teacher input but also wanting them to keep their distance during the actual program.

If the after-school program were to receive more information from the teachers in terms of homework or academic problems the students could be working on, the programs could have a need to increase its tutoring and homework assistance support. For the daytime teachers, this would be the ideal. Students would receive the extra help during the after-school program that they may not receive in school classes. But for the after-school staff, moving toward a more academic or tutoring type services takes time away from the more enriching *daycare* type of environment. Again, finding the balance between academics and an enriching environment becomes a challenge.

Although communication is key to understanding what is going on in daytime classrooms as well as knowing individual issues that students may have, communication

between the site coordinator and the daytime staff often prove to be quite challenging. One major reason is logistics. Kaitlyn does not arrive at the building until around 11:00 a.m., which makes it difficult for her to reach all teachers on a one-to-one basis. Most communication, then, is done via papers left in teachers' mailboxes, which is a practice that Anne began when she was site coordinator. Aside from leaving announcements with the teachers, Kaitlyn also tries to reach students. For instance, all schools in the district celebrated the national after-school event Lights on after School. The day of the event, Kaitlyn went around to each classroom to remind students about what was going on and to invite them and their families to participate.

Kaitlyn does participate in school wide professional development opportunities when they arise. In this way, she is aware of the types of training school day staff are expected to undergo and what types of pedagogy is being implemented in the classrooms. Since staff meetings take place immediately following school, Kaitlyn cannot participate in those regularly occurring meetings. Despite Kaitlyn's sense that the school respects her work, and they have a good line of communication, she is automatically excluded from staff meetings based on the time of day they occur.

Because of an increased focus on language arts and math, Kaitlyn learns most about what is going on at school through the Title I teachers. Also, Kaitlyn's office is located in the back of a storage type room adjacent to the teacher's lounge. This provides her with the opportunity to see and visit teachers when they come in for lunch or on breaks. Kaitlyn also states that she tries to join teachers for lunch when she can, and she participates in school special events and parent/teacher conferences.

At the same time, Kaitlyn admits that after-school staff has no relationship with the daytime staff unless they are one of the paraprofessionals working directly in the classroom. Because the majority of her staff are paraprofessionals, Kaitlyn sees that as an automatic link to the classroom because the staff have been there during the day. Yet, each staff member is responsible for a specific activity, so she has students that she did not have during the school day. Since they are paraprofessionals, they do not have teaching certificates or credentials to make them "highly qualified." The exception to that is Kaitlyn's writing teacher who is a district substitute teacher. From observations, students were most engaged in her class. They were asked to write a recipe and then volunteer to share it. Students were enthusiastic about this project and wanted to read multiple recipes out loud. In other activities, such as the language arts where students had to find as many words as they could in the phrase Merry Christmas, students were disengaged and were calling each other "a cheater."

Sometimes teachers will also approach her if they have concerns regarding a particular student, especially, when it comes to homework:

> Yes, I have had teachers come to me. I don't usually seek the students out or the teachers out. It's really hard with 90 students. But I have had teachers come to me and say, you know what? She doesn't know her sight words. Could your homework person pull her aside for five minutes every night and just go through her flashcards? And we've been doing that and she's been succeeding at that. I've had other teachers tell me this person has homework almost every night, they're not doing it. Can you make sure they are doing their homework? Then, I make

sure I zone in on those students at that time and ask them specifically, do you have homework tonight?

Essentially, then, Kaitlyn's information about what is happening in classrooms and throughout the building comes from a variety of directions. Her curriculum information generally comes from the Title I teachers in Math and Language Arts. Other information comes from more informal conversations and observations with teachers and staff, but if teachers have a specific issue, they can address Kaitlyn and she will make sure the problem is solved or the student receives the extra attention required.

Both Sarah and Anne believe that communication between daytime staff and after-school staff can be improved. Although Anne believes that Kaitlyn did a good job of informing the staff about the after-school activities, she also feels that she would like more data on how students in her class were doing in the after-school program. Suggesting that hearing something positive from the after-school staff about a student could also help encourage some of the more troubled students if they saw that support from both the after-school program personnel and the regular classroom teachers.

Sarah had a similar opinion. At the beginning of the semester, said Sarah, teachers filled out some assessment data on the after-school participants, but she had never discussed her students with any 21st CCLCs staff. Sarah, however, was quick to point out that teachers were also at fault for the lack of communication with after-school staff:

I think the weakness would be the lack of communication maybe between the day teachers and the afternoon. And that's partially our fault probably because we know that we should probably be gathering information and saying that, you know, these are the ones that didn't pass so in summer school or after school, that

> maybe they can group them by whatever concept they need more practice on. I found that did seem to be hard to do in the afternoon and I think that's partially our fault. There's not the communication there.

In sum, teachers and the after-school site coordinator are aware of special events happening in both places, but there seems to be a breakdown between the after-school staff knowing the individual needs of the students. Both teachers indicated that knowing how their students were doing in the after-school program would be helpful for them and also beneficial for the students who need that extra support and encouragement from multiple adult figures.

Similar to the situation at the elementary school, the perception of communication differed between the staff at the middle and the site coordinator. In order to communicate with the daytime staff, Ken at Schooner Middle School attends all staff development programs at the school. He attends all staff meetings and tries to get on the agendas:

> I mean I talk to teachers all the time. I'll visit them in their rooms. I can go observe the classes. I go to their team meetings just to see what's going on, see what I can do to communicate better with them and to, I guess, include what they're doing in some of what we're doing.

In addition to finding out what teachers are doing and what are their expectations of students, another goal of Ken's is to use this time to get teachers to help him recruit students, especially those who need the most help.

Sonya and Karen have different perceptions on the level of communication between the 21st CCLCs staff and the regular school day staff. Sonya discussed how Ken sends memos to the staff to let them know what is going on in the after-school program.

She talked about how he attends their meetings to learn about what is going on with the classes and students. Sonya speculates that after he attends the meetings, he tells the after-school teachers what they should be concentrating on with each student, yet she personally has not been part of those conversations.

Seeing a two-way relationship between what happens in the after-school program and what happens during the school day, Sonya mentioned that Ken will ask what is going on and whether she has a student who has been demonstrating a particular behavior problem. If so, Ken will talk to the stude; clearly, this is part of the mentoring role that Ken mentioned as being one of his primary goals. Sonya also said that her students will often come to class and make a connection between what they are doing in class and something that happened in the after-school program:

> When you see kids say in [21st CCLCs] yesterday we talked about this and such and it kind of relates to this, and you know, we read this story in [21st CCLCs] yesterday and we talked about conflict and we talked about this, and it's really good to see them come in here with some knowledge and I think that the [21st CCLCs] program does support the curriculum really well....I think [Ken's] goal is to strive to have that support system for the teachers and to make sure that he knows what's going on and the kids....there's a little boost for their regular school day.

Sonya does caution, however, that some teachers are concerned that the program has too much of a recreation focus and not enough academics. However, she said that she does not see that too much, and she is concerned that if it became more academic, students would stop attending.

In contrast, Karen believes that the communication between the after-school teachers and the daytime teachers could be strengthened:

> That's one point of the program that I think could actually improve on both parts. The staff of the after school program and our own teaching staff. I think communication needs to...I'm not sure there's a lot of it right now. I think that could be better. I know sometimes our site coordinator does come around and ask what standards are you covering, what would you like us to use. More specifically in the summer he does that.[6] Our site coordinator has not come around to ask specifically what we're doing in the classroom but I don't think teachers have made it a point to tell the program either...I think the communication all around could improve.

Karen, however, is willing to take part of the blame for not finding out more about the after-school program, "It's my fault, too, that I don't have a clue."

In the middle school, the after-school staff who teach language arts, math, and technology are daytime teachers. Qualifying her remarks, Karen states that maybe the staff did understand more about what happened during the day than she realized because they also taught during the day. Since they already know what they are doing in their own class, maybe that's what they focus on during the evening hours. But, the teachers only have certain students during the day and most likely only teach one grade level, so there is still a lack of program coherence between grade levels and other content areas. If these are the same teachers who cannot effectively teach students during the day, then getting

[6] During my interview with Susan, the program director, she mentioned the summer school program at Schooner Middle School. The math teacher at the program was given a specific Grade Level Content Expectation (GLCE) to work on with the students. After doing both a pre-test and a post-test, student scores went up by 30%, according to Susan. This indicates the strength of aligning the curriculum with the specific standards to reach a specific outcome.

students to respond to them for an additional hour or so after-school may not prove effective either.

Emphasizing the importance of the connection between the after-school program and the school day, Karen states that she does believe that an after-school program, when used appropriately as a way to enrich classroom learning, serves as an important link to provide students with additional academic support. But, she also says that will happen only through strong communication structures between the two staffs. Communication serves as a bridge between the daytime classroom teachers and the after-school program staff, giving the programs coherence. In this case, the lack of coherence may not have negative consequences for students, as neither program will be detrimental to the student's well-being. By not providing a coherent linkage, an opportunity is missed to provide additional academic support to students who most need it that would benefit all stakeholders.

Academic Progress of 21st CCLCs Participants

Whitetail Elementary

The 21st CCLCs program at Waterford relies on district and state assessments to measure the progress of its students. The local evaluator compared the results of the STAR reading test of 21st CCLCs participants to non-participants. In reading, only fourth graders at the elementary level did a pre and post-STAR test, and 21st CCLCs participants did not score higher than non-participants.

The state evaluation team asked sites to provide the classroom grades of students who had participated in the program. Students considered "regular" students, those who

had attended the program for 30 days or more, were compared to a control group of students who had attended less than 30 days (see tables 7 and 8)

Table 7
Change in Reading Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Whitetail Elementary

	Improved %	No Change %	Decreased %
Participants	32%	30%	42%
Non-Participants	44%	29%	27%

Note. Data was included only if at least 5 students had multiple points of grade data for each subject area. Number of students with reading grades: Less than 30 days=52, 30 days or more=71. Change of at least ½ point qualifies as a grade change.

Table 8
Change in Math Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Whitetail Elementary

	Improved %	No Change %	Decreased %
Participants	32%	25%	42%
Non-Participants	28%	32%	40%

Note. Data was included only if at least 5 students had multiple points of grade data for each subject area. Number of students with math grades: Less than 30 days=50, 30 days or more=71. Change of at least ½ point qualifies as a grade change.

As shown in the tables, a substantial percentage of participants had increased their grades in reading (32%), but the grades of non-participants' had increased even more (42%). This could be because the 21st CCLCs program recruits students in most need of help, so having nearly a third make gains could be seen as substantial progress. Simultaneously, 42% of the participants showed a decrease in their reading scores while only 27% of the non-participants showed a decrease. 21st CCLCs participants had a higher percentage of students' math grades decreasing (42%) than increasing (32%), but the percentage of non-participants who increased their math grades was only 28%. Based on classroom grades, there were no significant changes – and perhaps even negative effects – for students in the 21st CCLCs program.

When looking at MEAP results, however, the story is slightly different. With the MEAP reading scores, which was given to 4th grade students, 76% of the regular attendees achieved proficiency compared to 67% of the non-participants. The percentage of students reaching proficiency in math, which is the assessment given in the 5th grade, was even higher with 92% of the regular attendees reaching proficiency compared to 74% of the non-regular attendees.

Even though the classroom grades do not reflect that 21st CCLCs participants are performing better in their classrooms, the higher percentage of students meeting proficiency on the MEAP results may indicate that the extra support the students receive helps them develop and improve their critical thinking skills or, perhaps, in one or two specific content areas. The lack of improvement in the classroom, in contrast, may indicate several things. First, it may demonstrate a lack of coherence or connection between the after-school program and the school day classroom. The 21st CCLCs program may not be directly supporting or even supplementing what students learn during the day, and, therefore, the impact of the extra support is lacking in regards to the classroom grades. Secondly, we do not know how the students were assessed in the classrooms. Perhaps the grading system was such that the students, who may have alternative learning styles, have a difficult time learning in the individual classrooms. When classroom grades demonstrate an opposite outcome compared to the MEAP scores, the academic impact of the 21st CCLCs program is inconclusive.

When asked if teachers had seen cognitive or behavioral improvements in their students who had participated in the program, teachers could not specifically say they had seen any changes. One particular anecdote does stand out. Sarah mentioned that two

years ago there was a first grader whose screams could be heard down the hall. During her second grade year, there were improvements, but after attending the summer program funded by 21st CCLCs money, Sarah had not heard of any problems from her at all. Sarah attributed the change to her time participating in the program, even though there may have been other possible causes.

Anne said that she thought the 21st CCLCs program served as an incentive for students to maintain good behavior. If they misbehave during school, they are not allowed to attend the program. This policy, however, presents another conflict with the goals of the program. If the program is designed to help students behave better and learn how to deal better with social situations, then the program staff wants to recruit those students who could most benefit, yet misbehaving students are not allowed to go to the program, so they do not receive the social benefits that the program could potentially provide them. Poor student behavior should not disrupt a whole class, but herein lies another problem of the program. Both Sarah and Anne agreed that any type of support or interventions that after-school program students were given were going to benefit them in some way, even if the results weren't immediately apparent.

Schooner Middle School

Based on the results of the STAR test, the evaluator found that the participants of 21st CCLCs reading below grade level far more often than non-participants at Schooner Middle School. A total of 60% of the participants gained in reading over the course of the 2004-2005 school year, while 58% of the non-participants made gains indicating similar

growth or improvement for the two groups.[7] When looking at the STAR results in Math for Schooner Middle school students, 78% made gains in math over the 2004-05 school year. Although this percentage did not meet the goal of 90%, only 68% of the non-participants made math gains.

When looking at the classroom grade changes, the grades of 21st CCLCs participants improved more than those of non-participants in both reading and math (see tables 9 and 10). The percentage of students, whose grades also decreased, however, was also higher for the participants than the non-participants.

Table 9
Change in Reading Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Schooner Middle

	Improved %	No Change %	Decreased %
Participants	43%	27%	41%
Non-Participants	33%	56%	11%

Note. Data was included only if at least 5 students had multiple points of grade data for each subject area. Number of students with reading grades: Less than 30 days=9, 30 days or more=44. Change of at least ½ point qualifies as a grade change.

Table 10
Change in Math Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Schooner Middle

	Improved %	No Change %	Decreased %
Participants	43%	24%	41%
Non-Participants	25%	63%	13%

Note. Data was included only if at least 5 students had multiple points of grade data for each subject area. Number of students with math grades: Less than 30 days=8, 30 days or more=41. Change of at least ½ point qualifies as a grade change.

While more than 40% of the students increased their classroom grades in both reading and math, nearly the same percentage of students also saw decreases in their classroom grades. Many factors could explain this change, including differences between schools

[7] The results between the fourth graders and the middle school students were not aggregated when discussing the percentage of students that made gains in reading. For math, only the middle school students took the test.

and after-school teaching methods or how assessments are graded. When school day teachers do not know which students are in the after-school program, and when the after-school staff does not know the needs of students, growth in classroom grades will be limited.

Seventh grade students took the MEAP reading test, and, in the eighth grade students took the MEAP math test. Reading was the only test from the MEAP scores that had more than five students with valid scores. The percentage of students meeting proficiency for the 21st CCLCs participants was less than non-participants, 55% versus 78%, respectively. Unlike participants in the elementary school in this district, the middle school participants did not see positive differences within their MEAP scores.

When directly asked did after-school staff and school day teachers have to say about student improvement? The site coordinator, Ken, as well as teachers saw some improvement in their students. When asked about both cognitive and behavioral improvement in students, Ken said that student grades were gradually getting better. He also believed that behavior issues had declined this year as compared to the past year.

Sonya thought that there had been increases in the cognitive functioning of students by giving the students extra exposure to the subject areas. Behaviorally, she did not have many concerns, but again emphasized that Ken would manage any behavioral issues that evolved.

This was not an easy question for Karen to answer as she could not pinpoint the participation of any one student in the 21st CCLC program directly to classroom performance, but she indicated that anytime students hear a concept more than once, they are more likely to grasp it "and catch on faster" in the classroom. She connected multiple

exposures to a concept to better classroom behavior. Because students often misbehave when they do not understand something or do not know what is going on around them, they get frustrated and become a distraction to other students. Echoing Sonya, the more a student hears a concept, the more likely he or she is to understand the concept, thereby reducing behavior problems.

Data Used for Continuous Program Improvement

Using data for continuous program improvement is an essential component in any education program (Bernhardt, 2004). Despite having trouble getting access to student grades, (in one instance, Susan had to hand-write grades for program participants because they were not available electronically), Susan still felt that by allowing her access to the grades, the districts were showing a partnership with the program.

Perhaps more importantly, Waterford had a strong evaluation plan in place for examining the progress of the 21st CCLCs participants, determining what elements of the programs were working, and which elements needed improvements. A major strength of the Waterford program is a strong local evaluator who has an intentional evaluation plan for looking at outcomes. When asked about the evaluation, Susan provided a bound copy of the report that had been distributed to all staff of 21st CCLCs. Though Susan understands the importance of sharing data and using it for program improvement, she commented how this area was weak for them, especially sharing the results with the service staff:

> I've presented it to the principals. The place that it needs to get presented that it hasn't gotten presented yet is to the actual direct service staff. Sometimes I think they don't have a clue about this kind of part of the program and it needs to get to

them. Somewhere I talked about staff having, or that the program did ongoing, sort of ongoing look at, or kept track of academics and the staff didn't think we did. So that was just our fault in not getting this kind of information to them.

Even though the data was available to explore what seemed to be working and what could use a bit more work, the staff was not provided with that information and could make no instructional decisions regarding what kinds of academic support students needed and what they were doing well.

Summary of Waterford RESD

In sum, each person at Waterford truly cared about the job and the students. Many external factors affect the work of 21st CCLCs, including administrative responsibilities, district pressures, and school-level problems, yet site coordinators and staff try to work through these issues to have a program that best serves their students. While in the programs, students are in safe environments, receive nutritious snacks, and, more importantly, they are with people who care about them. Yet, tension exists between trying to find the right balance between providing a safe, fun, enriching environment that provides extra academic support.

Several challenges exist for the Waterford program. Analyzing the 21st CCLCs as academic support systems, the results are mixed. When looking at outcome data, the program did not tend to lead to better classroom grades. Although the teachers at the school seemed to support the program as a way for students to gain extra help, especially for homework assistance, the program did not seem to be an integral part of the school system.

Additionally, feedback is rarely provided to the after-school program staff on what could be done to provide better support to the students. Nor does the program give classroom teachers information on the program participants to better establish a connection between the daytime and after-school programs. With no coherence between the two programs, neither can build off the other. In effect, the 21st CCLCs programs at Whitetail Elementary School and Schooner Middle School have covered the relationship and youth development components of the program, which are essential ingredients to any successful program, but Waterford RESD program staff still have not mastered turning the after-school programs into successful academic support systems.

A Snapshot of Webster Public School District

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program at Webster Public Schools has a program director and a curriculum director overseeing fourteen sites (ten funded by state 21st CCLCs money and four funded with federal 21st CCLCs money), located in a mid-size urban city in central Michigan. From the original grant proposal submitted to MDE for the grant, Webster's statement of need listed many of the problems facing its students:

> Webster Public Schools (WPS) faces most of the problems that are closely associated with urban school districts. High-poverty, limited English proficiency, low standardized test scores, single parent or no-parent households, and high special education classification are all familiar problems to our district and our families. Some characteristics that describe the district include: more than 63% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch; about half of our students represent minority groups; 30% of the students who begin as freshman in the district do not graduate with their class; only about 33% of our students have satisfactory test scores in reading, and about 25% meet score standards in math; 50% of our students live in single-parent or no-parent households; and WPS students have the lowest state standardized test scores in the region. Moreover, WPS has seen a decline in enrollment of more than 1,000 students over the past 10 years, causing considerable changes in the district's financial position.

Not only do students in WPS have economic challenges, they also face severe academic challenges. Reduced district funds due to declining district enrollment compound the problem. In fact, the proposal states that the Webster Public Schools Board of Education

will consider making the program costs part of its general operating budget if the program can prove that it helps to maintain and increase student enrollment in the district. Since the program impacts so many schools in the district, the district sees its potential for acting as a recruitment and retention program that will ultimately help the district.

Although Gayle, the program director, was more than willing to be part of the study and indicated she would be happy to provide anything that I needed, actually getting appointments scheduled for interviews and observations became a difficult task. As an example, Gayle had set a day for me to meet with the middle school site coordinator at Gayle's office. When that day came, Gayle called the site coordinator. During this conversation, Gayle told the site coordinator that someone was in her office to ask her a few questions. Until that phone call, the site coordinator had no indication that a study was being done nor that she was being asked to participate.

At Hancock Elementary School, the site coordinator knew that I was coming on a particular day. Gayle had agreed to accompany me, but when I arrived at Gayle's office, she was not there and had forgotten about our appointment, so I visited the school without her. No one was willing to ask teachers who were not part of the program to participate nor to take a few minutes to speak with me. Instead, at the Hancock Elementary, two teachers, Kelly and Marlene, came to speak with me immediately following my interview with the site coordinator. Kelly and Marlene taught kindergarten during the say and taught kindergarten and first grade, respectively, in the after-school program. They had returned from a daytime field trip and could only talk but a few minutes before they were expected in the after-school program.

A similar situation arose at Clark Middle School. My site visit had been scheduled several weeks previous to the visit, no teacher interviews had specifically been arranged. Bridget, the site coordinator, told me to "grab the after-school teachers" following the academic component of the program. Thus, each of the three academic teachers agreed to participate in an interview together immediately following the academic hour of the 21st CCLC program. Deborah taught seventh grade science during the day and was in charge of the 6th grade students after-school. Jack taught 6th grade science during the day and eighth graders in the 21st CCLC, while Ben was 7th and 8th grade language arts teacher who taught the 7th grade 21st CCLC students.

Noting how accessible the site coordinators and teachers were is significant because it served as an indication of what I would see once I arrived at the sites-- a rather disorganized program where communication between administration and teachers was weak at best. Gayle, the 21st CCLCs program director at Webster Public Schools, was officially hired as the curriculum director for the program, but she ended up as the administrator of the entire program. Although Gayle has her teaching certificate, she has never been a fulltime classroom teacher. Gayle spent over 20 years in retail, but she began to substitute as a teacher to reduce her travel schedule. A friend told her that she was a natural, so she received her teaching certification and then was offered the 21st CCLCs job.

Despite Gayle's experience in management, she commented that running this program was like running an entire district. Her responsibilities seemed to go beyond 21st CCLCs. Once, when I was in her office, she asked the secretary to call the schools to see if they needed help entering their Head Count data as the school district had asked her to

assist with that project. Based on my past experiences with this grantee, it seems that the staff are all running in several different directions with no clear direction or priorities.

Throughout the 21st CCLCs program at Webster, there is high staff turnover, both at the management level (site coordinators), as well as instructional leaders at the site. The lessons seemed unorganized, and there seemed to be a lack of purpose with most of the lessons. The following will highlight what the program director, site coordinators, and teachers had to say about the 21st CCLCs program at Webster public schools.

School Demographics

Hancock Elementary's 21st CCLCs program is run like all the other 21st CCLCs programs in WPS, however, its funding comes from carryover money from their previous 21st CCLCs grant, and they are not required to submit the Annual Report form. Thus, some of the data available for other schools is not available for Hancock. Interviews at Hancock were conducted with the site coordinator, Julia, and two kindergarten teachers, Kelly and Marlene, who taught in the after-school program. During the interviews, the two teachers reported that although they did not know the exact demographics of the school, based on their classrooms, they would say that the student population was about 95% African American. The site coordinator added that she guessed the percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch probably ranged between 85% and 90%.

Academically, the school serves a diverse group of students. The teachers indicated that the students they taught in the 21st CCLCs program reflected the academic qualities of the students that they also had in the classrooms. These students had a diverse range of abilities from being exceedingly high to being exceedingly low. Marlene

indicated that the she felt the students who were most attracted to the 21st CCLCs program were those that needed the most help academically, although they were not specifically recruiting those most in need of academic help.

One problem facing Hancock Elementary in both the school day and the after-school program is high staff turnover. Julia, the site coordinator at Hancock Elementary is a young, white female who works in the school fulltime as a student support specialist. The site coordinator position for Julia extends her day three to three and a half hours Monday through Thursday. Julia previously worked as a site coordinator at a school that closed. When Julia transferred to Hancock in the fall of 2005, she became the site coordinator there. Thus, at the time of the interview, Julia had only been the site coordinator at Hancock for three or four weeks.[8]

During the 21st CCLCs academic hour, the classes are supposed to be taught by certified teachers. Although Julia stated that the majority of the academic staff are certified teachers, only one academic portion was run by a certified teacher during my observation. Teaching staff at the 21st CCLCs program at Hancock were recruited by finding out if they were interested in participating. Interestingly, the two teachers who participated in the interviews in the fall were no longer teaching at the school or in the after-school program when I returned to do the observation a few weeks later. One of the teachers decided to leave the profession to stay home with her child, and the other teacher's certification expired, and she did not renew it. Thus, if the school has a problem retaining teachers, then it is to be expected that the after-school program may have similar issues.

[8] My observation of the program occurred several weeks later in order to give Julia time to have a more grounded program.

The 21st CCLCs program at Clark Middle School has no limit on the number of students who can enroll in the program. According to the Annual Report, 26% of the students attending Clark Middle School also attend the after-school program. Based on data entered into EZReports, the majority of the program participants are in the 7th grade with 32% of the school's 7th graders participating (see table 11).

Table 11
Number of Participants per Grade Level at Clark Middle School 2004-2005

Grades	Number of 21st CCLCs Students	Total Number of Students Per Grade	Percentage of class enrolled in 21st CCLCs
6	38	212	18%
7	66	207	32%
8	37	169	22%

Note. Host school information is from the National Center for Education Statistics Database for 2003-04; information on number served is from EZreports as entered at the site. The attendance information includes all students enrolled at some point during the 2004-05 school year; some may have dropped from the program and others were enrolled to replace those students.

Across the state, the majority of middle schools stated that the 6th grade class was the largest enrolled in the 21st CCLCs program, and, as the grades increased, the numbers gradually decreased. As students get older, they have more responsibilities after school, such as caring for siblings, jobs, or other after school activities, such as sports or clubs.

The site coordinator, Bridget, also a daytime teacher at Clark, said that based on her knowledge of the students from working with them during the day, she perceives that the majority of students in the program are performing low academically, although they do have some straight A students as well. Improving behavior is a major goal of the program, and Bridget stated that they will also try to recruit students who have had behavior problems during the school day or have been suspended in order to help them

build relationships with the school and learn about appropriate ways to manage behavior. She also provides a description of the types of home lives many of these students face:

> The majority of our kids, not all of them but the majority of our kids are some of our lowest performing kids during the day. They have some of the most difficult home woes, crazy, you know, parents not home...They're forced to really take on a lot of responsibility on their own at an age when most kids aren't forced to do that and have parents at home, pushing them to do their homework. So we're able to do that for them here. And that supports what they're learning in school.

The teachers agreed by indicating that there was a push at the beginning of the year to get the students who were struggling academically to attend the program.

Similar to Hancock Elementary, Clark Middle School also uses teachers to teach in the daytime program and suffers from staff turnover. As previously mentioned, the site coordinator is also a fulltime teacher in the building. During the previous year, Bridget was a teacher in the program but moved up to site coordinator when the previous site coordinator left. As site coordinator, Bridget's major responsibility is administering the program, but since a teacher had just quit, she would be taking on a teaching responsibility with the program within the following week. Each of the teachers interviewed were also staff members of the 21st CCLCs program, which Bridget sees as the primary strength of the program:

> I'm a big believer in that the teacher that assists after school will have more success than an outside individual....Every teacher that we have right now are teachers in the building so they're able to, and each teacher teaches the grade level that they teach during the day, so they're they know what the curriculum is.

> They know the kids. They know where their strengths and weaknesses are so they can better plan their lessons and tutor them based on where they're, I've strategically placed those teachers for that reason.

Due to staff changes, by the time of the observation, the teachers were teaching in different grade levels from what they taught during the day, and they had to cover all subject areas, not just their content areas. Also, some of the after-school teachers only teach 21st CCLCs certain days of the week, so students may have one teacher one day and one teacher another day, which allows them no consistency with the students. As a teacher indicated there were "continuity problems."

Bridget also discussed several changes that the Clark program had experienced between last year and this year. For example, she talked about the turnover of the teacher leaders within the building, those high school or college students who are actually responsible for the students and try to get them to the appropriate activities each evening. Commenting on the strength of the leaders, Bridget claimed that the leaders this year were much stronger than those they had last year. She credited Gayle with making the appropriate staffing decisions. During the teacher interviews, however, all the teachers agreed that they were lucky if they could get a college student as a teacher leader to help with tutoring instead of a high school student as they found the quality of the work to be higher with the college students than with high school students.

Bridget also talked about how she tried to improve the role of the site coordinator:

> I am very visible in the after school program and last year, the coordinator was not as visible all the time. And the assistant coordinator that I have, I kind of think of her as my co-partner even though she doesn't have that title. She is just as

effective and efficient and visible and if not more so than I am, being that she doesn't work in our school building. So she's able to come in and get things prepared and work on things during the day that I'm not able to. So having that relationship with her together, having like work ethics, I think makes for stronger discipline policies.

Even though Bridget sees strength in having fulltime teachers serve as the site coordinators, she also comments on the advantages of not working fulltime during the school day. The external person has time to do planning and enters the majority of the data for the program.

Goals of the Program

As mentioned previously, part of the strategic plan for the 21st CCLCs in Webster School District is to help maintain district enrollment. In order to do so, several goals were presented in the proposal:

1) 100% of the students enrolled will participate in integrated academic, recreational, and enrichment activities in a safe environment.
2) 100% of the students enrolled will participate in integrated enrichment activities in a safe environment.
3) 95% of the students enrolled will not engage in unsafe behaviors. The rate of formal disciplinary actions among participating students will decrease, rate of attendance will increase.
4) 90% of the students enrolled will not be suspended from school.

5) 95% of the students will not engage in unsafe behaviors and 100% students will participate in 21st CCLCs in a safe environment.
6) Students will have more confidence in their ability to achieve academically, increase their frequency of reading, increase their frequency of completing homework, and manifest greater participation in classroom activities.
7) Students will participate 1 hour in the morning (7-8 a.m.). Students will participate 3 hours after school (3-6 p.m.)
8) WPS will collaborate with [local] zoo, Community Action Agency, Junior Achievement, [local] Arboretum, School-Based Scouts, Substance Abuse Council, and [local] public library
9) Students will have the opportunity to participate in the following core education services: Family Y Center, Zoo, Community Action Agency, Junior Achievement, Arboretum, School-Based Scouts, & Substance Abuse Council.
10) Students will increase their knowledge about the value of service to others, and they will increase their knowledge and internalization of good personal character.
11) Students will participate in the following activity/service; academic enrichment, Homework Help and tutoring in math and reading, constructive recreational activity, volunteering, and supplemental services.

Similar to Waterford, few goals explicitly relate to academic achievement. Even the goals that are related to academic achievement only talk about having students participate in academic activities, not how those activities will be presented.

In the proposal, these goals were chosen to align with the district's goals and the Board of Education Goals along with the State Board of Education and their partner

organizations. The proposal for Webster School District also explicitly explained why they chose not to have specific academic outcomes be included as part of the goals for the 21st CCLCs program, particularly standardized test scores:

> In fact, the goals for our program have been pulled from the 5-year strategic plan for our district. Readers of our application will note that we have avoided setting unrealistic goals for our program such as "increasing MEAP scores" or "reducing crime". Our experience with Community Learning Centers and our knowledge of how children learn and grow tells us that it is not possible to identify and isolate such specific effects of any particular program or strategy. As complicated as most of these children's lives are, it is simplistic and naïve to believe that a single program will produce attributable outcomes as complex as improve test scores.

The proposal goes on to mention the various ways they plan on helping students increase academically through high-quality experiences involving structured activities, instruction, discovery of new ideas, practice, interactions with others, play, introspection, and observation. While acknowledging that the programs do recognize the significance of having academic goals and an academic impact on their students' lives, the proposal clearly states that the academic impact or effectiveness of the program cannot be measured solely by standardized tests.

Yet, when asked what the goals of the program were, Gayle's answer included helping students do well on the MEAP:

> We're just trying to, to just be able to support what they do during the day in math and reading. To help with the MEAP, which is a big piece of the puzzle in the state of Michigan....And try to help students to achieve their goals. It's so

> important because a lot of these kids are at risk and they don't have the opportunity to be able to go home like a lot of us and have homework and do those types of things. So hopefully we're there to help them with their homework, with their math, their reading. And to keep them focused. So they won't miss out and they'll be ready for what happens tomorrow in their lives.

The academic piece is very important to the WPS 21st CCLCs programs, especially as it relates to the MEAP scores, despite the fact that the proposal indicated that MEAP was not the sole measure on which to base the impact of the program.

Even though Gayle discussed the role of 21st CCLCs in MEAP preparation, she also notes her frustration with the way that the programs are being evaluated. Gayle indicated that, academically, students were not doing well in school and resented the fact that after-school programs were being judged based on how the students improved or did not improve academically:

> It's kinda hard, any my thing is if they can't do it during the day, then how do we do it in 45 minutes to an hour? All we're doing is supporting and trying to give kids some, some of what they need, you know what I'm saying? But we look at report cards and they were kind of scary. I couldn't believe all the kids that had Ds.

In other words, if the classroom teachers were giving out so many Ds, then perhaps some of the problem with instruction is coming from the daytime teachers. All the after-school personnel can do is provide support and help with the homework that comes from the daytime teacher. If those lessons are not sufficient enough to meet MEAP standards, or in the case of report cards, if the students cannot meet the teacher's expectations, then

perhaps the problem cannot and will not be fixed until the instruction driving the school day is examined and analyzed to provide better regular instruction.

For the Webster 21st CLCC program, then, serving as an academic support center to help students support their daytime learning is, in fact, a prominent goal of the program. At the same time, administrators realize, as indicated in the proposal, that the success of the program cannot be measured entirely by the standardized test scores alone. In addition to raising student achievement scores, the program is also designed to help students learn by providing enriching activities, such as arts and crafts. Through community-based organizations, like the Scouts of America program, students learn more about character education, youth development, and citizenship to make them more well-rounded students.

Similarly, when asked what are the goals of the program, Julia, the site coordinator at Hancock Elementary School, listed several elements of the program to provide the students with a rich and well-rounded experience:

> To provide services for kids, educationally and enrichment activities that they can do after school to give them something to do if their parents may be at work, so they're not going home unsupervised. It keeps them focused on school and gives them that option to have something fun to do after school rather than going home and getting themselves in trouble. Also to give them extra academic help with the classroom teachers if they need that. And also field trips and things like that that they may not be able to go on regularly, they're able to do that here.

Even though Julia did not specifically mention safety as a goal, it is implied by her description of "going home unsupervised and getting themselves in trouble." Hancock Elementary is located in an urban area that has been noted for its high crime rate.

In terms of academic learning, Julia states that the studying of classroom materials provide extra support to their daytime classroom experience, but she does not say that instructional activities push them to go further or extend their learning. Both Kelly and Marlene mentioned that activities, especially in the older grades (3rd through 5th), focused on MEAP preparation. The emphasis on enrichment activities, particularly field trips, seems to be an important part of the program overall. For instance, Julia mentioned that all the 21st CCLCs went to see the *Nutcracker Suite* each year is one thing both the staff and students enjoyed.

The goals of the program, according to Bridget and other site coordinators, is "To provide a balance of educational achievement and social interaction." Throughout the conversation, the issues of discipline and behavior problems also were mentioned several times indicating that working on behavior was part of the social interaction aspect of the program. During the teacher interviews, however, a different story came to light when asked to describe the goals of the program:

Deborah: [To] engage students after school, I would say, in enrichment activities.

Ben: [Do you mean] the official or the realistic?

Deborah: Yeah. I mean, I think that's the goal cuz there's a big MEAP push, before the MEAP to get scores up and kids reviewing.

Ben: They should be doing academics but I think unofficially, it's just to give the kids a place to be after school.

Jack: Keeps them off the street, keeps them safe.

Even though these teachers are being paid to help them with instruction, two of them still believe that the major emphasis of the problem is simply to keep young people off the street. Despite the fact that the students are required to go to an "academic hour," the teachers do not feel that increasing their academic aptitude is in reality a major goal of the program. It is almost as if there is an idealistic goal that the site coordinators and administrators of the program must portray, and because they hear it so often, they may even believe it, yet those actually teaching in the program have found that the substance of a true academic learning environment seems to be missing.

Communication Among After-School and Daytime Staff

The site coordinator position is part time work. Many site coordinators have dual employment as full time teachers in the same building where the after-school program meets while others may work elsewhere as substitutes in the district. Some work in positions outside of education and use the 21st CCLCs as a second job. The grant level and site level staff communicate through weekly staff meetings and daily by phone or e-mail talks.

The 21st CCLCs programs at WPS try to have certified teachers lead the "academic hour." Before and after the academic hour, though, the 21st CCLCs participants have a "leader," who is usually a high school student or community member, who gathers the students at the beginning of the program, to ensure students get to their academic section, to assist the academic teacher, and to lead the enrichment portion of the evening. Gayle finds that hiring high school students is a strength for the entire school

district, because "we do hire seniors that are interested in maybe going into education. For them to get the feel for it before they go away to college because I think this is such a wonderful opportunity and experience for those individuals". Even though the 21st CCLCs programs are housed in elementary and middle school buildings, some area high school students also benefit by using the programs as a career exploration opportunity.

For the instructional portion of the program, the proposal indicates that the site coordinators will be responsible for connecting with the school day teachers to learn about the individual needs of the students. The proposal indicates that a mailbox will be set up for the teachers to leave notes and suggestions for the after-school staff, yet this requirement has not been met in the schools that are part of the study. Since many of the after-school teachers teach during the day in the same building, they are aware of what happens at staff meetings and what is expected of them at their own grade level or content area. Gayle indicated that the after-school staff go to as many school meetings as possible, yet Gayle also puts a disclaimer in stating that there are some buildings do not provide as much support as she would like, and communication is one area where Gayle would like to see improvement:

> Once or twice a month to me isn't enough. When you have kids that are failing and with all these initiatives involved with *No Child Left Behind*, I think we need to even take a stronger approach to how we're getting the message across, not only during the day but after school with the kids and teachers.

Gayle also remarked that sometimes the daytime staff does not take advantage of all the after-school program can offer. The after-school programs have the funds to support the

learning happening during the daytime but so much more can be done to strengthen the link between the two educational spheres.

Because Hancock Elementary is large and because of Julia's other responsibilities as a Student Support Specialist, she did had no specific strategies in place as far as communicating with the daytime staff:

> It's just hard to make those connections because we are running, you know, all day and it's in the morning, planning and preparing for the day...And then by the time they're done teaching, the teachers are already gone or they're at professional development, or other obligations. So it's hard to communicate, I think on a daily basis. I would love to consistently be able to communicate with the teachers every day. You know, do you need help getting some academic work ready? Do you need, you know, what do you need for me to do but because this is such a large building, and I'm always in demand, it seems like, you know, it's very difficult.

In her previous building, Julia said that she was able to be more available and able to talk more with the teachers about what support the 21st CCLCs program could provide because the building was smaller, but here at Hancock, the responsibilities are too much.

During the first part of the academic time when students can work on their homework assignments and receive extra assistance is the most obvious connection that the after-school program has with the daytime program. While certified teachers should oversee the activity and providing lessons for students after they finish their homework, this was not seen in all the Hancock Elementary classrooms during the observation. Of the five classrooms visited, three had certified teachers in the classroom and the teachers

had the most structured after-school activities. For instance, the fourth graders were reading books and working on book reports. Students recorded how many pages they read each day and when they reached 1,000 pages, they had their picture placed in the local newspaper and a party was given for the students.

Other classrooms were using paraprofessionals to lead the lessons. During the fifth grade session, the students worked in a class led by a paraprofessional, while the regular daytime teacher, who taught in that classroom during the day, continued to work at her desk. Under the paraprofessional, the students were supposed to be working on homework. However, the students were often chatting among themselves with the paraprofessional reminding them to be quiet. Shortly, the paraprofessional left the room saying she would "be right back." Thus, I was left sitting at a table with five fifth graders. During this time, the students openly chatted with me and said they did not like their teacher in the after-school program because she was ineffective and not helpful. Ten minutes later, the paraprofessional returned with more materials to do additional instructional activities.

In interviews across the state, many of the CCLCs program staff commented that after-school programs provided the opportunity for teachers to work with smaller groups of students. Teachers interviewed at Hancock Elementary indicated the after-school program was more likely to have large group activities than in the regular classroom. Kelly explained, "I think during the day we're broken up into smaller groups and into center activities. In the after-school program, we're broken into smaller groups but not as small as the regular school day. We do a lot of things whole group." Marlene agreed with

this assessment, saying, "I do a lot of whole group because that's the best way to keep their attention. Otherwise they're kind of off-task."

Kelly, a kindergarten teacher both during the day and in the after-school program, stated that she used the after-school time to extend the lessons she had begun during the day by using extension activities of what they started during the day. This emphasizes the importance of communication, particularly when the after-school teacher is assigned to a group of students or a grade level that is different from what he or she teaches during the day. If Kelly were to teach fourth grade after school, she would not be as aware of where students needed nor the curriculum for that grade level. Marlene, who teaches a different grade level for the 21st CCLCs program, thinks the after-school program could be used as a springboard for what the student learns during the day. She often asks teachers what homework they would be assigning, so she could help them with those concepts and "stretch them beyond that."

After-school teachers from the middle school talked about the problems connected with keeping students engaged in after-school activities, changes that district mandates had brought to the program, and challenges of being both a daytime and an after-school teacher. Despite the emphasis on having a curriculum director, all three teachers at Clark Middle School agreed that, basically, they planned their own lessons and turned them in once in awhile.

A constant turnover of attendees makes it difficult to plan coherent and consistent activities for students. Deborah had an earthquake lab project planned that would take about two weeks to complete. The day after they started the project, an entirely new group of students showed up. There was no way to have consistency with the lesson or

even make daily plans. Jack's class was engaged in a couple of different academic games, but only two students were in the room. His plan for the day had been to start a new book, but with only two students, he changed his plans and offered enrichment activities.

The constant turnover of students is not a problem for Bridget. Although there was not a specific attendance policy, Bridget says it is positive that there are 45-60 kids coming daily, "They come when they can come, they come when they want to come, and that seems to be consistent. They seem, the ones that are signed up for it, seem to consistently come." Those teaching in the program do find it difficult to make plans because they never knew who will be attending.

Because of district requirements for all schools in the district to do more work with math and science to increase their standardized test scores, the teachers indicate that the programs have gone from being less hands-on to a more traditional classroom setting. For example, during the previous school year, the teachers had been working with science labs within their classrooms, but, with more of a focus on math, the teachers are seeing a decline in the experiential learning. This was a particular issue with Ben, the 7th grade 21st CCLCs teacher:

> This year, they wanted to focus more on math than science and I don't know who much longer I'm gonna keep trying it. We'll see. I get the feeling that I'm losing the kid's interest. [I may] go back to my home territory so to speak and do something.

During the visit to Ben's 21st CCLCs classroom, however, the students did seem very engaged on this particular day. Students were asked to write a letter to a city councilman regarding a recent proposal to ban smoking in public places. After writing the letters,

students debated their positions. Some of the students were very involved in the conversation with arguments ranging from smoking will melt the glaciers to their own experiences with smoking. On occasion, the conversation turned personal. When the question was asked, "How many of you have seen anyone sell drugs?" many hands were raised. Though most students were engaged, there were a few disruptions. A video game was taken from one student for playing during the class and two girls were doing each other's hair. Despite the fact that a lively conversation was coming from this discussion, the classroom was still structured like a traditional classroom with rows of desks and students unable to see one another without shifting their positions or their chairs.

During the interview, as Ben described today's lesson, Jack said that the assignment seemed familiar to him because his students had participated in a similar lesson by writing to politicians about the students' concerns. Ben remarked that he had done a similar activity in class during an environmental unit, but he did not intend it as a "carryover piece." This conversation helped Ben to realize that the kids were actually making the connection between what they had learned during the daytime environmental unit and this assignment, "which was why one students was so adamantly saying, you know, smoking causes the ice caps to melt". In this case, without planning by teachers, students made connections between school day and after-school learning and enriching their own learning.

Despite the fact that the teachers who teach both during the school day and after school are knowledgeable about the students and the curriculum, there are certain drawbacks with working both jobs. Logistically, Ben finds it difficult to meet the

obligations he has as a regular teacher when he only has a few minutes after school to be ready for the second job at 21st CCLCs:

> It's extremely hard to keep kids after 7th hour for discipline. We lose a lot of time for calling parents and things like that. Because suddenly you get into, okay, now I have to go to 21st Century in five minutes or ten minutes or whatever. It just, it makes for a very long day. By the time last hour rolls around and you realize you have another hour to go, to a degree I think the kids feel that also. They want, I know one of the things that's pushed is that they want a more traditional classroom setting, at one of the meetings we were talking...

Deborah agrees that everyone is burned out by the end of the day, and Jack adds that without a "gung-ho" staff and the right mix of students, trying to have a traditional school setting for an additional hour after-school is not going to work.

A concrete example is provided by Deborah: the original plan for the day's lesson was to build magnet towers, but she "wasn't feeling it today....It wasn't the day. After hearing it all day today, I just wasn't ready to do it one more time". Thus, the pressures and stresses of the daytime hours seem to carry over into the after-school time for the teachers. With low energy levels and no time to process the day's activities, the teachers are then thrown into a similar environment but with different students who have also been facing similar issues all day long.

The teachers in the building, according to Bridget, are supportive of the program. She believes that when the teachers know the students are putting in the extra effort to stay after-school, they are more likely to allow them to redo assignments and give them more opportunities to work on their homework. In fact, sometimes students will sign in to

the 21st CCLCs program and then, to get more support, will work with one of their daytime teachers who is not directly part of the program. When the students finish the work, they join the other activities of 21st CCLCs.

Because of their role in the school, the after-school teachers did not communicate with other teachers during the day regarding the after-school program. Deborah provided an example of how she and another teacher worked together to solve a discipline problem with a student whom she taught at the 21st CCLCs, but she does not think that type of communication often occurred. Because of their positions with the school, the teachers did not seem to think that it was extremely relevant to have a strong communication with other daytime teachers regarding the after-school program. Their main concern regarding a lack of communication existed between the expectations of the program administrators and the responsibility of the teachers. Even though they had been requested to make their classrooms more traditional, when administrators saw students engaged and having fun, those tended to be the activities that were applauded. They did not believe that the administrators know what is the role of the after-school program as an academic support system.

Academic Progress of the 21st CCLCs Participants

With little data on which to make programming decisions, there is no way to know what works best for the students enrolled. For assessment at the program level, Bridget does not have any concrete methods. She mentioned that during the previous year they had given a pre-test but no follow-up post-test. She found that to be a waste of time.

Her feedback comes from teachers in the building. She has ideas on how she would like to improve the data piece:

> I've heard feedback from the teachers in the building about show much better it's run this year and how much more organized it is and I would like to think that that in and of itself is some good feedback. It would be nice if we could keep more track of the weekly grades of the students that are attending on a regular basis.

Bridget sees classroom grades as her primary assessment piece. The grades and MEAP scores of students reported to the state evaluation office, compared to the grades of non-regular students (students who participated for fewer than 30 days), showed the regular participants of 21st CCLCs had a lower decrease in grades but also a lower increase in grades (see table 12). In math, regular students from the 21st CCLCs who made improvements was less than non-regulars, while the percentage of students' grades who declined decreasing was equal for the two groups (see table 13).

Table 12
Change in Reading Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Clark Middle School

	Improved %	No Change %	Decreased %
Participants	20%	42%	28%
Non-Participants	33%	27%	40%

Note: Data was included only if at least 5 students had multiple points of grade data for each subject area. Number of students with reading: Less than 30 days=55, 30 days or more=45. Change of at least ½ point qualifies as a grade change.

Table 13
Change in Math Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Clark Middle School

	Improved %	No Change %	Decreased %
Participants	20%	39%	28%
Non-participants	34%	38%	28%

Note: Data was included only if at least 5 students had multiple points of grade data for each subject area. Number of students with reading: Less than 30 days=58, 30 days or more=46. Change of at least ½ point qualifies as a grade change.

A comparison of the reading and math MEAP scores for regular students and non-regular students showed the number of who achieved proficiency in reading was similar for both groups (42% of the non-regular students; 43% of the regular participants). In math, however, the percentage of students who achieved proficiency was greater for non-regular students than for regular students; 44% and 25%, respectively. These results tell us little about individual student progress or the areas of difficulty, but they do show that Clark Middle School students had difficulty with students scoring at levels considered proficient.

For the site coordinator and the 21st CCLCs teachers, the outcome results are inconclusive. Based on Bridget's own classroom experience, she is seeing more homework being turned in this year as compared to last year. Although she sees behavioral improvements, she sees it after a student has gotten into trouble and suffered some consequences, such as not being able to come to the program for a few days. Because of a consistent discipline policy, once they return, she sees behavioral and attitudinal changes in them. The after-school teachers interviewed did not see evidence of

cognitive nor behavioral changes in the after-school participants when compared to the students who did not attend the 21st CCLCs program.

The only data that Julia could share at this point from the elementary school was that some improvements were shown on the E. Sylvan pre and post-tests, but only 15 students were enrolled from the 21st CCLCs program. When asked to compare her experience between this school and her previous school, Julia said that she sees an academic improvement but not a behavioral improvement.

Data Used for Continuous Program Improvement

This year, Gayle was able to hire Sandy, a retired principal from the district, as a curriculum director for the 21st CCLCs sites. Sandy analyzes assessment results from the district as a whole to see what areas need the most improvement so 21st CCLCs know the areas of the curricula on which to concentrate its focus. Another responsibility is to train the academic leaders through professional development and site visits. Sandy looks for the following components of an activity when she visits a classroom:

- A Plan—What are you doing and why?
- Are materials prepared ahead of time?
- Do leaders know what is expected of them?
- Are all students engaged?
- Is there a plan for dealing with uncooperative or disruptive students?
- Is there closure to the lesson as well as for looking ahead (for continuity of instruction)?

Sandy provides the teachers with a Lesson Plan Outline that asks for the Lesson Content, Grade Level, and Materials Needed along with seven additional elements:

1) Objective of the lesson
2) Cue Set/Anticipatory Set
3) Share Activity/Best Shot
4) Guided Activity
5) Independent Activity/Practice
6) Closure/summarize
7) Assessment/evaluation

Encouraging the teachers to use data to help them plan their lesson plans, Sandy provides teachers with a list of potential data pieces to examine, including MEAP results, Building Assessments, Educational Performance, and Teacher Recommendations. In essence, teachers at the 21st CCLCs program are encouraged to use data-driven decision making guidelines to plan their programs. Yet, do teachers who work all day in their own classrooms have the time or energy to put much effort into their after-school program as well? Considering that the teachers interviewed constructed their own assignments and did not seem to know the particular weaknesses of individual students, they are either not getting the information or not working with it.

Interestingly, when Gayle was asked what assessments were used for the program, she did not know what the local evaluator was using. When the local evaluator was asked for a copy of any report she had done on the academic achievement of the students, she submitted a report given to the School Board. This report was not aggregated by school or by student but did provide information from student and parent

surveys. Although the report provided the percentage of students who were enrolled in specific activities, such as reading, math, science, social studies, and history, it provided no outcome data or assessment measures. Gayle indicated, however, that teachers were very good about providing the after school staff with information about individual students, particularly in what areas the student have difficulty.

Areas of communication lacking at Hancock Elementary School are data analysis and knowing how 21st CCLCs students are comparing with non-participant students. With the hiring of the curriculum coordinator, Julia has high hopes for next year's program:

> I think that'll help for next year, when we see the results in the after-school program, what areas we may need to integrate afterschool. When [our curriculum director] does it, she looks at all of the schools and what are the general fall downs. You know, where are we falling short? And she tries to implement that after-school which is a help because we can't, we can't all do that. There's no way that we can sit, when we hardly have time to communicate with one another, but to sit and see what are our gaps. To do like a gap analysis or anything like that would be very difficult so it's really gonna be helpful, I think having her as a liaison between what's going on in schools and what Gayle needs to know.

Even though a plan seemed to be in place through Sandy's work of analyzing the needs of the students, the work did not seem to be implemented at the site level. The site coordinators apparently understood the importance of using the data to inform the staff of the practices of the program, but neither site coordinator had the time to study it nor make the needed changes.

Summary of Webster Public School District

Do the programs of the 21st CCLCs in Webster Public Schools form coherent links to what the students learn during the day? In this programs, this question is complex because in one way the answer is yes. By having daytime teachers teach in the after-school program, there is definitely a connection between what is taught during the day and what is taught after school. But, because the program does not have a clear direction on its goals or how to accomplish those goals, the link is weak.

A look at the curricula that the program should meet, the goal seems to come down to meeting the state standards and benchmarks; in theory, this would, ultimately, help increase MEAP scores. The evidence shows it is not happening. Despite the fact that there is a curriculum director to help after-school teachers plan lessons, the teachers seem to be on their own in what they want to teach. At the middle school level, in particular, the teachers themselves felt that the program administrators were unclear concerning what should be taught in the programs and how it should be taught.

The staffing issue in Webster Public Schools raises a significant question. Daytime teachers have a significant connection to the school day, yet after-school programs are in the schools because students are not achieving. If the teachers are not getting the job done during the day, why should we expect them to get it done after-school? Teacher comments regarding the after-school activities raise a bigger issue about teaching in general. If teachers truly believe that these students will learn more in a relaxed environment that provides them with more hands-on and experiential learning, why are these types of projects not used during the school day? There are ways that the

daytime school, with larger class sizes, could become a more effective learning environment for students.

Further, logistics of full time teachers who continue to a second job in the after-school program poses problems. Admitting they are as tired as the students after a day of teaching and with the other responsibilities that they have, are they effective teachers in the after-school program or does the job merely provide an additional hour's pay for them? Despite the grantee Annual Report Form that stated no site coordinators had been replaced last year, Bridget was a new site coordinator, and that very day, Jack and Ben learned from Deborah that another of their colleagues had resigned. Julia, Bridget, Jack, Ben, and Deborah all talked about how tiring it was to work the two jobs. We may assume that part of the reason for the high turnover rates may be burn-out on the part of the teachers and staff.

A final major question that the Webster Public Schools raise is the use of evaluation and data in making programming decisions. A local evaluation report was not available, and both site coordinators talked about the dearth of data in program decisions. Decisions are made based on MEAP scores, and after-school staff are encouraged to teach to the same benchmarks and standards. According to middle school teachers, they are also encouraged to use a more traditional classroom setting. If this does not work for the students during the day, why would it work for the students after school and how are they expected to learn it a second time? Without specific data where students need help, and without data on what aspects of the after-school program work and which do not, the Webster Public School's 21st CCLCs program will make little change for its students neither academically nor socially.

CHAPTER 4: A SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

A Snapshot of Anchor Public Schools

Anchor Public Schools is located in an urban area on the western side of Michigan. Unlike the two cases presented in the previous chapter, the twenty 21st CCLCs programs in Anchor Public Schools rely heavily on their partnerships with community-based organizations. Anchor Public Schools has essentially split its program into an academic component, which the school district oversees using daytime teachers as the instructors, and an enrichment/recreational component, which is supervised by one of three Community Based Organizations (CBOs) (Parks and Recreation, YMCA, or Campfire USA).

Gaining access to Anchor Public Schools was different from any of the other sites approached. After contacting the program director and the assistant program director, the local evaluator, who is an employee of the public school systems, provided me with the forms needed to do research within the Anchor public school system. Gaining access to Anchor Public Schools was similar to gaining access through the university approval for human subject research. After the forms were approved, Amy, the academic curriculum director of the 21st CCLCs program, helped to set up with people from the program. Although principals were not part of this particular research project, the principal at the elementary school wanted to meet with me for a few minutes; the principal at the middle school insisted upon seeing the university consent forms. Both schools ended up approving the projects.

Anchor Public Schools with its 20 schools involved in the program, does not use the EZreports data system. They have their own attendance sheets that can be scanned

into the Anchor Public School system. The attendance records are then sent to the MSU Evaluation office in an Excel file. Anchor Public Schools has a commitment to protect the confidentiality and safety of its students, so the rules for gaining access to the district to conduct research is rigid.

Anchor Public Schools also has a unique demographic population not seen in other case studies. The area has a growing Hispanic population, increasing the number of bilingual students within the school and within the 21st CCLCs programs. Lisa, the lead teacher for Robin Elementary School estimates nearly 90% of the school qualified for free and reduced lunch with large bilingual and special education populations, "Bilingual is a huge component. We have probably, if you demographically look out over the state, we have a higher population of special ed[ucation] students. It's definitely an urban setting." Because of these special issues, the 21st CCLCs program at Anchor Public Schools has been able to offer some unique programming components, which will be discussed later in the chapter.

Because of the size of Anchor Public Schools, the organization of the program is a bit different from the other case studies already presented. Paula, the Program Director hired last summer to oversee the 21st CCLCs program, is a former a principal in the district. She oversees the administration of the program. William, the assistant program director, has more one-on-one contact with the sites. He does site reviews and works on other bureaucratic matters, such as licensing issues. Most communication with the external providers is done through the program director and the assistant program director. Amy, the Academic Director, works even more closely with the sites as she is in

charge of the lead teachers and all the staff who work during the academic hours of the program.

The management of the sites is slightly different between the elementary school and the middle school in this study. To stay with the terminology used by the other sites, the person designated as "site coordinator" at these schools comes from one of the community-based organizations. Their primary responsibility, however, is the enrichment program. Although the Annual Reports indicated that the arrangements between the school district and the CBOs have been fairly successful, the one challenge they reported was working with different agencies who have different policies and procedures. This model adds another bureaucratic structure to the theory of policy coherence. The 21st CCLCs program at Anchor Public Schools not only has the layers already discussed but the additional CBO policies and procedures that must align with the goals of the overall 21st CCLCs program.

As mentioned previously, the academic portion of the program comes from the public school district and is overseen by Amy and each program's lead teacher. The lead teacher is the teacher who supervise the academic instruction for each building. Although the lead teacher is a fulltime teacher during the day, the lead teacher does not teach in the after-school program. Instead, he or she is in charge of organizing the academic component of the program, serving as a liaison for the site coordinator, and providing resources for those teaching in the 21st CCLCs program. For the purposes of this study, interviews were conducted with the three primary program directors—Paula and William, the directors and Amy, the Academic Coordinator. Interviews were also arranged through the schools with the lead teachers in each building.

School Demographics

The statement of need for Robin Elementary school affiliated with the Parks and Recreation Department, mentioned both demographic changes in the neighborhood as well as academic need:

> The five [elementary] schools targeted as priority sites are areas that have seen significant Hispanic population growth (ranging between 157%-191%) in the past decade. Families in the targeted neighborhoods are living in extreme poverty (all sites exceeding 89%). Three of the five schools are in Phase IV improvement status as designated by Michigan Department of Education and at least 70% of students are identified as at risk. Academic data show that students are far from meeting expectations behaviorally and academically. Over 39% of elementary school students are absent over 12 days per year with 9% absent over 30 days. Over 7% of students were suspended and at least 60% are identified as at risk. Academically, 43% scored in the lowest MEAP category in reading, 60% in writing, 26% in math and 75% in social studies. . . . . The targeted schools have a documented need for on-site quality programs when students are out of school. Fewer than 15% of students in the targeted neighborhoods have academic and youth development opportunities before or after school, on weekends and during the summer.

The elementary school is dealing with a growing Hispanic population and many bilingual students. A vast majority of the students live in poverty, and their academic scores, based on the MEAP, are low.

Students in grades Kindergarten through fifth are encouraged to participate in the 21st CCLCs program at the elementary school. With the exception of kindergarten and second grades, each grade level has over 40% of its population participating in the after-school program with a total of 44% of the entire school participating in the 21st CCLCs program (see table 14).

Table 14
Number of Participants per Grade Level at Robin Elementary School 2004-2005

Grades	Number of 21st CCLCs Students	Total Number of Students Per Grade	Percentage of class enrolled in 21st CCLCs
K	33	87	38%
1	46	78	59%
2	22	82	27%
3	35	70	50%
4	33	71	47%
5	34	50	68%

Note. Host school information is from the National Center for Education Statistics Database for 2003-04; information on number served is from EZreports as entered at the site. The attendance information includes all students enrolled at some point during the 2004-05 school year; some may have dropped from the program and others were enrolled to replace those students.

When looking at race/ethnicity, Robin Elementary School is evidence of the growing Latino/a population in Anchor Public Schools. Of the 215 students participating, 174 are Hispanic, which is 40% of the Hispanic population in the school. The percentage of Hispanic students attending the program is critical to the activities offered at Robin. In fact, the 21st CCLCs program received a special grant to conduct a Spanish Literacy Class, which will be discussed later. While the program serves 32 African American students, those 32 students comprise 94% of the school's total African American population. The program has made no concerted effort to recruit certain students, a high

number of students have attended or do attend the 21st CCLCs program at the elementary school.

Located down the street from Robin Elementary School, Hancock Middle School has similar student demographics with a high Hispanic population. Even though 131 Hispanic students participate in the program, that is only about a third of the host school Hispanic population. At the middle school, 43% (n=83) of the African American students have participated in the program, a significantly lower percentage than at the elementary school.

Across grade levels, the percentage of students participating in each grade level is fairly consistent. The seventh grade class has the highest percentage of participants, 39%, while the eighth grade class, similar to other sites, has the lowest percentage, 29% (see table 15).

Table 15
Number of Participants per Grade Level at Hancock Middle School 2004-2005

Grades	Number of 21st CCLCs Students	Total Number of Students Per Grade	Percentage of class enrolled in 21st CCLCs
6	66	207	32%
7	82	211	39%
8	70	242	29%

Note. Host school information is from the National Center for Education Statistics Database for 2003-04; information on number served is from EZreports as entered at the site. The attendance information includes all students enrolled at some point during the 2004-05 school year; some may have dropped from the program and others were enrolled to replace those students.

The middle school faces as many or more academic challenges than the elementary school. Disruptive behavior has become an issue for each of the middle schools involved in the 21st CCLCs program in the Anchor Public School District. According to the needs statement:

> The five comprehensive middle schools enroll 2,828 students, 29% are white, 46% African American, and 23% Hispanic. Seventy (70) percent qualify for free or reduced lunch. Middle school students are far from meeting expectations. Over 59% are absent over 12 days per year. Over 1/3 (38%) were suspended. Sixty (60) percent are identified as at risk. Academically 36% scored in the lowest MEAP category in reading, and 47% in writing. Outside of athletics, neither the school system nor community agencies provide on-site, low-cost, comprehensive after-school programs with transportation. Where programs do exist, cost and transportation prevent the majority of middle school students from participating.

The middle school has a large minority population with high poverty rates and high discipline and academic problems. Additionally, the middle school proposal raises the issue of transportation and how difficult it is for students to have opportunities for out-of-school experiences. By bringing in the CBOs and offering inexpensive after-school programs, Anchor Public Schools has a much more *community* oriented program than do the other programs that are closely affiliated with the school districts.

Goals of the Program

Goals set by Anchor Public Schools seem to be more attainable or more closely aligned to S.M.A.R.T. goals than the goals set forth by both Waterford and Webster:

1) 20% of the student population at each site will attend the [21st CCLCs] program 3 or more times per week.
2) 40% of parents will attend at least one family event.
3) 85% of regular attendees will not have suspensions.

4) 85% of regular attendees will see greater academic gains than non-participants.

5) 90% of regular attendees will have fewer than 12 absences per year.

6) 90% of regular attendees will learn at least 2 life skills.

Instead of having 100% of the population attend, the district is hoping for 20%. Of those 20%, they hope that 85% will see greater academic gains. By trying to reach a smaller group of students, Anchor Public Schools can work more on the individual needs of its students.

The question was asked on the Annual Report why these goals were chosen. The response was, "The goals, objectives and outcomes as outlined for the [21st CCLCs] Afterschool Program meet the community's desire for defined outcomes and are designed to meet the special needs of students and their families, which may include literacy, second language learners, special education, and special circumstances, such as homelessness. Our purpose is to provide an array of quality learning and recreational opportunities that help our City's children succeed." These goals emphasize the needs of the special population served by the school district, which has resulted in unique program implementation through the services they offer the bilingual and special education students.

When administrators of the program asked what the goals of the program were, the staff tended to mention safety first and academics second. Paula specifically stated three different goals. First, she said the primary goals were to ensure a safe and orderly environment for all students. Anchor Public Schools wanted to service as many students as possible and keep them safe during the hours immediately following school. Second,

once they are in the program, they need an academic component to enforce what they have learned during the school day to enhance their learning. The third goal for Paula was to assure the parents that their kids were being taken care of in a safe environment with responsible adults. William agreed with Paula's assessment stating that helping working families keep kids safe and secure and helping kids with their homework were the main purposes of any after-school program.

As Academic Director, Amy's goals also reflected these aspects, especially when it comes to safety. She wants students to feel as that the building offers a safe haven for students after school so they do not have to go home alone and may prevent their getting into trouble on the streets. Additionally, Wendy feels that the relationships that students build in the after-school program may be critical to their success. This is particularly true for the middle school students. Amy explains the dilemma of this age group:

> Too many kids get a message, especially as they get to middle school, that if you don't turn your homework in, if you don't get here every day, you're not going to pass and so negative messages are read. The after-school program can change those negative messages to positive messages just by getting kids through their homework, tutoring in areas where they're deficient and getting them back to school the next day so that they're prepared for class, they're learning more in class, and then they can see those after-school people who are going to encourage them to come back during the day. And when the after-school people are the same as the daytime people, the encouragement doubles . . . so the goal has to be relationships that move children into academic success.

Amy believes that after-school programs have the potential to help students establish positive relationships with adults who care about them and their futures, which is a strength of having daytime teachers also teach in the after-school programs. Ultimately, Amy believes that having this support system will lead to increased academic achievement.

Nancy, the lead teacher at Robin Elementary School, agrees with Amy's assessment that the relationship building piece is what will help students increase their academic achievement. Nancy strongly correlates the connection between attendance at the 21st CCLCs program and attendance during the school day. If a student does not come to school, that student cannot come to the after-school program, and many students see that as a punishment:

> I think it's just to get kids involved in education, be excited about it, and want to stay in school. And I, my, one thing, I think, is really important about it is that the kids that come to the after-school program, they have an interest, and if we make it fun and interesting and engage them, then they're going to want to be at school because if they don't come to school, they can't come to the after-school program. If they're absent for the day, they can't come back for after-school. So they're going to want to be in school, not be in trouble as they get pulled out of the after-school program, not be suspended out of the rec[reation] part of the program.

Because the academic portion of the program is a required component for all students, then even if the student is only there for the recreational part of it, he or she must still get some academic support.

At Hancock Middle School, Lisa, the lead teacher, simplified the goals of the program:

> We want our students to be successful. We want it to be an environment that allows students to be safe and to . . . I guess to get the additional help that they need.

Again, academics are not necessarily the primary goal of the program. Instead, offering students a safe environment to go after-school is the number one priority. Providing students with the additional help or assistance that they may need is a secondary goal of the program. The development of relationships between students and staff is of great significance to Lisa, which will be discussed later when analyzing the outcomes from Hancock Middle School.

Communication Among After-School and Daytime Staff

Because of the organizational structure of the 21st CCLCs program at Anchor Public Schools, various levels of communication exist. At the building level, the lead teachers serve as the liaison between the site coordinator and the school. The lead teachers are also responsible for the teachers working with students during the academic time at their building. As Curriculum Director, Amy has responsibility for hiring the most qualified staff and helping teachers to actually understand what it means to teach in an after-school program:

> There are expectations that first you understand that if you're going to be a [21st CCLCs] teacher that you are teaching an academic class in perhaps a slightly non-traditional way. But that there has to be an understanding and training that the

curriculum is aligned with our, the core curriculum is aligned with our instructional models and that we're not teaching a system that's going to be expressively different than what Anchor Public schools expects during the day.

The goal is to have a strong connection between the school day and the 21st CCLCs program academically, then, it makes sense, according to Amy, to hire daytime teachers to oversee the program, although they do not teach. For the academic portion of the after-school program, essentially, the other staff is hired from within the district. Amy tries to hire those who have teaching experience or at least experience with after-school programs.

Given this system of teaching during the academic hour, it is also important to note that the teachers in the 21st CCLCs program in Anchor Public Schools do have a limited amount of time. They are only allowed 3.75 hours a week. The academic portion of the program is three hours per week and they have 45 minutes for planning. Schools are not required to have an hour of academics each night. Robin Elementary School, for example, has chosen to have academics for an hour and a half two nights a week while Hancock Middle School has an hour Tuesday through Thursday. Except when they come face-to-face during the program, the lead teachers and the academic staff do most of their communicating via e-mail and by other forms of written communication.

Amy does provide an after-school teacher meeting once a month where teachers have the opportunity to share their ideas, their successes, and their challenges. Amy described the monthly meetings as especially important for establishing a professional learning community among her staff:

> We have lead teacher meetings once a month, which gives the teachers an opportunity, the lead teachers an opportunity to meet with each other and share and collaborate. I always have a snack; I always have a tablecloth; I always have flowers on the table, so that there's a reason to come, that I'm respecting them and their work and their time. That they're coming to a meeting outside of the school building but the advantage is that the meeting is outside of the school building. So that their principals aren't there, their supervisors aren't there. They're together. There're administrative details. There're updates. There're some handouts, but I give them at least 30 minutes of sharing collaboration with a question to discuss. So there might be a topic, and this month, I really want to encourage the use of the academic curriculum. So this month the question is, what lessons of the academic curriculum have you used? Have you trained your teachers on it? If you were going to scroll through the lessons today, what kinds of lessons would you be looking for? So we can share around the table, teachers can talk about what they've done, and they they'll meet in groups and share ideas, and then come back together and say, okay, this is what we've come up with.

Similar to the teacher meetings that Webster Public Schools held, this is a time for after-school teachers to come together as a professional learning community to learn from each other and share their experiences. Amy specifically emphasized that she took the time to make sure they felt welcomed by offering snacks and setting a respectful atmosphere with tablecloths and flowers on the tables. Understanding that their work is respected is key to retaining staff and assuring them that the work they do is important.

From the two schools visited for this study, the after-school teachers were also teachers from within the same buildings. Although this is not the case in every program, it is what Amy strives to have in her buildings. She also mentioned that the relationships built among staff members in the district help in recruiting staff members. Many times, teachers are district substitutes, or when a teacher is transferred to another building with a 21st CCLCs program, that person will often end up working for the new school's after-school program. Amy especially likes it when a school principal requests a lead teacher stating:

> If the principal said this person is my lead teacher and then because the lead teacher is essentially the after-school principal, there's a trust relationship between the day principal and the after-school lead teacher so that the principal knows that discipline is carried out, that the standards are met, and that the children are cared for, and that they are looked after in the way they need to be after-school by an academic teacher.

Thus, Amy sees the relationship between the after-school program and the school day principal as essential to a strong and successful program.

Since most of the staff are already daytime teachers, Amy thought the communication among staff came naturally. Amy stated that each lesson is aligned with the school day and that is has to be marked as such. At the same time, however, Amy also said that for the after-school staff who are already teachers, they often do not need to state what benchmark they are covering because they know it intrinsically. Thus, it is unclear whether staff actually submit lesson plans that prove they are aligned with the

school day. Although Amy seems to have a vision of the ideal way for an after-school program to work, there is little evidence that there is follow-through for the curriculum.

Not working individually with the sites, neither Paula nor William could not comment on how teachers communicated with one another. They did emphasize the role of the principal. Being a former principal, Paula still attended the monthly district meetings to give updates and just be a presence. Most of the buildings had a meeting about the program with the principal at the beginning of the year to make sure they had support. The superintendent and assistant superintendent are on board and want to make sure the entire district sees 21st CCLCs as an extension of the school day, not just an additional voluntary program, Paula said.

Because of the difficulty in coordinating a program as large as the 21st CCLCs program in Anchor Public District School, Paula had a very realistic view of the academic piece being a work in progress. She also seemed aware of difficulties in finding evidence of follow-through among program staff:

> I think it's a good link, but I think it's always—it's a continuous process. It's one that always has to be overlooked and enhanced. And the teachers that are the lead teachers that are working on that academic piece are committed to making sure that it's happening in the classrooms. Because you have so many different components, you know, you always have to have a gatekeeper to make sure that what we're saying here in our office is happening out there in the field, so it's a work in progress.

Accountability among the programs is an issue in making sure everyone is doing what they should be doing, particularly when it comes to ensuring that students are receiving

the appropriate academic support they need in an environment that is relaxed and enriching.

As lead teacher, Nancy is totally responsible for the academic portion at Robin Elementary School, while the Parks and Recreation leader is in charge of the vendors and the other recreational components of the program. Because the programs can choose how they want to reach their three hours of academics each week, Robin Elementary uses two nights per week with an hour and a half out of three hours for the academic program. Like most lead teachers, Nancy does not teach in the program but supervises four other teachers. When teachers are new to the program, Nancy tries to let them start out slow by maybe only teaching one night a week to see if they eventually would like to stay two nights a week. Knowing that it is important for the teacher to not get burned out and to keep enjoying their work, Nancy works to ensure no one gets too stressed. The Annual Report for Robin Elementary School cites the strength of the program:

> We have teachers who teach during the school day teach the academic hour of the after-school program. This works well because the teachers know the students and their needs. Teachers also use the ASUPT Curriculum, which is curriculum specifically designed for the after-school program. ASUPT is not your typical school day learning.[9]

Because the staff work with the students during the day and are aware of their needs, and the fact that there is a specific curriculum designed to support the after-school program,

[9] ASUPT is a curriculum designed for after-school programs through Anchor Public School Districts. Because it is still being written, it is unavailable for publication or analysis at this time. Currently, 21st CCLCs staff have access to the curriculum and may choose to use it if they wish. During the observation times, teachers used their own curriculum not specific to ASUPT.

administrators of the program feel that it has a strong academic component to support what students learn during the day.

There was little evidence that this curriculum was actually being implemented at the site level. When Nancy was asked whether she provided the teachers with curriculum suggestions, such as the ASUPT, she responded that she had not had time to look at it too closely. She felt confident that her teachers were capable of coming up with assignments, and if they had any type of a problem, they would come to her. Yet, the Annual Report states that the entire academic curriculum was based on the ASUP curriculum. There is a contradiction about what is happening in the schools, unless the ASUP curriculum was fully implemented during the two or three months between the time of the interview and the time the report was submitted.

As for professional development, the teachers use the same skills and methodology that they use during the school day. According to Nancy, if a teacher receives a specific training, such as a specific math training, they may bring it to the staff at a staff meeting and that, in turn, will be applied to the teaching arsenal at the after-school program. At least one staff member has also undergone Lego's training for the person who is interested in teaching that.

Another way in which the school day is connected with the after-school program is through the literacy program. All teachers in the district are trained in Four Block. Thus, any literacy strategy used in the after-school program also uses the Four Block approach because it is one methodology students are taught during the day and it is the pedagogy in which teachers are trained.

In general, Nancy does not communicate with the staff unless she needs something specific. For example, she asked the kindergarten teachers for a list of their low performing students, so they could receive some special help. Without a specific request, Nancy does not know the strengths and weaknesses of the children in the program or what their special needs may be. Nancy does enjoy getting together with the other lead teachers to learn more about what is working at other sites and to learn from them for continuous program improvement.

Despite the fact that Nancy believes the school and daytime teaching staff do fully support the program, she had to develop a "Room Use Form" that each 21st CCLCs teacher fills out each night and leaves in the room explaining the condition of the room. Apparently, daytime staff members had complained that the rooms were not picked up after 21st CCLCs program. Since this form has developed and used in the program, the problem had been reduced.

During my visit of the program, a Bible Study after-school class, not part of 21st CCLCs met in the library. The 21st CCLCs Spanish class was forced to move to another classroom. Even though the 21st CCLCs program is there nightly, works closely to help students build academic skills, and is paid for through district funds, the extra-curricular non-secular class still seemed to have a higher standing. With the problems of maintaining neat classrooms and losing a room due to a non-school activity, there still seems to be a lack of respect between the school and the program.

As at Robin Elementary School, teachers in the 21st CCLCs at Hancock Middle School program are limited to 15 minutes of planning per hour of teaching, which means there is little time for after-school staff to meet. Because of this limitation,

communication among 21st CCLCs staff is done through memos and casual conversations during the program. For instance, Lisa, the lead teacher, may drop in a classroom just to see what's going on and ask if the teacher needs anything.

Because the teachers teach during the day, Lisa believes that they have a strong understanding of what students need to learn and the best strategies for getting students to learn, "They're used to teaching the curriculum in a way that they're comfortable with, using the methodology that they're used to using". Yet, these are the same strategies that are not effectively getting through to the students during the day; consequently, it is unlikely that these strategies would work in an after-school environment.

Because Lisa trusts her teachers, she is not concerned with the curriculum or the teaching strategies they use in the after-school program. If all students come with a particular assignment from a daytime teacher, then the after-school teacher may work on that with them during the academic hour and change their own lesson plan. Also, Lisa said that she also makes herself available if a student needs some one-on-one tutoring.[10] The lessons themselves, according to Lisa, are designed to supplement what the students are doing during the day. Reading and writing are incorporated as much as possible. Yet, in the language arts class, the sixth grade students were working on the exact same assignment they had been working on during class. In contrast, the Lego's class was different from anything the students did during the school day, yet they were still learning math and physic concepts in a safe environment.

As far as communication and connections with other staff in the building, Lisa felt that the principal completely supported the program while not micromanaging. A few

[10] Hancock Middle School has a grant to offer tutoring services to students performing at the very lowest academic levels. Lisa indicated that she had plans to call a local university to recruit some more tutors to work with students individually.

teachers had come to her with specific concerns about specific students, but Lisa felt that increasing communication among teachers was an area of the program that could be strengthened:

> They know that we have [21st CCLCs]. At least they know that we have an after-school program. From time to time, I've talked to the staff about [the program]. But that's definitely an area that I can improve on, you know, talking to the staff.

From this comment, it seems as if the teachers in the building have a weak understanding of what the program is supposed to accomplish in academics or otherwise. Thus, the communication level between the daytime staff and after-school staff is not strong.

Academic Progress of 21st CCLCs Participants

Robin Elementary School

Grades for Anchor Public Schools were not turned in to the MSU evaluation office. Based on the MEAP scores, though, program participants tend to have a higher percentage of students meeting proficiency than non-participants (see tables 16 and 17).

Table 16
Percentage of Students at MEAP Reading Proficiency Levels

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Participants	0%	33%	43%	24%
Non-Participants	0%	41%	41%	18%

Note. Level 1=Exceeded Expectations; Level 2=Met Expectations; Level 3=Basic Expectations Met; Level 4=Apprentice. Students reaching levels 1 and 2 are considered to be meeting proficiency.

Only 41% of the regular participants reached proficiency in reading and 27% made proficiency in math. Yet, the percentage of non-participants meeting proficiency were 33% and 6% in reading and math, respectively, which is much lower than the participants. Looking at the percentage of students who did not make proficiency is over

50% for both groups indicating that the academic needs of the majority of students at this school will most likely not be solved by an additional 3 hours of help each week. Teaching strategies during the regular classroom time will most likely need to change before academic progress, as determined by standardized tests, will be noticeable.

Table 17
Percentage of Students at MEAP Math Proficiency Levels

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Participants	0%	27%	33%	40%
Non-Participants	0%	6%	47%	47%

Note. Level 1=Exceeded Expectations; Level 2=Met Expectations; Level 3=Basic Expectations Met; Level 4=Apprentice. Students reaching levels 1 and 2 are considered to be meeting proficiency.

Hancock Middle School

Looking at the MEAP scores in math and reading, there was a greater percentage of participants at proficient levels in reading than non-participants, but in math, there was a greater percentage of non-participants at proficiency levels (see tables 18 and 19).

Table 18
Percentage of Students at MEAP Reading Proficiency Levels

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Participants	3%	33%	36%	27%
Non-Participants	0%	11%	29%	60%

Note. Level 1=Exceeded Expectations; Level 2=Met Expectations; Level 3=Basic Expectations Met; Level 4=Apprentice. Students reaching levels 1 and 2 are considered having met proficiency. N=26 for participants and N=40 for non-participants.

Table 19
Percentage of Students at MEAP Math Proficiency Levels

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Participants	0%	15%	35%	50%
Non-Participants	0%	20%	13%	68%

Note. Level 1=Exceeded Expectations; Level 2=Met Expectations; Level 3=Basic Expectations Met; Level 4=Apprentice. Students reaching levels 1 and 2 are considered having met proficiency. N=26 for participants and N=40 for non-participants.

Proficiency levels at the middle school were similar to those of the elementary school where the high percentage of students not meeting proficiency in both groups causes concern for the school. When 89% of the non-participants are not meeting proficiency in reading and 63% of the participants are, the students are not getting the material during the school day. Yet, the after-school teachers are the same teachers they have during the school day, and according to the lead teacher, they are using the same methods they use during the day.

Data Used for Continuous Program Improvement

As mentioned previously, Anchor Public Schools does not use the EZreport data system like all other grantees in the state. Instead, their data are collected internally by their Assessment and Evaluation Office. Both Amy and William do site visits. Amy's feedback is generally oral with a focus on encouragement and the providing of ideas. William also provides oral feedback and a written report goes into the school's folder. During his visit, William looks for very specific items:

> When I go to a site visit, mainly what I'm looking for is quality and structure of the program. I'm looking for if there's staff as well as student engagement in the activities that's going on. Making sure there're teachers there that they're working with students on an academic piece. Just mainly structure within the program. And then I'll also just ask them if they have any problems because, we, Anchor Public Schools, provides services like snacks and custodial services, transportation, so just to see how things are going in that area. If they need any support with that part.

Because of the organizational structure of the program, the program directors have a much more encompassing role than simply making sure instruction is happening. They have to ensure that both service providers and teachers are doing their jobs.

Although the Assessment and Evaluation Office conduct the evaluation, Paula is hoping for better assessment instruments to help them gauge what is working effectively in the programs and what specific aspects need to be improved for better results. Although they had used the Gates McGinnty literacy test as a measure last year, the school district is no longer using that assessment test, and the program has not yet looked at MEAP scores.

The one assessment piece they have concentrated on is attendance in the program. William developed a comprehensive attendance policy that went home at the beginning of the year, so all parents were aware of the policy. In fact, the policy puts pressure on parents ensuring that the students who are registered attend on a regular basis:

> All students attending the [21st CCLCs] program must attend regularly to receive full benefits of the after-school program. We encourage and expect registered students to attend daily. Space is limited and students are expected to attend each day they are in school. Parent/guardian should mark the days in which their child will be attending the [21st CCLCs] program on the registration form.
>
> Once capacity is met at the [21st CCLCs] site students may be put on a waiting list. Failure to attend regularly (at least 3 days or more per week) may result in being removed from the program. Students who have been removed from the program may be placed on the waiting list upon further evaluation of the student's and parent's/guardian's commitment to the program.

All three program directors perceived attending the 21st CCLCs as a privilege, and any student who did not respect that privilege would no longer be welcome; consequently, that student's space would be given to another student.

No data had been collected at the time of the interview for Nancy to comment on the academic success of students in the program at the elementary school. At the time, Nancy was just in the process of highlighting the students in each class who attended the program. From her own experience as a classroom teacher, Nancy believed that the students who participated in the after-school program were more interested in things that were happening during the day and that they were happier during the day because they had something to look forward to at night.

According to Lisa, the middle school program does not have specific data attributing academic achievement solely to the program. In fact, she says, it would be very difficult to measure. Instead, Lisa looks at who is in the program and the relationships that are formed as indicators of whether or not the program is a success.

When Lisa looks at the students who are attending the program, she often sees those who struggle most in class, "the thing that runs through my mind is I'm surprised you're here. Because you know, these might be the students who are struggling during the day. And here they are, staying after, and to me that means that we're providing something for them where they'll stay."

Lisa really focuses on the relationship piece of the program. She believes that by developing relationships with the students, usually in a mentoring relationship, the after-school program can have huge impacts on students. For instance, one student was struggling in a Language Arts class. By taking the time to get to know him, Lisa

discovered that he simply did not understand fiction, so she started working with him on some non-fiction books, and he thrived.

The power of relationships is even more telling when Lisa talks about a former student she had:

> I actually still have a student who comes in, she's come in, I think, once or twice, from the high school level. She was part of the after school program last year, and then she brings her report card to me . . . I'm expecting her to coming through the door. Well, probably in the next two or three weeks because the deal is she has to get Cs or higher, and then I'll take her out for dinner . . .

Even though this student is no longer at the middle school, the relationship she built with the teachers there was so important to her that she still comes back to share her progress. And, Lisa has shown such an interest in her, that they have continued their relationship on a social level.

Summary of Anchor Public Schools

Although this study focuses on the academic components of the after-school program, it is important to keep in mind the different organizational structures each program has. This is especially true with Anchor School District that relies so heavily on community-based organizations to oversee the non-academic portions of the programs. Amy, William, and Paula all felt that in general, the relationships with the external organization were quite positive. Amy credited them with essentially being responsible for attendance, busing, and overall behavior management, even saying they would not have a program without the service providers. William also gave credit to the service

providers for helping them establish a strong program. Each provider, he said, has different things to offer youth development. In fact, in programs overseen by the YMCA, the students get a free membership. The downside, he stated, was the bureaucracy and all the paperwork that each different organization, including the public school district, required.

For Amy, the importance of the program is that students are learning in a more relaxed environment in the after-school programs. Based on her description of what she likes to see in a classroom, her main concern is that students are simply in a different physical formation than how they would be found during the day. She still wants to see the students all engaged in the activities:

> When I go into an after-school program, I like to see the kids engaged in a particular room engaged in an activity . . . so the teacher knows what everyone in the classroom is doing. But I'm also looking for a slightly louder noise level than during the day. I'm looking for less formal seating arrangements than during the day. I like to see kids looking for less formal seating arrangements than during the day. I like to see kids standing over by the window using the window as a writing surface. I like seeing kids over in a corner sitting on the floor. I like to see them sitting in circles and moving their chairs. But I want to know that they're engaged in the same activity, so I'm looking for a classroom culture that's academically focused and engaged, but less formal.

Even though Amy wants a more relaxed atmosphere, she is not looking for more creative activities or for allowing students to work at their own pace or to choose their own assignments. Even though an after-school program provides the ideal opportunity to work

on more creative projects, during the majority of the academic time, they want to see students working on the similar activities they work on during the day. In contrast, they also promote authentic learning experiences through the manipulation of Lego's. Thus, in some academic rotations, it is a much more formal atmosphere whereas in others, it fits more with academic enrichment and authentic learning experiences.

At Robin Elementary School, there are essentially four different activities in which students can participate, that include a math problem solving group, a reading strategies group, a Spanish literacy group, and remedial Spanish for activities, such as phonics and decoding. The classes focusing on Spanish specifically target the bilingual population. Unless students are in the Spanish group, they spend time in both the math and reading groups. On some days, a regular activity will be planned, but as Nancy pointed out, most activities are simply day-long projects because the students may not come two days in a row, so teachers may have some of the same students on some days, but they will often have a few new students as well. During math, for example, the math teacher may use something out of her problem solving/logic book. On other days, they may simply play a game such as Outburst. If there had been a problem during the day, sometimes the session turns into a discussion of what happened or ways of dealing with problems or issues. Nancy finds these days to be as successful as when a lesson is planned:

> But on the whole, just having the kids come and be excited to be there, just be there, doing what they're supposed to be doing, to me is success whether we're doing something that's really, really academic, or whether we're playing

something academic or, you know, if it just goes into a conversation about something.

The one thing that Nancy did emphasize was the programming changes that had taken place this year. In November, the program received an additional grant to have a Spanish Literacy Club. Using the money to support two staff members one day per week and for supplies, the program will use chapter books that students will study during the program and be able to take home to continue reading. Also, Nancy stated that at the beginning of last year, the school was doing MEAP preparation with the 21st CCLCs participants, and they began to see their attendance numbers drop. When this began to happen, they took the kids into a computer lab to play academic games on the computer, and the attendance numbers began to increase. This did provide a lesson for the after-school staff that if the program is going to emphasize the same learning styles used during the day and is not engaging and fun, then the students will not attend.

MEAP scores are dismally low between both regular participants and non-regular participants. If students are not learning the Michigan standards during the day and then go to the same staff in the after-school program, it is unlikely to show results. A difference is that students may receive more one-on-one attention in the after-school program which may help them improve their skills. Given the low grade point where these students began, Robin Elementary School will be hard pressed to show significant gains in after-school programs. For Nancy, however, that is not the most important part of the program:

> And [the students] really like being around us, which I think is important . . . some kids just don't have adults that really give them the time of day or that they

can look up to, that really care about them. A lot do, but we're just extra outside their family life. They know we love them.

By having teachers stay after-school to provide them with support and extra attention the students stay in a safe and semi-structured environment for a few more hours each day after school instead of going to an empty home or to a dangerous neighborhood. Robin Elementary School also faces the challenges of having a multi-lingual community where they reach out to the students and their families whose first language may not be English.

Hancock Middle School structures its program differently from any of the programs that have been discussed previously. First, the students are grouped by grade level, but they rotate to a different teacher each six weeks. In turn, they have a different focus every six weeks. For example, the sixth graders will get the Lego's activity for a six week period and then the seventh graders will get it followed by the eighth graders. This way, the students are not with the same teacher all the time or with their daytime teacher every day in the after-school program. With this system, however, the students do not have the consistency they would have with the same teacher or teachers or even subject matter.

Hancock Middle School also has mandatory requirements for two groups of students: athletes and eighth graders. The athletes have to participate in the after-school to ensure that they keep their grades up and stay eligible to play their sport. Eighth grade students are separated by gender. Separating the boys and the girls began last year when problems arose between the genders. Although students returned to mixed groups at the beginning of this year, the after-school staff found that separating the boys from the girls worked better.

Essentially, the students have one hour of instruction where the teachers are free to teach whatever they like. The first part of the hour is dedicated to homework help, then the teacher begins the lesson. Lisa described several different enrichment activities that the academic hour provided the students, particularly in the manner in which a 21st CCLCs enrichment activity is connected to an academic skill. A lesson planned to interest students (i.e., food) follows:

> One of the things we worked on was we did a taste test, and they taste tested three products. It was donuts, brownies, and muffins, and they had to come up with the product that they thought was the best, and then they had to come up with like a campaign. And this was actually just one lesson.

This activity allowed students to develop marketing strategies and apply a variety of skills in an enrichment activity.

The staff at Anchor Public Schools 21st CCLCs program see strength in an academic program separate from the enrichment program. Independent community-based agencies are hired to oversee the enrichment portion while the schools themselves handle the after-school part. A lead teacher who does not teach in the program helps the academic program when one individual handles the administrative aspects and provides support to those who actually teach.

Because the lead teachers work in the school building, they stated that they communicate effectively enough with the school day staff so they know what is going on in the classrooms and daytime teachers know what is happening in the after-school program. Yet, neither lead teacher states they do communicate directly with the staff about the needs and goals of the program. Despite the fact that the 21st CCLC program

has a professional learning community for staff and is developing an after-school curriculum, neither lead teacher provide curriculum to their teachers instead allowing them to choose assignments given to after-school students.

Both lead teachers believe that their staff was capable of developing their own lesson plans to help supplement the daytime curriculum. The percentage of students who achieved proficiency, both participants and non-participants, is low. If these teachers are not able to get their students to a proficient achievement level during the day, how will the same teaching strategies in the evening promote academic success for the students?

On the other hand, Lisa argues that developing the relationships with students provides them with support and motivation that the students will have for the rest of their lives. Students who have a safe place to go after-school and are provided with support, particularly those children who may be the weakest in the school and also struggle from other challenges such as speaking a language other than English or qualifying for special education services, benefit from those additional three hours of after-school activities.

CHAPTER 5: EXTERNAL GRANT PROVIDERS: THE *COMMUNITY* ASPECT OF COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

The previous chapters provided case studies from three 21st CCLCs programs where academic programs are administered by site coordinators and staff hired through the host school or district. This chapter examines 21st CCLCs programs in Michigan funded by external providers, including a Boys and Girls Club and a state university. Initially, two Boys and Girls Club programs were included, one located in Southwestern Michigan and the other in Northern Michigan. Each served middle school students through the 21st CCLCs grant. When the interviews were conducted, however, it was discovered the Northern Michigan program had fired the Boys and Girls Club and school personnel run the program. This chapter briefly examines why the Boys and Girls Club was not found to be a complementary match with this middle school, it serves as an example of how a community-based organization may serve as a weak connection to the host school. Refer to table 20 for the names of the grantees and sites included in this chapter:

Table 20
Organization Affiliated Grantees and Sites

Grantee Name	Elementary School	Middle School	Program Affiliation	Geographic Area
Boys & Girls Club in Anderson School District		Victory Middle School	Boys & Girls Club	Urban Southwestern Michigan
Avonlea ISD		Lake Middle School	Former Boys & Girls Club	Rural Northern Michigan
Center Village University	Apple Elementary	Neptune Middle School	State University	Urban Southeastern Michigan

Following the previous chapters, four primary components of the 21st CCLCs program are analyzed:

1) goals of the 21st CCLCs program
2) communication between the after-school program and the school day
3) academic progress of 21st CCLCs participants as measured using MEAP and classroom grades
4) types of data program staff use for evaluation purposes

Although both the Boys and Girls Club and university programs are considered external program providers, they have very different ways of organizing themselves. The Boys and Girls Club site is a complete and separate entity from the host schools, while the university affiliated sites share a resemblance with school affiliated sites.

A Snapshot of the Boys & Girls Club in Anderson School District

The Boys and Girls Club has an executive director and an education coordinator, who is the 21st CCLCs coordinator. Six full-time staff members work directly with the students in the recreation and the arts components of the program. Several community-based organizations send volunteers to the Boys and Girls Club. Volunteer tutors from a nearby university and Foster Grandparents aid students with homework.

Located in a high poverty urban area, the school district where the Boys and Girls Club is located has faced many problems in recent years, including the potential takeover by the state. Students who attend the Boys and Girls Club are primarily African American. Maggie, the program director, stated that there were one or two multi-racial

families as well as an Indian family and a Spanish family. The Club itself is located across the street from a public housing project.

Gangs and violence are a major problem in the area. Laura, the site coordinator, discussed the violence that the students face. A club member had been shot for his jacket while standing on a nearby street corner. He speaks to other members of the club on his experience and serves as a role model to help other children stay free of danger.

A Boys and Girls Club member pays a $5 membership fee. When they enter the Club, they must show their ID card, which is electronically scanned into a computer. Students are free to attend any session they like during the evening; attendance is taken again at each session. When students leave the building, they may not return that evening, but they are free to come at any point during the evening.

The structure of the Boys and Girls Club is different from that of a traditional school. The Club is housed in a former school building, where students sit on couches or lounge chairs. In addition to the academic portion, the Boys and Girls Club has a strong community service aspect. Maggie listed several outside activities, such as the Torch Club where students have opportunities to clean up the environment surrounding the Club or help decorate Main Street for Christmas. Students help out at an area soup kitchen and at a nursing home. Girls attend Smart Girls and boys attend Passport to Manhood; both programs teach students responsibility and talk about issues such as alcohol, drugs, pregnancy, and others. The program director and the site coordinator are proud of the drama club, which tours around the local community and has won several awards.

The purpose of implementing a 21st CCLCs program at the Boys and Girls Club is to expand the program already in place. The plan targets 200 Victory Middle School

students and aligns the Boys and Girls Club activities with the middle school curriculum. Asin several Boys and Girls Clubs, the program builds upon five core areas and three expansion programs:

- Character and Leadership Development
- Academic and Career Development
- Health and Life Skills
- The Arts
- Sports, Fitness & Recreation
- ClubTech
- Project Learn
- SMART MOVES

Academic and career development are programs most related to academic achievement. They are defined as "enabl[ing] youth to become proficient in basic educational disciplines, apply learning to everyday situations and embrace technology to achieve success in a career" and Project Learn described as "Through Project Learn utilize all areas and programs in the club to create opportunities for "high yield learning activities," including leisure reading, math, science, writing activities, homework assistance, tutoring, and learning games that develop young people's cognitive skills." Most of the programming initiatives of the Boys and Girls Club are through a youth development lens rather than an academic focus.

The following case study analysis of the Boys and Girls Club program serving Victory Middle School students is based on interviews with the unit director and the site coordinator as well as a program observation. Due to a lack of response by Victory

Middle School, teachers were unable to be interviewed but staff remarks indicate a weak connection between the school and the after-school program. Teachers are unlikely to be knowledgeable about the program.

School Demographics

According to the statement of need in the original grant proposal, the students, particularly the middle school students, have fallen behind the state averages on the MEAP test:

> . . .a city experiencing long-term economic and social decline as indicated by a long-term poverty rate, high unemployment, a large number of families receiving welfare, and a dwindling tax base. Anderson Area Public Schools Administrators report that students in grades 4 and 5 lag behind state averages by approximately 20%. The lag for middle school students is 30-40% in grades 7 and 8 based on compiled scores. The percentage of 7^{th} and 8^{th} grade students scoring satisfactory or higher on the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) reading and math tests were **9.5%-M and 15.8%-R (2001-2002)** as compared to State of MI averages of 53.8%-M and 50.9%-R. The rate of change among MEAP tests that have existed in the same grades and subjects over five years has increased by an average of 2.2 percentage points per year. This is comparable to the average annual state increase, but counter to the peer trend, which shows relatively little change over the same time period (Standards & Poors, 2001).

On the grant application, the Boys and Girls Club targeted Victory Middle School for aid, which raised some questions concerning funding. Will Victory Middle school students be

the sole beneficiaries of the 21st CCLCs funds, or can the money benefit all students attending the Boys and Girls Club from the various schools in this district? The Michigan Department of Education deemed students solely from Victory are the recipients of the funds, the money goes to the education portion of the program, and no discretion is used as to which students receive the money.

Unlike other middle schools in the study, Victory Middle School had the greatest number of seventh graders is the attending the program at some point during the year, according to the Annual Report Form, with 32% of the seventh grade class attending the Boys and Girls Club after school. More than one-fourth (26%) of the eighth graders attend the program. A mere 12 of the sixth graders participated throughout the year (see Table 21).

Table 21
Number of Participants per Grade Level at Victory Middle School 2004-2005

Grade	Number of 21st CCLCs Students	Total Number of Students per Grade	Percentage of class enrolled in 21st CCLCs
6	12	150	8%
7	47	147	32%
8	40	154	26%

Although these numbers indicate that 99 students were coming from Victory Middle School, when looking at the number of students who attended 30 or more days and are considered regular attendees, only 19 students in grades 6-8 through Victory Middle School qualified.

Goals of the Program

Instead of listing individual specific goals for the program, as shown in the majority of the proposals, the Boys and Girls Club described their purpose "to connect

the instruction and learning, and outcomes that take place in the Anderson Public Schools to the instruction, learning, and outcomes that take place in the Boys and Girls Club school program." The initial proposal suggests a strong intent of the program to align its curriculum to the curriculum that engages students during the day. The major intended outcome is a 15% increase in MEAP scores across all content areas for Victory Middle School students. According to the proposal, this will be accomplished through Michigan Department of Education's content standards and benchmarks.

On the Annual Report Form, several more specific objectives were checked as the focus of the 2004-05 school year:

- Define and recognize technology. Use technology to encourage creative expression of ideas through Microsoft Word, Paint, Internet Explorer, Encarta Bookshelf and PowerPoint. Apply technology skills to practical family, school, and social uses.
- Develop decision-making and problem-solving skills. Evaluate advertising. Use assertiveness techniques to stand up for themselves. Identify uses of a drug, meaning of dependence and consequences of use. Fact and fiction of alcohol and drugs.
- Guide the evaluator to design a formative evaluation for the purposes of providing on-going feedback to the partners so that adjustments/improvements can be made in the project as it develops.
- Improve English, math, science, reading comprehension skills. Develop writing and communication skills. Use scientific method to problem solve.

Explore science. Show job related areas in math and science. Increase time on homework and desire to learn.

- Involvement of girls and boys in sports and fitness programs that focus on teambuilding, sportsmanship, conflict management, violence prevention, effective communication, problem solving, friendship building and acceptance of differences.
- Realize own value. Learn bodies need food, rest, exercise, hygiene for good health. Identify goals. Practice teamwork. Understand friendship and lasting relationships with peers. Importance of family, and not conform to stereotypes or social norms.
- Torch Club members will elect officers and develop a calendar of service learning projects, report outcomes of projects in club newsletters, school articles and Community Newspaper, Annual Reports, etc.

Only one objective is focused on the academic piece of the after-school program, while the other goals and objectives aim to improve life skills and character development. Due to the five core areas of the Boys and Girls Club, the program has, by design, a more youth development focus rather than support system for academics.

Maggie, director of this Boys and Girls Club, has had the position for a few months, although she served as the volunteer coordinator at the club for two years. Before working with the Boys and Girls Club, Maggie earned a Bachelor's degree in business management and spent 25 years in the corporate business world, but she finds working with children much more rewarding, "I just felt kind of a calling. I worked in the business world for 25 years with two major corporations and really felt like it wasn't rewarding for

me. So, I started seeking out opportunities where I could mentor children, and I started doing that and felt like I really needed, really enjoyed doing it and felt like I was making an impact on children. And so I started seeking out possibilities of being able to work on that as a career." Maggie, however, states that she comfortably interacts with children understands their emotional needs, she does not always understand what they need educationally.

The aim, as Maggie indicates is to try to hire people with a bachelor's degree or the equivalent. Sometimes, may hire a person with no degree but good references and educational experiences such as a paraprofessional. As Maggie states, sometimes getting someone with a Bachelor's degree is not always realistic. Maggie lists seven different fulltime positions within the program: health and life skills, the arts, the computer lab, sports and fitness, the learning center, and a volunteer coordinator who oversees the Americorps volunteers. Because they are a part of the national Boys and Girls Club network, any trainings they receive normally comes from the national office and with the focus on youth development. The staff receive little training for teaching academics.

A major goal of the program, is ensuring that students feel safe when they are at the Club; a second goal is building a trusting relationship with the adults:

> So the main goals are to give them a sense of belonging, encourage them to influence others positively, give them a sense of, oh, competence. You know, those types of things. We want them to feel good about themselves and then to pass it on to others, either their community or other, other children. And in their life, you know, give back.

Maggie cites these goals as part of the Boys and Girls Club movement; students the opportunity to learn—whether through socio-emotional development or academic skills—while having fun.They may not realize they are learning and may be more willing to learn.

Through the Learning Center, the Boys and Girls Club works on the initiatives of the 21st CCLCs grant. Maggie explained it as "To try and make sure that they're getting an education, raise their MEAP scores, things like that." The Learning Center, however, does not just target the Victory Middle School students. Because everything is a choice within the program, any child can participate in the Learning Center. While this is a desired outcome and the Learning Center should not be exclusive to only certain students, not all of these students are funded through the 21st CCLCs funds. Yet, Maggie makes an argument why all students should be included:

> The good thing about this is it's not only the middle school kids are the ones that benefit. It's even the younger kids who will eventually be in middle school and have already set down those routines. So they're already getting into the act and, hopefully, by the time they get to middle school, we're going to see some scores go really high. And so that's what our hope is.

The policy question raised here is whether the Michigan Department of Education should limit the number of students the 21st CCLCs money will support if the number of students overall can benefit from a particular program, particularly in the case of a community-based organization.

Laura, the site coordinator for the 21st CCLCs program runs the Learning Center at the Boys and Girls Club. Assuming the position in January 2005, Laura had previous

educational experience by working as a paraprofessional in an area charter school and by having a daycare in her own home. Currently, Laura is also working on completing her degree in elementary education. Laura says it is the character development aspect of the program that intrigues her rather than any educational component:

> I agreed with all the things that they represented. You know, inspiring and enabling the children to become better citizens basically. Just even the character. They have core characteristics that they like to teach the kids, and I feel those are important because like even working in the elementary school, you see a decline in respect for teachers . . . .so I liked the fact that they had core values, character values that they wanted to establish with members.

Laura's interest, then, is to instill good character and moral values into the students, things that she sees lacking at the school level. If students do not receive these lessons from parents or the schools, then Boys and Girls Clubs provide another opportunity for them to learn these skills.

Because of the various components of the Boys and Girls Club, which include youth development, health and physical education, life skills, and academics, various goals exist for the program. As the person primarily responsible for the academic component, Laura's primary goal for the program is to see improved academic achievement:

> My primary goal is to see kids' grades improve, to be able to spot children that are not working at their, the level they should be, or what their grade level is. And then partner with teachers, if at all possible, or even to help them here . . . Basically, I try to do supplemental activities that will go along with what the kids

are doing at school, but try to make them fun. Do them in a way that they're not realizing it's really learning.

Laura's intention is to work with teachers to provide the best support possible for students. Students are encouraged to bring their homework to the after-school program, which is the primary connection Laura has to the school. Since teachers are unwilling to work directly with her, she learns what students are doing by looking at the types of assignments they have for homework. This year, the homework room remains open until 7:00 p.m. instead of ending at 5:00 or 6:00 p.m. Laura decided to do this because she finds that many of the students, particularly middle school students, often do not arrive at the club until much later in the evening, whenever their other extracurricular activities have ended. Laura has seen an increase in the number of students participating in homework help, especially middle school students.

In the Learning Center, students are asked to bring their weekly spelling words and they play a game to help the students learn the words. Unfortunately, due to the lack of communication between the program and the school and the difficulty in getting classroom grades, Laura's goal of working with teachers to serve each child's needs is hard to achieve.

Communication Among After-School and Daytime Staff

The Boys and Girls Club is both physically and financially disconnected from Victory Middle School. The lack of communication between the Club and the school reflects the school staff's inability to see how a strong relationship could benefit students.

Yet, this school has fewer than 25% of its students achieving proficiency on the MEAP test, so any help they receive seems beneficial to the students.

In retrospect, the ease or difficulty with which to gain access to a grantee or a site was indicative of how organized the program and how strong the link between the program and the school. Access to the Boys and Girls Club that served students attending Victory Middle School in the Anderson School District was easily accomplished. Both the director and the education coordinator were willing and helpful. The site visit was postponed one time because an emergency staff meeting had been called to deal with discipline problems the club was experiencing.

In the past, the grantee personnel and the local evaluator often had difficulties acquiring student information from Victory Middle School. Laura, the education coordinator (the equivalent of a site coordinator position), said that she often left three voice mails before the school counselor would respond to her messages and that he had never given her his e-mail. On the day of the site visit, I met with the middle school counselor. I explained that I wanted to interview two teachers regarding their relationship with the 21st CCLCs program at the Boys and Girls Club. The counselor said that Victory Middle School was working with three other after-school initiatives so teachers were unfamiliar with 21st CCLCs. However, he would ask for volunteers at the next staff meeting. The following day, voice mail from the counselor indicated the staff meeting had been postponed, and that was the last I heard from the counselor. Based on this experience and the interviews with the Boys and Girls staff, no coherence exists between the school and the 21st CCLCs program at Victory Middle School, and no teacher interviews are included in this section.

Not surprisingly, Maggie's response to questions was not positive regarding how the Boys and Girls Club is able to communicate with Victory Middle School. When meetings are arranged Maggie remarks, with the middle school counselor, his follow-through has been poor:

> The communication pretty much goes one way. If we don't go over there and actually get in their face, nothing really comes about, and we have to really kind of work on making the decision or following up ourselves. I mean, getting report cards and things like that are just like pulling teeth. It's just awful and so we really have a hard time with that.

Maggie credits Laura, the site coordinator, with making the most effort toward communicating with the school. Persistent, Maggie said it often takes three or four phone calls to get a response from the school. Maggie is unsure of Laura's success of reaching individual teachers regarding specific homework assignments of some students.

Since teacher observations are not available, no comparisons are made directly showing how students learn during the day as compared to learning in the Boys and Girls Club. In Laura's words, the program differs in several ways:

> A lot of different games that focus on things that they need for school that a lot of times when they're learning it in the classroom, a lot of times it doesn't stick with them. I've found learning with movement or with hands-on activities tied together seem to work better with them and they seem to retain what they've learned better.

The Boys and Girls staff provide students with experiences they may not receive at school or at home. For instance, the program staff planned a passport activity where

students "visited" a new country each day and learned about it through the use of videos and other learning activities. Then, international guests from the university would visit the Club and talk about their respective countries to share different cultures with the students.

Another aspect of the program that makes it different from the school day is the importance of choice. Students are not forced to go to homework study hour or to the Learning Center. Instead, they are free to go wherever they want. At one point, students were being required to go to the homework room, but based on student survey responses and enrollment numbers, the Club returned to a choice-based program. Since students are not required to attend the after-school program, they are not forced to do things that they do not want to do.

At the time of the interview, Laura's primary communication with the teachers came from observing the type of homework students took to the club and planning supplemental assignments based on that. Laura says the constant after-school staff turnover is a big factor preventing teachers and night staff from better communication. Prior to Laura taking the job, almost every four months, there was a new coordinator, and it made connecting with the school staff difficult. At the same time, though, Laura realizes that time is a challenge. Because Laura is with the students for five hours each day, she is limited to two hours to do planning, set up activities, make phone calls, and connect with teachers at the middle school. Laura says better communication with the students' teachers will help make the program stronger:

> Basically to kind of touch base with how the members that are going here, how they're doing in their class, what they need to improve on, what kind of activities

that I could possibly do to, to help them work at a higher level, or at the level they should be. Try to help them catch up. I guess that's my highest goal.

Talking with teachers about individual students strengthens the Boys and Girls Club program and gives students help in the specific areas where they need some extra assistance.

The school counselor tells Laura that the first point of contact is through the middle school counselor. Unfortunately, it takes three or four voice mail messages before the counselor returns Laura's calls, and he has never provided her with an e-mail or other way of to reach him. When the counselor did not return her calls, Laura talked to the principal, who is helpful. She finds the counselor more agreeable for awhile, then the situation reverts back to the original. She is hesitant to go to the principal for fear of causing more problems with the counselor and finding her communication with the school more tenuous.

Academic Progress of 21st CCLCs Participants

The after-school program sponsors a variety of activities for the students, including sports and fitness, healthy lifestyles, arts, and the academic piece. Students are not required to attend any particular session, but they are encouraged to attend different sessions throughout the night. Maggie described several different programs in different content areas that the Learning Center offers students. Dragon Fly is used for some of the science program, Math Elites helps teach different math concepts to students. To increase student literacy, students participate in Readers Rap:

> We have something else called Readers Rap where they, for a certain period of time every month, they get points for reading, you know, certain periods of, certain books for certain periods of time, so many pages, that type of thing. This is all encompassed in a program called Power Hour. And they get points for doing their homework, spending as much time on certain subjects, that type of thing, and at the end of the month, once those points are accumulated, they get to spend them at what we call Power Hour store, where we have certain things they can buy for a certain amount of points. So number one, it's giving them a responsibility to really work hard and collect those points and it's fun because then they get a prize at the end.

Although students could still get points for the books they are reading, the Power Hour store had been closed because of the problems students were having with discipline. As punishment, they were no longer able to use the store. Staff at the Boys and Girls Club considered the store a privilege and one that could be taken away if students were unable to behave appropriately.

The Learning Center worked to attract older students. Often, the younger students were more apt to come in during one of the sessions. Even though the original grant stated that the Club would serve 200 students from Victory Middle School, the Club had over 30 students from the middle school by fall 2005, which, according to Maggie, was almost double what they had the year before.

Behaviorally, there have been some incidents with visiting students. Boys and Girls Club members pay a $5 membership fee, and visitors are allowed to come three times. After they have been there three times, they need to pay a membership fee or they

cannot come again. When the student becomes a member of the club and begins to pay attention to the rules, the behavioral problem tends to decline. Yet, in January, behavioral problems were a concern; the club was cancelled one day to have an emergency staff meeting to discuss the behavior problems. As mentioned previously, one consequence of that meeting was no treasure could be taken from the treasure chest even if the students continued to earn points.

When they were challenged, Maggie did see improvements in students. Maggie talked about the Queen and King contest from the previous year:

> We have several students that are not very good writers or readers. But we had a queen, king and queen content this summer and it had to do with poise, their character, things they'd done in the club, how they participated, their behavior, things like that, but also had to be able to write a paragraph on what the club meant to them and, number 2, they had to be able to stand up in front of their peers and explain what that was. So number one, they had to have good writing skills and number two, they had to be able to articulate it to their peers. So that was a huge undertaking for some of these kids that are a little bit insecure and maybe don't have very high self-esteem. They built some major confidence...had we not challenged them, they probably would've never experienced that they really could do that.

With the strong youth development aspect of the program, Maggie also talked about how they try to teach the students how to set goals for themselves. One way they try to accomplish this is through career fairs. For example, they had a career fair where they learned to write resumes and how to dress for an interview. Through the computer lab,

students can research careers and find out exactly what it would take to become a doctor versus a nurse. Essentially, by helping the students develop life skills, the Boys and Girls Club hopes to provide its members with the resources and required skills to live productive lives.

No MEAP data nor classroom grades were submitted to the 21st CCLCs statewide evaluation project, although the Boys and Girls Club's local evaluator did submit some assessment test results to the Club. When asked what do the data tell you about your program's successes related to student academic achievement, the response was: "Grades and teacher surveys show some improvement on behalf of students. Students demonstrated more gains in Reading (41%) than Math (21%). Students demonstrated more decline in Math (51%) than Reading (30%)." Although some progress was being made in the primary content areas, a large percentage of students also showed declines.

Laura said that there was an improvement in both classroom grades and MEAP scores for the 21st CCLCs participants. She also can give examples of helping students with very specific problems. For instance, she had a couple of middle school students reading at a first grade level. By pairing each one with a volunteer mentor, both students' increased their grade level reading ability.

Laura's bigger goal, though, is to help the students set realistic goals to achieve, which includes raising their grades. For all students—whether they are in middle school or elementary school—she wants them to see past what is happening now and start planning for their future:

> My main thing, too, is having the kids set goals because they're so set on immediate gratification. And, they, they don't look past tomorrow.... I want to

> see them have goal setting strategies. I want them to look into their future and see that with their education, they can have a promising future. They can go to college and just educate them on the means to get there and help them to realize that getting good grades will help them get there....I talk as if though there's no other way. They're going to college.

By believing in the students and showing them how to set goals and make plans for the future, Laura hopes that the students will begin to feel that education is the means to get there, which for her, is a more important outcome than any standardized test measure.

Data Used for Continuous Program Improvement

The Boys and Girls Club have surveys that students and staff complete, and Maggie also thought parents filled out a survey once a year. These surveys, however, are more for program improvement rather than looking at academic outcomes. At their monthly staff meetings, Maggie said the staff discuss what they could be doing better and what the kids want.

As mentioned previously, no assessment or classroom data were returned to the state evaluation project and there was no evidence that specific data was being used to measure the academic progress of students at the Boys and Girls Club. Although part of this is due to the difficulties in having the school cooperate in getting those types of results to the club, it also appeared that the staff were more inclined to use the national Boys and Girls Club type surveys to indicate whether or not students were happy with the overall program activities rather than assessing their academic outcomes.

Summary of the Boys & Girls Club

Although the program was not closely connected to the school day, it is important to make note of the types of academic and tutoring supports that the Clubs offer on a national basis. Based on the Boys and Girls Club program called Power Hour, the students are allowed to choose what type of academic activity they would like to do. Laura has also purchased many different types of grade level activities that the students can choose from, or if she knows they need help in a certain area, she may have them work on that specific problem. In general, she likes to focus on a specific academic area each day of the week so Monday has a math focus, Tuesday is writing and reading, etc. Students are also encouraged to bring in their spelling words and they receive points for doing so. Since the students usually come from the same classes, they can quiz each other.

The importance of reading is also emphasized in the Learning Center. Students record the books that they have read and when they complete five, they get to pick a book out to take home with them. According to Laura, achieving that goal is extremely important to the students because many have few books at home and they view the books as "treasures." During Reading Rap, students read stories out loud to one another. These stories may even be something that they have written themselves either at the Club or at school. Reading is particularly emphasized during the summer months. One volunteer group comes in to help students that have been identified as not reading at grade level and the volunteers work with this specific group of students over the summer.

The Boys and Girls Club programs have been running successful programs for decades, particularly youth development programs. The question for this study is can a

Boys and Girls Club provide an academic support piece that qualifies it for 21st CCLCs funding? Several challenges have arisen from giving 21st CCLCs funds to the Boys and Girls Club. First, if they are only to serve a targeted group of students, how do they tell the students not attending the host school that they cannot participate in a certain component of the program. In this case, that component would primarily be the Learning Center. The Boys and Girls Club have essentially solved that problem by allowing everyone to participate, which technically goes against the grant proposal.

Secondly, by having a community-based organization with such a strong history, how do the policies of the new program, 21st CCLCs, overlap with the policies of the old program? At this particular Boys and Girls Club, the director herself says that she may not always know what the students need academically. Youth development is still an essential part of the Boys and Girls Club and it seems to still be emphasized over the academic component. Because it is a community-based organization, the program needs to keep its clientele happy or they will not come back. When they experimented with requiring everyone to participate in academic activities, they found that caused too many problems so now students are not even required to participate in the academic component part. Thus, an argument can be made that the targeted students are not receiving the full benefit of the funding.

Finally, with the community-based organization being located off the physical campus of the school, the program has essentially no communication or contact at all with the host school. Consequently, the staff at the Boys and Girls Club do not feel that they are particularly appreciated for their efforts in helping the students at Victory Middle School. Even though Laura can look at the student's homework to see what they are

doing in classes, it is not the same as directly hearing from the teachers what the students are learning or what they could do to help supplement the school day activities. Considering that Victory Middle School is very much in trouble based on student assessment data, it would seem that they would want to take advantage of every opportunity presented to them to help their students receive the extra academic assistance that they need.

Lake Middle School

Originally, the study had proposed to study two Boys and Girls Clubs located in separate regions of Michigan to do a comparison of how Boys and Girls Clubs could serve as academic support systems through 21st CCLCs. Lake Middle School, part of a 21st CCLCs consortium with four other school districts in Northern Michigan, was included as part of this study because the majority of its program was contracted out to the county Boys and Girls Club. Due to irreconcilable conflicts with the Boys and Girls Club staff, the program was let go after spring 2005. The rest of this section on Lake Middle School will talk about why the Boys and Girls Club failed and what the middle school was going to do to replace their program.[11]

Community Background and Changing Goals of the Program

Similar to all the 21st CCLCs proposals, Lake Middle School wanted to conduct a comprehensive program that would support students' academic as well as emotional needs. Lake Middle School had five original goals in the proposal including:

1. To improve student achievement.

[11] Unlike the Boys and Girls Club in Anderson School District, the 21st CCLCs program at Lake Middle School was held in the host school building and the site coordinator was an employee of the school system.

2. To improve relationships among students regarding school through the establishment of constructive relationships.
3. To improve the level of health and safety for students and families.
4. To improve literacy, educational and technological competencies for students and families.
5. To sustain quality out-of-school time programs for all students and families for these four school communities.

Several Boys and Girls Club programs were mentioned in the proposal as avenues of helping to attain these goals including Project Learn: The Educational Enhancement Program; Leadership/character development curriculum-Torch Club and Keystone; and Leadership and Service Learning Programs.

Elaine, Lake Middle School's site coordinator, has been working at the middle school in different capacities for several years. Most recently, she oversaw their mentoring program, and her goals for the 21st CCLCs program are still primarily academic:

> Well, the primary goal is to impact the academic achievement of our middle school students in a positive way. By offering enrichment activities after school. By providing family activities. One of the goals of the grant is to, and there's not a lot of money for this component but to offer, to try to meet the unmet educational needs of the parents and the children, whether it be ESL classes or computer class or high school completion.

Extending academic achievement to reach the families of the students, then, also became an important aspect of the 21st CCLCs program. Although the population of the area is

growing, it is still a very poor and rural community, and many of the students come from single-parent households.

Why the Boys and Girls Club Failed in this Setting

The most important difference between Elaine's goals for the program and what the Boys and Girls Club could offer was the focus on youth development versus academics:

> I think in terms of the goal, the primary goal for this grant, being academic, the academic improvement for these kids is crucial. I don't think there's anyway to get the results that we're looking for without that. And that was, that was a missing part....I don't want to be critical about the Boys and Girls Club, or the Y. It's just that their focus is more youth development and recreation. And that's, and they do weave in the academic piece but it's not as, it's not as much of a priority as some of the other things. Like you know, youth development, is their primary, you know, priority. And it certainly is ours also. By having caring adults and also giving them opportunities to become, to develop their leadership skills. You know, help them plan. That's youth development as well as just trying to find ways to help them learn without them realizing that they're learning.

Even though Elaine also believes that the youth development measures are certainly important to the healthy development of a middle school student, she also believes that it is important for the youth development aspect to also reflect academic learning. Elaine later stated that she truly believes that the Boys and Girls programs such as Wise Guys and Smart Moves and Smart Girls were good programs and could perhaps be

incorporated as part of the programming, but for the intention of 21st CCLCs, those programs could not be the focus of the entire after-school time.

Besides the philosophical differences, a few other challenges arose making it difficult for the Lake Middle School 21st CCLCs staff to work effectively with the Boys and Girls Club staff. When Elaine wanted to work with the Boys and Girls Club staff on a project or assist them in giving the program a more academic focus, she felt that the Boys and Girls Club staff were always being reminded that they worked for the Boys and Girls Club rather than the school. Unlike with the Anchor Public Schools where working with the outside community-based organizations seems to be effective, the plan did not work out at Lake Middle School.

Because the grant was supposed to target the middle school students, recruiting strategies were another problem with the Boys and Girls Club. During the first year of the grant, the Boys and Girls programming included anyone ages six and up. Often, the middle school students would not want to be with the younger students or they did not believe the program had anything to interest them so enrollment numbers were very low. Without the Boys and Girls Club, the program can now entirely target middle schools students.

Like the Boys and Girls Club in Anderson School District, the Boys and Girls Club serving Lake Middle School students did not have an attendance policy. According to Elaine, students were free to come and go as they pleased. They did not have to stay for the entire evening. The only time they may not be asked into the program was if there was a discipline problem and the students were asked to not come back for a few days.

Working with School Staff

Even with the Boys and Girls Club, the 21st CCLCs program at Lake Middle School offered a tutoring program for the students most in need of assistance. These students were targeted and specifically asked to participate in the program, and teachers from the school day have always overseen these tutoring sessions. Often, the teachers taught the same students they had during the day so they knew the assignment and what aspects of the assignment the students would most likely have difficulties with. If the students went to a different tutor, Elaine was not sure if the tutor would have been previously informed by the student's teacher what the homework assignment was or if it was solely the student's responsibility.

One specific change being made in the program is to have a more focused academic tutoring time. For the 2005-06 school year, three middle school teachers in the content areas of language arts, math, and science agreed to become consultants for program development. According to Elaine, the role of the consultant will be to meet in their teams and "give ideas about projects or activities that we can do that support the units they are doing in their daytime curriculum. So that, that will be a very intentional, different approach from what we've had in the past."

An impetus for this movement came from a small project they were able to try last year. The staff incorporated a poetry workshop with a poetry unit that the 5th and 6th graders were doing. Bringing in a local poet to explain the process to them, Elaine found the program to be very successful and realized that they needed to do more activities like that. This year, the poetry program grew by having students volunteer to become part of the "Elders" project. Supervised by the same local poet, students would be interviewing

local elderly people to learn about their experiences in the community. The students would then transcribe the interviews and write poems from them. Ultimately, Elaine hoped to turn the poems into a dramatization that some students who were interested in acting could perform for the community.

Despite the effort to make the program more coherent with the school day by using the teachers from the school and making a more intentional point of connecting the curriculum with the school day curriculum, Elaine is aware of the challenges presented when asking teachers who have already taught all day to participate in an after-school program. In order to prevent burn-out, Elaine planned on doing more in-servicing for staff and providing them with ideas on how an after-school program may differ from a school day program:

> Just making sure that they understand, you know, what, how their relationship with these kids and how their role is different than it is as a daytime teacher....[The program director] has a handout that she's gonna give to me that has pulled together just some points about just good practice in after-school programs. It's a short, one-page because our staff, our teachers are so overwhelmed already with everything that is expected of them that I really try to make it as easy for them as possible. Give them a lot of praise for what they do and really try to not load on a lot more. So I'm always mindful of that because I don't want to lose them. I don't want them to feel like, well, this is too much.

By coming together as a cohesive after-school staff and helping the teachers as much as possible when planning their lessons so they do not become too overwhelmed, Elaine

believes the 21st CCLCs program at Lake Middle School will become much more successful.

Summary

Despite the fact that Lake Middle School ultimately eliminated the Boys and Girls Club program elements, these two examples of Boys and Girls Club serving as 21st CCLCs academic support systems are very similar. Even though the Boys and Girls Club serving the Victory Middle School students has tried to incorporate more of an academic piece, it is still ultimately youth development. Without mandatory attendance policies, they are still having problems getting the middle school students to attend the academic piece. With Lake Middle School, one of the major reasons why they eliminated the program was because middle school students were not attending.

Unlike at Lake where the Boys and Girls staff did not want to cooperate with the school staff, the Boys and Girls Club in Anderson School district has tried to make connections with the school who refuse. Lake decided that the only way the students were going to make academic progress was to include more qualified teaching staff, yet at the Boys and Girls Club, the education coordinator has not even completed her teaching degree and the program director admitted she did not know if she always knew what the students needed educationally. By default, then, the academic portion of the program seems to take a backseat at the actual Boys and Girls Club.

With these two examples, it seems that when the 21st CCLCs program was held at the school, the importance of the coherence between the program and the school day was more realized than when the program was a completely separate entity from the

school. Based on youth development alone, the Boys and Girls Club have a successful program that has been documented over the course of many decades. Given the importance that the 21st CCLCs policy places on academics, however, it seems that Boys and Girls Clubs cannot provide the academic support required by the grant.

A Snapshot of Schools Being Served by Center Village University

The 21st CCLCs program administered by Center Village University, a state university in an urban area of Southeastern Michigan, became an outgrowth of a HUD housing project that the university sponsored for at-risk students. Working within Harborside School District, the 21st CCLCs program has been implemented at Apple Elementary School and Neptune Middle School. Martina, the program director for Center Village, reflected on the role that a university plays in a community:

> And it's my belief that as higher education, and an institute that's well known for its teacher education program, that we ought to benefit the community in which we live. And so it's that philosophy that we take in working with Harborside School District.

Although other grantees in Michigan may use the resources of local universities for field trips or volunteers, Center Village is the only program in the state that has university staff actually overseeing the program. In addition to providing resources to the schools that they may not have otherwise, working in such a partnership allows the university to expand its connections and makes the program more community based.

The teachers notice the effort being put into the program too and how it truly is a community program. At the middle school, an eighth grade teacher commented that the site coordinator "spends an awful lot of time here. He's just very invested in the young people here, which is really a nice thing to see from a community member, that's a good partnership." Because the site coordinator is not hired by the school district, the teacher considered him a community member and not just a university employee. She sees him as invested in the students and because she sees him as wanting to be there as opposed to the

program just being another job for him, she respects all efforts he makes to the students, the school, and the community.

Despite the efforts for a community wide approach, the neighborhood lends itself to violence. For instance, a sixth grade teacher interviewed talked about how one of her students had recently been upset because her uncle had gone to jail for shooting someone and she did not know when he was being released. In the proposal, risk factors highlight the presence of drugs and gangs within the school district: "there are three different Bloods and three different Crips gangs, located in different areas in the school district; there is also a 'chapter' of the After Dark Posse gang. Gangs are involved in drug distribution."

The schools with 21st CCLCs programs in the district also have a high percentage of students coming from single parent households. The staff often serves as role models for these students. Erin, the site coordinator at Apple Elementary School, talked about one student in particular who looked up to one of the male after-school instructors because she did not have a father in her own life:

> There's this one particular child whose father, she's never met. And so she's, there's a male staff person that she kind of gravitates towards because he reminds her or from, I guess pictures she's seen reminds her of a father and so she kind of clings to him and looks at him as a father figure.

For many students at Apple Elementary and Neptune Middle School, the 21st CCLCs program provides stability and constant role models that the may not have at home. Even though the program does have a strong academic focus, it is often the relationship piece that makes the most impact on the students.

School Demographics

The 21st CCLCs site coordinators recruit students at the beginning of the school year. Often, classroom teachers recommend particular students who may be struggling, but Martina emphasized that they wanted the program to serve a diverse body of students, "And we have worked very hard to make sure that teachers don't look at us as a program that is to help only the needy. We want to make sure that they understand that what we wanta be able to do is for all kids. We wanta have a diverse population. Kids that do well academically and kids that don't do well academically. So work with the teachers in that regard." Martina's ultimate goal by the end of the grant is to have the "A"students mentoring and helping the struggling students.

Even though the program administrators want to work with a diverse population of students, some of the teachers feel that the programs should target those most in need. At Apple Elementary, Frances, a first grade teacher would like to spend the first few weeks of school getting to know her students and then recommend the students she thinks would benefit most from the program.

Erin, the Apple Elementary site coordinator, noted that many of the students come from single parent households and that there seem to be a lot of grandmothers involved in the lives of the students. She sees the parents, grandparents, or guardians every day when they come in to pick up the students. Because each program is limited to 40 students, and the elementary school had not yet reached that number, for some portions of the afternoon, all grade levels are grouped together, which can cause some conflict when grades range from first to fifth. Whenever a conflict arises, though, Erin uses the time to teach them how to get along with others and how to react in confrontational situations,

which Erin sees as a lifelong benefit for the students as well. Table 22 shows the breakdown of students by grade level at Apple Elementary.

Table 22
Number of Participants per Grade Level at Apple Elementary School 2004-2005

Grade	Number of 21st CCLCs Students	Total Number of Students per Grade	Percentage of class enrolled in 21st CCLCs
1	2	20	10%
2	10	20	50%
3	3	30	10%
4	4	25	16%
5	5	42	12%

At Neptune Middle School, the site coordinator, John indicated that the students were primarily African American with many coming from single mother homes. The students the program was attracting were fairly high achieving students. In fact, John indicated that a couple of the students maintained 4.0 grade point averages. One of the interviewed middle school teachers indicated that she noticed the program had been primarily boys the last few times she had looked in the library doors, where the program takes place. She viewed John as a strong role model and though that it was very important for the students to have a consistent adult figure in their lives. See Table 23 for a breakdown of the number of students attending Neptune Middle School by grade level.

Table 23
Number of Participants per Grade Level at Neptune Middle School 2004-2005

Grade	Number of 21st CCLCs Students	Total Number of Students per Grade	Percentage of class enrolled in 21st CCLCs
6	27	160	17%
7	20	186	11%
8	13	188	7%

Goals of the Program

Because the proposal was written by Center Village University personnel, the program had a very academic focus to improve academic progress at the two selected schools. The original goals as stated in the proposal are as follows:

1) Contribute to the school improvement process and achievement of Adequate Yearly Progress goals at Neptune Middle School and Apple Elementary Schools, and, through the dissemination process, in the district as a whole.
2) Improve academic performance of Neptune Middle and Apple Elementary School students.
3) Increase student commitment to learning as a key tool for a better future.
4) Enhance family participation in student's education, family literacy and family economic situation.

Through the goal objectives, the proposal discussed how each of these goals were going to be accomplished. For instance, for goal 2, the objectives were to "provide academic enrichment activities coordinated with school curriculum" and an outcome was that "75% of the students will receive passing scores on MEAP testing in math and reading." Similar to the other goals, the 21st CCLCs staff at Center Village thought that using the program as an academic support system would increase the academic success as measured by standardized test scores. When talking to the staff, the goals were not quite as focused.

Martina, the overall program director, has three primary goals to focus on: academic achievement, student safety, and program sustainability. Although all program directors and site coordinators in the study spoke about how important student safety was,

Martina looked at it from a different angle. Instead of talking about how the program offered an alternative safe environment to go to after school instead of hanging out on the streets or going to a dangerous home, she spoke about how the children, particularly at the middle school level, need to feel safe within the walls of the program:

> I guess with both sites but primarily with the middle school, it's important to be able to provide a safe environment and I think that if we as adults look back to the timeframe in our life when we were in the middle school, we can certainly appreciate that that's a time in adolescence when you experience being part of a clique and being accepted and do things that could be hurtful to other people, and learn whether or not that's an acceptable thing to do or not. And so that's why I think it's really important to be able to have a safe environment and that's a lot of what I'm getting at. The safe environment that every child feels important and safe with their peers.

Martina wants the students to feel safe in the program and she sees the programs as a way of helping students develop the skills that they will need to get along with others and not to judge each other simply because they may be in another "clique." This is especially important considering the environment that many of these students live in daily.

Having worked at the Apple Elementary 21st CCLCs program before becoming site coordinator, Erin recently graduated from Center Village University in elementary education. For Erin, the goals of the program are to enhance what students do in the classroom, "To give academic enrichment to enhance what they're doing in the classroom. We, our primary focus is reading and science so we try to combine the two programs." For one semester, the primary focus on the 21st CCLCs program was animals

ranging from insects to African animals to farm animals. After the science teacher taught a lesson, then the literacy lesson would closely follow the science lesson. The students may read books from the library on whatever animal they had been studying and then write about it in their journals. In this respect, there is also a level of coherence at the program level as well where the activities tend to connect with one another while the general literacy and science lessons are designed to support what the students learned during the day.

Francis, a first grade teacher at Apple Elementary School, indicated that the goals of the program were "to work with the teachers as best as they can to implement instruction." She sees the 21st CCLCs participants doing a lot of work on computers, which she sees as a real benefit because they do not have as much time to do technology during the day as she would like the students to have.

John, the middle school site coordinator and retired middle and high school principal, emphasized the academic part of the program as his primary goal, "Pretty much I see our goal as being to shore up again those academic gaps that students may have in that mathematics and language arts area. To complement the work that teachers are doing in their classroom...what I say to my students is my primary goal is that none of them are retained this year." For John, working with the students to help them with what they are doing in the classrooms is his primary focus. He wants them to be successful and believes the evidence of that comes from what they achieve in the classroom.

When discussing behavioral issues, particularly when it comes to middle school students, John also defined a "safe environment" in the same manner as Martina. For John, a safe environment includes not just a safe physical environment but also a place

where "every youngster who comes in that, in that room after school comes in with the feeling that they are gonna be protected and they're in a safe, both physically and, and emotionally, they're in a safe environment." By being with classmates that they may not be with during the day, the program participants' learn to deal with other students in a more relaxed environment. Although problems are bound to arise, working through problems and working on conflict resolution skills is another benefit of the program.

When the middle school teachers were asked what they believed the goals of the program were, they indicated that it served both academic enrichment and a safe environment. Trisha, the eighth grade teacher, understands that reading enrichment was one of the main goals "just to be sure that the young people are in fact getting reading components that maybe enhances what they're doing in our literacy skills classes. And they can check our Accelerated Reading books at the library. They can take tests on them on the computers." Cheryl, another eighth grade teacher spoke about providing the students a safe environment to go to after school, "I think it's, part of it's, too, to provide a safe environment for kids where they can receive additional support. A lot of students are, you know, their parents are working. A lot of our parents are working two jobs so to make ends meet, and so I think that it provides an opportunity for kids to be at school in a safe, supervised environment, and to help them with their academic needs. And I think it's a little less structured than school."

A sixth grade Neptune Middle School teacher, Sandra, has very specific goals for the program. In fact, she would like to make it mandatory for all struggling students to attend:

> Well, I see the primary goals as raising my, helping my lower students to achieve more, as a support for my lower students. Giving them that extra. And unfortunately because it's not mandatory, because it's signed up for, some people take advantage and some people don't. And I wish I could just say you, you, you, and you, you know schooling every day. And, but I can't, but it makes a big difference to those who do go.

Sandra sees many academic benefits for the kids that attend the program. By only focusing on the students not making academic achievement, though, Sandra's wish for the program is in contrast to the program's goal of having a diverse student body where there is a range of academic abilities. Despite the efforts of the program to recruit students at all different academic levels, the teachers still view the program as one to primarily help their low performing students.

Communication Among After-School and Daytime Staff

Although the program director and site coordinators are hired through a university, Martina does not see her staff as the "experts." Instead, she prefers a more group-oriented discussion approach and her overarching philosophy is that people will be responsive and that better ideas will evolve through a partnership if everyone is truly a partner and there are no hierarchical levels:

> I think a lot of times with higher education, what tends to happen is that we get a group of people, an expert that comes in to an environment and says I'm the expert, let me tell you how to do it. But I think what needs to happen is to be able to go into the environment and say what are your challenges? What are you

> issues? What's working? And really listen. If you just go in with this is our program and we're gonna show you how it needs to be done, that's pretty much what you're gonna do. But if you go in with the philosophy of they've go things probably that are working very well for them, let's build off of those and let's establish a rapport and relationship. Then we'll be able to have them be open minded to the expertise that we can provide to them....I think if you have the right philosophy or the right approach, you can do what maybe seems impossible or other programs that you talk to, they might say well, we're really having this difficulty. I think that approach breaks down the barrier so that you don't have as many of these types of challenges to overcome.

Martina sees the obvious challenges in having an external organization, especially a university, come into a school and start telling the school that the university way is the correct way and that they need to do what they say. Instead, Martina and her staff have been very intentional about establishing partnerships within the school and the district from the very beginning in order to avoid some of these challenges. And, it is this philosophy that Martina believes has helped the program open the doors to communication with the teachers.

Although the site coordinators have an office with the university, they are at their sites by mid-morning almost every day of the week. Martina explains the advantages to having the site coordinators on site:

> Well, we have site coordinators and staff that are in the school during the day. So they, the staff get to see how teaching goes on, what the curricula is the interaction with the students. The students in turn see our program as part of the

program during the day. We have teachers that teach during the day that are integrated into our middle school program....We've participated in professional development activities with the district and we've had them participate in professional development activities that we've put on so I think a fully integrated approach of programming is truly what we're doing.

Similar to Waterford, the site coordinators spend most of the day in the building making connections or at least demonstrating a presence to the staff at the school allowing the programs to have a more of an integrated feel.

Specifically, the program has worked with teachers on homework help. By understanding what teachers are assigning to the students and how students are supposed to do the assignments, the after-school program supports the school day. Martina explains the importance of working together with teachers on this issue:

> We have worked with teachers on homework help which is, I guess I tend to, when I say academic enrichment, that is part of that category. Not only do we provide them, you know, some kind of teaching about a specific subject matter but we also provide homework assistance and put a lot of emphasis and priority on getting your homework done. But working with teachers to make sure that we know what kind of homework that they are providing, how they go about assigning homework, and it's our belief that by being the in classroom to establish a rapport with them so that they begin to bring you information without you having to seek it out. If, if they recognize your program as something that benefits not only the child but them as a teacher, then they want to be able to work more

closely with you cuz it makes their job easier. And it gets to the ultimate goal of the child succeeds academically.

Instead of viewing the program and the school day as two separate programs, Martina wants the teachers to feel that the program is part of the school. When teachers see the benefits that it can bring to their classrooms, Martina is hoping for a reciprocal relationship where the teachers communicate with the site coordinators and feel that they can come to the after-school staff with any problems or issues they may have within their own classrooms or with certain students.

At the elementary school, Frances, the first grade teacher, feels comfortable going to the site coordinator with any concerns she may have, or if she notices that a participant is not turning in his homework, she will ask the site coordinator if he is actually getting finished in the program.

A natural extension that the program has with the classroom at both schools is Accelerated Reading (AR) and Accelerated Math (AM). Both schools recently implemented the two programs. Accelerated Reading tests the actual grade level a student is reading at, and then the student finds books at his or her reading level. Once the student has read an AR book, she then takes an online test. If the student reaches a specific score on the test, usually set by the school, the student receives a certain number of points. The school usually has a reward system for when the student reaches a set amount of points. Also online, the AM tests the students and when they reach a certain level, they also receive points. The 21st CCLCs staff participated in the staff professional development for both these programs and students are given time in the after-school program to read for Accelerated Reading and to take the tests to add to their overall total points, which

Sandra saw as a real benefit for the participants, "so they're going through those books a lot faster, which means they're getting a lot more done, which means they're getting a lot more points, which means they're improving their reading a whole lot. So that, you know, cuz the more you read the better you do." Essentially, the after-school program provides the students with time to do additional reading and receive additional points for the AR program. Because it is computerized, the 21st CCLCs staff can access the program participants' scores to see how many points they have and if someone seems to need more points or more assistance, they can make accommodations for that student.

During the site visit to the middle school, students were in the library for the first 30 minutes of the program. Although all the students had selected an AR book, many of them were still sitting at desks chatting instead of reading the books. Other students did seem involved in their books and were taking the tests. A similar situation arose at the elementary school. Both schools had Center Village teacher education students available to help the students. Although several were sitting down at tables with the students and reading with them, there were a few that were simply wandering around until a senior staff person asked them to work directly with a student. If students are willing to do the reading, having the additional AR time is something of value to both teachers in the school and the program.

At the elementary school, students receive 40 minutes of homework time each day. If the students do not have homework, worksheets and other academic activities are provided for them. Erin had also made a point to go into the second and fourth grade classrooms to learn more about what was going on those grade levels:

> I've been, myself, personally, I've been going into the second grade classroom and fourth grade classroom just to get an idea of what's going on, to help the teachers out. A lot of the kids are in those two grades so it's beneficial for me to see how they act with their main teacher and just, you know, to get some, just to observe and get some tips and things like that. And a lot of stuff that they're doing, well, some of the stuff they're doing, I don't wanta say all cuz we do different things as well, is aligned to what we're doing. I think next year we're gonna really get on the ball with that. Cuz I think there's always room for improvement. Next year we wanta have more of a connection with the classroom teachers and our staff so we'll always know what's going on with each other.

While in the classrooms, Erin will sit and listen to the teacher or play games with the students, depending on the current activity. Going into the classrooms was partially inspired by the fourth graders saying that they did not have any homework so Erin decided to investigate and talk directly to the teachers about their expectations and daily assignments. Next year's plan also involves dividing the 21st CCLCs staff up so everyone has a specific teacher to communicate with so there is a deep understanding about what is happening in each classroom as that is an area that Erin definitely sees as needing improvement, yet realizing the importance is a critical first step.

Because the site coordinators spend the majority of the day at the building, John will take the opportunity to stop in classrooms to see what the teachers are doing and to check in on individual students, "Depending upon students, [I] go around and see, you know, other, to see the regular day teachers, you know, how so and so's doing, what's he doing in class, what she's doing in class. Do they have any outstanding assignments that

need to be picked up or whatever. I don't do it a tremendous amount, but I do do it." John also said that he participated in the summer curricular inservices for the school so he was aware of what the school wanted to accomplish.

Because John's primary goal for the program is to serve as a complement to what the students do during the day, he sees that having tutors coming from the university as a great asset to the program. As students in an education program, they are learning similar pedagogies to what the students learn during the day. Yet, the students are learning the most up-to-date methods and may be able to look at assignments through a different lens than the classroom teacher. John provided an example of how a college student helped one of the participants understand a lesson that he did not understand when it was taught by the classroom teacher:

> Yesterday, a student was doing, he had a project on metaphors. You know, which was quite honestly a pretty high, a pretty complicated project. I really think as an aside that the teachers had not explained it fully. Just kinda get him started and said, okay, give me some metaphors. Well, the kid had no idea what he was doing. Well, as it turned out, we have, we happened to have a tutor who is a language arts major and so when you talk about metaphors and similes and stuff like that, you know, we can kinda bring those into play.

Based on his experiences with the tutors, John indicates that he now looks at what specific skills each tutor has and tries to take advantage of their areas of expertise. Their skills may bring something that is lacking at the program level or they can increase the quality of the program by strengthening something already in place.

John strongly feels that the program needs to be connected to the school day. As he says, a program may be "glorious" but if it doesn't support anything they do during the school day, then what is the point?

The middle school teachers are familiar with John and his work with the students. For example, Cheryl discusses how John finds out who the student's core teachers are and talks with them individually about the students:

> John usually finds out if the students are in his program, he usually finds out who their core teachers are and then he lets us know if they need homework. Like I know I have two students that I can simply leave him a note or send him an e-mail at Center Village and let him know these students have a project due, what it's about, and he makes sure that they are working on it and it's been really funny because the students are like, 'no, I don't have homework,' and he said, 'Hm, I have an e-mail from [your teacher].' All I have to do, all he has to do really is say that name and 'oh, yeah, social studies. I got it. So that's been a really cool part.

The teachers have thus found that the program can encourage students to work on their homework and get it done in a timely fashion. In fact, Cheryl said that she often gives John a copy of what the expectations of an assignment are so that he and his staff can work directly on it with the students.

In this instance, Cheryl specifically indicates that she had corresponded with John via e-mail. During the conversation, Trisha mentioned that although she had not thought about using e-mail, she definitely thought that it was another communication method that should be employed in addition to the personal contact and putting memos in mailboxes.

A sixth grade teacher at the middle school spoke about her frustration with the reasons why parents initially signed their students up for the program:

> They seem to want to use it as a baby-sitting service to begin with and then when they find out it really helps their kids, once, once you get the first marking period and some children aren't doing well and there's a few slots still available....We spend a lot of time as classroom teachers, explaining to them this will make a big difference but this is a huge commitment and you can't drop in and you can't drop out because it's not the way the program works.

The one weakness Sandra did see in the program was that she was rarely updated on which of her kids were formally in the program. By just providing a quarterly list of who was enrolled in the program, Sandra thought teachers could provide better support to 21st CCLCs.

Academic Progress of 21st CCLCs Participants

The 21st CCLCs program at Center Village University purposefully set a limit of 40 kids per site in order to have a smaller ratio of students to fully benefit from the program. If a student stops coming, parents are contacted, and if they decide to not continue in the program, another student is recruited. Martina believes that if the program is going to make any progress with the students, they need to attend on a regular basis, "we just don't think that we can affect improvement academically if we don't get the time spent with the kids."

It's not just the academics, though, that impact the students as so many of these programs demonstrate. The enrichment, arts, cultural activities and outside groups also

play a role. Martina talked about a comment that a student wrote about a non-profit group that comes in and teaches children through art. When asked to finish the sentence, "'There are many ways that the 21st Century Center Village after-school program has changed my outlook on life. The biggest way I've been changed is my new found love of art'." Martina felt the impact of that statement, "Well, the fact that they felt that their whole life was impacted. It was pretty, I mean, pretty dramatic to be able to, you know, see comments like that." This demonstrates that 21st CCLCs are much more than academic support centers. They provide opportunities that many of these children may not have otherwise.

Perhaps even more telling are the personal stories that the program staff hear from the parents. At an open house, Martina had a father approach her to personally thank her for the difference the program had made in his student, "I've had one of the parents that attended the last family night that came up to me afterwards and said I can't thank you enough for the improvement in my son. He used to just stay in his bedroom and not come out and wasn't achieving in school and he's progressed so much and now he's getting active and I really think that has everything to do with him being involved in the after-school program." Even if the standardized test scores don't demonstrate that the programs are making huge strides academically, when a parent notices such a difference in his student, then the programs are obviously having some positive impact or influence in the lives of the students it serves.

Apple Elementary School

Because MEAP scores and classroom grades had not been collected yet (see Tables 5.5 and 5.6 for the results included in the Annual Report Form), Erin talked about

her primary assessments being journal entries that the students wrote. After they would have a lesson, they might be asked to write about what they learned or draw a picture of something that they had studied that day. Behaviorally, the students in 21st CCLCs focused on the Three R's: Respect, Responsibility, Reasonable. Although there were a few squabbles to be expected of elementary students, Erin did not see any real behavior issues in her students.

At the elementary school, Frances only had a couple of student in her class that were actually 21st CCLCs participants so it was hard for her to comment on any noticeable changes academically. She did notice, however, that if one of the students did not attend the program, he did not turn in his homework the next day. Thus, the program allowed this student to get his work done and when he did not attend, there was a noticeable difference in his homework completion rate (see table 24).

Table 24

Change in Reading Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Apple Elementary

	Improved %	No Change %	Decreased %
Participants	22%	44%	56%
Non-Participants			

Note. Data was included only if at least 5 students had multiple points of grade data for each subject area. Number of students with reading grades: Less than 30 days=1, 30 days or more=9. Change of at least ½ point qualifies as a grade change.

At the elementary level, there were fewer than five students that Erin was able to submit grades for so they were not counted. However, even with the nine students considered "regular" over half of them decreased their reading grades while only 22% increased their grades. Because the sample size is small, having access to the individual student grades to see where their individual strengths and weaknesses are could help the program and the daytime teachers make demonstrable progress with these students.

Table 25

Change in Math Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Apple Elementary

	Improved %	No Change %	Decreased %
Participants	22%	33%	56%
Non-Participants			

Note. Data was included only if at least 5 students had multiple points of grade data for each subject area. Number of students with reading grades: Less than 30 days=1, 30 days or more=9. Change of at least ½ point qualifies as a grade change.

Neptune Middle School

For John, the results have been more tangible. Several students in the program made the honor roll. Based on Accelerated Reader results, John had also seen noticeable gains, but he also noted that some students' grades had also declined (see Tables 26 and 27). John also indicated that some students had dropped out because they wanted more choice in the program. Although John indicated that was something they would try to incorporate, his major priority was still to keep a safe and orderly environment.

The teachers also commented on John's commitment to making sure the students were progressing. Whenever progress reports or report card grades came out, John would be in the classrooms looking at the participants' progress. They also see John's involvement as a way to communicate with parents in regards to their students' grades. Trisha talked about at conferences, parents will talk to the teachers about grades because John has recommended them to the teacher by saying he's not sure the student is working up to their potential. By working with the after-school program and the teachers and then having the parents get involved, the students' support system grows.

At the same time, the teachers also had very realistic expectations of the program. Both Trisha and Cheryl agreed that the program helped some students finish their

homework and without that time after school, they most likely would not have finished it. Trisha also qualified the success of the program by stating "in some cases, they have some pretty tough cases so we're not talking about miracle cures. But they're, they are doing better than they would do without that service." Again, even as an academic support service, 21st CCLCs may not show incredible academic achievement, but it still gives students the opportunity to make even minimal improvements. Cheryl has also seen her students overtime gain more confidence in public speaking and showcasing their skills and projects, which she attributes to the 21st CCLCs program (see tables 26 and 27).

Table 26
Change in Reading Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Neptune Middle School 2004-2005

	Improved %	No Change %	Decreased %
Participants	19%	39%	52%
Non-Participants	29%	36%	36%

Note. Data was included only if at least 5 students had multiple points of grade data for each subject area. Number of students with reading grades: Less than 30 days=14, 30 days or more=31. Change of at least ½ point qualifies as a grade change.

Table 27
Change in Math Classroom Grades for Participants and Non-Participants at Neptune Middle School 2004-2005

	Improved %	No Change %	Decreased %
Participants	19%	18%	52%
Non-Participants	20%	20%	60%

Note. Data was included only if at least 5 students had multiple points of grade data for each subject area. Number of students with reading grades: Less than 30 days=15, 30 days or more=33. Change of at least ½ point qualifies as a grade change.

Although the sample size is larger for the middle school than it was for the elementary school, the results are very similar. Over half the participants' grades in both reading and math actually declined over the course of the year. In reading, 10% fewer of the

participants' actually made increased in their reading grades compared to the non-participants indicating that perhaps extra time in AR did not have that much of an impact on their classroom grades. In contrast, the percentage of participants and non-participants improving their math grades were almost the same while 8% more of the non-participants decreased their math grades than the participants. One explanation is that the program has an emphasis on science and technology which may have more of a math focus rather than a literacy focus. By providing the students with extra exposure to those concepts, they are increasing their math skill base.

Data Used for Continuous Program Improvement

When asked on the Annual Report Form "what do the school outcomes data and student/parent/teacher survey data tell you about your overall program's successes related to school improvements in their grades?", Center Village University had a thoughtful response that centered on how they would use this type of data to make changes for the coming year:

> As part of SES [Supplemental Educational Services provider], we have begun assessments of CLC participants, and have discovered that although our academic enrichment curriculum was designed to grade level, students are working well below grade level, so the curriculum needs reexamination. Homework Help needs to be strengthened as a program component, including working with teachers to get specific information no each student's academic needs. However, our approach has been to tie language arts to science education, which is not a

philosophy that will necessarily show improvement in reading and math grades--the purpose of the program is NOT to extend the school day.

For Martina, with various staff changes and the implementation process, she felt that by the end of the second year of the program she understood what mistakes had been made and where they needed to go from there, "We've had the opportunity to be able to develop processes and learn from our mistakes and have an idea of what we needed to accomplish. And now we're getting to that point of being able to really develop and offer the types of programs and things that we want to." In Martina's view, the program is always under a constant a state of self-examination and improvement. Now that she feels the programs have been fully implemented at both schools, she and her staff know exactly what the strengths are and the areas in which they need to improve. Based on these experiences, they already have ideas for how to make those improvements.

The 21st CCLCs program at Center Village University also is uses the Youth Program Quality Assessment evaluation. Although still in the pilot stages, this self-evaluation tool helps programs monitor various aspects of the program such as youth opportunities, youth supports, policies & structure, activities and structure based on a rubric. The instruments helps programs look for areas in need of improvement and overtime helps programs monitor their own progress in those areas.

For Erin at the elementary school, her made source of assessment came from her own interactions and observations of the students. She also would talk to parents when they came to pick up their students in the evening. If the parent or Erin noticed any type of problem, she would go to the teacher to find out if they had noticed a problem, what

particular area they needed help in, and if there was any extra work that could be provided to address those specific issues.

During the first year of the program, the middle school staff did not intentionally collect as much data as they could have for program improvement. For the 2004-2005 school year, the staff began to ask teachers more direct questions concerning student participants and John was looking forward to talking with parents and receiving their feedback. Essentially, collecting the data was an act in progress at Neptune Middle School. Although they realized the significance of it, it was just something that they had not implemented a strong plan yet.

Summary of Center Village University

Even with a strong philosophical notion of how after-school programs should closely connect to the school day through a partnership lens, the 21st CCLCs program at Center Village University has had several challenges. At the elementary school, the building was undergoing many physical renovations, the principal was new, and the upper elementary grades also had staff turnover. Even when the renovations were complete, the 21st CCLCs program still did not have full access to the gym when other sports teams were practicing or someone else needed a room. With the completion of the renovation, the program could use the library and computer lab so students were also able to be split up between upper and lower elementary grades when appropriate.

Erin did not have access to any computer at Apple Elementary so all her administrative work had to be done at her Center Village office. Being in the school was something that Erin saw as a major responsibility of her job so that she could increase her

time with the daytime staff. Additionally, with the emphasis being place on Accelerated Reader and Accelerated Math at the school, having access to student scores would be a definite benefit for Erin and her staff.

Center Village also had difficulties in staffing. Wanting the university's teaching students to gain hands-on experience, the staff discovered that the after-school hours conflicted with university classes. Also, the original attention of having university faculty provide some of the instruction did not happen as much as the program anticipated. The program still uses university students to help with the program when they are available. Now, the site coordinators are also required to have a strong background in curriculum development and mentoring qualities so that they can offer advice and support to the pre-service teachers in the program. Additionally, the site coordinators need to be able to jump in and teach any class if one of the students or other instructors cannot make it on a certain day.

Like in the other middle schools, attendance has been a problem due to conflicts with other extracurricular activities and even detention. This has also been a problem with the fourth and fifth graders at Apple Elementary. At the elementary school, they were still able to come for the last 20 minutes of the program. This did cause some problems with parents who were unhappy that the students were not getting their homework completed in the after-school program. When that problem was brought to Erin's attention, she had to let the parents know that the student had to make some choices about what the top priorities were.

The connection with the university is also very important to the teachers at the middle school level. Trisha indicated that it provides the school access to resources that

they may not have had otherwise. Even more importantly, according to Cheryl, students have had the opportunity through the 21st CCLCs program to actually go to the university. She's noticed that the students dress up when they go to the campus and they have also been able to get tickets for sporting events. For students in this area, Trisha said any kind of connection and college aspiration is very important:

> It makes the university a tangible thing. For some of our kids, college, university is not a tangible thing. They, if they go to college, they could be the first person in their family that does it so anytime you can start younger with students to let them know and to feel and experience the college, that's helpful.

Without this program, some of these students may not even have a glimpse of what college might be like or any hopes of someday attending. The teachers see this as an invaluable piece to the after-school program as well as a great asset to what they can offer during the day.

CHAPTER 6: EFFECTIVE AND NON-EFFECTIVE AFTER-SCHOOL PRACTICES

The previous chapters analyzed various 21st Century Community Learning Center programs throughout Michigan and how the after-school programs supported what students did during the day. Each of the six programs in the study, used a variety of organizational strategies that the staff said was most conducive to student learning. This chapter examines the strengths and weaknesses of the programs using the four program components--goals, communication, academic progress, and data used for continuous program improvement. The concluding chapter will focus on policy and practice recommendations for all programs.

Goals of the Program

Each proposal cited goals to increase student achievement as measured by standardized test scores and classroom grades. Increased student achievement is the main goal of the proposals written by each grantee. As part of the state and federal evaluation, grantees are required to submit information regarding student test scores and classroom grades. The majority of the program directors were not yet hired nor did they have input when these proposals were first submitted to the Michigan Department of Education. Thus, the knowledge and understanding of the original program goals was limited at best.

Many of the program goals seem unrealistic. Grantees wrote goals showing 75% participants would increase academic achievement 75% to 90% by the MEAP test and/or classroom grades. Webster Public School is the sole grantee to acknowledge that setting unrealistic goals may not be in the best interest of the programs. According to their proposal and based on past experience with similar programs, they recognized that an

additional three hours in an after-school program should not be expected to be the sole method used to increase nor evaluate the academic achievement of the students served.

After-school staff across all the sites indicated two primary goals of the 21st CCLC programs: to provide a safe environment and to increase academic achievement of the students. Each of these 14 sites served students who came from homes in high-poverty communities that were often unsafe and dangerous for students to be alone in the hours immediately following school. In fact, providing a safe environment was the first priority across all sites with increased instructional being a close second.

This raises a significant question for the 21st CCLCs program. Allowing students time and opportunity to remain after-school in a structured supervised environment where academic and enrichment activities are offered provides children with opportunities for learning that they would be missing had they gone directly home. The question is whether programs should be evaluated and judged solely on the academic progress of its students.

The program directors and site coordinators interviewed in this study state the programs are designed for more than helping students achieve. It is a time for children to develop positive relationships with adults. The story of the high school student who was proud of her report card and the happy fifth grade student went to the movies for the first time, or the student whose entire life was changed by learning about the impact of art on his life, reveal the importance of the enrichment parts of the program.

This is particularly true of the community-based Boys and Girls Club. Because the national program focuses more on youth development rather than academic outcomes, their programming in the past has not had as much influence on the academic

achievement of the students. With little or no contact with the student's daytime teachers, the program finds it difficult to help children with their schoolwork. Still the purpose o the proposal is to increase MEAP and classroom grades. Without understanding what the MEAP involves and without designing structures that will aid students with school achievement, the Boys and Girls Club is unlikely to demonstrate academic growth of students.

Despite the intentions of the after-school program to be far more than an extension of the school day, teachers interviewed in the study who did not teach in the after-school program assert that the after-school programs should focus on academics, especially when they observed students who attend the program tend to turn their homework more frequently. In contrast, Hancock Middle School teachers in 21st CCLCs are concerned that the district or program director is pushing to have the 21st CCLCs program look too much like a traditional classroom, because both teachers and students are already tired by the time they get to 21st CCLCs and need to teach and learn differently.

Jack talked about two differences between the after-school program and the school day. First, he emphasized to get students to come to an after-school program, children must be internally motivated since no one forces them to come; thus, the lessons had to be self-engaging. Jack saw a definite conflict between goals of the program and how they would accomplish those goals. Gayle, the program director, asked for more traditional activities, she asked Jack to demonstrate to other 21st CCLC staff a lesson taught in a non-traditional learning game. The students called out answers and engaged in the activity so Jack wondered about the program, it's as "if they don't know what they

really want. It's like they say they want this but when they see this and they see that this work."

The teachers working in the programs receive directives from program administrators, they find that they can be more successful by providing activities they create and when the directors see these other activities, they ask for demonstrations. Thus, teachers are confused about the goals of the program and what message the program is sending to students and parents. Jack indicated the programs are an opportunity to present more engaging lessons. A challenge facing teachers, however, is the inconsistent attendance of students.

In the recruitment of students, there also was a conflict. Although the policy itself dictates that programs recruit students most in need of academic assistance or considered most "at risk," schools have an open door policy. In Waterford, once the programs reach capacity, site coordinators may then select students off the waiting list. Since few 21st CCLCs programs keep few extensive records on the student achievement, it is difficult to measure who is attending classes. Are programs reaching the students who need the most assistance? Should the programs set guidelines about who should be recruited for the program?

Although each program had general ideas about the goals of the programs, in most cases, the goals were not clear or nor did they focus on a specific target group of students (i.e., those with the most academic need). Few activities within the programs aligned with the original proposal goals. The 21st CCLC staff members mention safety and academic achievement as the primary goals. Daytime teachers, though, usually qualified their responses by saying they were not entirely sure what the goals of the

program were but they assumed it had something to do with providing academic enrichment to the students. Thus, the after-school programs and the school's goals did not specifically align and therefore did not build upon or even supplement one another. Without stating clear concise goals or providing mission statements, it is difficult for program personnel to plan accordingly and structure activities to help reach those goals.

Communication Among After-School and Daytime Staff

In the study, no single program had formal communication structures with the daytime staff other than to attend except staff meetings or pass memos through mailboxes. Communication between the two staffs depended on who taught in the after-school program. Staff with dual jobs, teaching both in the daytime and after-school programs, stated communication was in place because they received information in both places, although they taught a particularly grade level and/or subject area. Most frequent communication is between school teachers and daytime staff where the fulltime site coordinators spend much of their work time in the school building, such as in Waterford or Center Village University. Despite the efforts of Waterford, the teachers interviewed in both the elementary and middle school buildings stated that communication was weak between the programs.

Waterford has a strong management structure with one program director overseeing seven sites. Site coordinators at Waterford have fulltime positions, they are able to take care of administrative duties for their 21st CCLCs sites and take a more active role in the school by talking with teachers, and attending professional development trainings with the school day staff. Kaitlyn, the site coordinator at Whitetail Elementary,

observes classes. Ken, the middle school site coordinator, attended staff and grade level meetings both indicative of an intentional effort to communicate with the school day staff.

Kaitlyn's staff consists primarily of certified teachers and paraprofessionals who work in the Whitetail building during the day. Each person is responsible for a specific class. For instance, both full-time Language Arts and math teachers always teach those specific sections of the after-school program. The Language Arts teacher is a certified teacher, but does not teach in the building, while the math teacher only has the student teaching component to complete before receiving his certification. Other staff members are paraprofessionals who work at Whitetail Elementary or at a nearby K-1 building and oversee other types of activities such as technology, DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) and Recreation. At Schooner Middle School, the after-school core staff is comprised of teachers from the daytime program. Since each instructor is responsible for a certain subject area, students have consistency within the program and know what to expect each day.

Ironically, daytime teachers stated communication was a weakness across both programs. Teachers are aware of the program and support it because it gives students extra academic support and a safe place to go after school. At Whitetail Elementary, the second grade teacher stated that memos were the only visible form of communication. At Schooner Middle School, one teacher said the communication was very strong, yet she had never actually seen the program in action. The seventh grade teacher admitted that she did not have any idea what was taught in 21st CCLCs. Even more telling are the middle school survey results where staff indicated that the program needed a more

academic approach and that the after-school staff need more time to work with the daytime staff. These discrepancies among teachers indicate that the communication structure between teachers and program staff is weak at best.

Another weakness of the program, which may be part of the communication problem, is the type of respect the programs receive from the host school. The MSU evaluation team received an Annual Report from each grantee and each site. Within the report, each site was asked to describe the program's relationship with the school and with the school. In the annual report from Whitetail Elementary, the relationship between the school principal and the site coordinator was referred to as "warm, welcoming," and meetings happened "face-to-face weekly or every other week" and "meet in staff group(s) monthly." During the interview, Kaitlyn attributed much of the support of the program to the principal, "She has been awesome. She's always supportive of any of our program." However, Kaitlyn indicated she does not attend staff meetings because they "happen right after school," so the staff meetings indicated on the annual report may not be official staff meetings. Kaitlyn's office was moved from a classroom to a small area in the back of the teacher's lounge and storage area. When space became an issue, it was the 21st CCLCs office that had to move.

Although the principal of Schooner Middle School was never mentioned during the interview with Ken, on the Annual Report Form, the relationship with the principal is described as "warm, welcoming" and "indifferent (neither warm nor distant)". Ken's office, however, was moved from a classroom to a small office in the back of the gym next to the girl's locker room. Similar to the elementary school, when a reallocation of

space occurred, it seems that the after-school office ends up being physically moved into a smaller less conducive space in which to work.

Center Village has a similar story. Martina, the program director, explained why site coordinator positions were changed from part-time to fulltime:

> Well, we started off with the position being a part time position. And we, the expectations of education were the minimum that needed to be met for licensing. We really recognized quickly through having people with educational backgrounds as our staff that it was extremely important to have a strong educational background with skills in coordination and, you know, other administrative skills, but the more important piece of it was to be able to develop curricula, to be able to mentor education students. And so when we experienced turnover in those two positions, that was our opportunity to be able to modify, based on experience, the criteria and turn the position into a fulltime position. And part of the reason why adding the hours, making it from a part time to a full time, was that ability to interact with the school day. Because that's where you really get the integration and work with the curricula, with the buy-in.

Essentially, Center Village 21st CCLC staff realized the importance of being able to interact with daytime staff and chose to use advantage to ensure the site coordinators were a visible presence in the school.

Teachers, particularly at the middle school, said that they know John, the site coordinator, very well and that they have a good working relationship with him. The teachers discussed a key point during the interview regarding communication with John. They realized that e-mail would be an efficient tool of communication. Two years into

the program, the teachers had not taken advantage of e-mail. Another middle school teacher wanted a list of students who participate in the program. Instead of informing the site coordinator or other program staff, she related to this researcher her ideas of what would be good practice for the program. In general, the site coordinator spoke with the teachers and they felt they could communicate if and when problems arose concerning students, yet this was only surface level communication. Even answering a few questions about the communication structure with the program lead the teachers to some ideas on how the program could be improved.

Teachers with dual roles as both teachers during the day and in the 21st CCLC program have a different perspective on communication among the two staffs. In Webster Public Schools, the part-time site coordinators also teach fulltime. Julia, the site coordinator at the elementary school, works fulltime at Webster Public Schools. She has limited time for planning, and instead leaves it to the teachers or the curriculum director. In the classrooms where there was a certified teacher, the students seemed more engaged compared to other classrooms lead by a paraprofessional. Fifth graders at Hopkins Elementary said the leader is ineffective and could not help them.

Teachers at Clark Middle School who also teach in the after-school program say they have a strong connection between both schools. Yet, in the after-school program, they may be teaching at a different grade level from what they teach during the day, and they plan to cover multiple content areas. The 21st CCLCs program director and curriculum coordinator seem to offer advice and tips for lesson plans, academic teachers indicate, they lose the attention of the students when those lesson plans are followed. Teachers say they are unclear what directions administrators want the program to take.

If a district chooses to not spend the funds on a full-time site coordinator who works outside the school district, then the approach Anchor Public Schools has taken should be considered. A hired teacher leader who does not teach in the program but oversees the academic component of the after-school program seems to be working for Anchor Public Schools. This person is both a resource for teachers and a liaison for the community-based organizations that come in to help.

Using teachers in the after-school program, however, creates another dilemma. If teachers are unable to teach children during the day, how are they effective during the evening hours? Paula contributed the smaller ratio of students in a class to the success of an after-school program. Because of the smaller size, more activities are hands-on. Often many students find those types of activities—the experiential type—to be more fun than sitting at a desk with 20 to 30 plus students.

Nancy, site coordinator at the elementary school says that with a smaller class size, she gets to know the students better in the after-school program than she does during the school day:

> In the after-school program, the kids to me, become individuals whereas a lot of time in the classroom, it's like just a mass and it's hard to pull out individual personalities and get to know the kids as much as you can during the after-school program because groups are smaller. It's the ones that want to be there.

Comparing the 21st CCLCs program to a church youth group, Nancy said that in the program, "You're just an adult leader rather than a teacher/disciplinarian." This role develops the type of mentoring relationships that Amy, Paula, and William described.

An interesting point brought up by Lisa, the middle school site coordinator, is the idea of students talking in the classroom and, perhaps, how a traditional school day structure may not be appropriate for all children to learn. As a teacher, she struggles to find the right "classroom culture" that will help all students learn (how students learn best). Prompted by the movie *Glory Road*, Lisa began thinking about how students learn in ways teachers deem inappropriate:

> I was actually watching the new movie that's out, the new basketball movie, *Glory Road*, I think it is. And I was watching some of the basketball players interacting and there definitely is that culture when it comes to, you know, allowing a student to learn within their culture. And one of the things I noticed, and I'm kind of mindful of is how often do we tell the students they can't talk, partly because we see talking in a threatening way. You know, we think if the students are talking that they're talking about non-academic issues when they might be commenting [on the lesson]....As teachers we sometimes expect that, that real quiet classroom an we don't think learning is taking place in a real, real loud classroom.

Lisa is beginning to realize that students can learn in a more interactive classroom; however, the concept has not been applied entirely to her daytime classroom or to the academic portion of the after-school program, although the after-school program offers an ideal opportunity for student interaction and noise. In Lisa's case, perhaps learning about how students learn in an after-school setting will lead to a more interactive daytime classroom for her students. In the meantime, though, an assumption is made that if the

students are taught by the same pedagogical strategies that are used during the school day, the after-school program will not help them become more successful.

One way to bring staff to an understanding of what needs to be done in an after-school setting is by holding high quality staff development meetings. Staff at Webster Public Schools, Waterford RESD, Anchor Public School, and Center Village University discussed the professional development information they offered the instructional staff. Crediting a high quality staff for helping to attain the goals of the program, Susan, intentionally brings her staff together as a time for communication as well as collaboration. Susan likes to have staff meetings that focus on more than just logistics:

> Just like all people in all areas of education know, staff meetings that aren't just devoted to calendars and dates are far more meaningful if they have a little study group time or something.

All staff members teaching language arts had an evening to look at language arts strategies, and math instructors also had an evening to get together last year. Staff is encouraged to look at current best practice strategies, such as literature circles, to help facilitate quality lessons in a fun and interesting way in literacy. Susan is trying to develop a professional learning community within her staff by giving them time to collaborate and talk about what's working, what questions they have and what subject areas they need to focus on for student achievement (DuFour & Eaker 1998). Deliberate conversations about what is working and what needs improving in the programs is one way of informing program improvement which is something the curriculum directors at Webster and Anchor try to accomplish with their meetings.

In contrast to any of the programs connected with the school, the Boys and Girls Club have minimal communication with the Victory Middle School due to lack of response from the school counselor. The 21st CCLC staff find this frustrating and the program staff cannot understand why the school at no extra cost were unwilling to take advantage of a partnership that would benefit students already struggling in their school.

Academic Progress of 21st CCLCs Participants

When aggregate student standardized test scores and classroom grades are available, the test results for 21st CCLCs participants when compared to non-participants are mixed at best. The grades of after-school participants' classroom grades decreased more than they increased in the classroom in both reading and math, although some students' grades did show an increase. Because of the variety of interventions used in a school, it is difficult to demonstrate that after-school program had a significant impact on a student's classroom grades.

Perhaps even more disconcerting are the standardized test scores. The percentage of students meeting proficiency is low for both 21st CCLC participants and non-participants. Even providing the best extra support, it is difficult for students to gain academically if their school day instruction fails to meet their needs as well.

The 21st CCLCs staff across the programs said they see improvements in small doses though nothing that has been actually measured. Since the daytime teachers are often unaware of who is in the program, they could see no improvements either, although they did notice when students would make a connection between something taught in a day class and something taught in the after-school program.

Schools are unable to see better academic outcomes, in part, because of the lack of communication between day classes and after-school classes. If the instructional components of both the after-school program and the school day are to be coherent, then one should supplement the other. With the exception of Center Village University who used Accelerated Reading and Accelerated Math as part of their program, no program directly connected to the school day through their content. For the most part, the after-school program is entirely separate from the school day. Homework assistance does not support the work that goes on during the school day. Although assistance is available for the students, the 21st CCLCs, in general, do not talk with teachers or know the expectations of the students. Without this knowledge, making significant progress with students is difficult.

After-school programs need not mirror traditional classrooms. Smaller class sizes and more flexibility to present create learning environments, after-school programs have the opportunity to offer students authentic learning experiences, yet few take advantage of this option. For example, when reading something by Mark Twain in their classroom, the after-school program can enhance the student's knowledge of the author or genre by role playing life on the Mississippi or show a video of Hal Holbrook's impersonation of Mark Twain followed by a discussion on political satire, and finally, compare it to today's political world. Present opportunities for students to develop critical thinking skills and enhance the lesson they in the after-school program can contribute to the student's classroom achievement and overall knowledge base.

Another aspect that seems to be lacking from the programs but would contribute to students learning is challenging enrichment exercises. At Whitetail Elementary School,

an example of higher order thinking skills in a 21st CCLCs developed in a 21st CCLC writing class where students wrote a recipe and shared it with the class. Meanwhile, the Language Arts class had students arrange the letters of MERRY CHRISTMAS to spell as many words as they could. Students were disengaged during this activity and used the time to bully each other and call each other cheaters. At Hopkins Middle School in Anchor Public Schools, students seemed engaged in the after-school enrichment activities. One dance class for instance was taught from an almost military perspective with the students learning how to discipline their minds as well as their bodies. Similar activities such as these are more likely to engage the attention of students, gain more interest in other aspects of school, and increase their achievement.

Finally, gauging the academic progress of students will also be inconclusive if programs do not target a specific group of students or do not know the baseline achievement of their students. This knowledge is necessary to access the progress of the students. When students start at the bottom, the smallest incremental progress may be touted as a success. For 21st CCLC programs, the ultimate goal is to help students increase their academic achievement, but the relationship building aspect through mentoring and safe environment of the programs cannot be discounted.

Data Used for Continuous Program Improvement

With so little data available to measure the progress, it is nearly impossible to say whether or not the programs have had any impact on student academic progress. Teachers admit that the results are inconclusive. Although evaluation plans should be in place, only one site in the study has established evaluation plans that provide useful data to them.

Results of the student, parent, and program improvement surveys developed by the state evaluation team at MSU were provided to the grantees to use for program improvement purposes but what they do with those results is currently undocumented.

Waterford RESD's local evaluator conducted an extensive evaluation that included student grades and standardized tests for participants and non-participants as well as focus groups with students and parents. The program director and academic director of Anchor Public Schools conduct site visits and provide oral and written reports to the sites on what they saw and what improvements could be made. Keeping staff informed of the progress is a beginning step toward program improvements.

In contrast, other programs had a difficult implementing effective evaluation plans. Clark Middle School talked about how they had started the program with a pre-assessment, but no post-assessment was given. Bridget, the site coordinator, said the time could be better spent on other activities. The Boys and Girls Club could not gain access to student grades from Victory Middle School so noting where the students were at academically and what steps needed to be taken were difficult. Center Village University has an understanding of the importance of using data for school improvement, but other than the a self-evaluation there was no evidence that any plan was in place. The collection of data for program improvement is a time consuming task, it is a necessary endeavor for the implementation of an efficient after-school program that will meet student academic or emotional needs.

Programs should stay abreast of the most effective research in after-school programming as well as in education in general. Program leaders must be aware that working with adolescents in middle schools is different from working with the first and

second graders in an elementary school. The middle school site coordinator at Center Village University rotates activities in 30 minute segments because the research suggests that is middle school students' attention span:

> I try to gauge the activities in the room in about a half an hour splits. In other words, nothing that we do is longer than half an hour. Okay, so that if they're involved in homework, they're doing that for half an hour. Accelerated Reading, you can do that for half an hour. Then we'll move, maybe computer work. Then we'll maybe have double dutch, then maybe have ROTC drill. Whatever it is that we're doing, nothing really over, over half an hour. Because we're figuring, we're talking about attention spans, you know, you've gotta be kinda guided by what science says and what it says is, you know, you need to keep it moving and so that's what we try to do.

Programs leaders that stay informed about what works best for students will most likely have the most efficient programs that aid students in their academic and youth development needs.

Summary

In this study, programs have many areas they could improve upon, the staff all work hard for the students they serve. This study found that there was a severe lack of coherency between the school day and the after-school program which would also account for the lack of evidence to suggest the after-school programs help the students increase their academic achievement. Program staff did agree on the importance of the connection with the school day. John, site coordinator at Neptune Middle School, made the point:

> So when you, when you talk about the idea of us complementing or adding to or, you know, shoring up what the students are doing during the regular day, that's pretty much the guise of our program. And what I tell the staff is things that we do particularly during our academic time, you know, if it doesn't have a direct reflection on what they do during the regular school day, in terms of adding to their skill level, my question is is it really worth it? I think because we can add great stuff but if it doesn't help the kids be more productive in their regular day program, I question whether or not, we're, we're really doing what needs to be done. Going back to what people say in *No Child Left Behind*, they don't ask how the kid did in the after-school program. What they ask is how they're doing in the regular school program. So our task is to make sure that those students are successful there and that's what we do.

Program in this study lacked for communication with the school day teachers, but program staff indicated improved communication as a goal for the coming year.

Making changes to the program will be difficult without strong program goals or methods for monitoring the programs. Programs struggle to find the balance between offering academic enrichment activities and providing youth development type supports; finding the balance is key to whether a program is determined a success:

> But the link between positive adult-youth relationships and academic success is a complex one. To burden a program that solely intends to provide youth with adult role models and a safe place to be with the expectation of participants' academic improvement puts it at unnecessary risk of being considered a failure (Walker, 2000).

The 21st CCLCs programs across Michigan provide many examples of how after-school programs impact students through the development of positive relationships with adults or mentors. The belief that these programs will help students take their education more seriously and that itself will lend itself to higher academic achievement is predominant among 21st CCCL staff.

Good in theory, a more structured communication link needs to be put in place between the after-school program and the school day. Without knowing what students do during the school day, the after-school program cannot contribute to a student's classroom success. Further, without providing challenging enrichment activities in the after-school program, students may not be anymore inclined to engage in the after-school programs than they are during the school day.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

A review of 21st Century Community Learning Centers throughout Michigan leads to policy recommendations to strengthen the after-school program's connections with the school day. A stronger connection to the school day may produce both an increase in student achievement but in sustainability within the schools and districts that they serve. The following section offers several policy recommendations for after-school programs.

Goals of the Program

A successful program has a specific plan and that plan begins by setting S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time Bound) goals. These goals should be monitored and changes made as necessary. The principal or school districts and site coordinators together plan strategies where 21st CCLCs can reinforce the mutual goal of student achievement.

The after-school programs have the potential to be more than "daycare" as Susan, program director at Waterford RESD, referred to the programs. The programs have the opportunity to offer students more experiential hands-on learning and authentic learning experiences. Smaller teacher to student ratios of the after-school program provide more opportunities to present activities that they may not have had the resources to do during the day. It is difficult for anyone to grow/learn on today's sixth grade content at a sixth grade reading level when whole parts of learning and basics are missing (unlearned) because of poor attendance, frequent family moves, illness, etc. How about some classes to provide learning to patch the holes in the learning?

The programs should also set policies to target specific groups of students. Strong recruitment of students who have the most academic need could be enforced or offer special programs for specific groups of student such as the bilingual classes offered to the bilingual population at Robin Elementary School. Form Book Clubs, History Clubs, Dance Clubs, or other groups to peak a student's interest.

At the middle school level, barriers were noted. Programs can work like Anderson School District and design a schoolwide policy where the athletes must participate in the academic portion of 21st CCLCs. If the school values the work of the 21st CCLCs program, school day personnel can work in conjunction with after-school programs to plan goals and recruit students to benefit from the program. Ultimately, academic progress made by 21st CCLC participants reflects positively upon the school. When the two programs can work together to develop a comprehensive plan developed to enhance student achievement in both the daytime and evening hours, the students will be the winners.

Recommendations for Setting Goals

This research study suggests that 21st CCLCs include the following for goal setting:

- Set S.M.A.R.T. goals to help plan each year's program and use data to both plan and monitor the progress of their goals.
- Work directly with the school principal and staff to ensure the after-school program's goals align and supplement the goals of the school.

- Offer activities and opportunities to students to engage in experiential learning opportunities. A less structured environment gives students the opportunity to move around physically and to interact with other students.
- Consider recruitment goals to entice low achieving students and any special populations (i.e., bilingual) they would like to target. Work directly with school districts in and with teachers in the building to include students with special needs or students who can especially benefit from the program. Encourage teachers to support the program.

Communication Among Daytime Staff

Communication between daytime staff and after-school staff is key to providing a coherent link to the school day program. The programs had varying levels of communication with the staff who worked during the day. In programs where the site coordinators were not teachers, such as Waterford, Center Village University, the Boys and Girls Club, the 21st CCLCs staff devoted time to connecting with the daytime staff by attending staff meetings, sending memos, and sitting in on day classes. The host schools value the after-school program, but whenever other activities/people need space, the site coordinator offices often are moved.

After-school programs hire daytime staff for the programs. Site coordinators who are also daytime teachers run the risk burn out causing staff turnover at the site and grantee and for 21st CCLC teachers as well. Anchor Public Schools hire the lead teacher for the sole purpose of serving as a resource for teachers in the program and as a liaison between the community-based organization leaders and the after-school program.

School teachers not part of the 21st CCLCs program say that the communication structure is weak. Goals of the after-school program are not clear nor are classroom activities. Few have actually seen the program in action. Yet, most teachers say the program benefits the students, particularly with homework help. Many teachers are unaware of who from the day classes attend at night. did not even know which of their students participated in the program. Daytime teachers also teaching in the after-school program said that they understand what students needed to know because they already work in the school, but how to make lessons more enriching while students still learn is a challenge.

After-school programs have complicated staffing issues. The administrators want a qualified staff but who is considered qualified? Is it only certified teachers or are paraprofessionals also qualified to teach in after-school programs? If teachers do not reach students during the day, how will they reach the children during the evening hours? Adding at least an hour more to the day tends to cause burnout among teachers and the 21st CCLCs students lose the consistency that they need. If 21st CCLCs staff rely on hiring paraprofessionals, then the program staff have not the methodological or pedagogical skills necessary for instructional and classroom discipline. How do program staff communicate with the daytime teachers about the curricula if the after-school staff are not physically located in the daytime classrooms? There are no easy answer to these questions, but 21st CCLCs programs should strive to hire a qualified staff possible to meet the needs of the individual school and should provide in-services designed to help after-school staff deliver productive, enriching, and fun instructional lessons to all students who are at varying levels of academic ability.

Recommendations for Communicating with Daytime Staff

This research study suggests that 21st CCLCs include the following for communication with daytime staff:

- Hire full-time site coordinators when possible. The full-time position allows site coordinators to spend most of their time at the schools interacting with students and teachers in their classrooms along with planning and coordinating activities.
- Hire daytime teachers as part-time site coordinators if a full-time position is not possible, but do not be expect this teacher to teach in the after-school program. Instead, the daytime teacher serves as a resource for the teachers and as a liaison for other organizations working at the center.
- Include after-school staff in all daytime staff meetings and in-services.
- Implement formal communication structures between the 21st CCLCs program and the daytime staff. Memos and e-mails concerning after-school activities should be daily or biweekly.
- Beyond updates, site coordinators need to communicate with teachers about individual students and what is happening in each classroom so supplemental lessons can be applied to the classroom work. When possible, site coordinators should visit classrooms and become a visible presence with the teachers.
- Be aware of the daily homework needs of each student by knowing what the teacher has assigned through some type of homework log.
- Be aware of what is happening in each grade level after-school staff teach in and/or the content area of what the program offers.

- Train all after-school teachers on delivering after-school type instructional activities that differ from what the students learn during the school day.
- Allow the opportunity for interaction among after-school staff with one another and discuss successes and challenges at their sites. These sessions should be hosted by the program director or academic coordinator.

Academic Progress of 21st CCLCs Participants

The 21st CCLCs staff must collect baseline data on the participants. What are their grades starting out? What are their standardized tests scores? What are the strengths and weaknesses? Is discipline or behavior issues? Knowing the needs of each child aids the program staff to develop a comprehensive plan for each student.

Throughout the year, the after-school staff needs to remain in contact with the daytime teachers so all parties are involved in monitoring the progress of the students. Additionally, 21st CCLCs staff need to know what students are studying in classrooms so they can supplement those assignments accordingly. By supplementing those assignments, the after-school staff can design enrichment activities that help students make connections to both their classroom and the real world.

Recommendations for Improving the Academic Achievement of 21st CCLCs Participants

21st CCLC staff need to:

- Collect baseline data on each of its participants and academic activities to increase achievement.

- Monitor the progress of each student and make adjustments in their individual plans.
- Communicate with classroom teachers to learn about classroom assignments and current lesson plans so they can develop and design lessons that supplement what students are doing in the classroom and bring it the lessons to a higher level for the students.
- Design lessons for the after-school program that take advantage of the smaller class sizes and offer the students opportunities for hands-on experiential learning.

Data Used for Continuous Program Improvement

The use of data for continuous program improvement aligns with the other three program components analyzed in this study. First, set goals so the program knows what to measure and can develop an evaluation plan to measure how effectively those goals are being reached. Second, establish close communication between the after-school teachers and the daytime staff about individual students. After-school staff will not know what the needs of the students are or how they can effectively supplement the learning that occurs in the classroom. Lastly, use data to look at student progress through classroom grades, test scores, and behavioral progress.

An effective evaluation plan helps programs in manners of sustainability and continuous program improvement. Programs that do not have a plan in place or a concrete idea of how the students are faring seemed to be floundering. Activities planned without a specific purpose in mind for how this would help students further their

education abilities or life skills. Evaluation plans should focus on more than just academic outcomes. They should be inclusive enough to cover all the major goals of the program including the socio-emotional and behavioral aspects of the program. Both summative and formative evaluations will inform the program (Fashola, 2002).

Recommendations for Using Data for Continuous Program Improvement

This research study suggests that 21st CCLCs include the following for using data for continuous school improvement:

- Implement summative and formative evaluation plans at the beginning of the program to monitor the progress on the goals the program has set forth and to make adjustments to those goals as necessary.
- Receive feedback on the after-school program from the evaluator(s) or program administrators and have opportunities to discuss the feedback and think about ways to improve the program.
- Work with classroom teachers to determine the needs of each student and then monitor their progress. This helps programs understand how they are meeting the needs of each student and how they can more effectively supplement what the students are doing in the classroom.
- Meet with the school principal and/or staff to determine the processes for the program to have access to student data.
- Collect and disseminate the most recent research and best practices for after-school programs to their staff.

- Work with an experienced evaluator to help staff understand the evaluation reports (i.e., what does it mean when a group of students score better than another group on a standardized test?) and how does that impact the 21st CCLCs program.

Challenges and Solutions

After-school programs often are viewed as programs separate from the school day. Until 21st CCLCs are viewed as an extension or an integrated part of the school day, after-school programming staff may not gain the acceptance of the daytime staff nor be able to form an effective partnership to help the school achieve their goals. A major challenge is setting goals for 21st CCLC programs. Many of the program directors were not hired when the original grant proposals were written, and most did not know what the proposals stated as goals. With no prior knowledge of the original intent of the programs, it is difficult for program directors to develop plans that address goals or to develop evaluation plans for monitoring goals. To support the school day, it is important that after-school know the goals of the school and work to with the school day staff to help achieve their needs. Finding the time to work with the school day staff is a challenge, particularly when the site coordinators are part-time. By meeting with the school day staff at the beginning of the school year to discuss the school's goals and how 21st CCLC can support those goals, after-school programs can forge a relationship to help the school grow.

All after-school staff need to be aware of the goals of the program and how the program goals work to increase student achievement. Each person needs to understand how the role he or she plays in the after-school program is an essential part of the growth

of the students. If the 21st CCLC program has S.M.A.R.T. goals in place that support the school's goals and all after-school staff members are aware of the goals and in agreement with the philosophy behind setting these particular goals, the program is more likely to have activities that more consistently align with the school day. Building a relationship with the daytime staff that emphasizes both the after-school program and the daytime education ultimately want the same thing is essential for a positive relationship. Setting goals needs to begin with conversations between the after-school staff and the school day staff on each can support one another.

Staffing is another major challenge for 21st CCLCs. Site coordinators who work during the day tend to have the highest rates of turnover. After working with students for six hours, teachers then put in another hour to two hours leaving them with little planning time. Programs put together with little planning time are unlikely to attend to program goals. Teachers who teach both during the day and after-school also have little planning time. On the other hand, paraprofessionals, college students, and community volunteers may not be the most qualified people to teach these students. Program administrators need to analyze the most major needs of the program and find the staff that can best serve those needs. Programs have the opportunity to be flexible with scheduling. Robin Elementary, for example, only had academics two days a week so teachers only had to be after school two extra days. Program directors need to accommodate the needs to their staff to reduce turnover and get the most use of their time.

Communication between daytime and after-school is one of the most difficult challenges facing the success of the academic portion of the after-school programs. In this study, no formal communication structure is in place at any site. For many programs,

it is an issue of time. Full-time site coordinators are in the building, but they are planning the sessions and attending to various administrative functions, such as entering information into the database system. Part-time site coordinators who are already teachers in the building state that they already know what is going on in the school because they work there. After-school instructors who do not work in the school have no connection with the daytime teachers and after-school instructors who teach in the daytime often teach different grades or content areas after-school from what they teach during the day. With the lack of the communication, after-school programs cannot adequately provide homework support or create activities that will build upon the curriculum teachers teach during the day.

Despite these inherent challenges in establishing communication between daytime staff and after-school staff, these obstacles can be addressed. First, after-school staff need to be present at the school wide meetings to provide updates on what 21st CCLC is doing and hear about any school wide problems, issues, or concerns. At these meetings, school goals and what 21st CCLC can do to help support those goals can be addressed by all staff. During these meetings, 21st CCLC staff should set up times to visit classrooms to help teachers and learn more about what students do in their classrooms. By treating 21st CCLC staff as part of the school staff, teachers are more likely to buy in to the program and begin to see how the program can help their own students.

Second, on at least a biweekly schedule, teachers need to submit copies of homework assignments to after-school staff and inform them of what is happening in the classroom. If staff are aware of teacher expectations of students, the after-school time can be used to help students reach those levels. Schools should also set up policies to recruit

the students most in need of academic assistance to attend the programs, and teachers need to know which of their students are enrolled in the program. The after-school staff and the daytime teachers can then work together to best serve the needs of those students.

Third, the after-school staff should be included in all professional development in which the school staff participates. The 21st CCLC staff will be more knowledgeable about what teachers do in the classroom and can implement similar teaching strategies in the after-school program.

Finally, after-school staff needs to participate in school wide data analysis. The program staff must have access to student records, such as grades and standardized test scores to understand areas in which students need the most help. When after-school staff are knowledgeable about the student achievement levels, they can develop plans to help increase those levels and help the students reach their goals. Currently, time constraints and the lack of integration of the 21st CCLC program with the daytime program poses several challenges. When 21st CCLC staff can effectively and collaboratively work with the daytime school staff and become an integrated part of the school day, the programs will have the most impact on increasing student achievement.

Sustaining the Field

The funds for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, a federally funded program, could be reduced or eliminated from the federal budget at any time. Interestingly, the only person in the study, Martina from Center Village, spoke to this issue. In order to create sustainability, she believed that developing coherency between the school was of utmost importance:

> A priority is to create sustainability. My philosophy in working with the school district and community partners is to be able to, particularly with the, with the school district, is to be able to, the first time that I meet with somebody is to tell them that this isn't my program or this isn't a Center Village program. This is their program. That we're just here as someone within the community to be able to provide resources because that's what we should be doing in higher education is providing resources and collaborating with them. And I think that philosophy has really aided in the partnership, whether it's a community partner or it's the district as a partner.

Working so closely with a school or district and trying to explain to them that this program will ultimately benefit the students you see in your classrooms every day is an important piece of the puzzle. Yet, this is a link that most districts have not found with their school or partner.

Because of the complexities involved in after-school programming, the research on after-school programs is lacking. This study shows through case studies various ways that program activities are structured and how they are linked to the student's classroom. In Michigan, the level of coherence between the two programs is weak at best. Communication between schools or programs need improvement, but no program established formal structures.

From an academic perspective, work on the field of after-school programs is in its infancy. Data and current evaluation studies provide a broader understanding of what the field entails and how it can productively lead to increased student achievement academically and otherwise:

> Finally, we are in the early stages of developing theories linking interventions and outcomes. As this work progresses an more evaluations become available, stakeholders will begin to come to consensus about what kinds of programs and activities have the best chance of achieving positive outcomes for children in after school program. Bringing the development research theories and findings together with information from program evaluations to inform long-term planning, decision-making, and day-to-day activities of programs is critical as we lay a solid foundation on which to build a field (Weiss, 2000: 1).

As more schools "fail" and more supports and interventions are necessary for students to succeed, after-school programs will become an increasingly more important part of educational institutions. Developing ways to help programs make stronger connections with the school day will help increase the outcomes associated with after-school programs.

Before this can happen, much more research needs to be done on after-school programs. Little is known about the groups of students who actually participate in after-school programs or what types of activities generate the most interest from students. How do partnerships with community-based organizations help structure the programs? And, how can activities that support the school day be implemented in an after-school environment that will help students succeed academically while providing them with the emotional support and guidance that many so desperately need. Organizationally, how can after-school programs recruit the most highly qualified staff to teach in the after-school programs and how do programs deal with a continuous staff turnover?

After-school programs have demonstrated that they can make significant impacts on student lives. And, the staff involved in the programs are people who truly believe that they can help make a difference in the student's lives. The field of after-school programming raises a significant question concerning policy and practice. How can a program with a high expectation of increasing student academic achievement work with schools to reach this goal? The 21st Century Community Learning Center programs in Michigan ask this question and seek answers that are consistent and tested to show positive student achievement in after-school programs.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Program Director Interview Protocol

Demographic Information

First, I'd like to ask you a little about yourself and your history in education.

1) How long have you had your current position as the 21st CCLCs director?
2) What is your educational background (i.e., what is the highest degree attained)?
3) Do you have any teaching or other educational experience?
   3a) If so, please tell me about it.
4) Please tell me how you became interested in after-school programs and what made you want to work here.

Context of the After-school Program

Now, I'd like to talk about your 21st CCLCs program in general.

5) Please explain what you see as the primary goal of a 21st CCLCs program?
   Probe: How are your goals focused around academics? How are your goals focused on other activities, such as recreational activities?
6) How does your 21st CCLCs achieve those goals?
7) Does your 21st CCLCs program have a specific mission or vision?
   7a) If yes, please describe it for me.
   7b) If not, why doesn't your program have a specific mission or vision?
8) How does the learning environment provided in your after-school program make good programming compared to learning during the school day?
9) What are your attendance policies for students participating in the after-school program?

Links to the School Day

This next set of questions asks about how the after-school program connects to the regular school.

10) How would you describe the link between school-day academics and the 21st CCLCs academic program?
11) How would you describe your site coordinators relationships with the regular classroom teachers and school staff?
    Probe: Do you have a formal communication structure between program staff and school staff? Does your program staff attend school functions? Does the school

staff attend 21st CCLCs events? Do the after-school staff and school day staff attend the same professional development offerings?

12) How do your site coordinators connect with the regular classroom teacher?
Probe: Does this happen through formal contacts about individual students, informal contacts, logs, other means?
13) What information about curriculum is shared between you, your staff and the regular classroom teacher?
Probe: Do both curricula align to the state standards? To the Michigan Out-of-School Time Standards?
14) What information about individual students is shared between you, your staff, and the regular classroom teacher?
Probe: How does your staff learn about individual student learning styles? How are the academic learning needs of the students assessed by the after-school staff?
15) How important do you believe the link is between the regular school day and the after-school program?
16) How does that link benefit or not benefit students?
17) What actions has the program taken to strengthen the relationship between the program and the regular school day?
18) What are the strengths of that relationship?
19) How would you like to see that relationship improved?

Management of the Program

I'd like to briefly talk about the management of your program.

20) Are your site coordinators full-time or part time?
21) What did you use as hiring requirements for site coordinators?
22) What were your hiring requirements for other instructional staff?
23) What is the decision-making process for your 21st CCLCs staff in terms of deciding instructional strategies and curriculum used?
Probe: Do site coordinators make or contribute to the decisions? What role does your advisory committee play?
24) In what types of training and staff development does your staff participate?
25) How is staff instructed to assess students and the progress they are making?
26) How is program assessment and evaluation conducted?

Student Participants and General Academic Supports

The next few questions focus on your target student population and the academic supports used in the program.

27) How would you describe your student population in terms of demographics and academic achievement?
28) What types of academic supports do you use within the program?
Probe: Would you define them as homework help, tutoring, additional instructional time?
29) How are the academic learning needs of students defined?

30) What instructional models are used to address the needs of the students (i.e., remediation, enrichment, alternative learning styles, problem-based learning, or self-directed learning)? Please describe.
31) What would you describe as the strengths of after-school programs serving as academic support systems?
32) What would you describe as the weaknesses of after-school programs serving as academic support systems?
33) Do you see cognitive improvements in the 21st CCLCs participants?
34) How do you assess the cognitive improvements?
35) Do you see behavioral improvements in your students?
36) How do you assess the behavioral improvements?

Literacy Curriculum

Although we could talk about many different specific areas of your program, I would like to focus on literacy as a specific academic subject that is also taught during the school day.

37) How is literacy taught in the after-school program?
38) Can you describe the after-school literacy curriculum?
Probe: What does a successful lesson plan include? What does a typical day or week look like in literacy instruction in the after-school program?
39) Why was this curriculum chosen?
Probe: Does it connect to classroom work? District initiatives? Aligns with benchmarks and standards?
40) Who decided what literacy curriculum to use?
41) How does the teaching of literacy in the after-school program relate to the literacy the students are learning during the school day?
Probe: Is it the same material? Are similar instructional strategies used? Is the after-school program used to support what the student is learning during the school day or extend upon what is being taught during the school day?
42) Who did you recruit to teach your literacy curriculum?
Probe: Did you choose a certified teacher, college student, volunteer? Why?
43) What type of pedagogy is used to teach the curriculum?
44) How many kids are in each academic literacy session?

Conclusion

45) Any other thoughts or comments you would like to share?

Thank you!

APPENDIX B

Site Coordinator Interview Protocol

Demographics

First, I'd like to ask you a little about yourself and your history in education.

1) How long have you had your current position at the 21st CCLCs site?
2) What is your educational background (i.e., what is your highest degree attained?)
3) Do you have any teaching or other educational experience?
   3a) If so, please tell me about it.
4) Please tell me how you became interested in after-school programs and what made you want to work here.

Context of the After-school Program

Now I'd like to talk about your 21st CCLCs program in general.

5) Please explain what you see as the primary goal of a 21st CCLCs program?

Probe: How are your goals focused around academics? How do your goals focus on other activities, such as recreational activities?

6) How does your 21st CCLCs program achieve those goals?
7) Does your 21st CCLCs program have a specific mission or vision?
   7a) If yes, please describe it for me.
   7b) If not, why doesn't your program have a mission or vision statement?
8) How does the learning environment provided in your after-school program made good programming compared to learning during the school day?
9) What are your attendance policies for students participating in the after-school program?

Links to School Day

10) How would you describe the link between school day academics and the 21st CCLCs academic program?
11) How would you describe your relationship with regular classroom teachers and school staff?
    Probe: Do you have a formal communication structure between program staff and school staff? Does your program staff attend school functions? Does the school day staff attend 21st CCLCs events? Do the after-school staff and school day staff attend the same professional development offerings?
12) How do you and your staff connect with the regular classroom teacher?
    Probe: Do you have formal communication about individual students, informal contacts, logs, other means?

13) What information about curriculum is shared between you, your staff and the regular classroom teacher?
Probe: Do both curricula align to the state standards? To the Michigan Out-of-School time standards?
14) What information about individual students is shared between you, your staff, and the regular classroom teacher?
Probe: How does your staff learn about individual student learning styles? How are the academic learning needs of the students assessed by the after-school staff?
15) How important do you believe the link is between the regular school day and the after-school program?
16) How does that link benefit or not benefit students?
17) What actions has the program taken to strengthen the relationship between the program and the regular school day?
18) What are the strengths of that relationship?
19) How would you like to see that relationship improved?

Management of the Program

I'd like to talk briefly about the management of your program.

20) Is your position full-time or part time?
21) Who hired your instructional staff? What were the hiring requirements?
22) How are decisions made regarding curriculum and instruction? What role do you play?
23) In what types of training and staff development does your staff participate?
24) How is staff instructed to assess students and they progress they are making?
25) How is program assessment and evaluation conducted?

Student Participants and General Academic Support

The next few questions are in relation to your target student population and the academic components of your program.

26) How would you describe your student population in terms of demographics and academic achievement?
27) What types of academic supports do you use within the program?
Probe: Would you define them as homework help, tutoring, additional instructional time?
28) What instructional models are used to address the needs of students (i.e., remediation, enrichment, alternative learning styles, problem-based learning, or self-directed learning)? Please describe.
29) What would you describe as the strengths of after-school programs serving as academic support systems?
30) What would you describe as the weaknesses of after-school programs serving as academic support systems?

31) Do you see cognitive improvements in the 21st CCLCs participants?
32) How do you assess the cognitive improvements?
33) Do you see behavioral improvements in your students?
34) How do you assess behavioral improvements?

Literacy Curriculum

Although we could talk about many different areas of your program, I would like to focus on literacy as a specific academic subject that is also taught during the school day.

35) How is literacy taught in the after-school program?
36) Can you describe the after-school literacy curriculum?
37) Why was this curriculum chosen?
    Probe: Does it connect to classroom work? District initiatives? Aligns with benchmarks and standards?
38) Who decided what literacy curriculum to use?
39) How does the teaching of literacy in the after-school program relate to the literacy the students are learning during the school day?
    Probe: Is it the same material? Are similar instructional strategies used? Is the after-school program used to support what the student is learning during the school day or extend upon what is being taught during the school day?
40) Who did you recruit to teach your literacy curriculum?
    Probe: Did you choose a certified teacher, college student, volunteer? Why?
41) What type of pedagogy is used to teach the curriculum?
42) How many kids are in each academic literacy session?

Conclusion

44) Any other thoughts or comments you would like to share?

Thank you!

APPENDIX C

Regular Classroom Teacher Interview Protocol

Demographics

First, I'd like to ask you a little about yourself and your history in education.

1) How long have you been a teacher at this school?
2) How long have you been a teacher?
3) Have you ever worked at an after-school program? If so, please tell me about your experience.

Links to After-school Program

My next set of questions is about the relationship between your school and the after-school program that serves students from this school.

4) In general, what do you know about the 21st CCLCs program?
   Probe: What is its purpose?
5) How would you describe the 21st CCLCs program in your school?
   Probe: What are the goals? Do you see those goals being achieved?
6) How does the learning environment provided in the after-school program differ from that provided during the day?
7) How would you describe your relationship with the site coordinators and staff of the 21st CCLCs programs?
   Probe: Do you have a formal communication structure between school staff and after-school staff? Does your staff attend after-school functions? Does the program staff attend school day functions? Do you and the after-school staff attend the same professional development offerings?
8) How do you connect with the 21st CCLCs staff ?
   Probe: Does this happen through formal contacts about individual students, informal contacts, logs, other means?
9) What information about curriculum is shared between you and the 21st CCLCs staff?
   Probe: Do both curricula align to the state standards? To the Michigan Out-of-School Time standards?
10) How would you describe the student population of those being recruited in 21st CCLCs programs in terms of demographics and academic achievement?
11) What information about individual students is shared between you and the 21st CCLCs staff?
   Probe: How does the after-school staff learn about individual student learning styles? How are the academic needs of the students assessed by the after-school staff?
12) Do you see cognitive improvements in 21st CCLCs participants?
13) How do you assess cognitive improvements?
14) Do you see behavioral improvements in 21st CCLCs participants?
15) How do you assess behavioral improvements?

16) How important do you believe the link is between the regular school day and the after-school program?
17) How does that link benefit or not benefit students?
18) What would you describe as the strengths of the after-school programs serving as academic support systems?
19) What would you describe as the weaknesses of after-school programs serving as academic support systems?
20) What actions has the program taken to strengthen the relationship between the program and the regular school day?
21) What do you see as the strengths of that relationship?
22) How would you like to see that relationship improved?

General Academic Support

My next two questions are about your teaching strategies in general.

23) How do you define the academic learning needs of your students?
Probe: How do you gauge individual student needs? What special support is given to student with needs?
24) What instructional models do you use in your classroom (i.e., remediation, enrichment, alternative learning styles, problem-based learning, or self-directed learning)? Please describe.

Literacy Curriculum

My next few questions are about the literacy curriculum used in your classroom.

25) What literacy curriculum do you use in your classroom?
26) Can you describe your literacy curriculum?
Probe: What does a successful lesson plan include? What does a typical day or week look like in literacy instruction in your classroom?
27) Who decided what literacy curriculum to use?
Probe: District, school, principal?
28) Why was this curriculum chosen?
Probe: Does the curriculum align with the *Michigan Curriculum Framework* benchmarks and standards? How do you know?
29) What type of instructional strategies do you use to teach this specific curriculum?
30) How many students are in your class?
31) How would you describe the students in your school in terms of demographics and academic achievement?

Conclusion

32) Any other comments or thoughts you would like to share?

Thank you!

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

Baldwin Grossman, J, Price, M.L., Fellerath, V., Jucovy, L. Kotloff, L. Z., Raley, R. & Walker, K. E. (2002) *Multiple Choices After School: Findings from the Extended-Service Schools Initiative.* Washington, DC. Public/Private Ventures. June.

Bernhardt, V. L. (2004). *Data analysis for continuous school improvement.* Larchmont: Eye on Education.

Borman, G. & D'Agostino, J. (1996). Title I and Student Achievement: A Meta-Analysis of Federal Evaluation Results. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 18*(4), 309-326.

Boys & Girls Club of America. (1999). *Program Basics: The Definitive Program Resource for Boys & Girls Clubs.* Boys & Girls Club of America.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America. (1999). *Tools for inspiring and enabling young people to fully realize their full potential...our national program.* Boys & Girls Club of America.

Bumgarner, M. A. (1999). *Working With School-Age Children.* Mountain View, California: Mayfield Publishing Company.

Butty Manswell, J.-A. L., LaPoint, V., Thomas, G, and Thompson, D. (2001). *The Changing Face of After-School Programs.* Retrieved October 22, 2004, from http://www.principals.org/news/bltn_aftr_sch1901.cfm.

Cohen, D. and Spillane, J. (1992). Policy and practice: The relations between governance and instruction. In G. Grant (Ed.) *Review of research in education, Vol. 18* (pp. 3-49). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

Cooper, H., Valentine, J., Nye, B., and Lindsay, J. (1999). Relationships Between Five After-School Activities and Academic Achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 91*(2), 369-378.

Cosden, M., Morrison, G., Albanese, A., & Macias, S. (2001). *When Homework is not Home Work: After-School Programs for Homework Assistance.* Educational Psychologist. 36(3). 211-221.

Craciun, K. & Snow Renner, R. (2002). *No Child Left Behind Policy Brief: Low-Performing Schools.* Denver: Education Commission of the States.

DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation. (1999). *DC Standards for Out-of-School Time.*

DuBois, D.L., Holloway, B.E., Valentine, J.C., Cooper, H. (2002). Effectiveness of mentoring programs for youth: A meta-analytic review. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 30,* 157-197.

DuFour R. & Eaker, R. (1998). *Professional learning communities at work: Best practice for enhancing student achievement.* Bloomington: National Educational Service.

Dynarski, M., James-Burdumy, S., Moore, M., Rosenberg, L., Deke, J. and Mansfield, W. (2004). *When Schools Stay Open Late: The National Evaluation of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education/Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE).

Dynarski, M., Moore, M., Mullens, J., Gleason, P., James-Burdumy, S., Rosenberg, L., Pistorino, C., Silva, T., Deke, J., Mansfield, W., Heaviside, S., & Levy, D. (2003). *When Schools Stay Open Late: The National Evaluation of the 21st-Century Community Learning Centers Program First Year Findings.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of the Under Secretary.

Farbman, D. A. *The Forgotten Eighty Percent: The Case for Making the Most of Children's Time Out of School.* Boston: Massachusetts 2020.

Grossman, J.B. & Rhodes, J.E. (2002). The test of time: predictors and effects of duration in youth mentoring relationships. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 30,* 199-219.

Guzman, L., Redd, Z., Matthews, G., Moore, K., & Bronte-Tinkew, J. *Outcomes for Youth in Out-of-School Time Programs: Summary Report of a Baseline Study.* Washington, DC: Child Trends, Inc.

Halpern, R. (2002). A Different Kind of Child Development Institution: The History of After-School Programs for Low-Income Children. *Teachers College Record, 104*(2), 178-211.

Harvard Family Research Project. (2003). *Out-of-School Time Evaluation Snapshot: Performance Measures in Out-of-School Time Evaluation* (No. 3). Cambridge: Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Harvard Family Research Project. (2004). *Understanding and Measuring Attendance in Out-of-School Time Programs.* Issues and Opportunities in Out-of-School Time Evaluation. (No. 7). August.

Herrera, C. & Arbreton, A.J.A. (2003). *Increasing Opportunities for Older Youth in After-School Programs.* Washington,DC: Public/Private Ventures.

Hirschman, A.O. (1970). *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty:* responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Huang, D., Gribbons, B., Sung Kim, K., Lee, C. & Baker, E. (2000). *A Decade of Results: The Impact of the LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program on Subsequent Student Achievement and Performance.* Los Angeles: UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation (CSE).

Hudley, C. (2001). *Perceived Behavioral and Academic Competence in Middle Childhood: Influences of a Community-Based Youth Development Program.* Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, WA. April.

Jekielek, S., Moore, K.A., Hair, E.C. (2002). *Mentoring programs and youth development: A synthesis.* Washington DC: Child Trends.

Kleiner, B., Nolin, M., and Chapman, C. (2004). *Before- and After-School Care, Programs, and Activities of Children in Kindergarten Through Eighth Grade: 2001.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education.

Larson, R. W. (2000). Toward a Psychology of Positive Youth Development. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 170-183. Retrieved October 22, 2004 at http://gateway.ut.ovid.com/gw1/ovidweb.cgi.

Lauer, P., Akiba, M., Wilkerson, S.B., Apthrop, H.S., Snow, D. & Martin-Glenn, M. (2004). *The Effectiveness of Out-of-School Time Strategies in Assisting Low-Achieving Students in Reading and Mathematics: A Research Synthesis.* Aurora: Mid-Continent Research of Education and Learning.

Little, P., Sharon DuPree, and Sharon Deich. (2002). *Documenting Progress and Demonstrating Results: Evaluating Local Out-of-School Time Programs.* Cambridge: Harvard Family Research Project.

Marzano, R. J., Waters, T. & McNulty, B.A. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results.* Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL).

Mass Insight. (2002). *Schools Alone are not Enough: How After-School and Summer Programs Help Raise Student Achievement.* Research Report. Mass Insight Education. May.

McComb, E. M. & Scott-Little, C. (2003). *After-School Programs: Evaluations and Outcomes.* Greensboro: SERVE.

McDonnell, L. & Elmore, R. (1991). *Getting the job done: Alternative policy instruments*. In A. Odden (Ed.) Education Policy Implementation. Albany: SUNY Press. 143-156.

Michigan Department of Education. (2003). 21st Century Community Learning Centers Implementation Technical Assistance Training: Cohort B. Conference at Lansing Holiday Inn West. October 8.

Michigan Department of Education. (2003). *Model Standards for Out-of-School Time Programs in Michigan*. February 27.

Michigan Department of Education. (2002). *Competitive Grant Application for 2002-2003: 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grants.*

Michigan Department of Education. (1996). *Michigan Curriculum Framework.*

Michigan State University. (2002). *Statewide Evaluation of 21st Century Community Learning Centers.*

Michigan Department of Education. (2003). *Model Standards for Out-of-School Time Programs in Michigan*. February 27.

Miller, B. M. (2003). *Critical Hours: Executive Summary*: Nellie Mae Education Foundation.

Munoz, M. (2002). *Outcome-Based Community-Schools Partnerships: The Impact of the After-School Programs on Non-Academic and Academic Indicators*. (ERIC ED 468 973).

Newman, S.A., Fox, J.A., Flynn, E.A., & Christeson, W. (2000). *America's After-School Choice: The Prime Time for Juvenile Crime, Or Youth Enrichment and Achievement*. Washington, DC: Fight Crime: Invest in Kids.

Newmann, F.M., Smith, B., Allensworth, E., and Bryk, A. (2001). *Instructional Program Coherence: What It Is and Why It Should Guide School Improvement Policy.* Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis. Vol. 23 (4). Pp. 297-321. Winter.

Noam, G. G., Biancarosa, G., and Dechausay, N. (2003). *Afterschool Education: Approaches to an Emerging Field*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

Payne, R. (1998). *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*. Highlands, TX: RFT Publishing Co.

Redd, Z., Cochran, S., and Moore, K. (2002). *Academic Achievement Programs and Youth Development: A Synthesis*. Washington, DC: Child Trends-Edna McConnell Clark Foundation.

Scott-Little, C., Hamann, M. & Jurs, S.G. (2002). *Evaluations of After-School Programs: A Meta-Evaluation of Methodologies and Narrative Synthesis of Findings.* American Journal of Evaluation. 23 (4). 387-419.

Schinke, S.P., Cole, K.C. & Poulin, S.R. (2000). *Enhancing the Educational Achievement of At-Risk Youth.* Prevention Science. 1(1). 51-60.

Shumow, L. (2001). *Academic Effects of After-School Programs.* Retrieved August 13, 2004. ERIC Digests ED458010.

Tyack, D. & Cuban, L. (1995) *Tinkering Toward Utopia: a century of public school reform.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Walker,& Arbreton, A.J.A. *After-School Pursuits: An Examination of Outcomes in the San Francisco Beacon Initiative.* San Francisco: Public/Private Ventures.

U.S. Department of Education. (2003). *21st Century Community Learning Centers Non-Regulatory Guidance.* February.

U.S. Department of Education. *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.* Washington, DC.

U.S. Department of Education. (2002). *When schools stay open late: The national evaluation of the 21st-Century Community Learning Centers Program, Executive Summary: First Year Findings.*

Zaff, J. & Redd, Z. (2001). *Logic Models for Out-of-School Time Programs.* Washington, DC: DC Children & Youth Investment Trust Corporation.