

Evaluation of 21st Century Community Learning Centers in North Dakota
2021-2022

Addendum: Report on GPRA Performance Indicators

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Executive Summary

In this addendum to our earlier report of evaluation of North Dakota 21st Century Community Learning Centers for the 2021-22 fiscal year that was released in October 2022, we include an analysis of data pertaining to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measures. The results are reported for the overall population of participants in these programs as well as separately for Native American and for low-income participants. Overall, the results show that large majorities of participants (70% to 95%) improved in English and math achievement, attendance, behavior, and engagement. Participants who are Native American or low-income improved at similar rates to the overall population, except for low-income participants who experienced an in-school suspension the prior year. Comparisons with non-participants generally showed that participants improved at rates that were higher or the same as non-participants.

Evaluation Methods and Measures

Data from the state Department of Public Instruction included English and math test scores, attendance rates, and in-school suspensions. Data on student engagement came from teacher surveys that were entered into the Youth Services database. Unfortunately, no data on GPAs of students in grades 7-8 and 10-12 for the 2021-22 academic year was available. Comparisons of participants to non-participants which showed a statistically significant difference favoring participants are marked in the following tables with an asterisk (*).

Evaluation Results

GPR 1a: *Percentage of students in grades 4-8 participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in reading and language arts on state assessments.*

Overall, 74% of 4-8 graders who participated in 21st CCLC programming improved in their English Language Arts test score from 20-21 to 21-22. Among Native Americans, 71.7% improved, and among low income students, 73.5% improved. See Table 1.

Table 1

Percentage of 4-8 Graders Improving in English Language Arts

Group	Total Number	% Improving	Average Points Improved
All students			
21 CCLC Participants	2,973	74.0%*	33.1*
Non-participants	35,295	69.9%	30.9
Native Americans			
21 CCLC Participants	787	71.7%	33.5
Non-participants	2,796	68.2%	33.5
Low Income			
21 CCLC Participants	1,509	73.5%*	33.3
Non-participants	8,333	69.6%	32.6

*21 CCLC participants were significantly higher on this measure than non-participants.

GPRA 1b: *Percentage of students in grades 4-8 participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in math on state assessments.*

Overall, 82% of 4-8 graders who participated in 21st CCLC programming improved in their math test score from 20-21 to 21-22. Among Native Americans, 78% improved, and among low income students, 80% improved. See Table 2.

Table 2

Percentage of 4-8 Graders Improving in Math

Group	Total Number	% Improving	Average Points Improved
All students			
21 CCLC Participants	2,991	82.3%	34.6
Non-participants	38,491	83.4%	35.7
Native Americans			
21 CCLC Participants	799	78.0%	36.5
Non-participants	2,849	78.5%	37.1
Low Income			
21 CCLC Participants	1,528	80.1%	35.3
Non-participants	8,429	79.8%	36.3

GPRA 2: *Percentage of students in grades 7-8 and 10-12 attending 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer with a prior-year unweighted GPA of less than 3.0 who demonstrated an improved GPA.*

Unfortunately, we were not able to access any data pertaining to this goal.

GPRA 3: *Percentage of students in grades 1-12 participating in 21CCLC during the school year who had a school day attendance rate at or below 90% in the prior school year and demonstrated an improved attendance rate in the current school year.*

Included in Table 3 are only those students whose attendance rate in the prior school year was below 90%. Among those students, 70.7% of 21st CCLC participants improved in attendance the next year, in contrast to only 58% of non-participants who improved. Native Americans and low-income students also improved in attendance at rates similar to the overall rate. See Table 3.

Table 3

Percentage of Students Improving in Attendance

Group	Total Number	% Improving
All students		
21 CCLC Participants	988	70.7%*
Non-participants	11,326	58.0%
Native Americans		
21 CCLC Participants	587	71.2%*
Non-participants	2,573	57.8%
Low Income		
21 CCLC Participants	816	69.6%*
Non-participants	6,192	56.7%

*21 CCLC participants were significantly higher on this measure than non-participants.

GPRA 4: *Percentage of students in grades 1-12 attending 21CCLC programming during the school year and summer who experienced a decrease in in-school suspensions compared to the previous school year.*

Included in Table 4 are only those students who experienced at least one in-school suspension in the prior school year. Among those students, nearly 95% of 21st CCLC participants decreased in suspensions the next year, compared to 84.4% of non-participants who decreased. While Native Americans and low-income participants decreased at lower rates, their rates were similar to their counterparts who did not participate in 21st CCLC programming. See Table 4.

Table 4

Percentage of Students Decreasing in In-School Suspensions

Group	Total Number	% Decreasing
All students		
21 CCLC Participants	58	94.8%*
Non-participants	1,147	84.4%
Native Americans		
21 CCLC Participants	22	86.4%
Non-participants	144	84.0%
Low Income		
21 CCLC Participants	32	40.6%
Non-participants	271	42.8%

*21 CCLC participants were significantly higher on this measure than non-participants.

GPRA 5: *Percentage of students in grades 1-5 participating in 21CCLC programming in the school year and summer who demonstrated an improvement in teacher-reported engagement in learning.*

Teachers reported that 70.7% of 21st CCLC participants improved in their engagement in learning. Similar rates of improvement were found among Native Americans and low-income participants. Teacher reports were available for only a small subset of non-participants, and thus comparisons to non-participants must be made with caution. See Table 5.

Table 5

Percentage of Students Increasing in Teacher-Reported Engagement

Group	Total Number	% Improving
All students		
21 CCLC Participants	2,090	70.7%*
Non-participants	592	57.9%
Native Americans		
21 CCLC Participants	458	73.1%
Non-participants	61	62.3%
Low Income		
21 CCLC Participants	976	71.5%*
Non-participants	161	61.5%

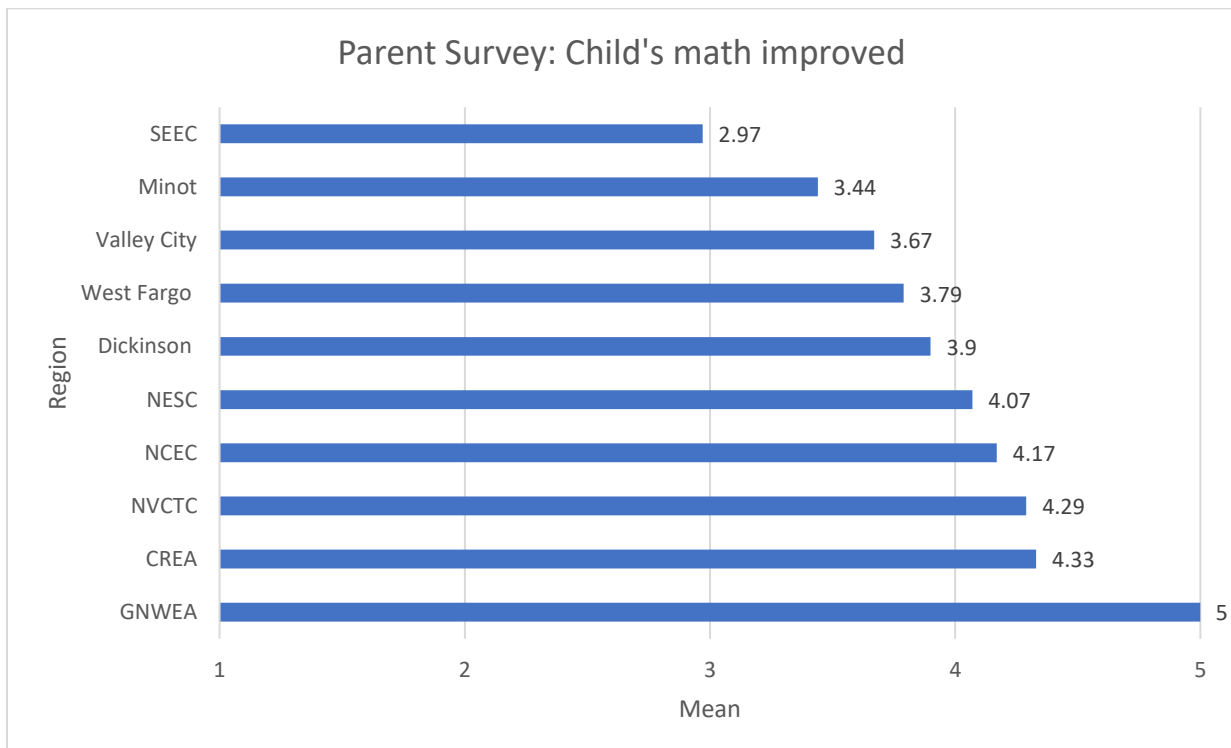
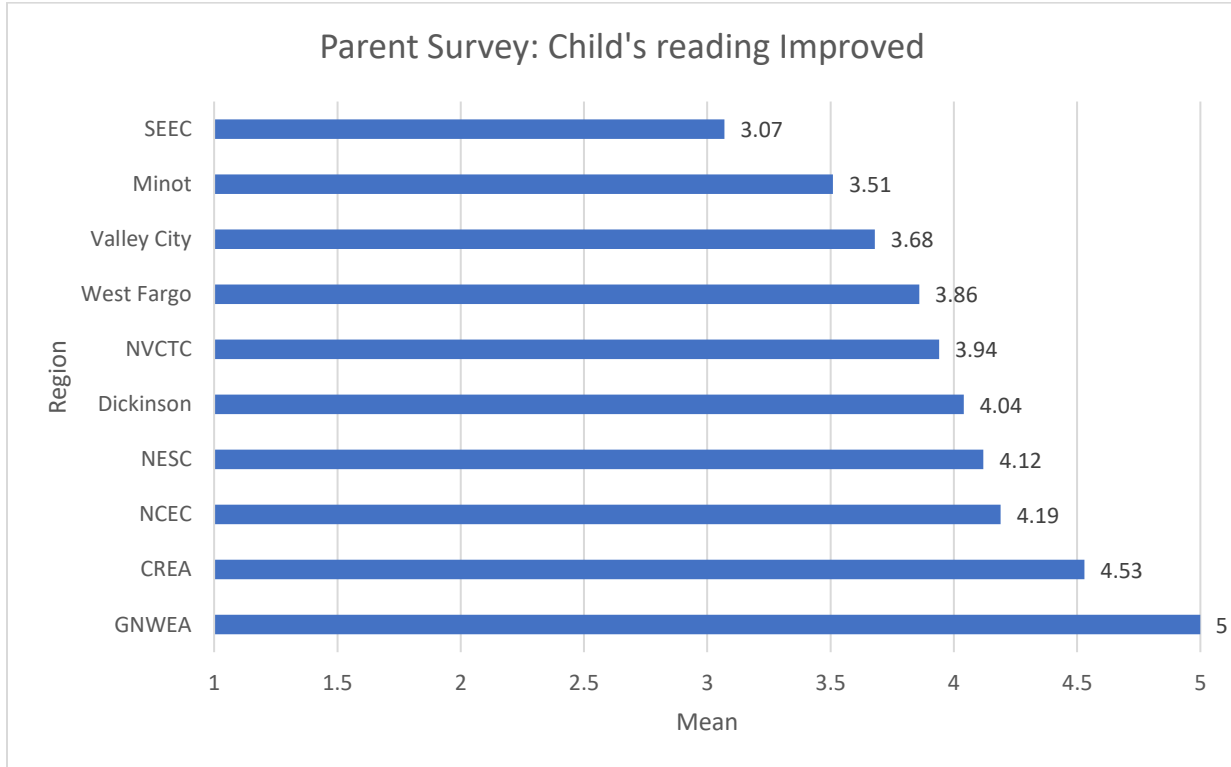
*21 CCLC participants were significantly higher on this measure than non-participants.

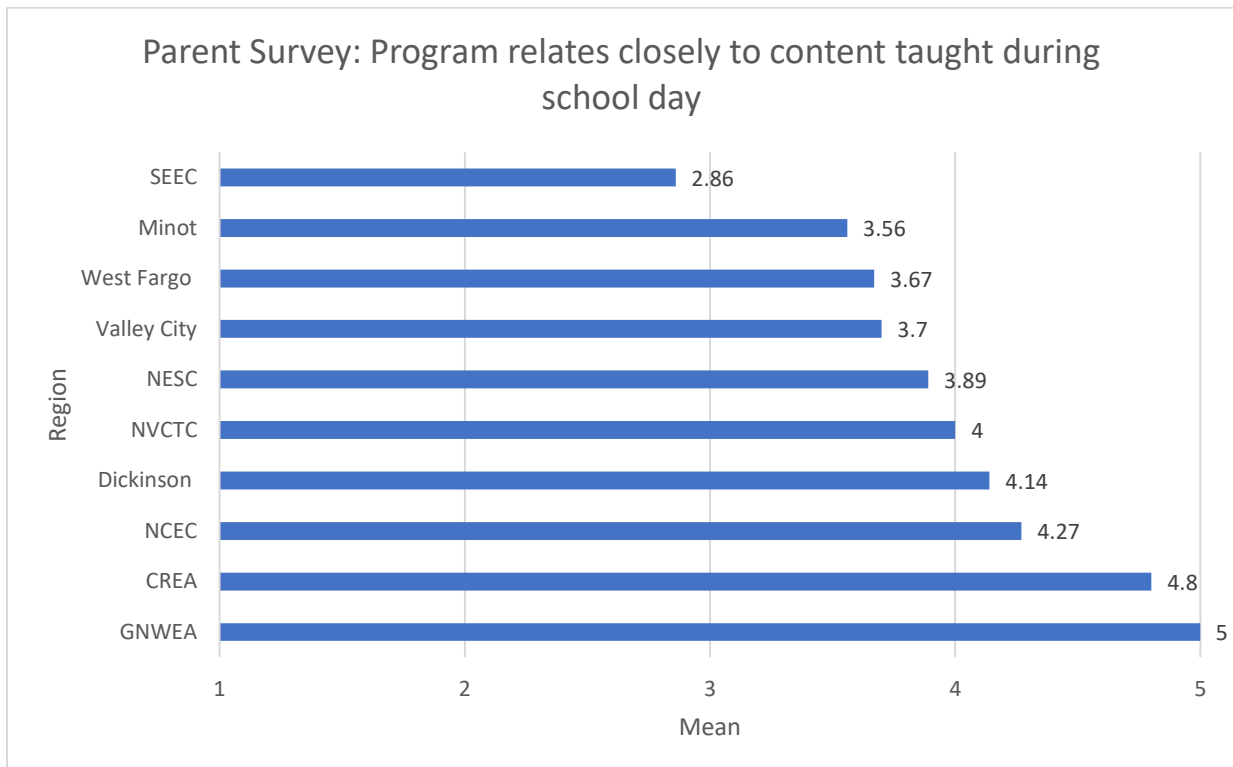
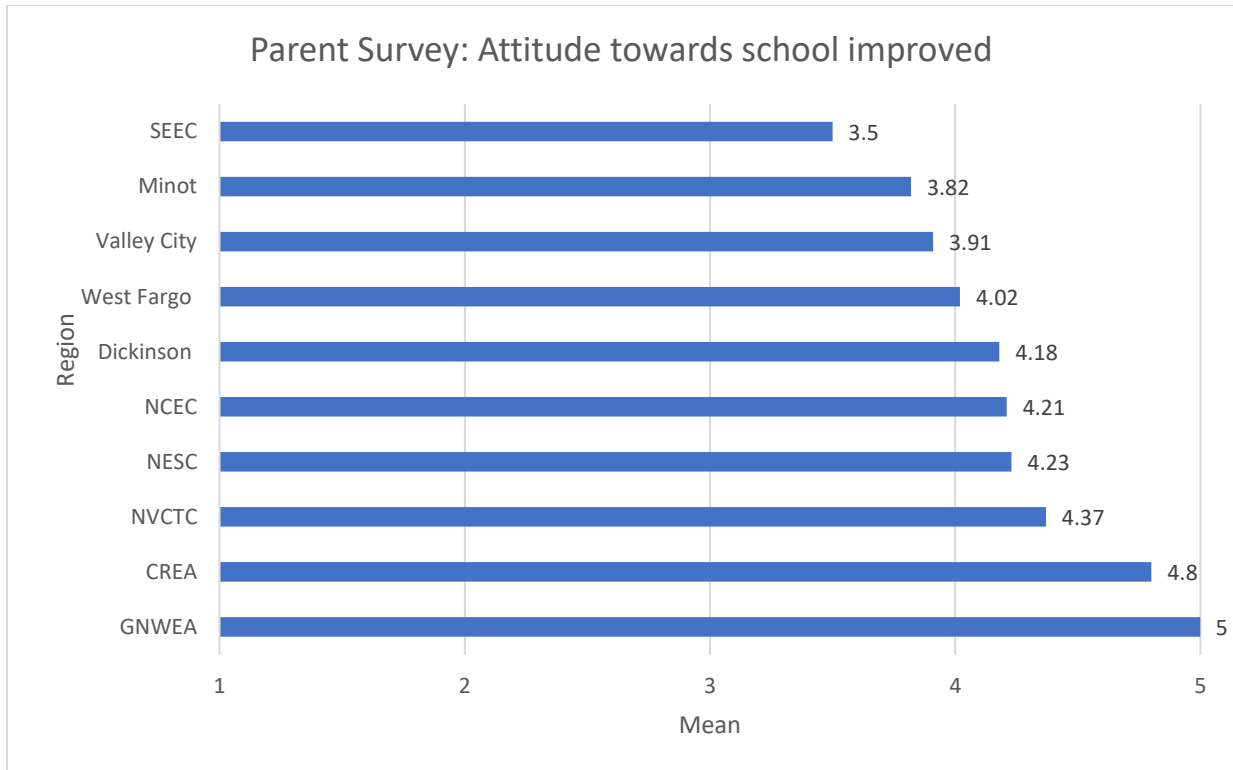
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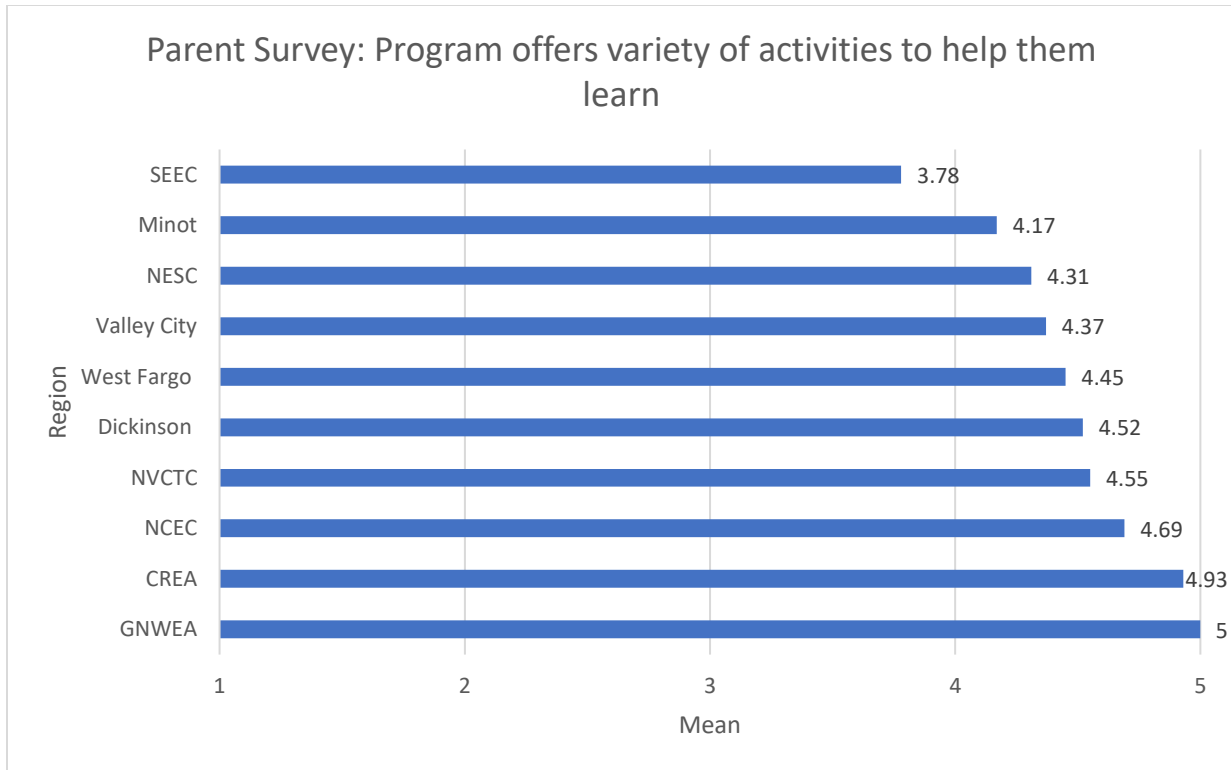
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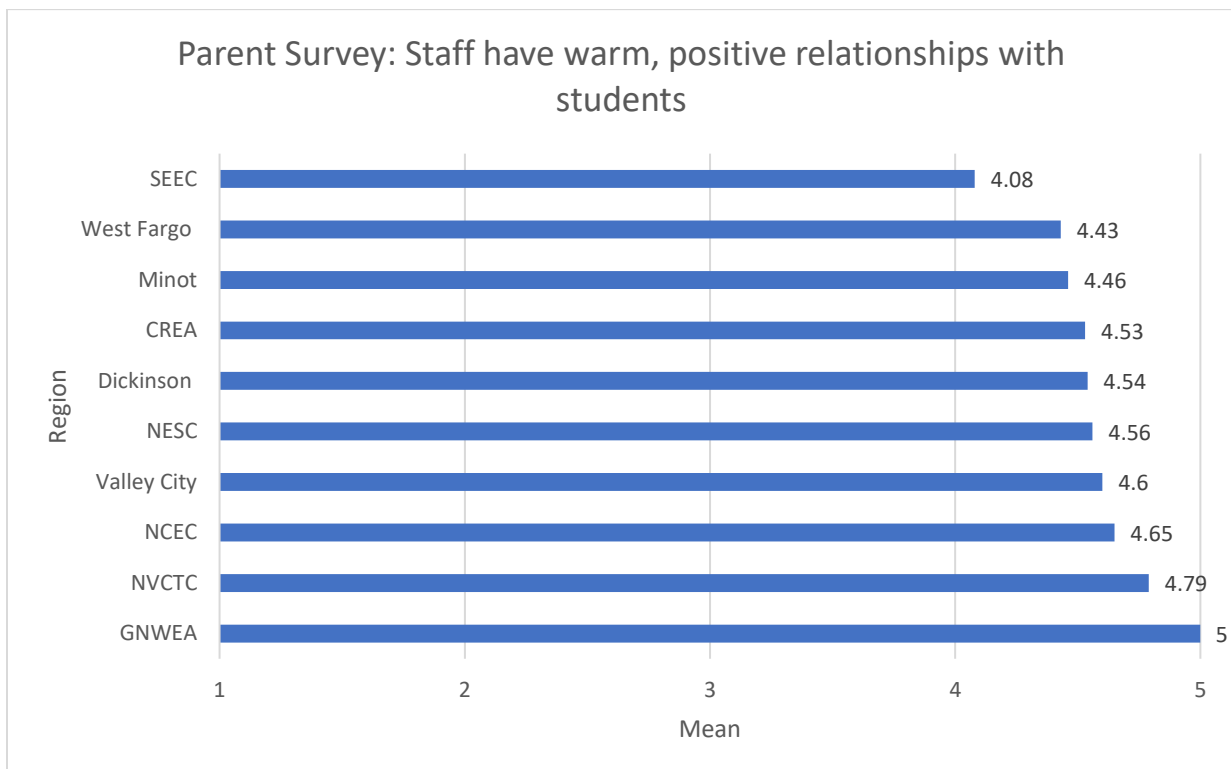
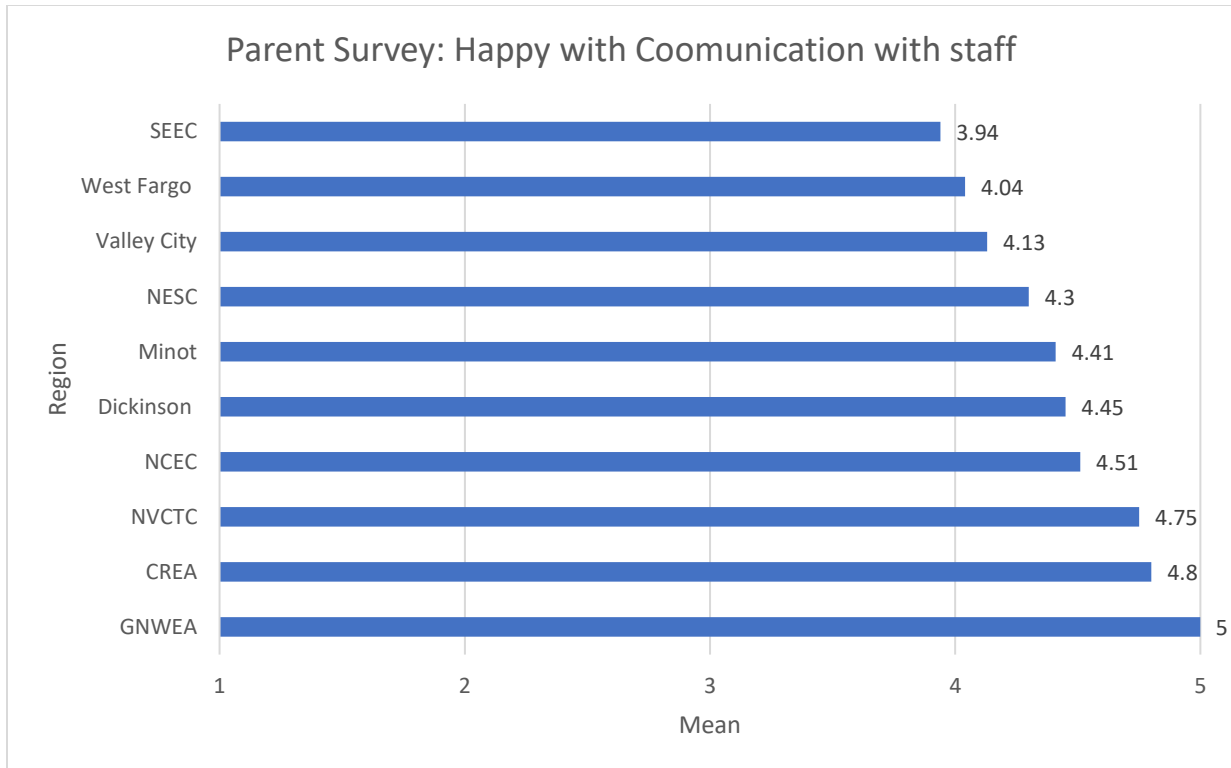
Appendix A: Graphs of Survey Measures by Region

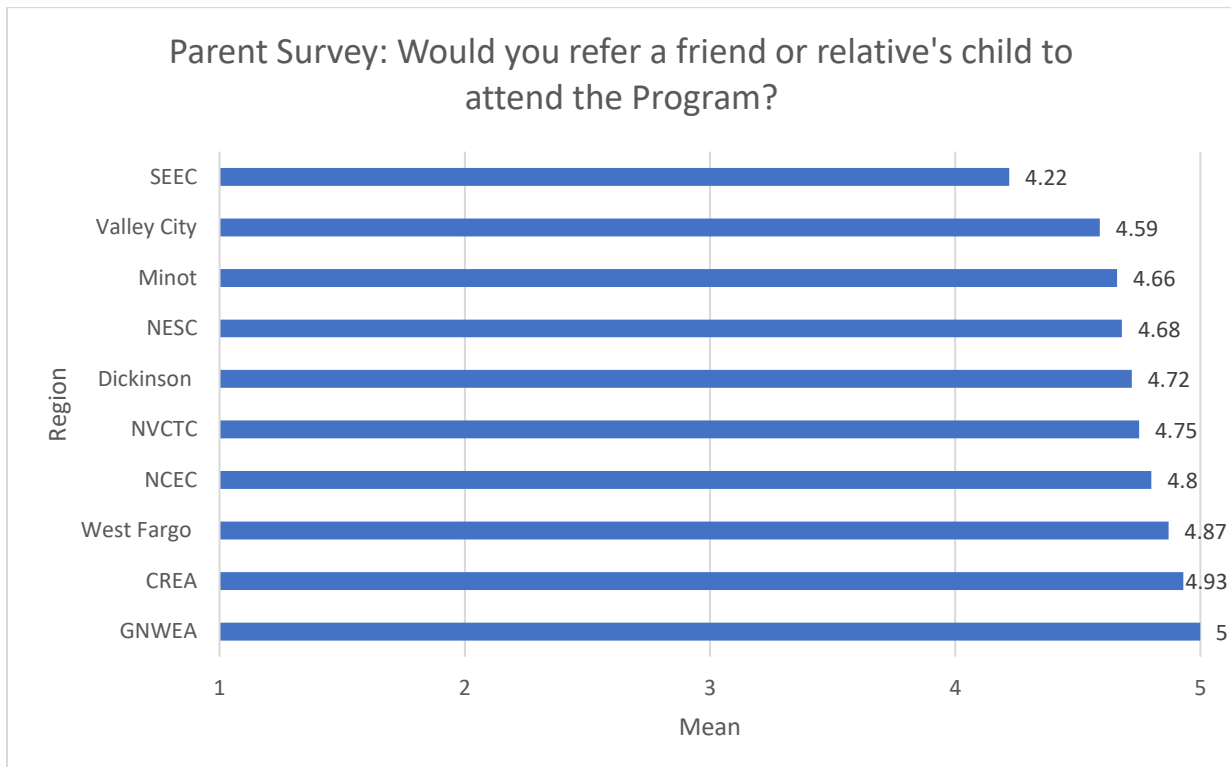
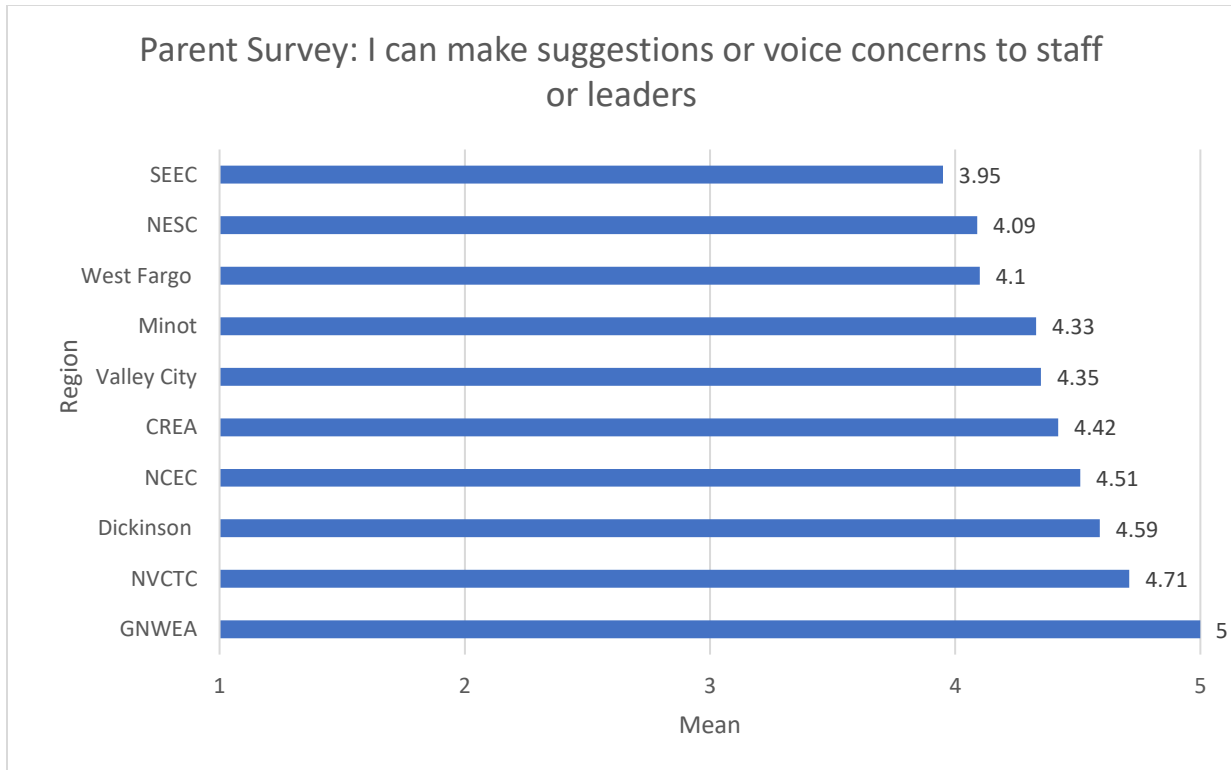
On these surveys, participants responded on a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Thus, higher values indicate greater levels of agreement.

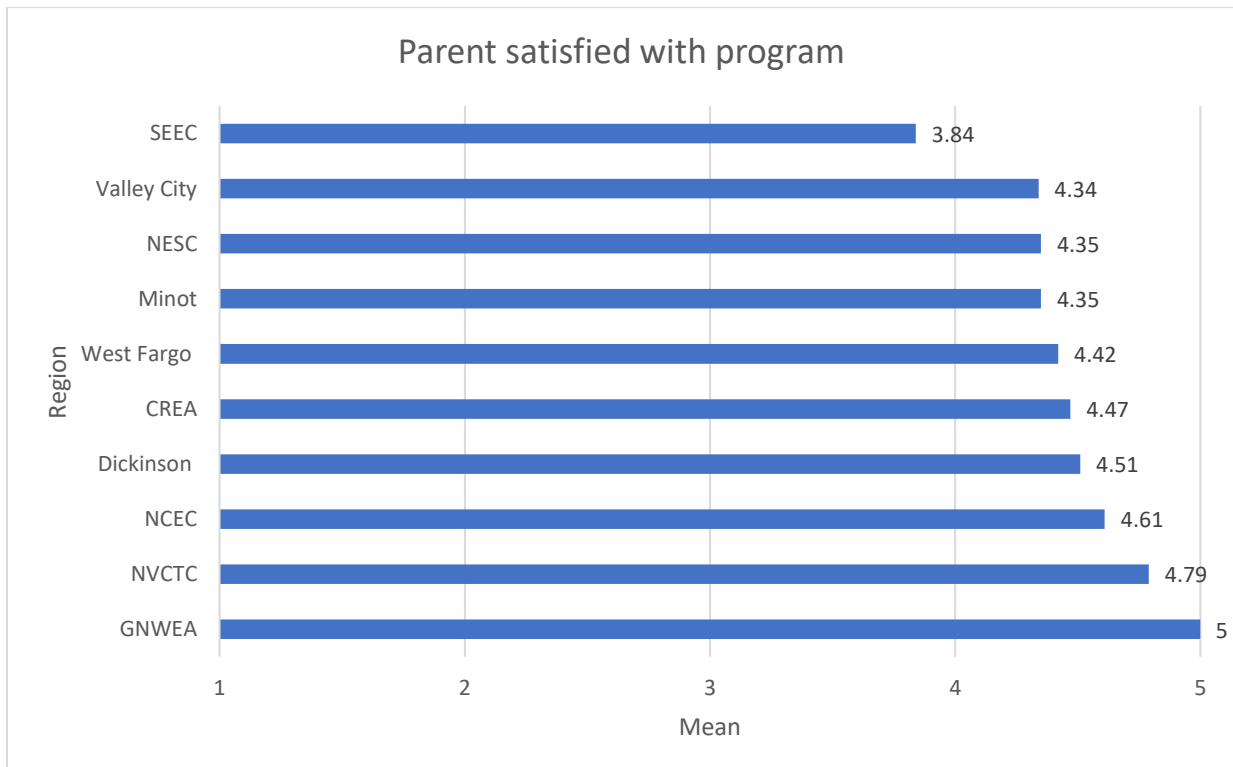
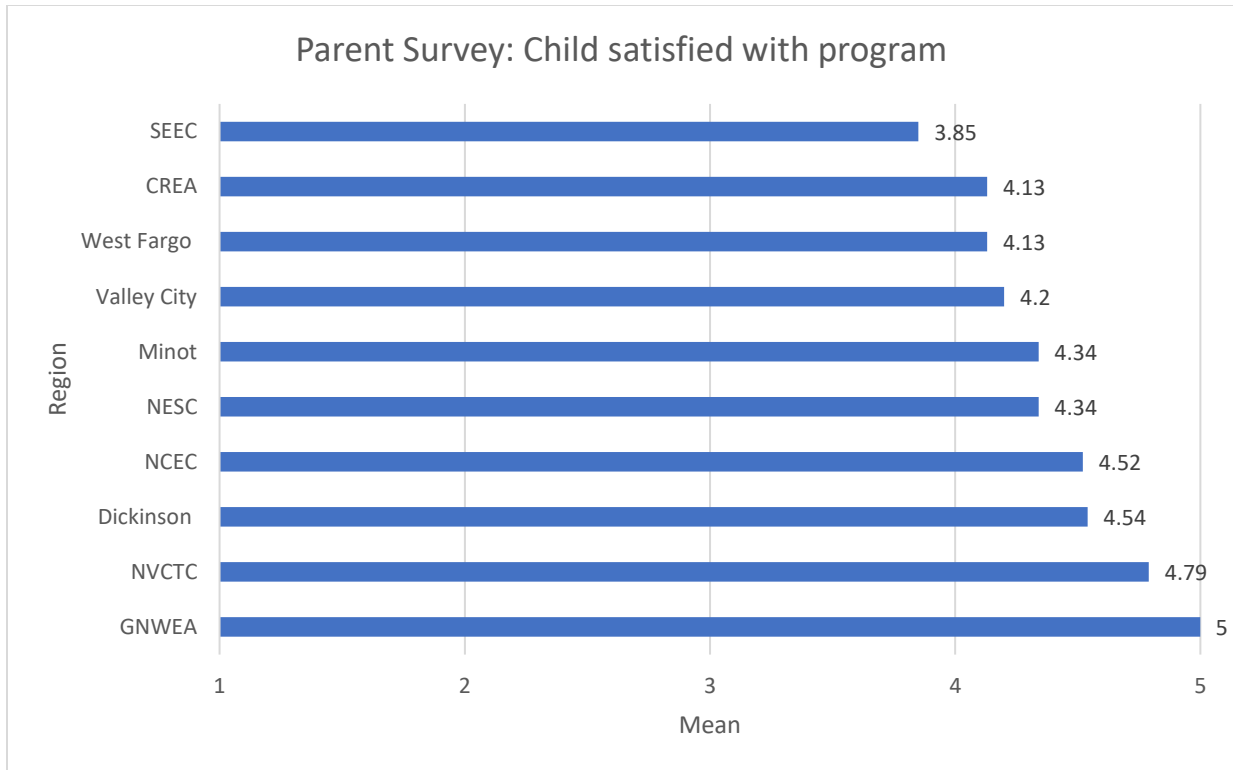


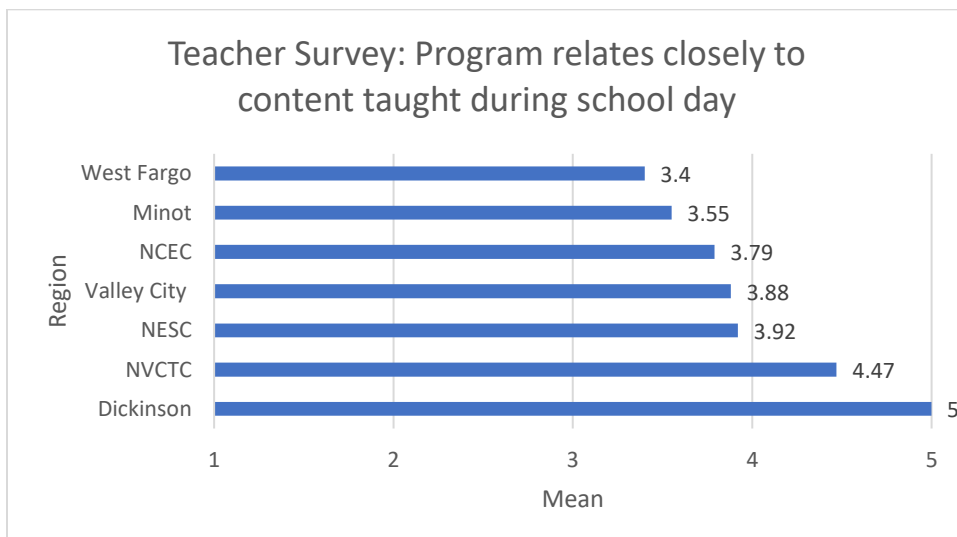
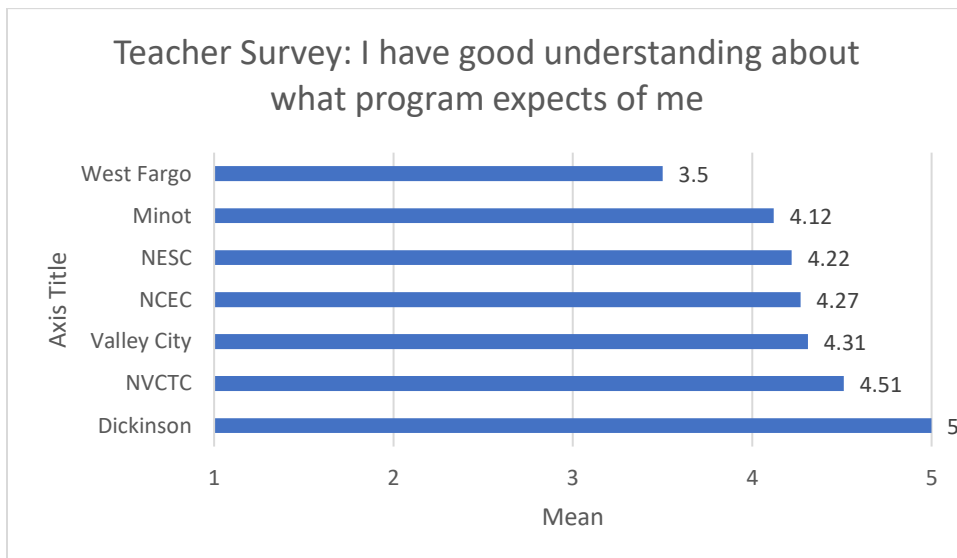
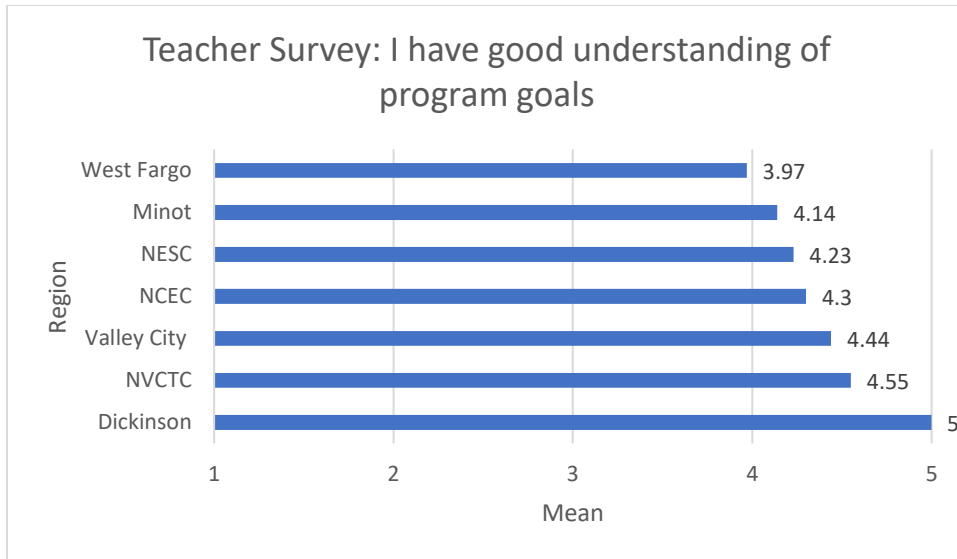


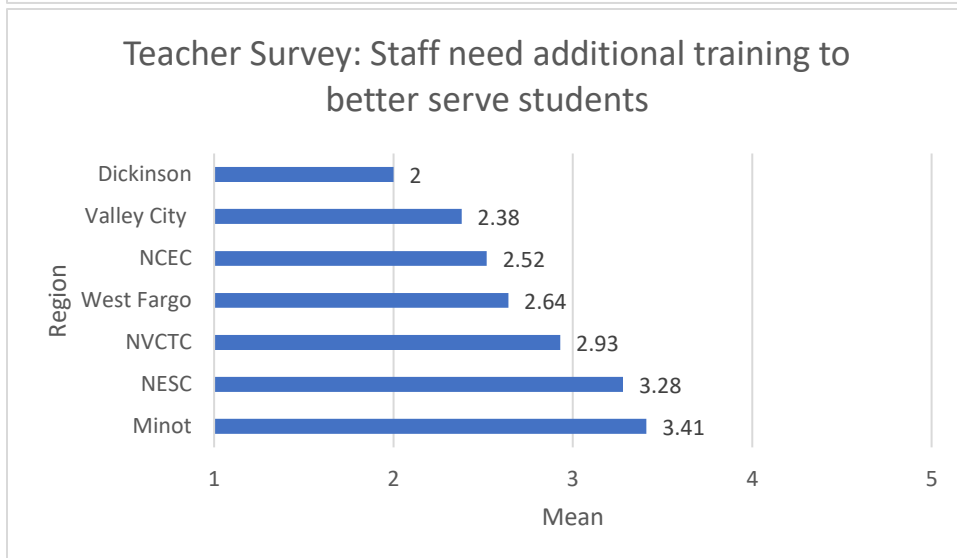
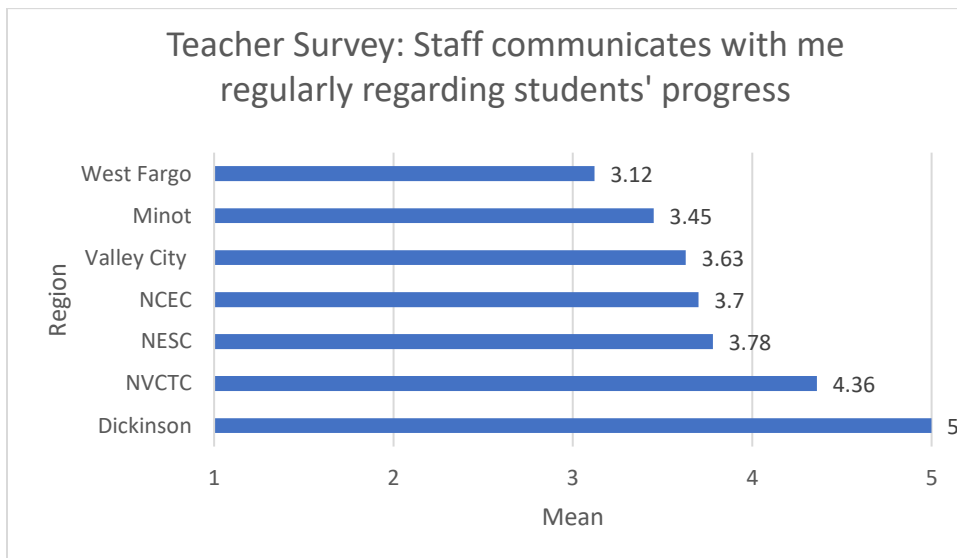
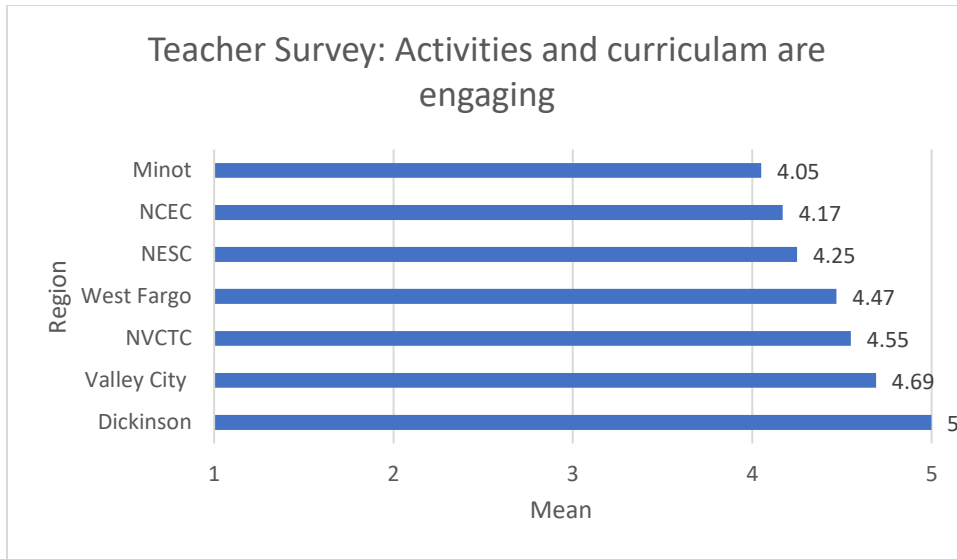


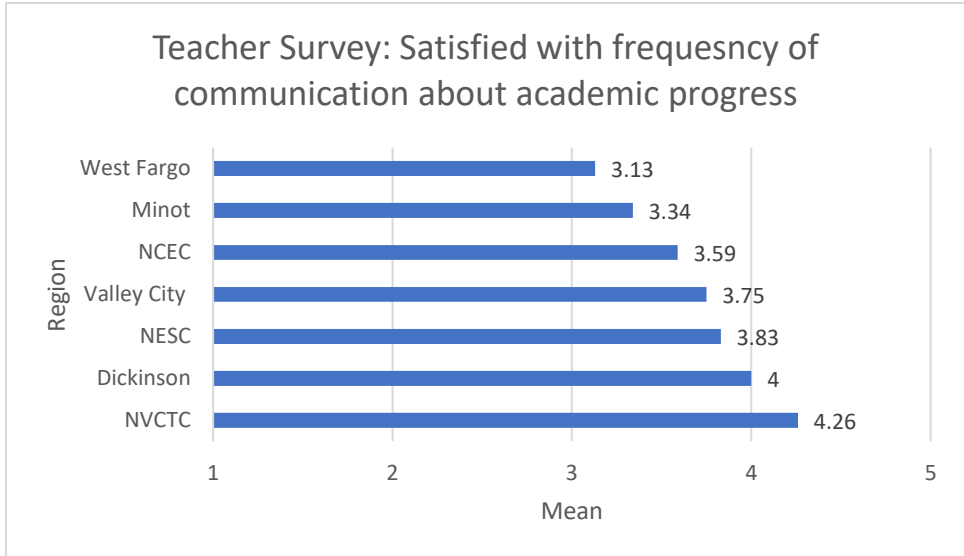
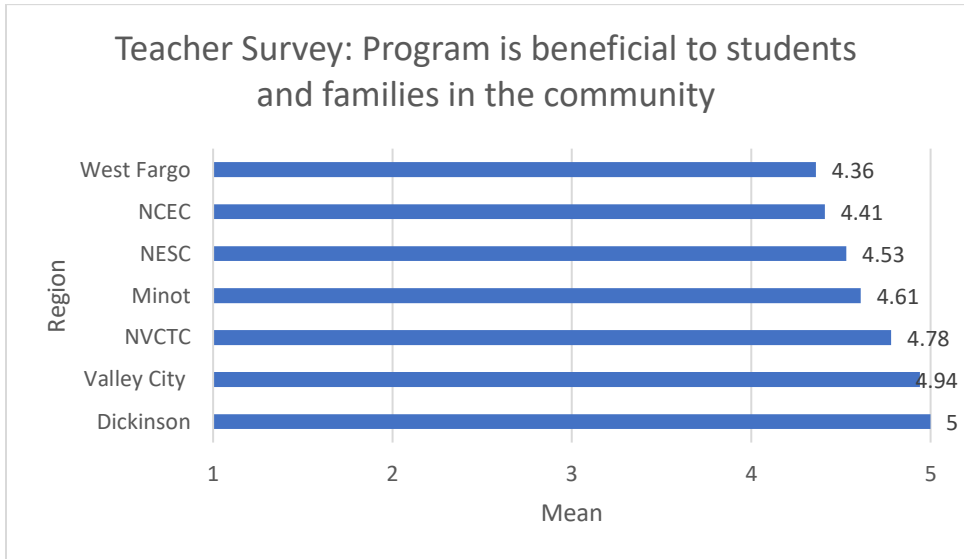
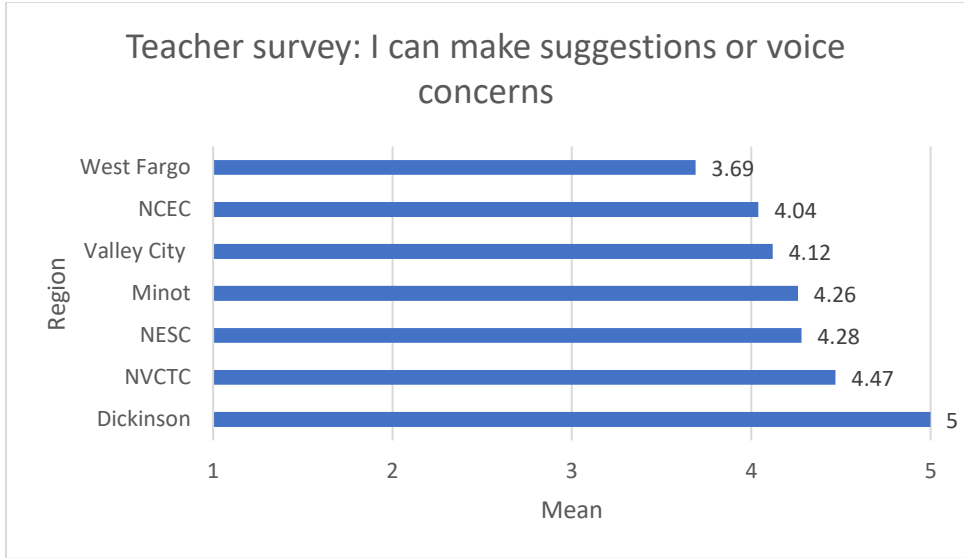


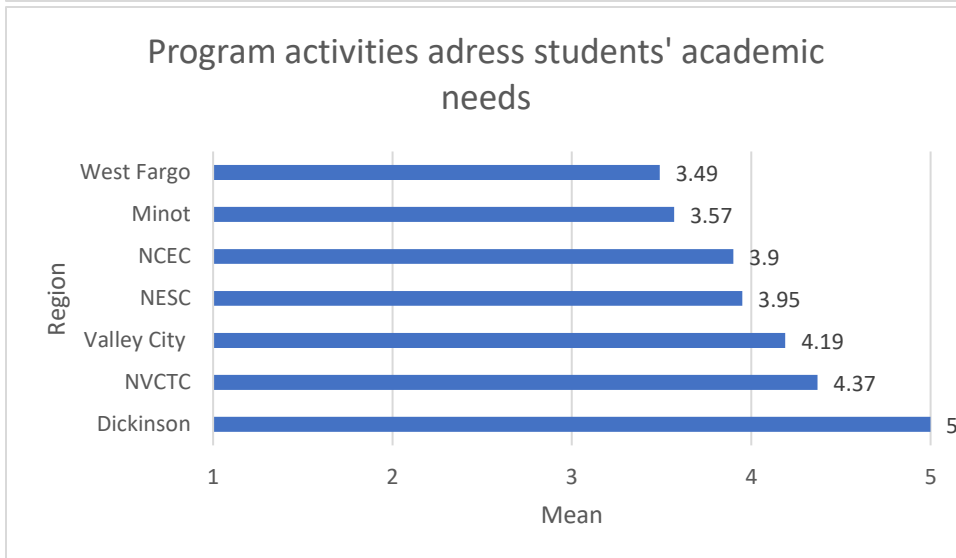
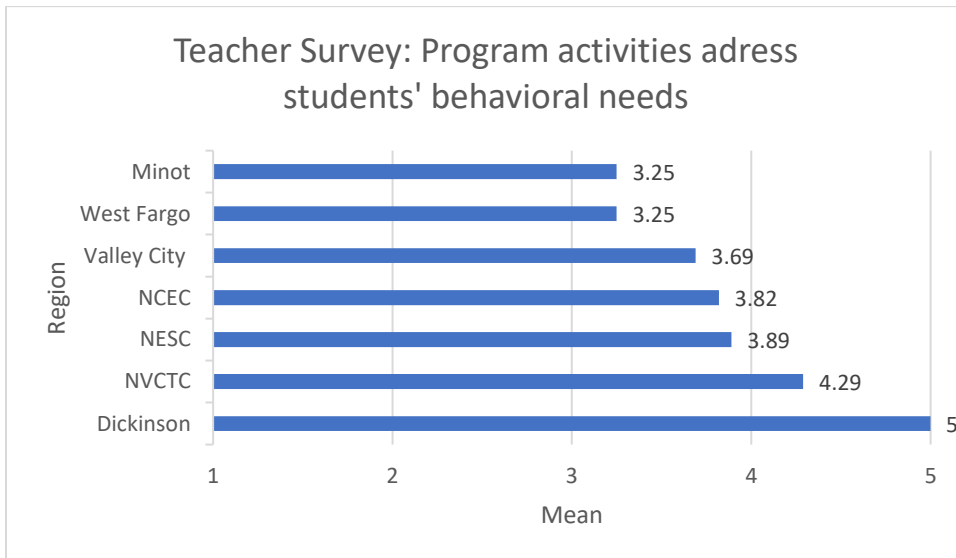
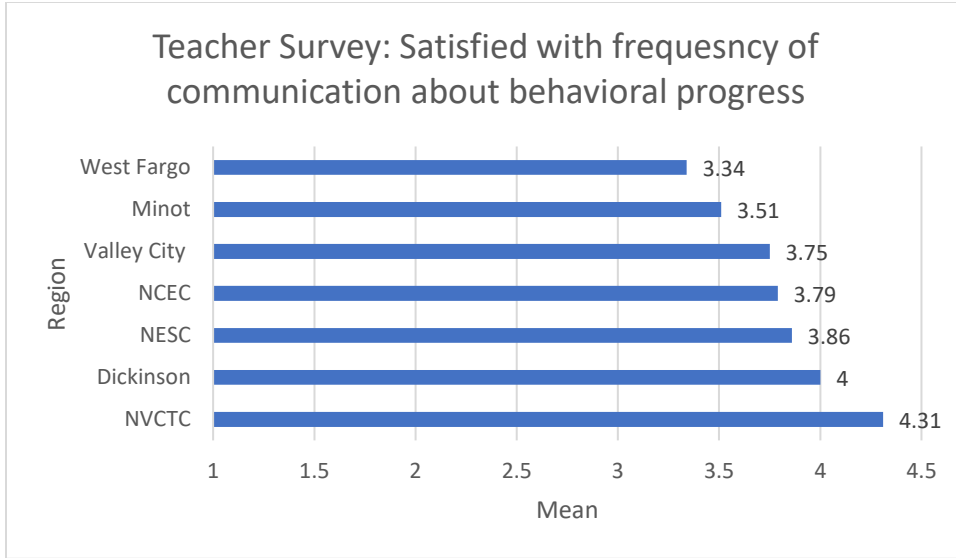


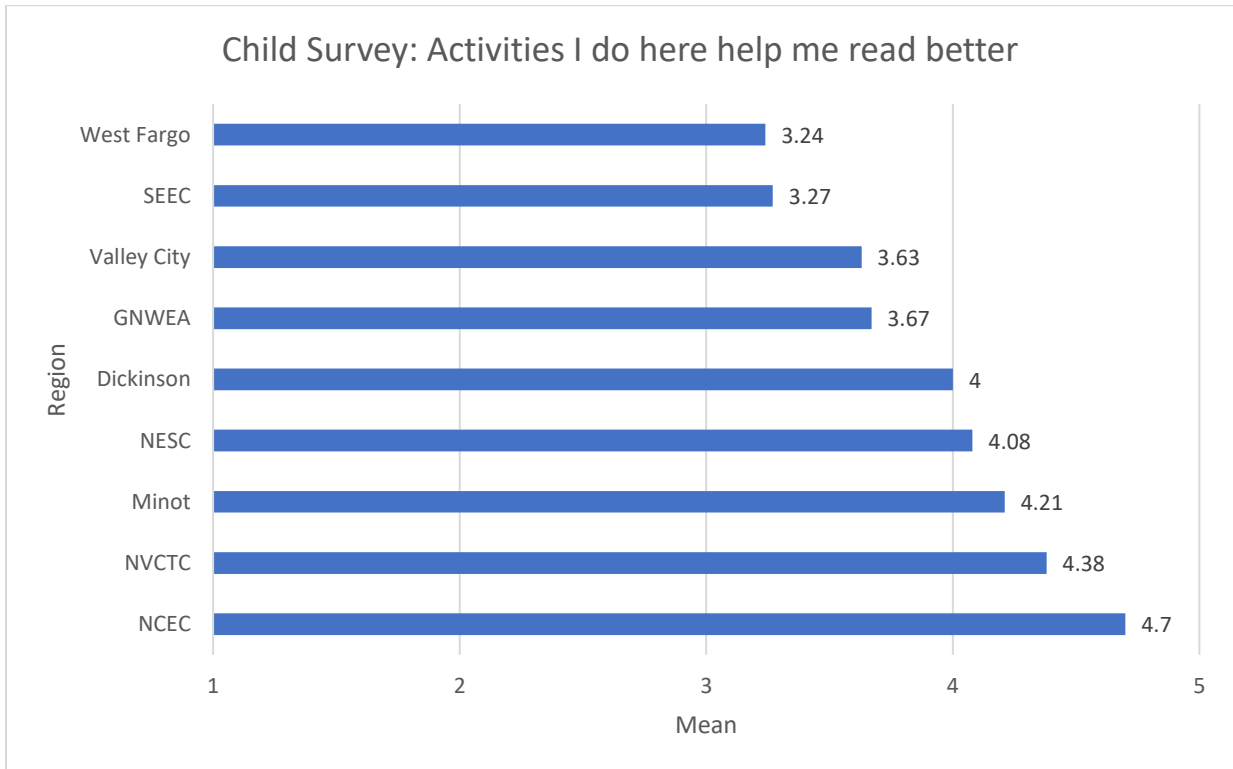
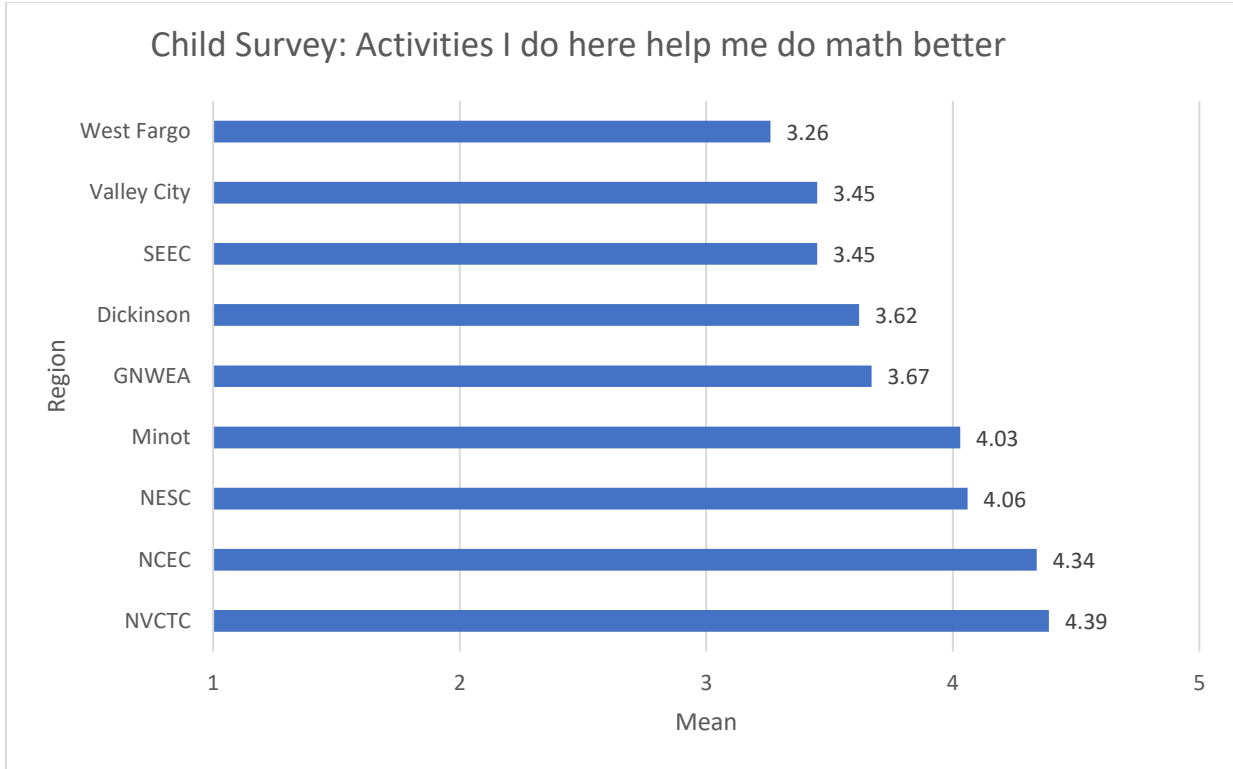


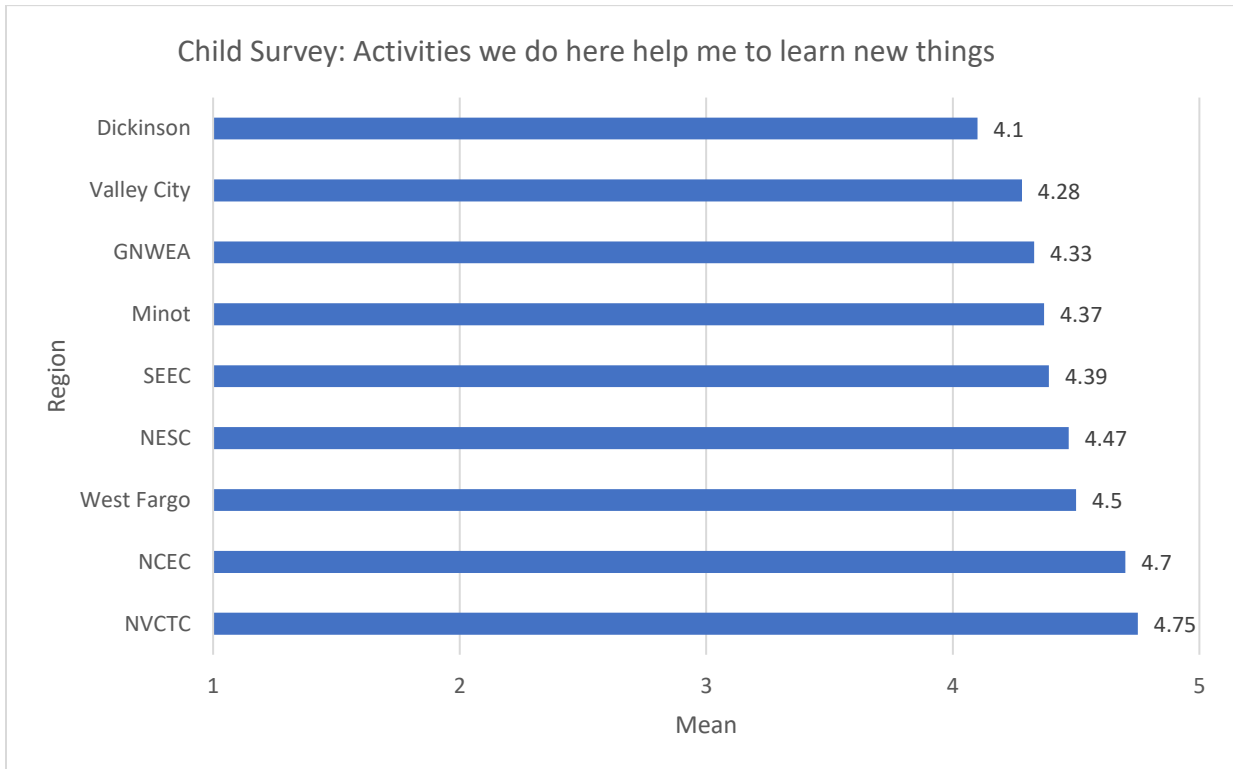
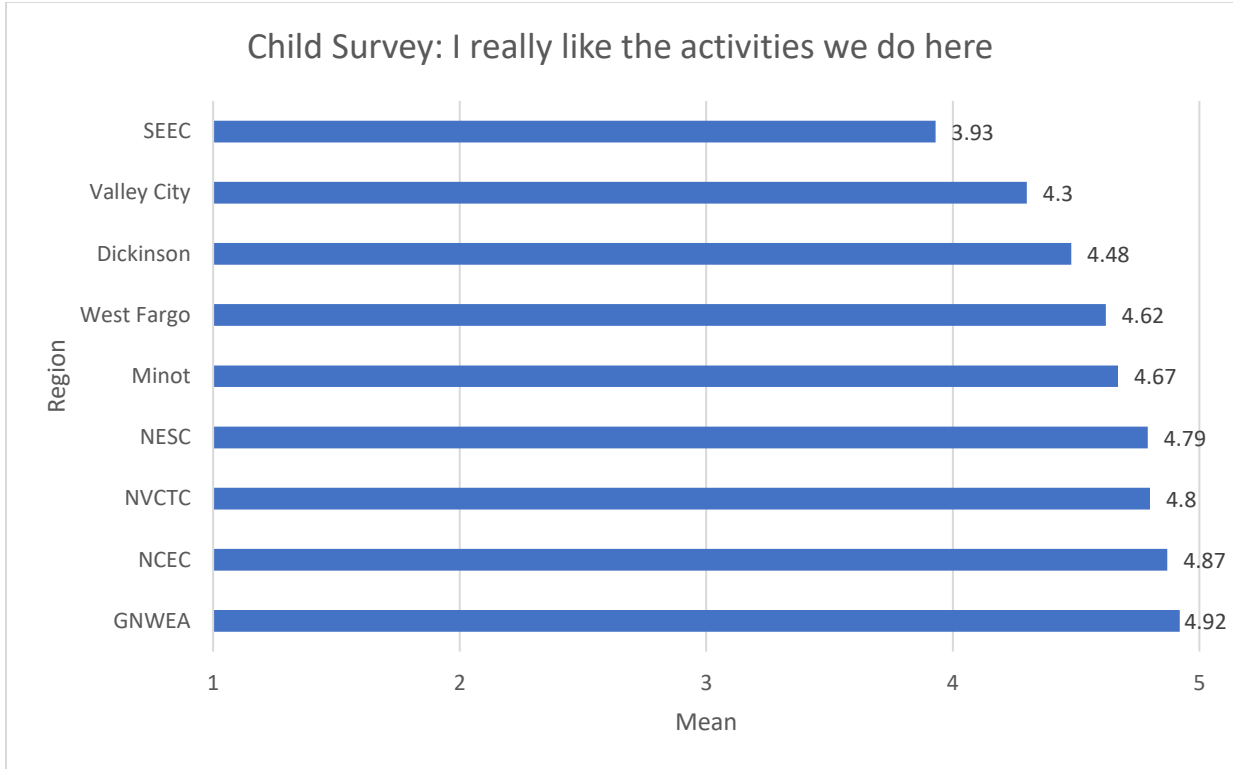


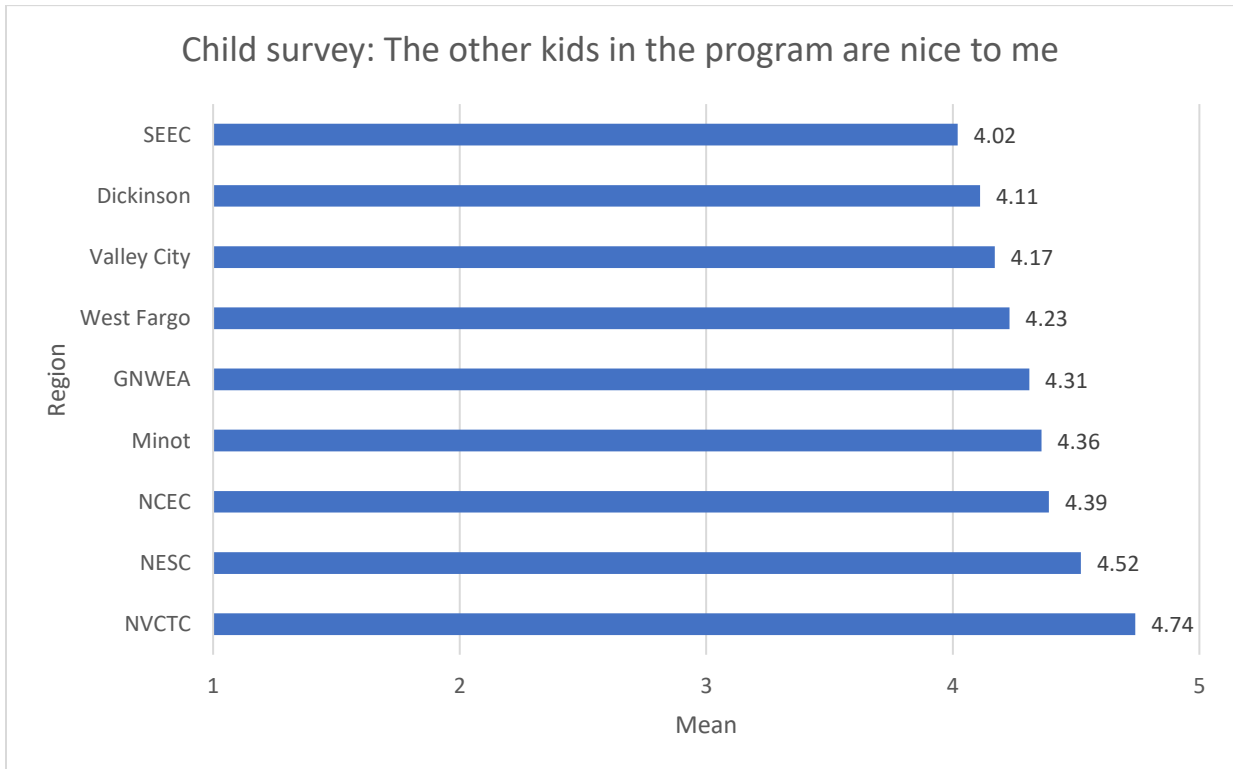
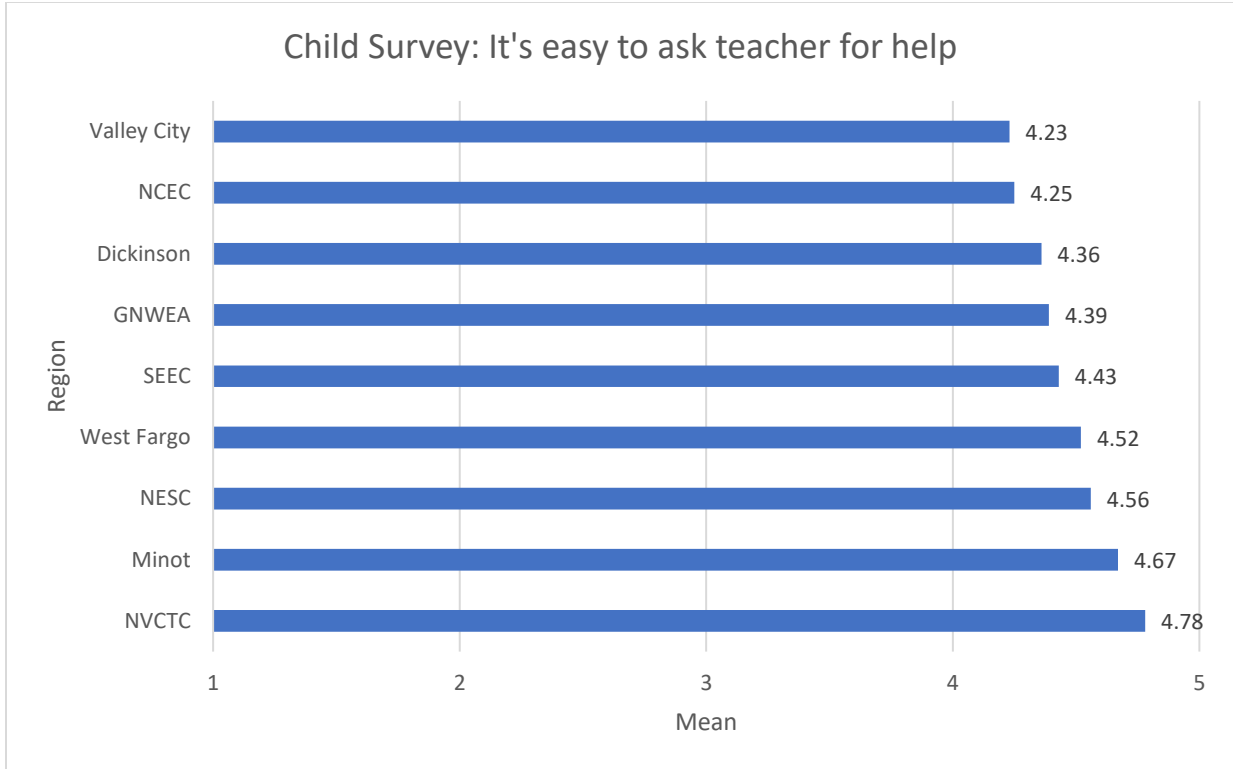


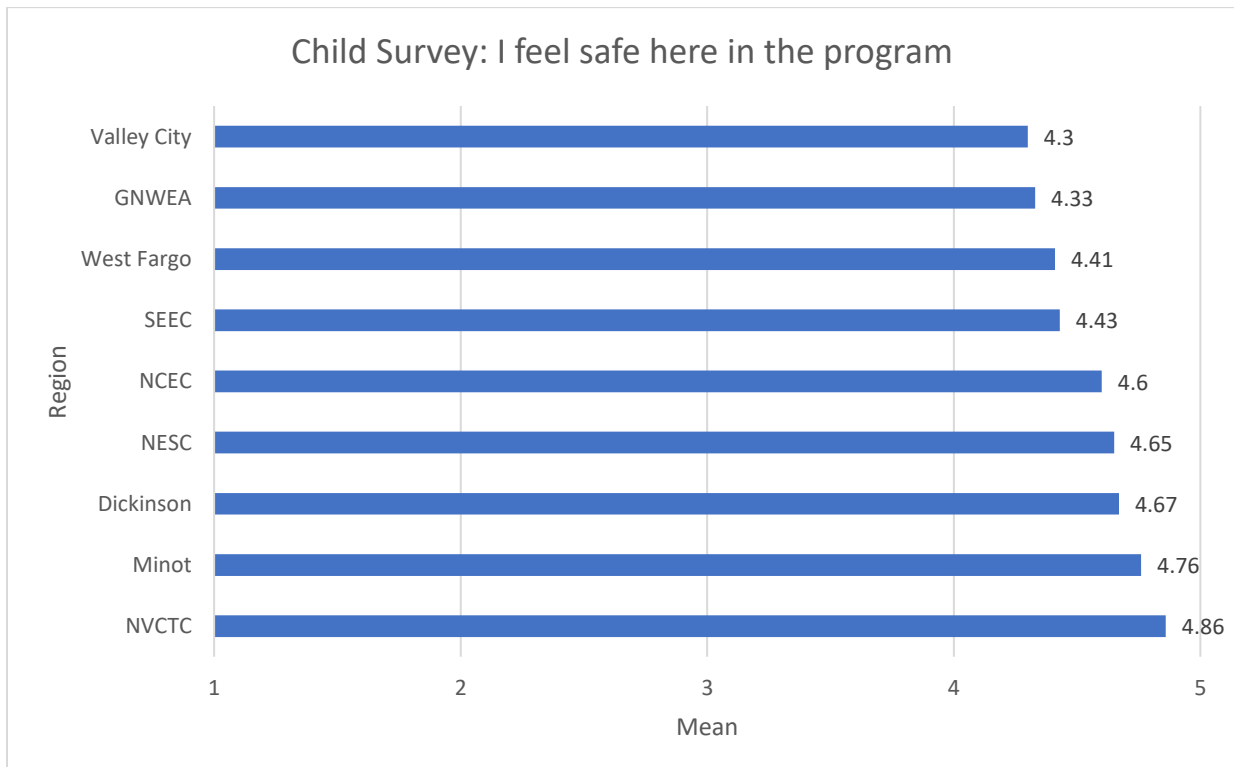
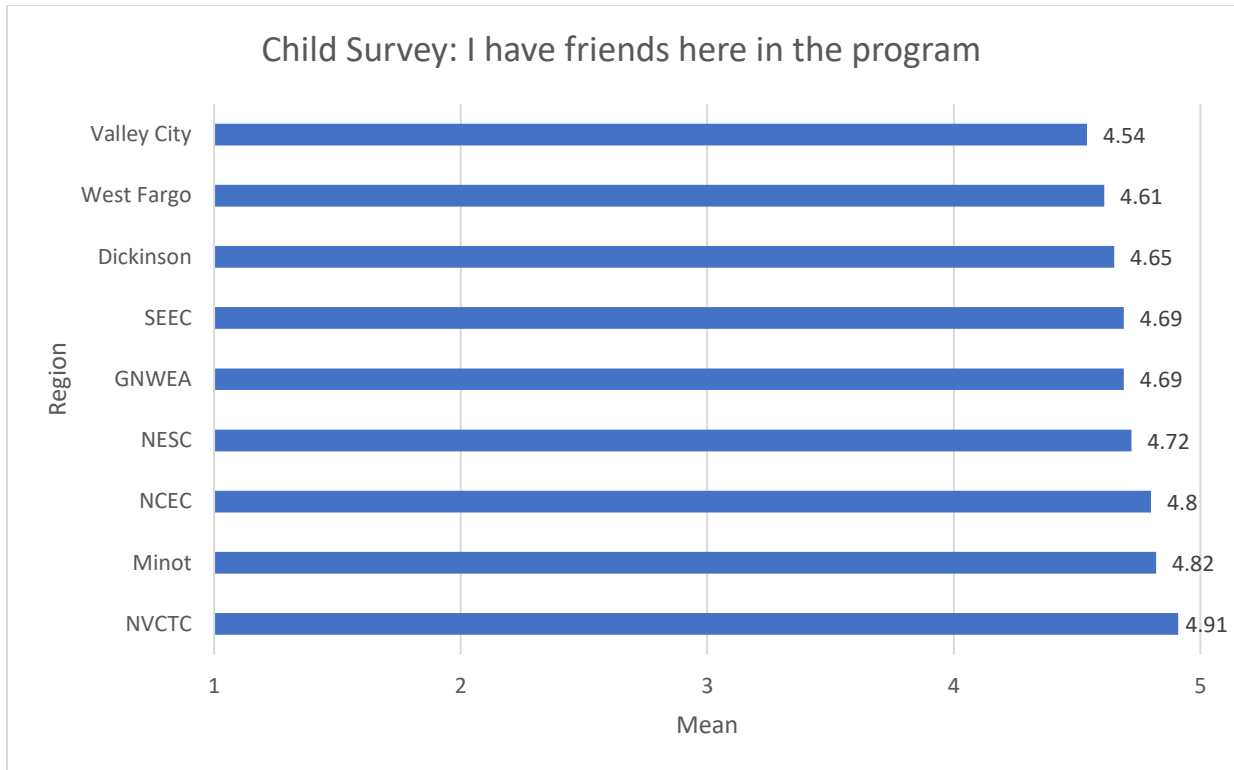


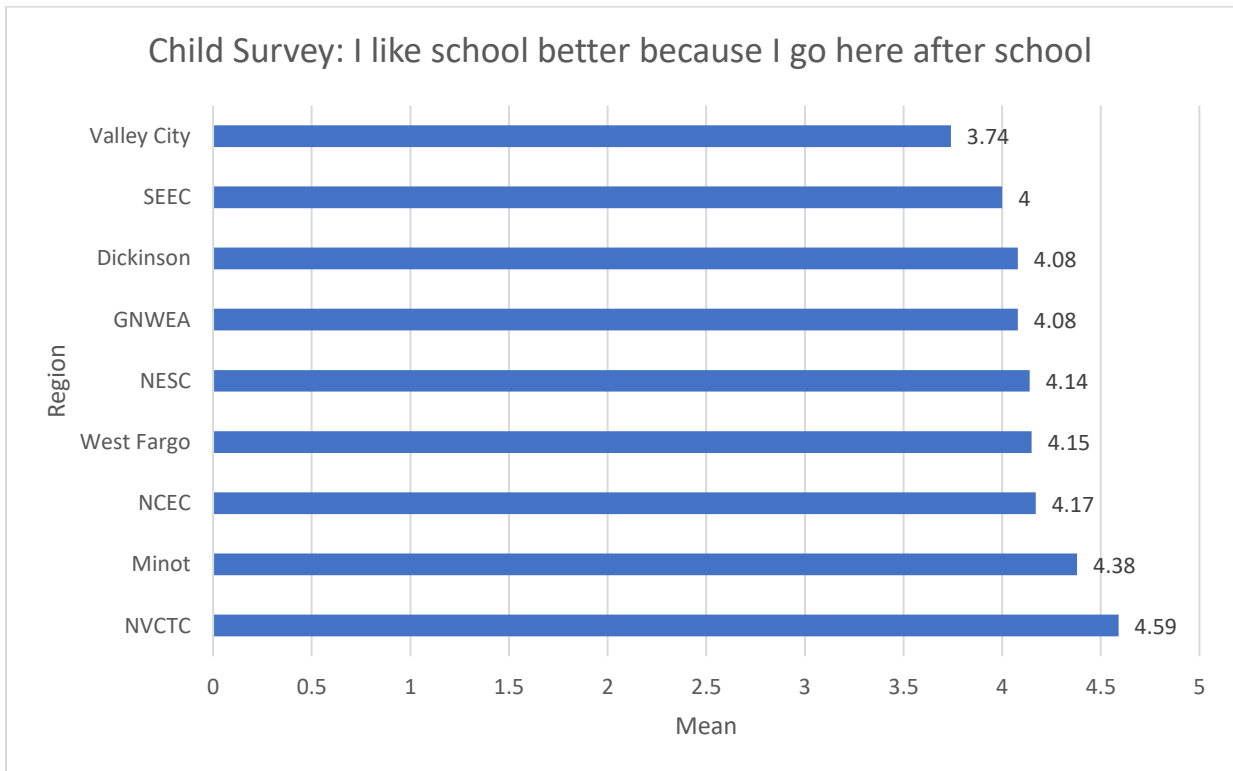
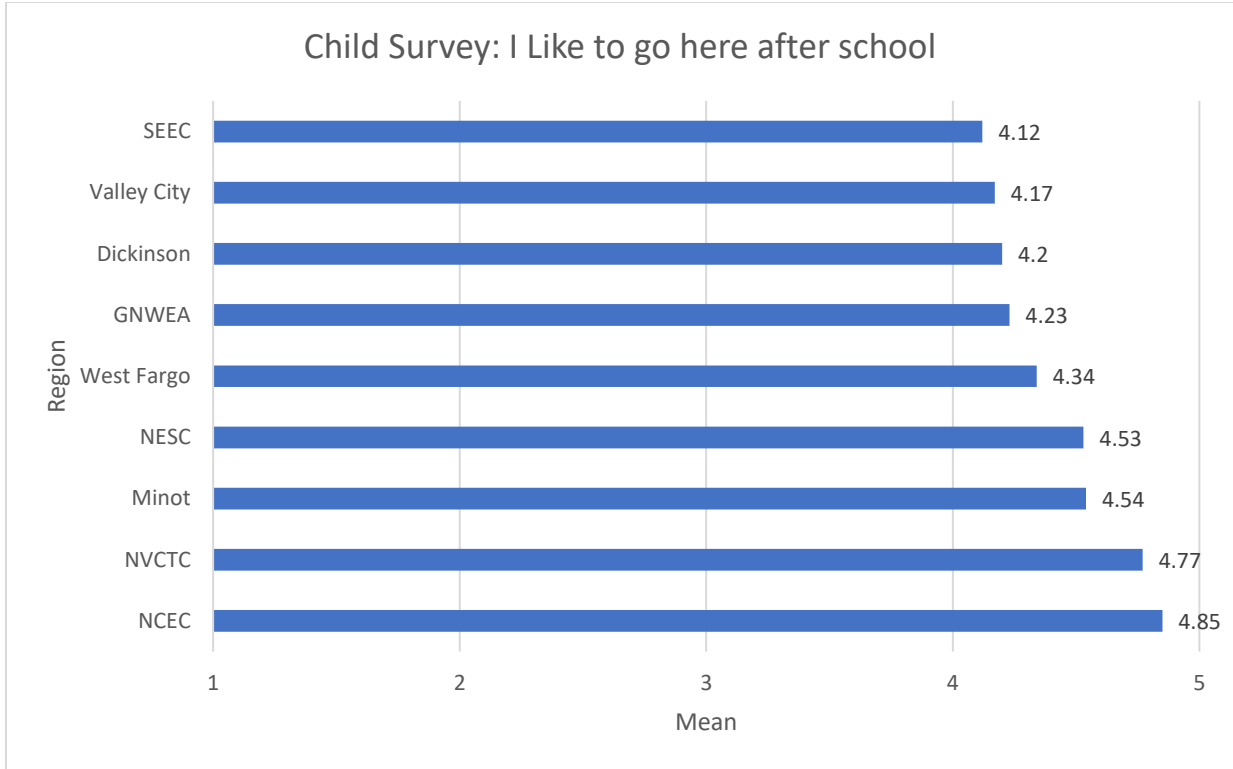




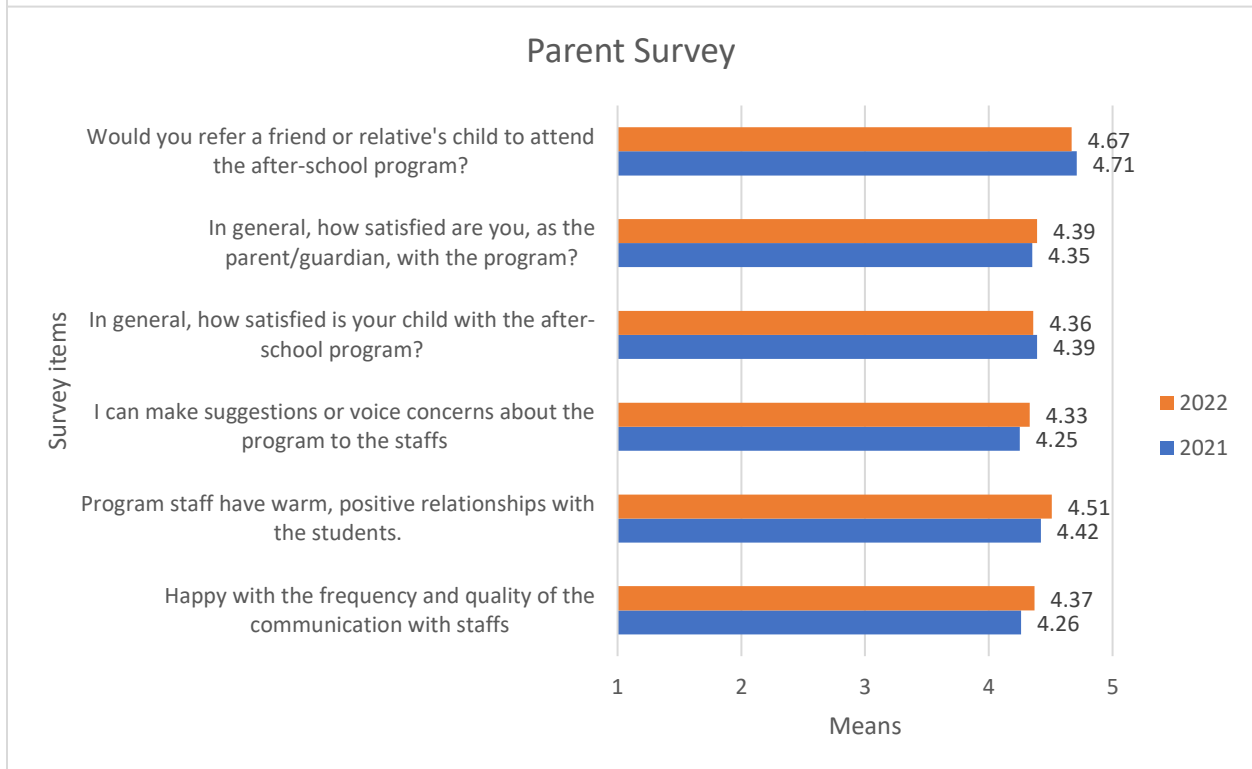
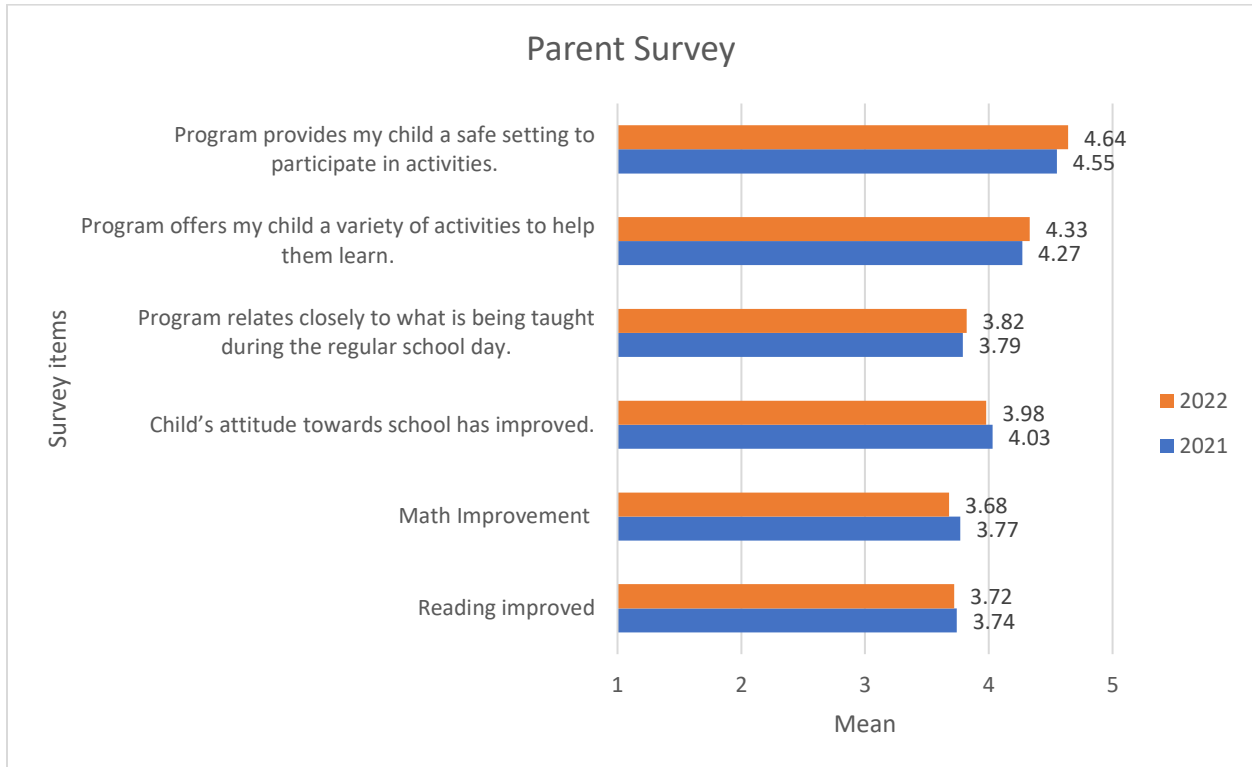


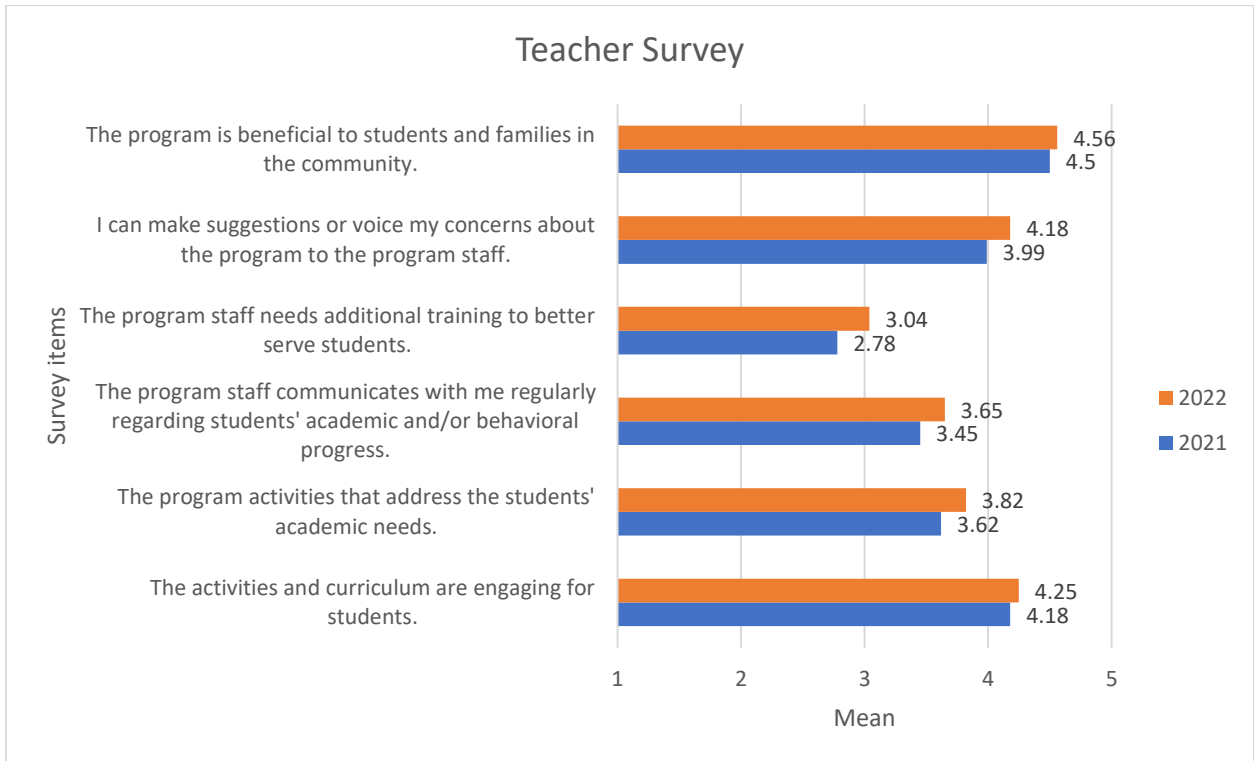
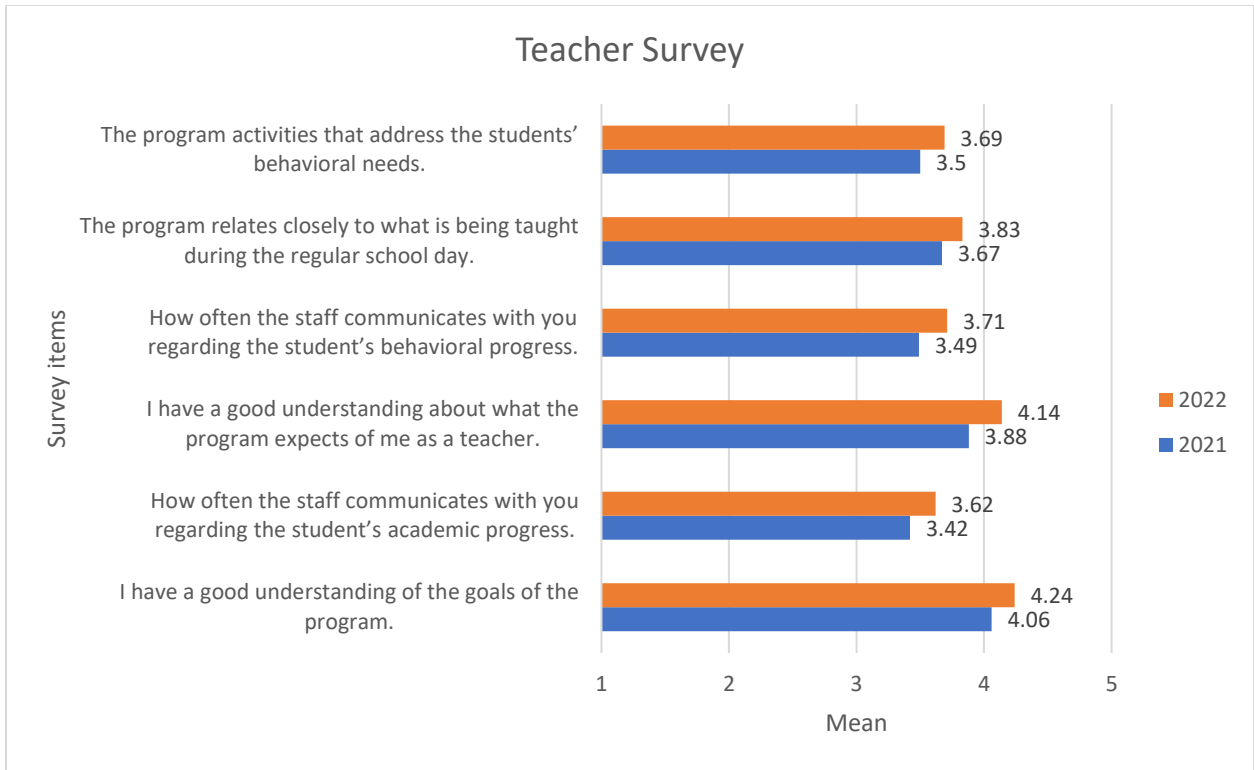


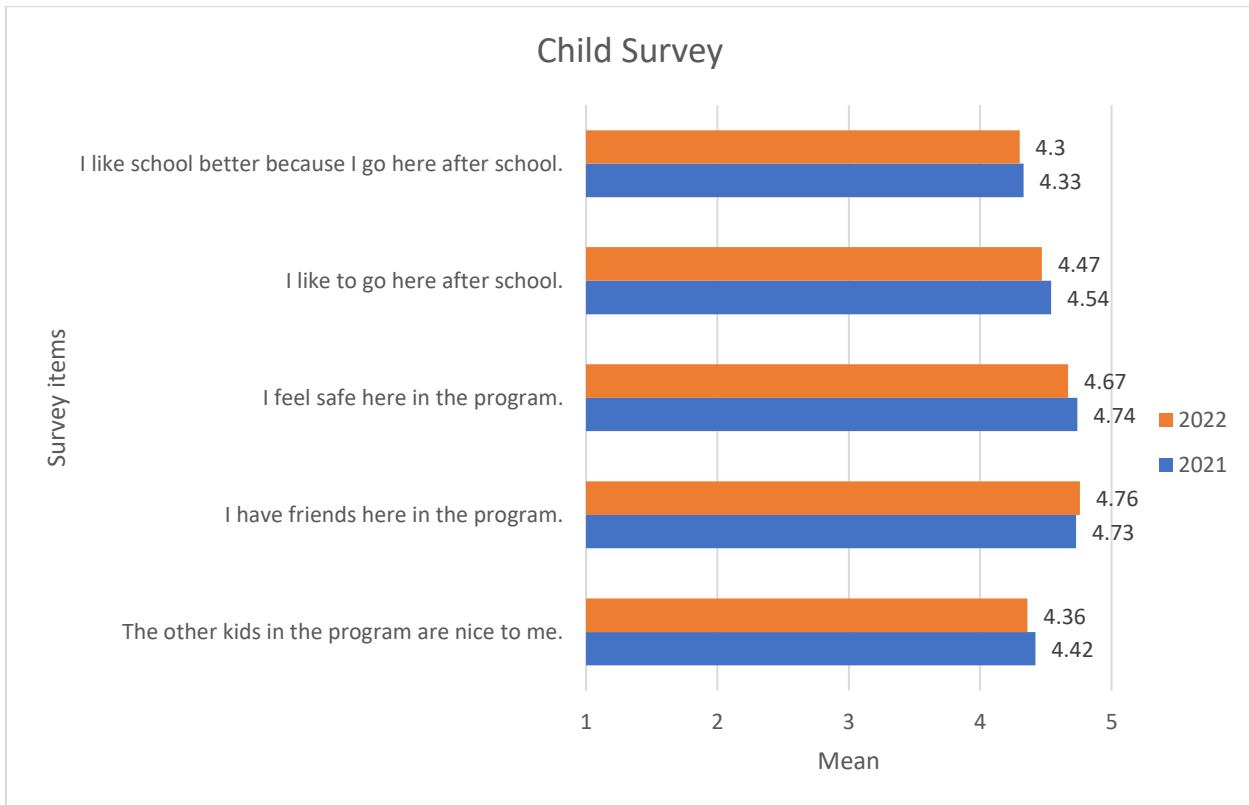
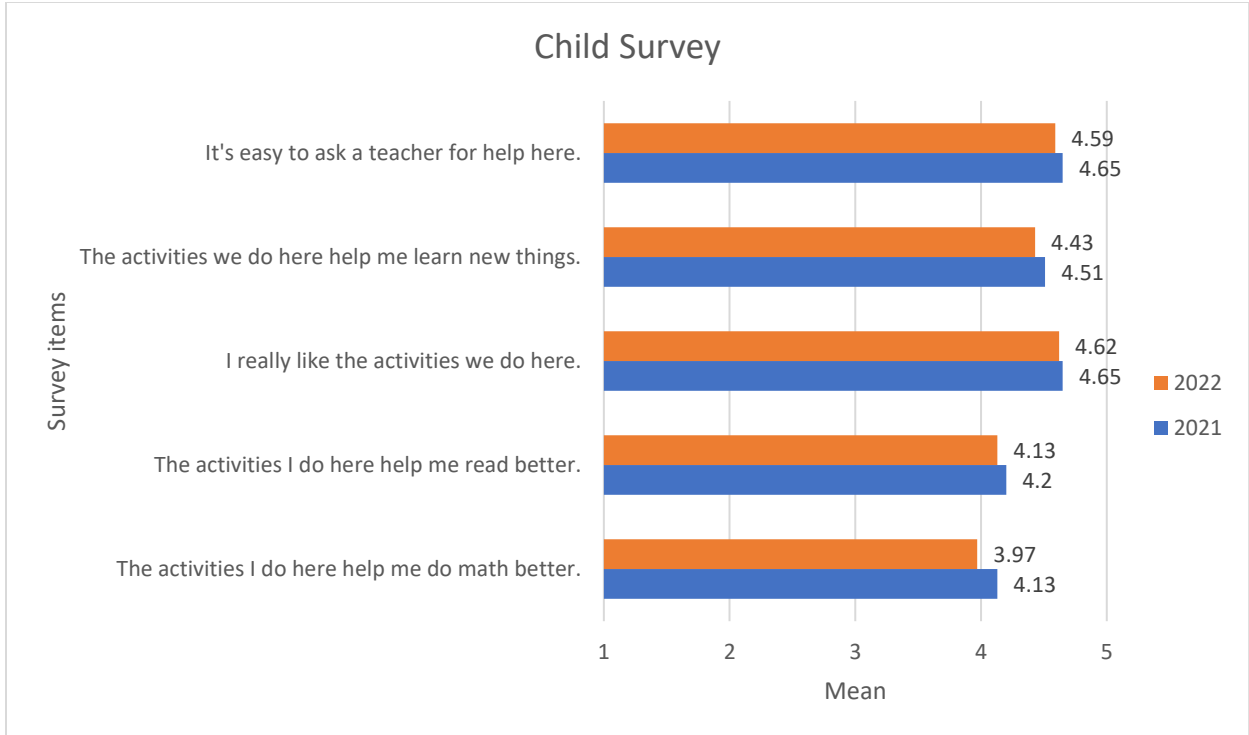


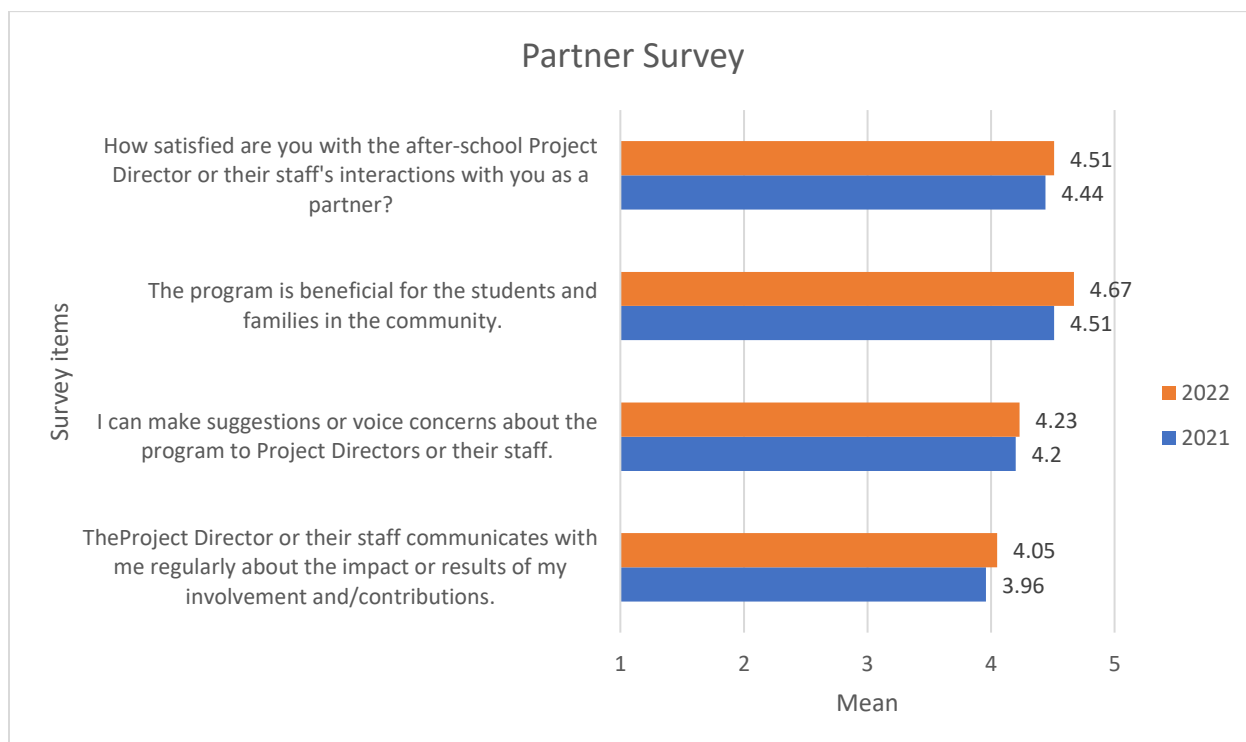
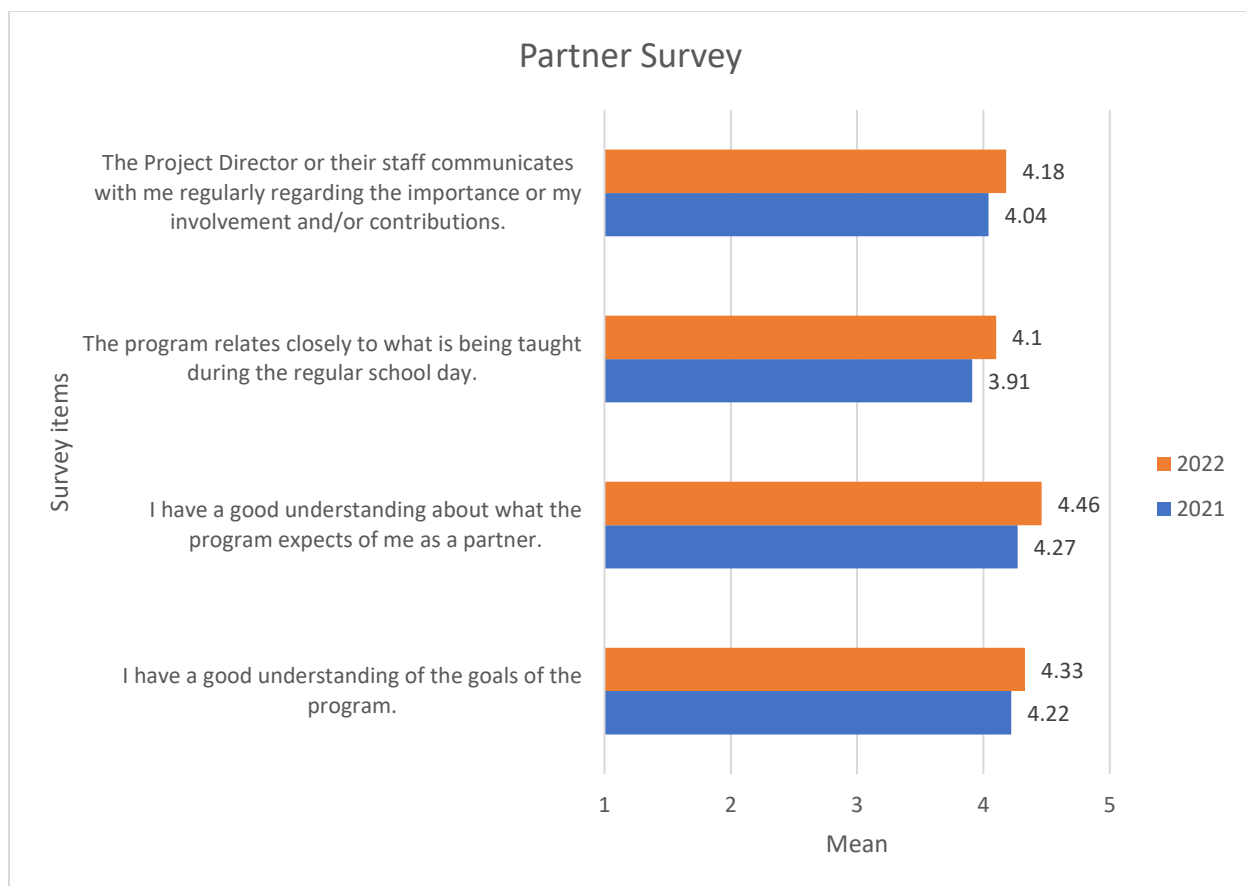


Appendix B. Two-Year Comparisons on Survey Items

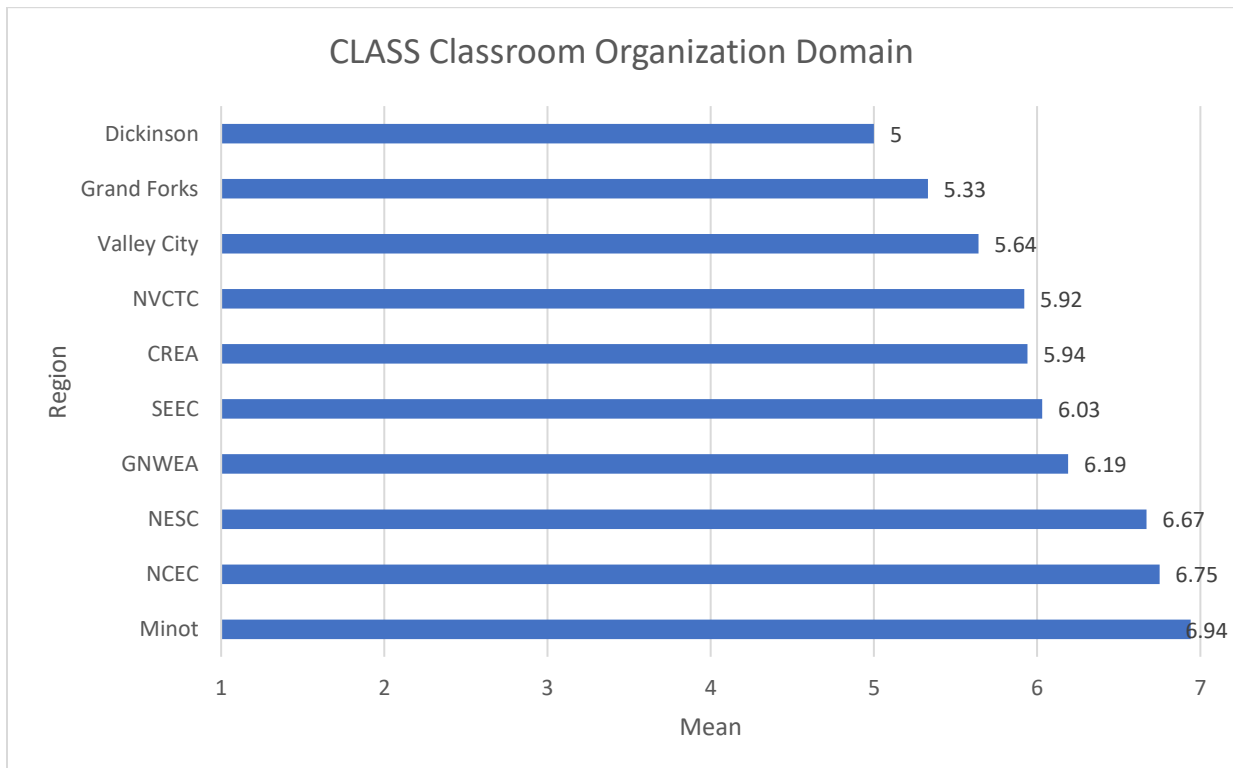
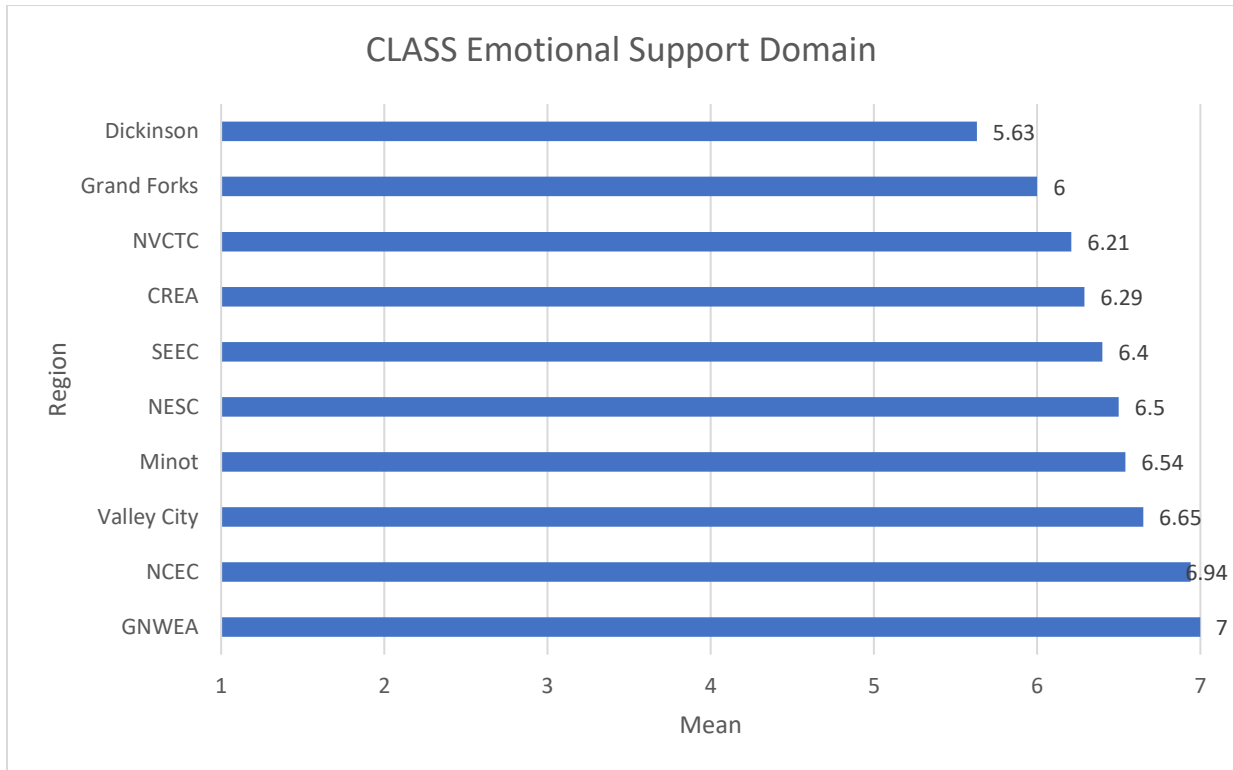


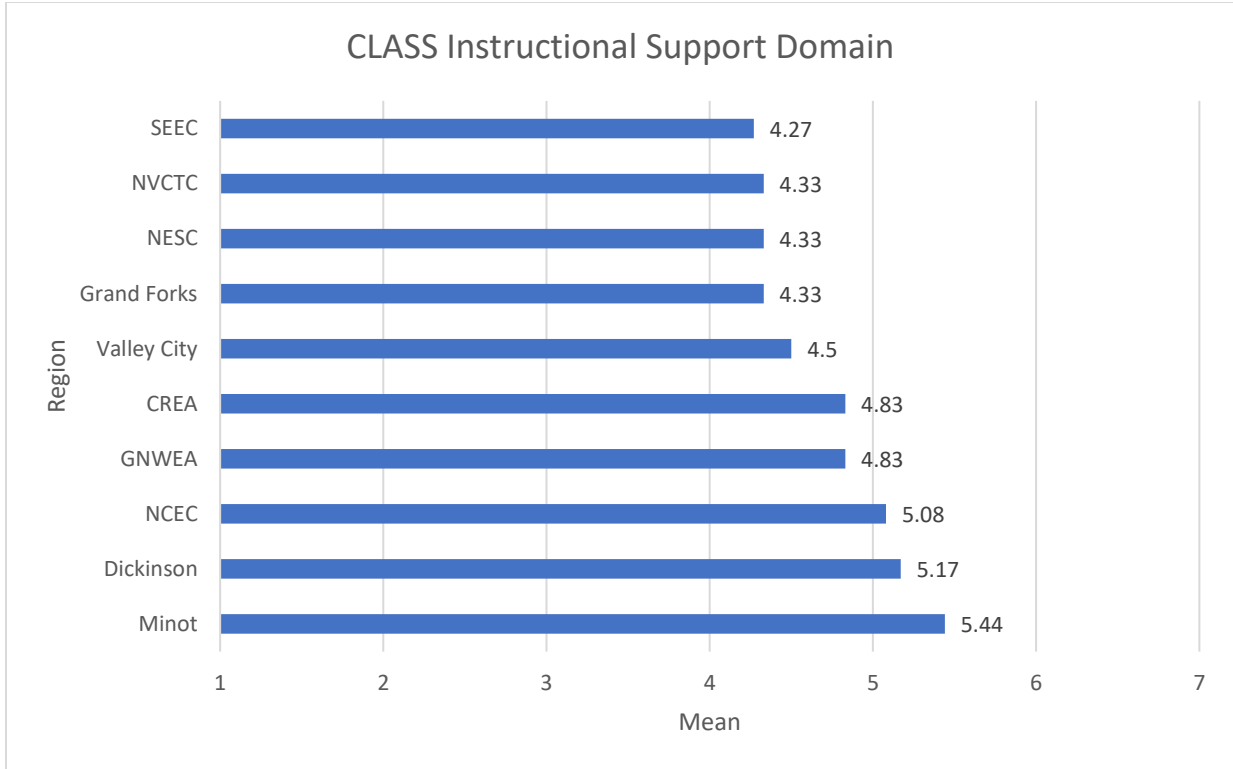






Appendix C: Class Domain Scores by Region





Appendix D: List of Sites Observed with the CLASS in each Region

Region	Site	Observation date
CREA	Bismarck Dorothy Moses Elementary	5/12/22
CREA	Bismarck Jeanette Myhre Elementary	5/13/22
Dickinson RASP	Dickinson Roosevelt	6/27/22
GFPS	Grand Forks Lake Agassiz Elementary	4/27/22
GFPS	Grand Forks Winship Elementary	6/22/22
GNWEC	Grenora	5/10/22
GNWEC	Eight Mile Program - Trenton	5/11/22
JSVC	Edgeley	6/23/22
JSVC	Valley City Jefferson Elementary	4/11/22
Minot	Washington Elementary	5/3/22
Minot	McKinley Elementary	5/4/22
NCEA	Bottineau	6/10/22
NCEA	Westhope	6/9/22
NESC	Langdon Area Elementary	5/5/22
NESC	Midkota Elementary - Binford	4/20/22
NVCTC	Northwood	4/27/22
NVCTC	Valley-Edinburg	4/21/22
SEEC	Fargo BGCRRV Lincoln	3/10/22
SEEC	Jamestown Roosevelt	3/23/22
SEEC	Fargo McKinley Elementary	3/24/22
SEEC	Mapleton	3/28/22
SEEC	Wahpeton Youth Club	4/1/22

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Executive Summary

Two primary methods were used to collect the data for this evaluation. Research assistants used the CLASS tool to conduct systematic observations of interactions between program staff and their students. Observations were conducted at 22 sites across the state, including urban and rural areas. Survey data was also collected through an online platform. Teachers ($N = 238$), parents ($N = 657$), children ($N = 2,323$), and community partners ($N = 39$) completed surveys from late March through May 2022 regarding their perceptions of the program.

On the surveys, strong majorities of children, parents, teachers, and community partners endorsed every positive statement about the program. All groups of respondents agreed that safety, the activities, and the academic support that programs provide were the best and most important aspects of the programs. Most respondents had no concerns about the program and no suggestions for improvement. Among the few who did indicate some areas of concern, issues related to resources, communication, and behavior management were the most prevalent.

The observations showed that the 21st CCLCs in North Dakota provided high levels of emotional support and were also strong in classroom organization. The centers were slightly weaker in providing instructional support, consistent with national trends. However, scores in this domain were higher this year than last year. Sessions including small group activities and those focused on art or science appeared to be the most engaging. Art and science provide a structured way for children to become physically involved in learning through doing.

Background

More than 1.6 million children and youth in the U.S. attend 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLCs), federally funded afterschool programs available in each state particularly for students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2020). These 10,125 centers are intended to do much more than provide supervision and safety for children after school while their parents are still at work. Their mission includes academic support and enrichment, social and emotional learning, drug and violence prevention, and physical activity and nutrition education (Afterschool Alliance, 2021). In North Dakota the 21st CCLC programs are administered by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and operated locally through grants awarded by the DPI.

Each state is mandated to conduct evaluations of its 21st CCLC programs. Thus, the North Dakota DPI contracted with North Dakota State University to conduct the statewide evaluation of 21st CCLCs in North Dakota in 2021-2022. As this was a year of transition in evaluation plans, this report will focus only on results from surveys of teachers, parents, children, and community partners and from observations using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS; Pianta, et al., 2008). The CLASS is a tool to measure process outcomes, specifically focusing on the quality of staff-student interactions.

An addendum to this report will be issued in the spring of 2023 to report results on the required Government Performance and Results Act (GRPA) performance indicators based on data entered by site directors into the US Department of Education's 21APR online platform.

Evaluation Methods and Measures

Two primary methods were used to collect the data for this evaluation. In order to provide information to site directors and staff on the actual quality of their programs and help them in pinpointing how they might be able to improve, systematic observations of interactions between program staff and their students were conducted using the CLASS tool.

The CLASS has been used extensively in research on regular classroom instruction, and the U.S. Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (2021) uses the pre-K version for national evaluations of Head Start. But we can find no published reports of its use in out-of-school-time settings such as 21st CCLCs. With foundations in socioecological theories of development (e.g., Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) and constructivist theories of learning (e.g., Rogoff, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978), the CLASS is a structured observation protocol that focuses on the interactions that take place between staff and students. It provides scores on ten dimensions, which are grouped into three domains. The domain of Emotional Support includes the dimensions of Positive Climate, Negative Climate (reverse-scored), Teacher Sensitivity, and Regard for Student Perspectives. Classroom Organization includes the dimensions of Behavior

Management, Productivity, and Instructional Learning Formats. Instructional Support includes Concept Development, Quality of Feedback, and Language Modeling (Pianta et al., 2008).

Observations were conducted at 22 sites across the state, including urban and rural areas. Prior to beginning observations, three observers completed a two-day training in using the CLASS K-3 and then passed a test, achieving at least 80% agreement with master coders across all ten dimensions on each of five video-recorded classroom sessions. Agreement is defined as being within one point of each other. The NDSU IRB approved the study, and informed consent letters were sent to all teachers and parents.

At each site, the observer observed for 20 minutes, taking notes on all interactions between staff and students. Then they spent 10 minutes reviewing their notes and determining a score for each of the 10 dimensions. They then repeated that cycle one more time. Doing only two observation cycles per session was an adaptation necessitated by the shortened hours of afterschool programs; when the CLASS is used in regular school classrooms, four to six of these cycles are standard (Pianta et al., 2008). The CLASS scores are based on the behavior of all of the adults in the room during the observation cycle; the observers did not necessarily focus on just one teacher or staff member. Both structured activities and unstructured free time were observed, as well as transitions. Only rooms including students from kindergarten to third grade were observed, to match the version of the CLASS observers were trained to use, and because that grade range is the most prevalent in 21st CCLCs in the state.

Scores on each dimension range from 1 to 7. Observers are trained to consider a number of different indicators for each dimension, and to categorize each indicator as being in the low, middle, or high range. If nearly all indicators for a dimension are within the low range, the dimension is scored as 1; medium range, 4; and high range, 7. If there is a mix of indicators from different ranges, then the dimension is scored with a 2, 3, 5, or 6, depending on whether the mix is predominantly in the low range with some middle, the middle range with some low, the middle range with some high, or in the high range with some middle, respectively.

For each session, scores across the two cycles were averaged to obtain a score for each of the ten dimensions, and then domain scores were calculated as means of their respective dimensions. Observers also recorded the grade level(s), format, and content of the session.

Survey data was also collected through an online platform. Teachers ($N = 238$), parents ($N = 657$), children ($N = 2,323$), and community partners ($N = 39$) completed surveys from late March through May 2022 regarding their perceptions of the program. On the child surveys, a graphical and audio interface was used to assist young readers in understanding the questions and available responses.

Evaluation Results

Results from Surveys of Teachers, Parents, Children, and Partners

In addition to the overall results reported below, graphs of survey results broken down by grantee (region) are presented in the Appendix.

Parent Surveys

Of the 657 parents responding on the parent survey, strong majorities agreed with every positive statement about the program. See Table 1. The highest levels of agreement were with the statements “I would refer a friend or relative’s child to the program” and “The program offers a safe setting” (both at 96%). The highest level of disagreement, at 9%, was with the statement “The program relates closely to content taught during the school day.” The most frequent responses of “Neither agree nor disagree” occurred on the questions of whether the child’s reading and math had improved as a result of participating in the program, with 36% choosing the neutral response for each. Most responses this year were very similar to those last year, with the greatest increase (though still slight) in the parents’ happiness with the frequency and quality of communication with staff. See the Appendix for year-to-year comparisons on all questions.

Table 1. *Frequencies of Responses on the Parent Survey*

Question on Parent Survey	% Agree	% Disagree
Child’s reading improved	57	7
Child’s math improved	56	8
Child’s attitude towards school improved	70	5
Program relates closely to content taught during school day	64	9
Program offers variety of activities to help them learn	86	4
Program offers a safe setting	96	2
Happy with communication from staff	86	6
Staff have warm, positive relationships with students	91	4
I can make suggestions or voice concerns to staff or leaders	85	3
Would refer a friend or relative’s child	96	2
Child satisfied with program	86	4
Parent satisfied with program	88	4

Note. $N = 657$. “Strongly agree” and “Agree” responses were combined in the % Agree column. “Strongly disagree” and “Disagree” responses were combined in the % Disagree column. “Neutral” responses are not shown but can be computed as the percentages in the two columns subtracted from 100.

The parent survey also included some questions eliciting open-ended responses, which we grouped into categories. Of the 380 parents responding with aspects of the program they were satisfied with, the top three most common responses had to do with the program's activities, safety, and provision of academic support. See Table 2.

Table 2. *Aspects of the Program Parents Were Satisfied With*

Aspect of the Program	Number	Percentage
Activities	182	47.9
Safety	128	33.7
Academic support	76	20.0
Structure and operation of the program	59	15.5
Parents like all aspects of the program	34	8.9
Communication	17	4.5

Note. $N = 380$. Parents' open-ended responses were coded into these categories.

On the question eliciting aspects of the program parents were dissatisfied with, 276 parents responded, but 198 of them (72%) said they had no concerns. See Table 3. The top concern of the rest was programming and student development, with 25 parents mentioning issues such as children playing games too much and not doing enough learning activities, not having enough supplies for everyone, and concerns that learning may decline from participating in the program.

Table 3. *Aspects of the Program Parents Were Dissatisfied With*

Aspect of the Program	Number	Percentage
Parents had no concerns	198	71.7
Programming and student development	25	9.1
Behavior management	16	5.8
Program schedule	8	2.9
Technology use	8	2.9
Communication	6	2.2
Homework	5	1.8
Staffing	5	1.8
Attitudes of staff	4	1.4
Snacks provided	3	1.1
Safety	3	1.1
Individualized Education Program accommodations	2	0.7
Program cost	1	0.4

Note. $N = 276$. Parents' open-ended responses were coded into these categories.

When asked if they had recommendations for improvement of the program, 258 parents responded, but 158 of them (61%) said they had no suggestions. See Table 4. The most common suggestions among the rest focused on the provision of additional resources, such as tutoring programs, outside activities, and changing activities each year to avoid redundancy. Another set of responses had to do with wanting more frequent communication and concerns about the number, training, and turnover of staff.

Table 4. *Parents' Recommendations for the Improvement of the Program*

Recommendation to improve the following:	Number	Percentage
Parents had no suggestions	158	61.2
Provision of additional resources	36	14.0
Communication	19	7.4
Staffing	13	5.0
Program schedule	11	4.3
Homework	6	2.3
Behavior management	6	2.3
Safety	5	1.9
Technology use	2	0.8

Note. $N = 258$. Parents' open-ended responses were coded into these categories.

Teacher Surveys

Of the 238 teachers responding on the teacher survey, majorities agreed with all of the positive statements about the program. See Table 5. On the one statement that was not positively worded, "Program staff needs additional training," there was no response that captured a majority, but 34% disagreed and another 36% choose "Neither agree nor disagree." The most strongly endorsed statement was "The program is beneficial to students and families," with 93% agreement. The lowest levels of agreement (though still over 50%) and highest levels of disagreement (though still under 25%) came on three items about the communication of staff with them as teachers and on one item, "Program addresses students' behavioral needs."

Comparing responses from this year with last year, we see slight increases in agreement with every item, with the biggest increase on "Program staff needs additional training" and "I have a good understanding of what the program expects of me." See the Appendix for all year-to-year comparisons.

Table 5. *Frequencies of Responses on the Teacher Survey*

Question on Teacher Survey	% Agree	% Disagree
I have a good understanding of program goals	88	8
I have a good understanding of what program expects of me	79	8
Program relates closely to content taught during school day	66	11
Activities and curriculum are engaging	87	4
Staff communicates with me regularly regarding students' progress	62	21
Program staff needs additional training	30	34
I can make suggestions or voice concerns to staff	85	4
Program is beneficial to students and families	93	3
Satisfied with frequency of communication about academic progress	58	19
Satisfied with frequency of communication about behavioral progress	62	14
Program activities address students' behavioral needs	62	16
Program activities address students' academic needs	67	11

Note. $N = 238$. “Strongly agree” and “Agree” responses were combined in the % Agree column. “Strongly disagree” and “Disagree” responses were combined in the % Disagree column. “Neutral” responses are not shown but can be computed as the percentages in the two columns subtracted from 100.

The teacher survey also included some questions eliciting open-ended responses, which we grouped into categories. Of the 135 teachers responding with the benefits they saw in the program, the top three most common responses had to do with the program's safety and support, activities, and student growth. See Table 6. Those who listed activities mentioned that students engaged with others above and below their grade in activities that were not offered in their regular classrooms, and that some students enjoyed the program's STEAM activities rather than sports.

Table 6. *Teachers' Reports of the Benefits of the Program*

Benefit	Number	Percentage
Safety and support	69	51.1
Activities	47	34.8
Student growth	39	28.9
Homework assistance	31	22.9
Program structure and operations	13	9.6

Note. $N = 135$. Teachers' open-ended responses were coded into these categories.

On the question eliciting aspects of the program parents were dissatisfied with, 88 teachers responded, but 45 of them (51%) said they had no concerns. See Table 7. Among the rest, one category of top concerns was program structure and operations, including concerns about funding, lack of services for PreK, and mismatch of expectations between parents and the program. Another area of dissatisfaction was behavior management, including comments on a lack of consistent rule enforcement and lack of staff training on how to deal with misbehavior.

Table 7. *Aspects of the Program Teachers Were Dissatisfied With*

Aspect of the Program	Number	Percentage
Teachers had no concerns	45	51.1
Program structure and operations	22	25.0
Behavior management	14	15.9
Communication	10	11.4
Activities	8	9.1

Note. $N = 88$. Teachers' open-ended responses were coded into these categories.

When asked if they had recommendations for improvement of the program, 78 teachers responded, but 36 of them (46%) said they had no suggestions. See Table 8. The most common suggestions among the rest focused on improving activities by providing more homework help, more activities for older youth, and more science, art, cooking, and field trips. Teachers also suggested that additional resources would allow the program to serve more children, and that frequency of communication of program staff with them regarding students' behavioral and academic goals could be improved.

Table 8. *Teachers' Recommendations for the Improvement of the Program*

Recommendation to improve the following:	Number	Percentage
Teachers had no suggestions	36	46.2
Activities	14	17.9
Provision of additional resources	12	15.4
Communication	10	12.8
Staff training	7	8.9

Note. $N = 78$. Teachers' open-ended responses were coded into these categories.

Child Surveys

Of the 2,323 children responding on the child survey, strong majorities agreed with every positive statement about the program. See Table 9. The highest levels of agreement were with the statement “I have friends here in the program” (97%) and “I feel safe here in the program” (94%). The lowest levels of agreement (though still over 70%) and highest levels of disagreement (though still under 16%) came on items asking if the activities they do in the program help them do math better and read better. The highest frequency of neutral responses was on the item asking if the activities they do in the program help them do math better. Responses on the whole were very similar to last year, with the largest difference being a decrease in the number of children responding that the activities they do there help them do math better. All year-to-year comparisons are shown in the Appendix.

Table 9. *Frequencies of Responses on the Child Survey*

Question on Child Survey	% Agree	% Disagree
The activities I do here help me do math better	72	15
The activities I do here help me read better	78	13
I really like the activities we do here	92	4
The activities we do here help me learn new things	88	7
It’s easy to ask a teacher for help here	92	5
The other kids in the program are nice to me	86	7
I have friends here in the program	97	2
I feel safe here in the program	94	4
I like to go here after school	88	8
I like school better because I go here after school	83	11

Note. $N = 2,323$. “Strongly agree” and “Agree” responses were combined in the % Agree column. “Strongly disagree” and “Disagree” responses were combined in the % Disagree column. “Neutral” responses are not shown but can be computed as the percentages in the two columns subtracted from 100.

The child survey also included some questions eliciting open-ended responses, which we grouped into categories. Of the 2,086 children who responded to the question asking them what they liked about the program, a majority mentioned activities. See Table 10. The top five activities they listed are gym, free time/recess, fun activities, computers/tablets, and art/creative activities. The fact that the program allowed them to spend time with their friends was also something children liked, with a few also listing the opportunity to make new friends. Children also mentioned how they liked being with the program staff, whom they described as kind and helpful.

Table 10. *Aspects of the Program Children Liked*

Aspect of the Program	Number	Percentage
Activities	1673	80.2
Friendships	387	18.6
Caring relationships	229	11.0
Provision of snacks	222	10.6
Academic Support	154	7.4
Everything	55	2.6

Note. $N = 2,086$. Children's open-ended responses were coded into these categories.

On the question of what things in the program they did not like, about 42% of the 1,676 children giving a response mentioned something about the activities, including that they were boring or they didn't have any choices. See Table 11. The two specific activities listed the most as not liked were reading and spelling and doing homework. The next most prevalent response was that there was nothing they did not like about the program. The only other category with a significant number of responses included negative behaviors of children toward each other, such as bullying and student disruptiveness.

Table 11. *Aspects of the Program Children Didn't Like*

Aspect of the Program	Number	Percentage
Activities	703	41.9
Nothing they didn't like	485	28.9
Negative behaviors	320	19.1
Snacks provided	49	2.9
Leaving the program early	47	2.8
Takes time away from being at home	23	1.4
Staff/personnel	16	1.0
Everything	16	1.0
The program sessions are long	12	0.7
Program session with other grades	8	0.5
No friends	5	0.3

Note. $N = 1,676$. Children's open-ended responses were coded into these categories.

Community Partner Surveys

Of the 39 community partners responding on the partner survey, strong majorities agreed with every positive statement about the program. See Table 12. The highest levels of agreement were with the statements “The program is beneficial to students and families” (97%) and “I am satisfied with the director or staff’s interactions with me as a partner,” “I have a good understanding of program goals,” and “I have a good understanding of what the program expects of me” (all at 95%). The highest levels of disagreement (but still below 12%) were seen for the statements about the director or staff communicating with the partner regularly about the importance and impact of their involvement or contributions. The highest level of neutral responses (at 13%) were for the statements “The program relates closely to content taught during the school day” and “Staff communicates with me regularly about the impact or results of my involvement or contributions.” Slight increases in agreement were seen on all items compared to last year. See the Appendix for more detail.

Table 12. *Frequencies of Responses on the Partner Survey*

Question on Partner Survey	% Agree	% Disagree
I have a good understanding of program goals	95	5
I have a good understanding of what program expects of me	95	5
Program relates closely to content taught during school day	84	3
Staff communicates with me regularly regarding importance of my involvement or contributions	84	8
Staff communicates with me regularly about impact or results of my involvement or contributions	77	10
I can make suggestions or voice concerns to staff	85	3
Program is beneficial to students and families	97	3
Satisfied with director or staff’s interactions with me as a partner	95	3

Note. $N = 39$. “Strongly agree” and “Agree” responses were combined in the % Agree column. “Strongly disagree” and “Disagree” responses were combined in the % Disagree column. “Neutral” responses are not shown but can be computed as the percentages in the two columns subtracted from 100.

The partner survey also included some questions eliciting open-ended responses, which we grouped into categories. When asked how their organization contributes to the program, 27 partners responded. Of those, 14 said that they provide the program with educational opportunities, such as field trips, programs, activities, or guest visits to the program. Another 5 indicated that they provided additional resources, such as a location, staff, and snacks. Five partners provided some funding to programs.

When asked what they saw as the benefits of the program, 34 partners responded. Of those, 17 mentioned how the program provided children with educational support and enrichment, such as homework assistance and engaging activities. Another 13 listed broader ways that the program supported children and families by providing a safe environment and helping working parents with affordable afterschool childcare. These responses were largely paralleled in responses to a question asking for aspects of the program partners were satisfied with.

Partners also responded to a prompt asking them to describe any concerns they had about the program. Of the 20 partners responding, 17 had no concerns. The three listing a concern focused on lack of parent participation in a family night, staff talking over each other, and feeling that the resources they provided were not being used. There were also 10 partners responding with recommendations for program improvement, focused mostly on ideas for new activities and program structures.

Results from Observations using the CLASS tool

Statewide means for both last year (2021) and the current year (2022) on each CLASS domain and dimension are reported in Table 13, and scores are broken down by region in the Appendix. In the Emotional Support domain, all four dimensions were in the high range this year, and the Negative Climate dimension, when reversed, had the best score of all the ten dimensions. Taking these four dimensions together, the overall domain score for Emotional Support was 6.45, which is in the high range. Other published studies using CLASS in K-5 classrooms in different regions around the country reported scores on these dimensions from the mid-4's to the mid-5's (and low-1's to low-2's for negative climate; Pianta et al., 2008). Thus, the 21st CCLCs in North Dakota performed better than regular classrooms in this domain.

The overall Classroom Organization score was just slightly lower, but still high enough to be in the high range this year. Instructional Learning Formats was the only dimension in this domain to score below 6.0, and it was also the lowest scoring dimension in this domain last year. This dimension focuses on ways in which the teacher maximizes the students' interest, engagement, and ability to learn. It includes effective facilitation, questioning, and use of a variety of modalities and materials. It is also indicated by the students showing active participation, listening, and focused attention. These scores are also consistent with published means from regular classrooms (Pianta et al., 2008).

On Instructional Support, regular school classrooms tend to score lower than in the other domains, generally in the low-middle to middle range (Pianta et al., 2008). The 21st CCLCs in North Dakota had similar scores, with all Instructional Support scores between 4.5 and 5 this year, which are over one point higher than last year.

Table 13. *Statewide Means on Each CLASS Domain and Dimension*

Domain or Dimension	2021 Mean	2022 Mean
Emotional Support	5.98	6.45
Positive Climate	6.25	6.36
Negative Climate	1.18	1.20
Teacher Sensitivity	5.98	6.35
Regard for Student Perspectives	4.87	6.29
Classroom Organization	5.65	6.09
Behavior Management	5.84	6.14
Productivity	5.86	6.20
Instructional Learning Formats	5.23	5.92
Instructional Support	3.27	4.63
Concept Development	3.30	4.68
Quality of Feedback	3.36	4.63
Language Modeling	3.15	4.58

Note. 25 sites were observed in 2021 and 22 sites in 2022. The CLASS scale runs from 1 to 7.

There were some differences in scores with respect to format and content of sessions. With respect to format, small group activities tended to score higher in the Instructional Support domain and on the Concept Development dimension, whereas whole group instruction scored lower on Concept Development. (See Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1. *Small Group Format versus All Other*

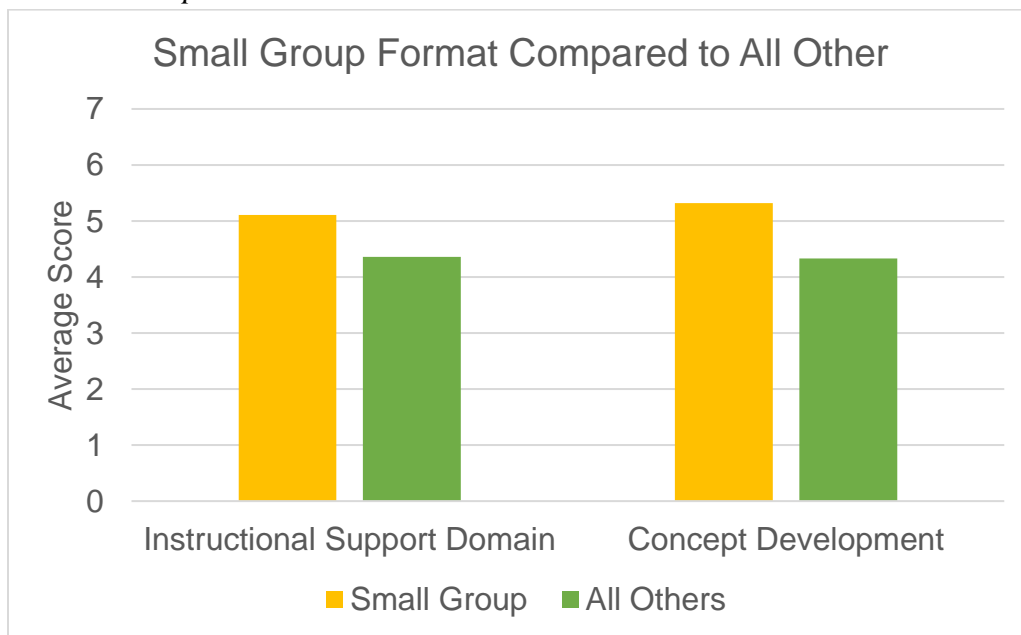
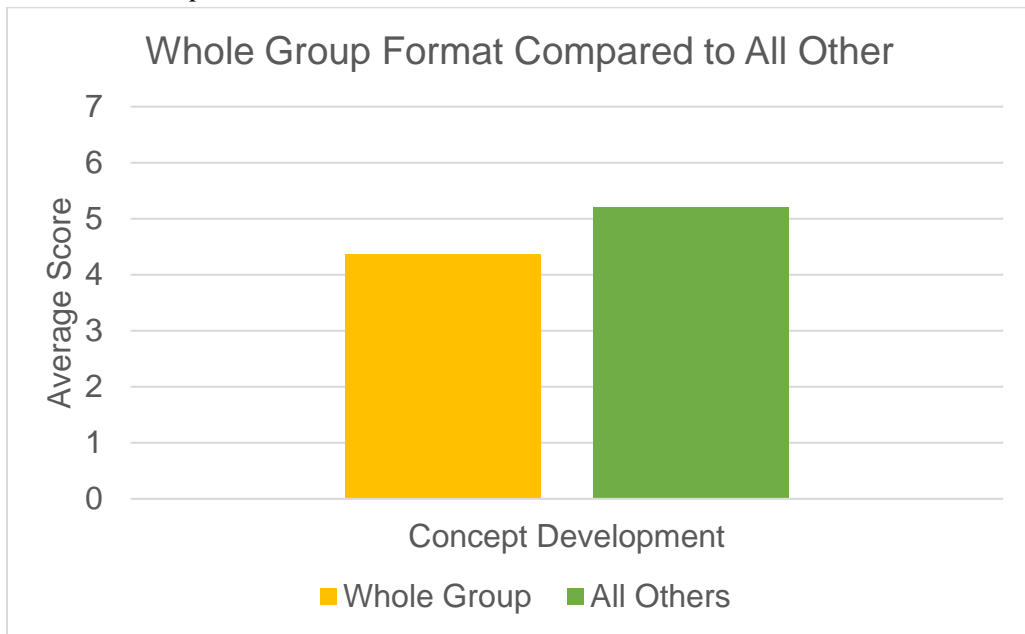
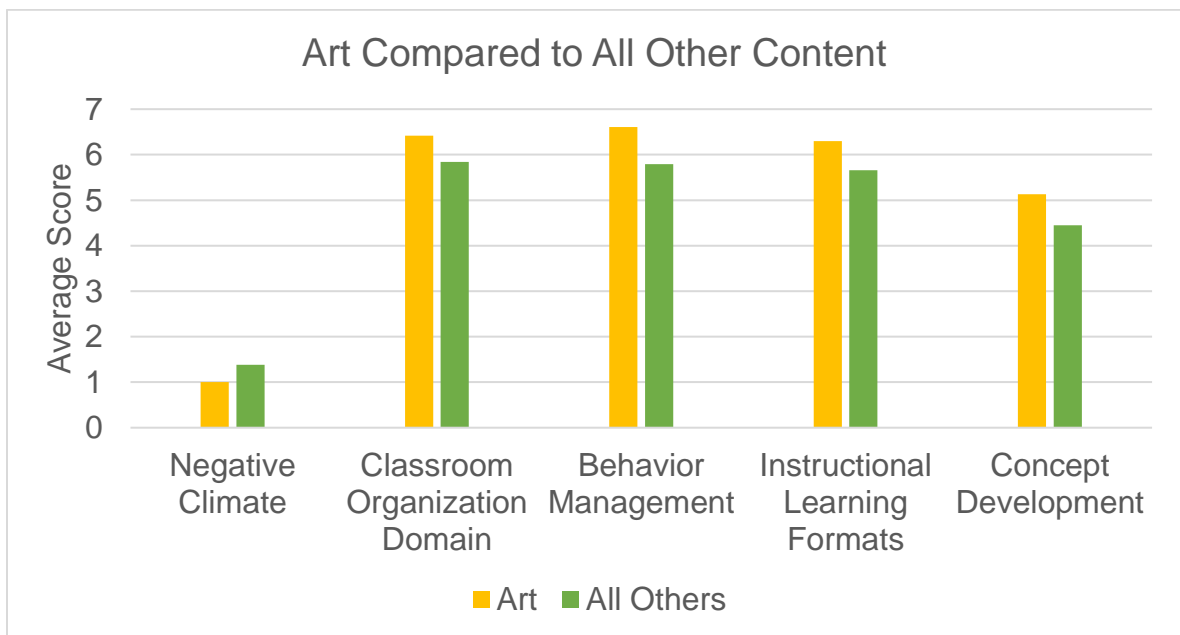


Figure 2. *Whole Group Format versus All Other*



Turning to the content of the sessions, those focused on art had significantly higher scores in Behavior Management, Instructional Learning Formats, and Concept Development, as well as on the Classroom Organization domain. Art sessions also scored lower in Negative Climate than those focused on anything else (See Figure 3).

Figure 3. *Art Compared to All Other Content*



Sessions focused on science had the most wide-ranging benefits. Compared to sessions focused on other content, science sessions scored higher in the Instructional Support domain and all of its dimensions (See Figure 4). Science sessions also scored higher in the Emotional Support domain and two of its dimensions, Positive Climate and Regard for Student Perspectives, as well as on the Instructional Learning Formats dimension (See Figure 5).

Figure 4. *Science Compared to All Other Content in Instructional Support*

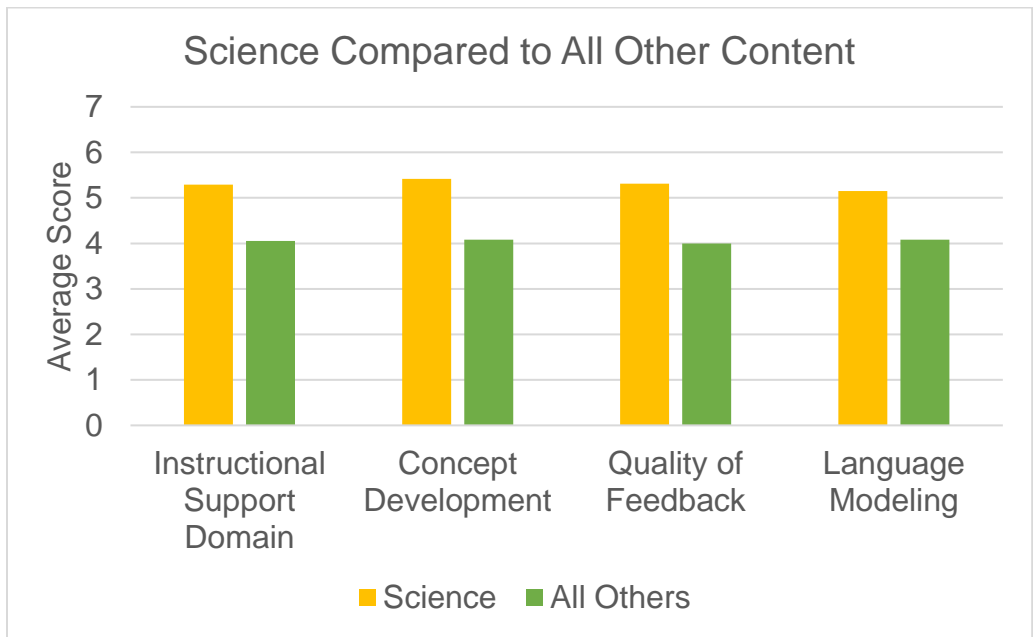
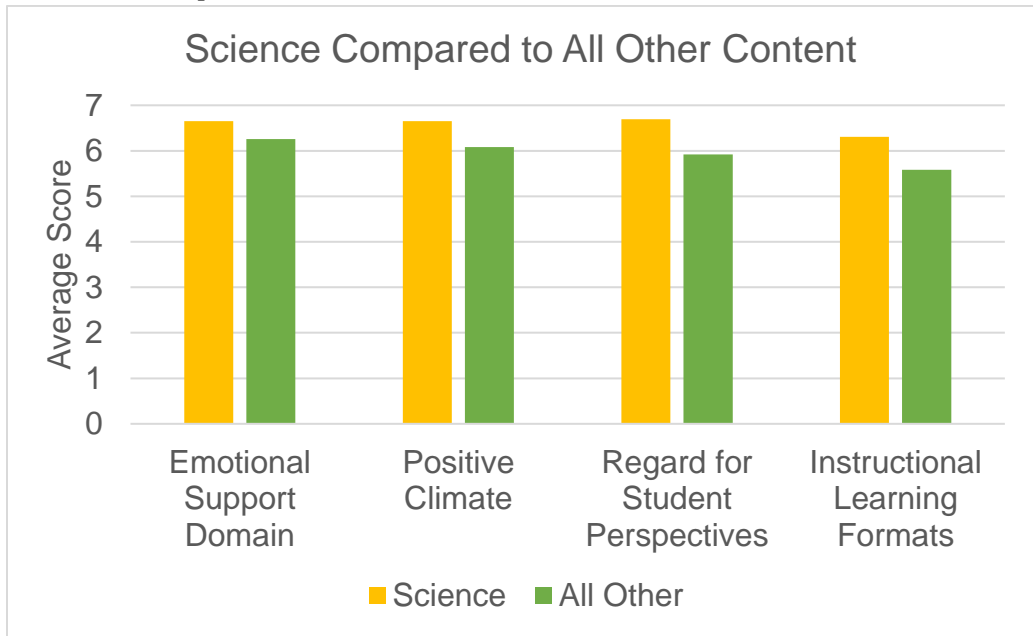


Figure 5. *Science Compared to All Other Content*



Conclusions

Comparison of CLASS Scores over Two Years

In this second year of using the CLASS observation protocol, we again saw that it can be used to reliably evaluate the learning environment in 21st CCLCs, and that the ranges of scores obtained in these programs are generally consistent with those in regular classrooms. Overall, CLASS scores were slightly higher this year than last year, and they were noticeably higher in the Instructional Support domain (See Table 13). This is consistently the most challenging and lowest scoring domain in regular classrooms, and 21st CCLCs are no exception. However, they improved in this domain over last year and scored slightly higher than what has been reported for regular classrooms across the country. It should be noted that we did not observe the same set of sites this year as last year, so the change in scores may also be due to observing a different set of sites.

The observations this year also showed that small group activities had an advantage over whole group instruction in promoting concept development and providing instructional support more generally. Another new finding this year is that sessions focused on art had a number of benefits across all three domains. The other content area showing higher CLASS scores in a number of dimensions was science, consistent with last year. What art and science have in common is that they provide a structured way for children to become physically involved in learning through doing.

Overview of Survey Results

Survey responses from the children, their parents, teachers, and community partners showed remarkable consistency. Strong majorities of every group endorsed every positive statement about the program. Nearly all parents said they would refer a friend or relative's child to the program. All groups of respondents also agreed that safety, the activities, and the academic support that programs provide were the best and most important aspects of the programs. The children also added that having this time to spend with their friends and with caring teachers was something they enjoyed. Adults should note that these social experiences are not just fun but are developmentally important as well. Most respondents had no concerns about the program and no suggestions for improvement. Among the few who did indicate some areas of concern, issues related to resources, communication, and behavior management were the most prevalent.

Acknowledgements

This report reflects the work of many people. The researchers would like to thank the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction for the opportunity to conduct this evaluation. In particular, Arlene Wolf was supportive throughout the process, always finding a way to make things work. Kristin Knorr at the North Dakota Afterschool Network was also a tremendous resource on the use of the CLASS and in how it might inform professional development and staff training. The largest burden of data collection fell on the center directors who distributed our emails to parents, teachers, and partners and made sure children had access to our surveys. Without their commitment, not just to the students but also to this project, this evaluation would have failed. Finally, we thank the students, teachers, parents, and partners who were willing to share their experiences to help pave the way for those who come after them.

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