



21st CENTURY
Community Learning Centers
State of North Dakota

State Evaluation SY 2023-2024

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 **NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**





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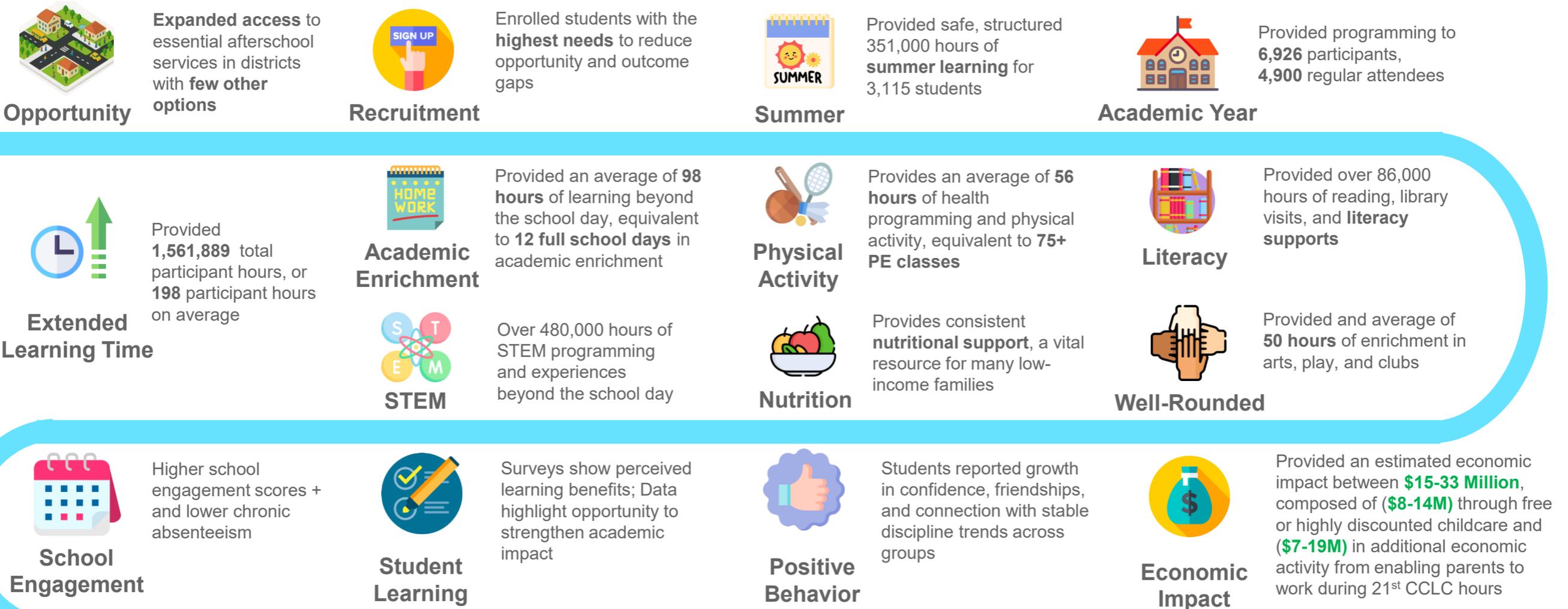


1. Executive Summary and Context



Broad and Measurable Impact: How 21st CCLC Programs Support Students, Families, and Communities Across North Dakota

This graphic summarizes the reach and impact of North Dakota's 21st Century Community Learning Centers, highlighting how the program supports students academically, socially, and economically across the state. Each icon represents a core outcome area, based on data from program records, surveys, and statistical analysis.





Executive Summary: Broad and Noticeable Impact of North Dakota's 21st CCLCs

Expanding Access

- Served nearly 8,000 students in 2023–24 across 109 centers, with 4,900 regular attendees
- Prioritized high-need students, including those who are low-income, Native American, and below academic proficiency
- Reached communities in over 50% of counties statewide, many with limited or no afterschool options

Extended Learning & Student Engagement

- Delivered over 1.56 million hours of academic, enrichment, and wellness programming
- Participants received an average of 198 additional learning hours, with strong emphasis on academic enrichment, STEM, and positive behavioral support
- Associated with reduced chronic absenteeism, particularly for low-income, Native, and Hispanic students



Executive Summary: Broad and Noticeable Impact of North Dakota's 21st CCLCs

Academic & Behavioral Outcomes

- Students report the program helps them do better in reading, math, and schoolwork
- No significant differences in standardized ELA/Math scores, though some sites show promising gains
- Perceived improvements in social-emotional skills, behavior, and peer relationships across all age groups

Economic & Workforce Value

- Estimated \$15–33 million in economic impact, supporting parental employment and reducing childcare costs
- Employed over 560 staff, including 87 college students and 50 high school students—building the educator pipeline
- Reinforces teacher retention by offering staff childcare and program alignment with the school-day workforce



Executive Summary: Broad and Noticeable Impact of North Dakota's 21st CCLCs

Strategic Implications

- **Participation gaps persist:** Higher-need students attend less frequently than peers, limiting the full benefit of programming for those most likely to benefit.
- **Stakeholders strongly support the program,** with high satisfaction across parents, students, teachers, and community partners.
- **Consistent quality and staff training remain priorities** for scaling impact and ensuring all students receive high-quality experiences.
- **School-day alignment and communication need strengthening,** particularly between teachers and program staff to reinforce learning and provide coordinated support.
- **Improved data practices and ongoing peer learning** at the site level can support a culture of continuous improvement and help surface successful local practices for statewide sharing.



2. Program Overview and Evaluation Purpose



Program Mission, Vision, and Core Values

21st Century Community Learning Centers are federally funded afterschool programs designed to support students attending high-poverty, low-performing schools. These programs offer more than just a safe space after school—they provide academic enrichment, build social and leadership skills, and promote drug and violence prevention, and health and wellness education. With over 1.6 million students served nationwide, 21st CCLCs are a critical support system for families and communities. In North Dakota, 21st CCLCs are designed to provide education, social, and economic benefits to local communities.



Educational

21st CCLCs serve as pivotal partners in helping schools achieve the **ND State Education Goals** by:

- Boosting **engagement** in learning
- Providing academic programming and assistance to raise **academic achievement**
- Offering individualized learning interventions that help **reduce disparities**
- Delivering a rich set of activities and experiences that ultimately, increase the number of graduates who are **Choice Ready**



Social

21st CCLCs improve the social outcomes and serve as connectors of schools to their communities by:

- Providing a **safe place** for youth after school
- Promoting **positive behavioral health** and providing increased opportunities to learn and practice social, emotional, and Essential skills
- Building **connections** between schools, families, and communities
- Raising cultural awareness
- Promoting community service and volunteering



Economic

21st CCLCs provide real economic benefits:

- Providing vital afterschool, out-of-school, and summer care allowing parents and other caregivers to **pursue work**
- Improving **teacher retention** through childcare support
- Expand the education **workforce pipeline** by providing training experiences for people interested in moving into education (college students, volunteers, etc.)
- Providing **early career exploration** experiences to participants
- Providing recreational and physical activities that promotes **health** and **military readiness**



Purpose of the Report

Each state, including North Dakota, is required to **evaluate** its 21st CCLC programs to assess effectiveness and inform continuous improvement. The Department of Public Instruction has partnered with **Alvarez and Marsal (A&M)** to conduct an evaluation of its program for the 2023-24 school year.

The evaluation analyzed data aligned with federal Government Performance and Results Act (**GPRA**) criteria to assess the effectiveness of North Dakota's 21st CCLC programs. We examined student-level data on **academic achievement, attendance, discipline, and student engagement** to measure program impact. Surveys from students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community partners provided additional insight into **program quality** and stakeholder experience. Findings were used to identify best practices, highlight areas for technical assistance, and inform recommendations for **continuous improvement**.



Evaluation Questions

The evaluation is structured around targeted questions aligned with the program's logic model, focusing on three key areas: stakeholder engagement, program implementation, and program impact. These questions guide data collection and analysis to assess how well the program meets its goals, engages families and communities, and improves student outcomes. This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of program performance, highlights best practices, and identifies areas for continuous improvement.

Key Focus Areas:

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Family satisfaction, community partnerships, school-day alignment
- **Program Implementation:** Fidelity to grant proposals, quality standards, staffing, participation
- **Program Impact:** Student achievement, attendance, engagement, and social-emotional growth



Methodology: Evaluating Program Impact

To assess the impact of North Dakota's 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC), we conducted a mixed-methods study combining both quantitative data analysis and stakeholder feedback. Data were obtained directly from the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) and included a comprehensive set of student records for both participants and nonparticipants. This included measures of school attendance, academic performance (ELA and Math test scores), discipline, and student engagement—allowing us to assess a range of short-term and intermediate outcomes.

In addition to state data, we analyzed survey responses from key stakeholders, including students, parents, school-day teachers, and school leaders. These surveys provided valuable insight into how the program supports students socially, emotionally, and academically. Together, these qualitative and quantitative sources allowed us to examine not only what changed, but also how the program was experienced by those it was designed to serve.

To ensure fair comparisons, we used propensity score matching (PSM) to pair each 21st CCLC participant with a similar nonparticipant based on key characteristics like grade, school, income status, race/ethnicity, chronic absenteeism, and disability status. This method helps account for pre-existing differences and allows for a more accurate estimate of program impact across key outcomes. Where appropriate, we identified statistically significant differences between participants and matched non-participants ($p < .01$).

Our analysis included all federally required Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measures, such as improvements in student achievement, behavior, and engagement. We also evaluated outcomes aligned with the program's broader vision—such as community benefit and included an economic impact estimate based on program hours delivered and cost savings for working families. This comprehensive approach helps quantify both the measurable outcomes and broader value of the program.



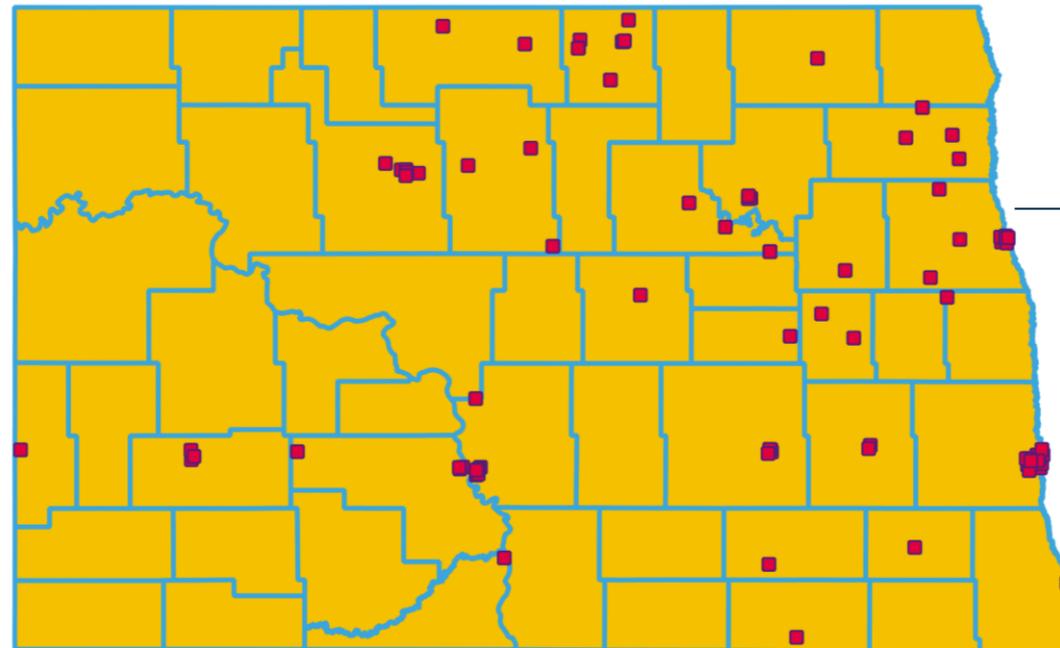
3. Strategic Investment and Reach



Investment in the State

In the 2023–24 school year, **North Dakota invested approximately \$6 million** in 21st Century Community Learning Centers to support students and families across the state. These funds were distributed through 12 grantees operating **105 centers**, which delivered academic enrichment and whole-child supports outside of regular school hours.

*As shown on the map, 21st CCLCs reach communities in every region—north, south, east, and west—providing services in **over 50% of North Dakota counties**. This geographic spread reflects a statewide commitment to equitable access to afterschool learning opportunities.*



For the 2023-24 school year, the program served almost **8,000 participants** over its summer and academic year programs across the state.



Who Operates 21st CCLCs: Subgrantees

North Dakota has **twelve 21st CCLC Subgrantees**, who operate a total of **105 sites**. Some of the subgrantees were regional cooperatives supporting multiple school districts and sites. Some subgrantees had specific curricular approaches like project-based learning, while others focused on career and technical education, STEM, and the arts.

Subgrantee	Number of Sites
Central Regional Education Agency	12
Dickinson Public School District (RASP)	6
Grand Forks Public School District	10
James Sheyenne Valley Cooperative (JSVC)	4
Minot Public School District	4
North Central Education Cooperative (NCEC)	12
Northeast Education Services Cooperative (NESC)	17
North Valley Career & Technology Center	7
South East Education Cooperative (SEEC)	19
Western Education Regional Cooperative (WERC)	7
South Sudanese Foundation	1
West Fargo Public School District	6

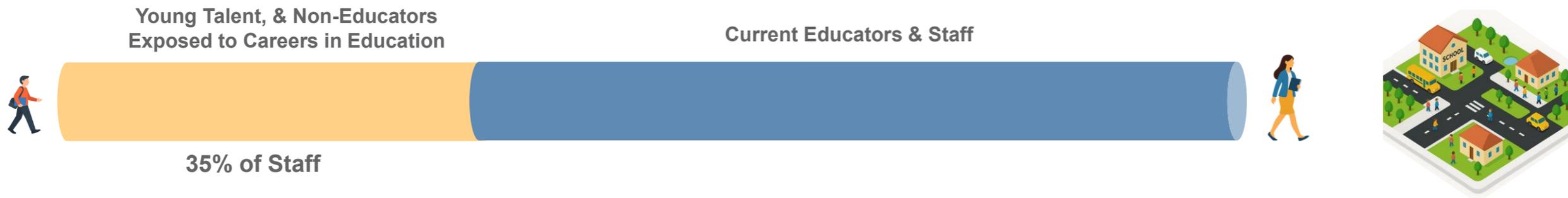
Who Supports 21st CCLCs: Local Partner Contributors

The 21st CCLC program connect students to a wide range of community partners who offer hands-on learning, mentorship, enrichment, and real-world experiences. These partnerships strengthen the program's impact and broaden student exposure to local resources and careers. Some of these valued partners are represented below.



Staffing Model and Workforce Strategy

The 21st CCLC program employs over 560 individuals and serves as part of the teacher development pipeline for the state.



The 21st CCLC program engages a broad mix of over 560 staff members, including 209 school-day teachers and 121 non-teaching school staff who extend student learning beyond the classroom. Notably, the program serves as a **pipeline to the next generation of educators**—employing 87 college students (many gaining practicum experience) and 50 high school students, offering **early exposure to careers in education**.

Staff Type	Number of Staff
School Day Teachers	209
Other Non-Teaching School Staff	121
College Students	87
High School Students	50
Other	58
Subcontracted Staff	21
Administrators	13
Community Members	6
Grand Total	565

This staffing model not only helps address ongoing **teacher shortages** but also strengthens community-rooted talent development. By offering hands-on opportunities to future educators, 21st CCLCs contribute to a more sustainable education workforce.



A Workforce Strategy that Helps Address Teacher Shortages

The program is not just student-facing – it's also strategic support for the educator workforce.

The 21st CCLC program plays a multifaceted role in strengthening North Dakota's education workforce. As previously identified by the state in its own analyses of teacher shortages and workforce challenges, one of the lesser-discussed—but pressing—barriers to teacher retention is access to reliable, high-quality childcare and afterschool care. Like parents in other professions, many teachers struggle to find care options that align with their work schedules. By providing afterschool care that is also available to school staff and their families, 21st CCLCs are not only enriching student learning but also delivering a practical retention benefit for educators.

This program is a lifesaver for many families at our school, my own included. My own child attends CLC here and I know she is safe and well-taken care of while I work in my own classroom.

- Teacher, Washington Elementary – Minot

My student that attends after school tutoring has been struggling with basic addition and subtraction facts and their strategies. With the help of this program, she has been improving gradually and has the confidence of completing her work independently.

- Teacher, Turtle Mountain

The program as improved my child's behavioral needs and engagement in class.

- Teacher, Central Middle School



4. Community Need and Value Proposition





Why is this Program Important?

Parents and school leaders, in our surveys, overwhelmingly agree: the 21st CCLC program is not just beneficial – it’s **essential**, especially in areas with childcare shortages and few afterschool options.

Working parents rely on it.



92% of parents agreed that afterschool programs like 21st CCLC help them **keep their jobs**.

In addition, Parents see this program as a cornerstone of their family’s daily routine.

It creates opportunities that wouldn’t exist otherwise.

- 82% of parents agreed with the statement that the program gives their children opportunities they wouldn’t otherwise have—underscoring its role in expanding access and experiences.

District leaders see it as vital.



School leaders rated the importance of the program at an exceptional **4.81 out of 5**, the strongest signal across all survey items, with **81% strongly agreeing** that the program is important for their students.

There are few alternatives.

- Leaders also reported limited local options for before- and afterschool care, with only **14%** of school leaders reporting that they had “several other options” for before or afterschool programming.

Parents and school leaders also highlighted the importance of 21st CCLCs in providing a **safe** place to go before and after school.

“I appreciate that there is an option in the building that he can safely stay while my spouse and I complete our workday”

- Parent Survey Respondent

“This program give students who would otherwise be unsupervised at home have a safe place to get work done and be with peers.”

- School Leader Survey Respondent

Together, this feedback highlights why the 21st CCLC program is not just a support—but a **necessity** for families, students, and schools.

Stakeholders Highlight the Program's Educational Value

Overall, the program is **well-regarded** for its educational value—but continued effort to **align, differentiate, and elevate instruction** can help it reach its full academic potential.

Helps with homework.



79% of parents agreed that the program provides **structured time and space for homework.**

Parents liked that their student could get tutoring and academic support that they may not have at home.

Sufficient academic rigor, mostly.

- 78% of school leaders affirmed that the program offers sufficient academic rigor. A subset of school leaders (22%) reported opportunities to increase the academic rigor of their 21st CCLC programs.

Teachers praised engagement; Some noted academic alignment gaps.



90% of teachers agreed that their program's activities and content were engaging.

- 79% of teachers reported that their 21st CCLC programs address students' academic needs.
- 78% of teachers agreed that their program's activities closely related to the content taught during the school day.

These survey results describe the academic potential and impact of 21st CCLC programs, by providing structured time for homework and enhancing. However, the data also suggests areas for refinement and local improvement. For instance:

- The lower score on alignment (4.08) suggests that some sites could strengthen connections to classroom content.
- The rigor rating from school leaders indicates room to push for **deeper academic challenge** in some settings.

Near Unanimous Agreement on Program Benefits

Community partners, school leaders, and teachers all agree—their communities are benefitting from **the 21st CCLC program**.

Unanimous Approval from School Leaders



100% of school leaders agreed with the statement that the 21st CCLC program is beneficial to students and families, with 81% strongly agreeing.

“The programs and interventions that are provided augment programs done during the day and this service is vital for working families that are struggling to make ends meet. It is a win-win for our community.”

- School Leader

“Students who would otherwise be unsupervised at home have a safe place to get work done and be with peers. Struggling students have a place to receive extra academic help. Students interested in STEM have a place to receive the engagement that they crave.”

- School Leader

Most Teachers Report Program Benefits



96% of teachers agreed with the statement that the 21st CCLC program is beneficial to students and families, with 70% percent strongly agreeing.

“The students seem highly engaged with the planned activities.”

- Teacher Survey Respondent

“The youth are being exposed to different types of skills and/or activities that they may not be able to experience otherwise. They are excited to try different activities, share their stories and be creative.”

- Community Partner

High Support from Community Partners



98% of community partners agreed with the statement that the 21st CCLC program is beneficial to students and families, with 90% strongly agreeing.

It is a good partnership as my organization has materials and assets that can enhance learning while at the same time my organization benefits by the networking and collaboration with adults and youth.

- Community Partner

“The program as helped children who are struggling to have more time to practice academic skills. I have seen more confidence and understanding of reading and math due to this program.”

- Teacher Survey Respondent



5. Implementation: What Happens in 21st CCLCs



Programming at a Glance: Over **1.5 Million** Hours of Programming Provided Across the State

In the 2023–24 fiscal year, North Dakota’s 21st CCLC programs delivered **1.56 million hours of academic, enrichment, and wellness programming** to nearly 8,000 students. During the academic year alone, over 6,900 students participated in **more than 1.2 million hours** of structured afterschool support. Summer programs engaged over 3,100 students in **352,000 hours** of safe, enriching activities that prevent learning loss. On average, participants received **196 hours of programming**, representing a major statewide investment in youth development and family support.

Time	Total Participants	Total Program Hours	Average Program Hours Per Student
Fiscal Year	7,959	1,561,889	196
 Summer Programs	3,115	351,997	113
 Academic Year	6,926	1,219,530	176

Program Activity Types

21st CCLC programs offer more than supervision—they provide a rich mix of academic support, enrichment, and social development opportunities.

Through structured activities that extend beyond the regular school day, students gain access to homework help, hands-on STEM projects, physical activity, healthy snacks, and spaces to build friendships and confidence. These components work together to support the whole child—academically, emotionally, and socially—while giving families peace of mind



Extended Learning Time

21st CCLCs provided **1,561,889** total participant hours for nearly 8,000 participants.

This is equivalent to an extra **198** hours of programming per student on average.

The most common activities according to the City Span Activity Reports focus on academic enrichment (including homework help and tutoring), STEM related activities,



Academic Enrichment

An average of **98 hours** of learning beyond the school day to each student, equivalent to **12 full school days** in academic enrichment



Physical Activity

An average of **56 hours** of health programming and physical activity, equivalent to **75+ PE classes**



Literacy

An average of **42 hours** of reading, library visits, and **literacy supports**



STEM

An average of **100 hours** of STEM programming and experiences beyond the school day, for those offering it.



Nutrition

Consistent **nutritional support**, a vital resource for many low-income families

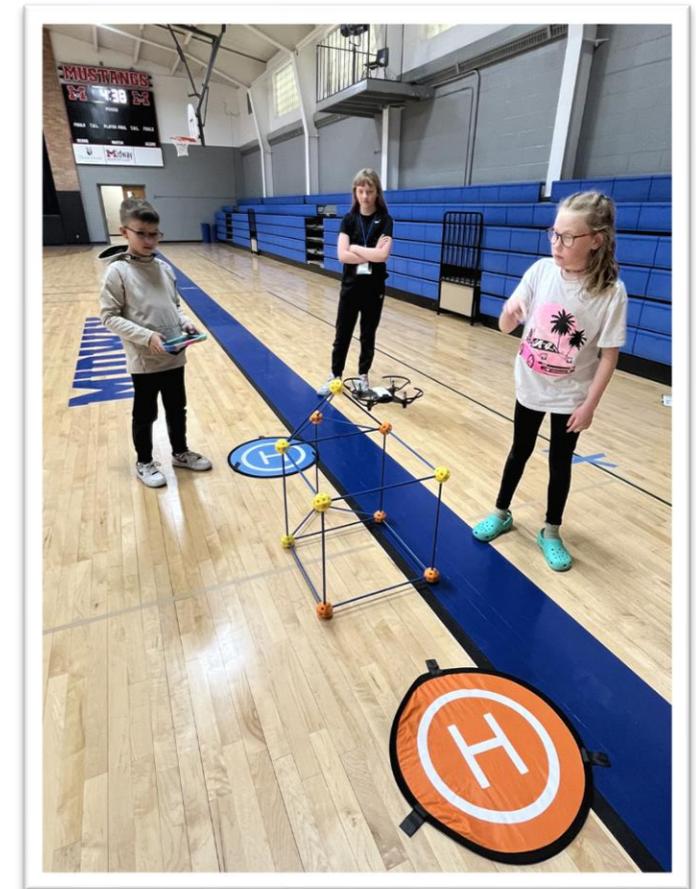


Well-Rounded

An average of **50 hours** of enrichment in arts, play, clubs, and other well-rounded activities

Program Activities: a Focus on STEM

21st CCLCs provide an average of **100 hours** of STEM programming and experiences beyond the school day for a typical participant. The photos below show the “hands-on” approach to learning promoted by programs as students learn the anatomy of the frog, investigate geology by comparing rock types, and engineer their own structures and devices.



Program Activities: Academic Support and Enrichment

21st CCLCs provide an average of **98 hours** of learning beyond the school day to each student, equivalent to **12 full school days** in academic support and enrichment. Participants are provided structured time to complete homework, receive tutoring and academic assistance.



Program Activities: Exposure to the Arts

21st CCLCs provide a well-rounded set of activities including art, clubs, and other activities. Participants highlighted the draw of activities such as arts, crafts, and Lego club in participating in the program.



Program Activities: Promoting Health and Play

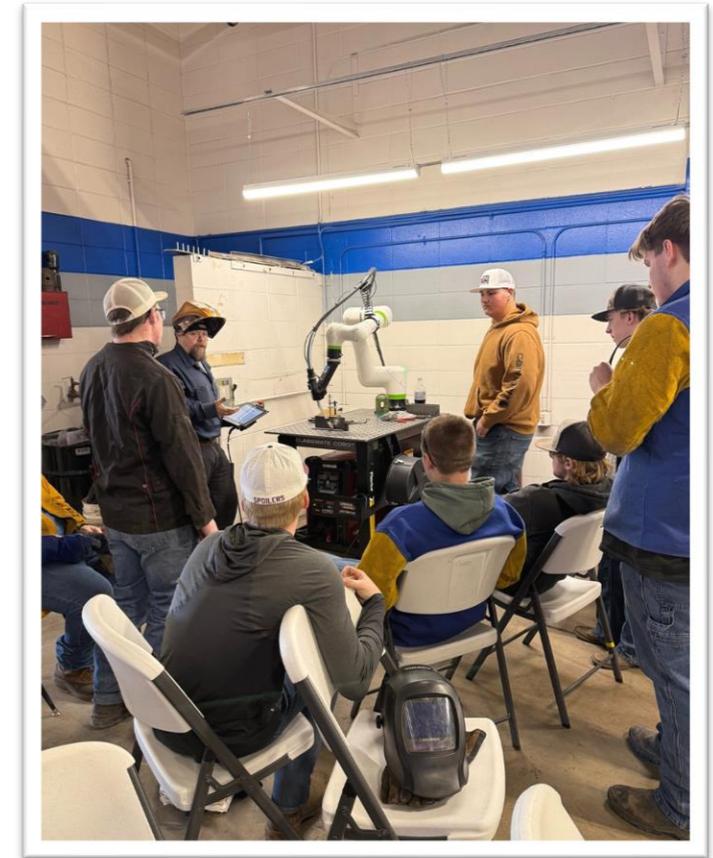
21st CCLCs provide an average of **56 hours** of health programming and physical activity, equivalent to **75+ PE classes**. With the state's CHOICE READY framework highlighting military readiness, the program provides regular opportunities for physical exercise and activity.



Program Innovations: Career and Technical Education in North Valley

The North Valley 21st Century Community Learning Center program redefines what's possible for rural youth by integrating work-based learning directly into afterschool and summer programming. Students in grades 9–12 participate in paid internships tied to their Career and Technical Education (CTE) studies, earning competitive wages while gaining real-world experience in fields like precision agriculture, advanced manufacturing, and healthcare. These opportunities are more than exposure—they are meaningful, mentored employment experiences that connect school-based learning with high-demand careers.

Through strategic partnerships with the Northeast Manufacturing Group, Lake Region State College, and North Dakota State College of Science, students engage in job shadows, workplace field trips, mentorship from industry professionals, and dual-credit evening courses. Certified teachers guide these experiences, ensuring alignment with students' coordinated plans of study. By fostering early career awareness and building workforce credentials, the program helps students and families build strong economic futures, while supporting rural workforce development and talent retention. For some participants 21st CCLC is not just afterschool—it's a pipeline to economic opportunity.



Program Innovations: Connecting Culture and Learning in Tate Topa

Tate Topa Tribal School is one of the key sites served by the NESC 21st CCLC grant. It serves a fully Native American student population in a rural context, making it a high-priority site for enriched and culturally relevant programming. These partnerships deliver:

- Art, Music, Dance, and Theater that reflect local Native culture and identity.
- Cultural History and Social Studies lessons integrated with traditional knowledge and community elders' input.
- Community Service Projects that promote tribal values and pride.
- Health and Wellness Programs aligned with Native youth development priorities, such as diabetes prevention and food sovereignty.

This wraparound model strengthens not only academic learning but also identity, pride, and holistic development among Native students. By embedding cultural relevance into its academic enrichment and family engagement efforts, the NESC 21st CCLC initiative helps Tate Topa students:

- Strengthen connections to their heritage,
- Build resilience and belonging,
- Engage more meaningfully with school and community life.

This culturally responsive approach reflects best practices in Native education and honors the distinct needs of the Spirit Lake Nation.



At Tate Topa Tribal School, Native song and dance are more than tradition—they are powerful forms of learning. Through the 21st CCLC program, students celebrate identity, language, and community while developing confidence, discipline, and pride. These experiences connect the past to the present and inspire students to carry their culture forward.



Program Innovations: Building a Teacher Talent Pipeline in Minot

Minot's 21st CCLC program leverages a powerful partnership with Minot State University to prepare the next generation of educators. Over 60% of the paraprofessional working in program sites are MSU education students completing practicum hours or gaining real-world instructional experience. These emerging educators lead academic support stations, facilitate STEAM enrichment, mentor students, and participate in behavior management strategies under the guidance of experienced site coordinators and licensed teachers.

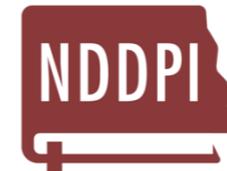


This partnership creates a dual impact: students receive focused academic and social-emotional support from highly motivated young professionals, and MSU students develop classroom confidence, instructional skills, and a deep understanding of student needs—well before their student teaching semesters begin. The program becomes a living classroom for practicum students and a vital resource for Minot's elementary learners.

- Future educators gain field-based training in afterschool and summer settings, working directly with students across literacy, math, STEAM, and positive behavior management.
- MSU builds a workforce-ready pipeline of educators trained in youth development, academic intervention, and inclusive practices.



6. Who Do 21st CCLCs Serve?



Participant Overview: Who is the Program Serving?

The program is enrolling high-need students and delivering critical academic and behavioral supports beyond the school day.



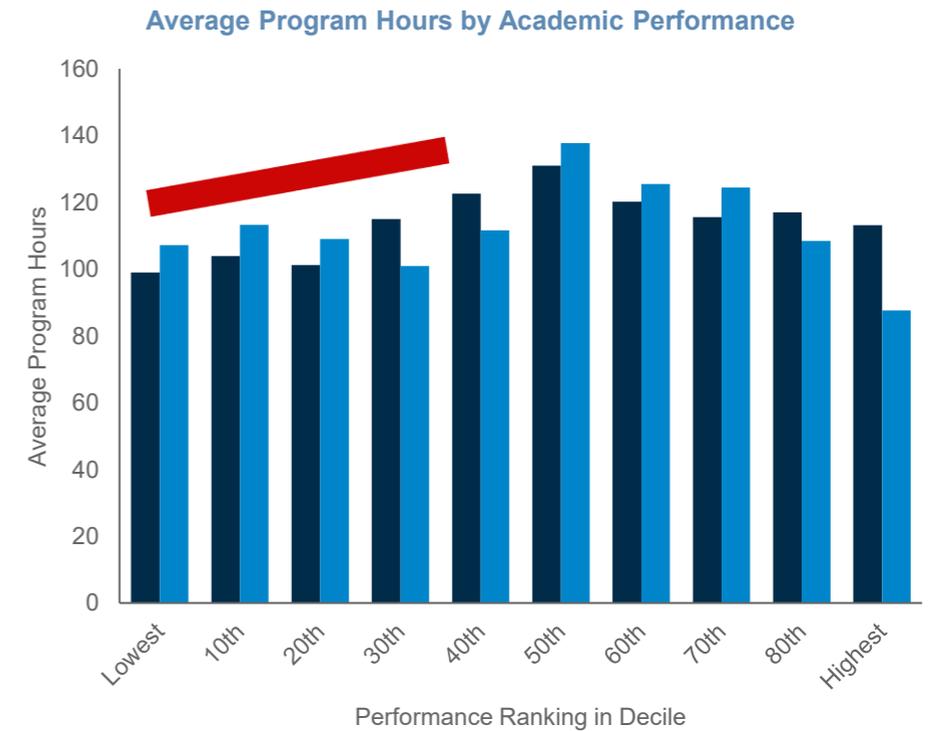
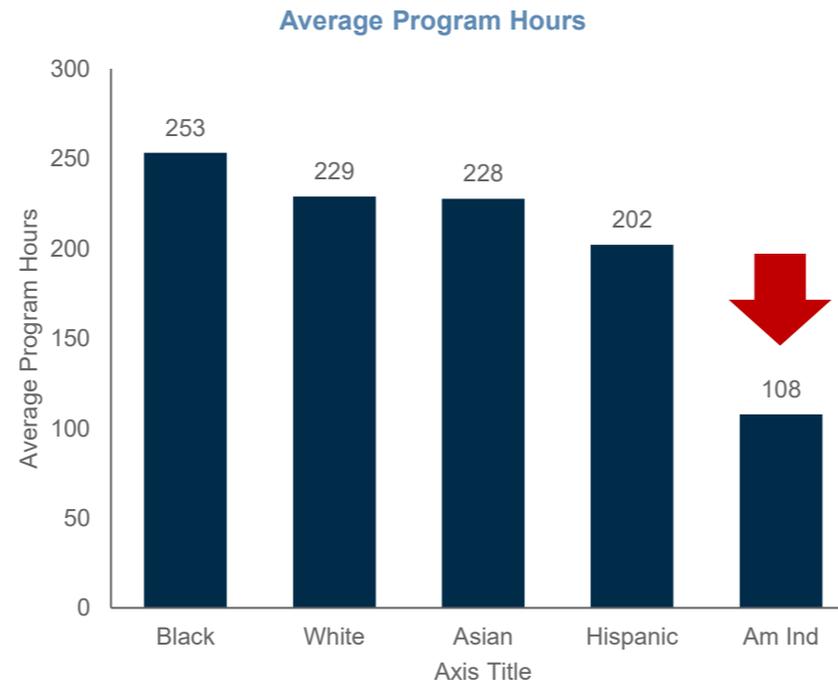
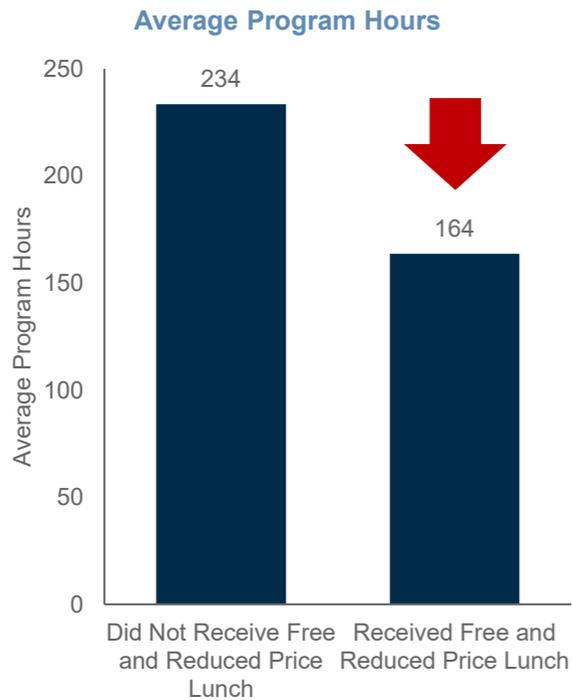
21st Century Community Learning Centers are reaching the **students who need support the most**.

Across all key demographic indicators, participants are more likely than nonparticipants to face barriers to academic success—underscoring the program’s role in expanding opportunity:

- **Low-income** students: Nearly half of all participants (47%) qualify for Free or Reduced Price Lunch, compared to just 32% of nonparticipants
- Students with **disabilities**: 19% of participants have an IEP, with rates reaching 22% in middle school
- **Native American** students: 24% of all participants are American Indian/Alaska Native — three times the statewide rate for nonparticipants
- Students **below proficiency**: Participants are significantly more likely to enter school below grade level in both math and ELA
- Students facing **behavioral or attendance challenges**: Participants have higher rates of discipline and chronic absenteeism, especially in secondary grades

Differences in Student Participation

While the program is reaching the students most likely to benefit the program, with higher proportions of low-income, Native, and students with lower proficiency levels in Math and ELA, these vital subgroups more likely to participate in low levels than their peers. They average significantly fewer program hours than their peers. For example, participants who receive free and reduced price lunch average 70 fewer hours than their peers. Native students average 100 fewer hours or half the rate than their peers. Generally, participants in the lowest levels of ELA and Math performance are also averaging fewer hours in the program than their peers.





7. Impact and Outcomes



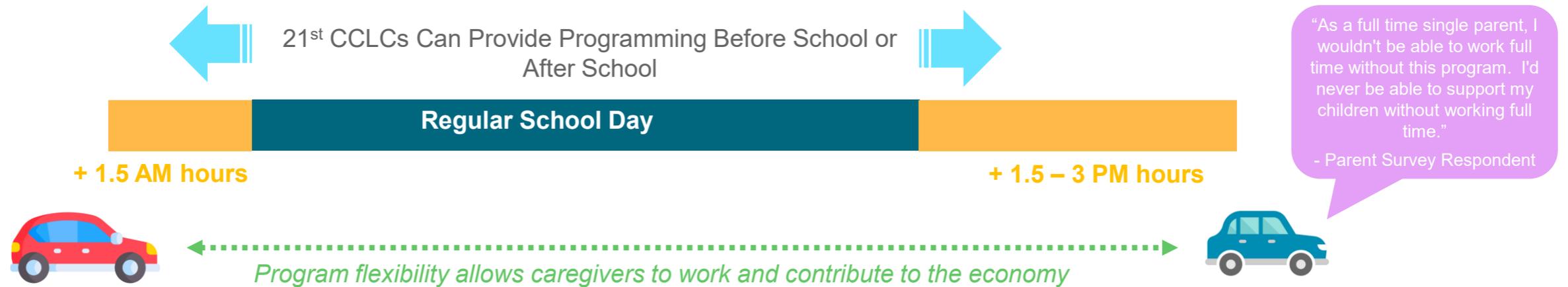
Broad and Measurable Impact: How 21st CCLC Programs Support Students, Families, and Communities Across North Dakota

This graphic summarizes the reach and impact of North Dakota's 21st Century Community Learning Centers, highlighting how the program supports students academically, socially, and economically across the state. Each icon represents a core outcome area, based on data from program records, surveys, and statistical analysis.

 <p>Opportunity</p> <p>Expanded access to essential afterschool services in districts with few other options</p>	 <p>Recruitment</p> <p>Enrolled students with the highest needs to reduce opportunity and outcome gaps</p>	 <p>Summer</p> <p>Provided safe, structured 351,000 hours of summer learning for 3,115 students</p>	 <p>Academic Year</p> <p>Provided programming to 6,926 participants, 4,900 regular attendees</p>
 <p>Extended Learning Time</p> <p>Provided 1,561,889 total participant hours, or 198 participant hours on average</p>	 <p>Academic Enrichment</p> <p>Provided an average of 98 hours of learning beyond the school day, equivalent to 12 full school days in academic enrichment</p>	 <p>Physical Activity</p> <p>Provides an average of 56 hours of health programming and physical activity, equivalent to 75+ PE classes</p>	 <p>Literacy</p> <p>Provided over 86,000 hours of reading, library visits, and literacy supports</p>
 <p>School Engagement</p> <p>Higher school engagement scores + and lower chronic absenteeism</p>	 <p>Student Learning</p> <p>Surveys show perceived learning benefits; Data highlight opportunity to strengthen academic impact</p>	 <p>Positive Behavior</p> <p>Students reported growth in confidence, friendships, and connection with stable discipline trends across groups</p>	 <p>Economic Impact</p> <p>Provided an estimated economic impact between \$15-33 Million, composed of (\$8-14M) through free or highly discounted childcare and (\$7-19M) in additional economic activity from enabling parents to work during 21st CCLC hours</p>

More Time to Learn, More Support for Families

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLCs) extend the school day to give students more time for learning, growth, and support. Programs can operate **before school (up to 1.5 hours)** and/or **after school (1.5 to 3 hours)**, creating consistent routines for children and helping families manage work schedules.

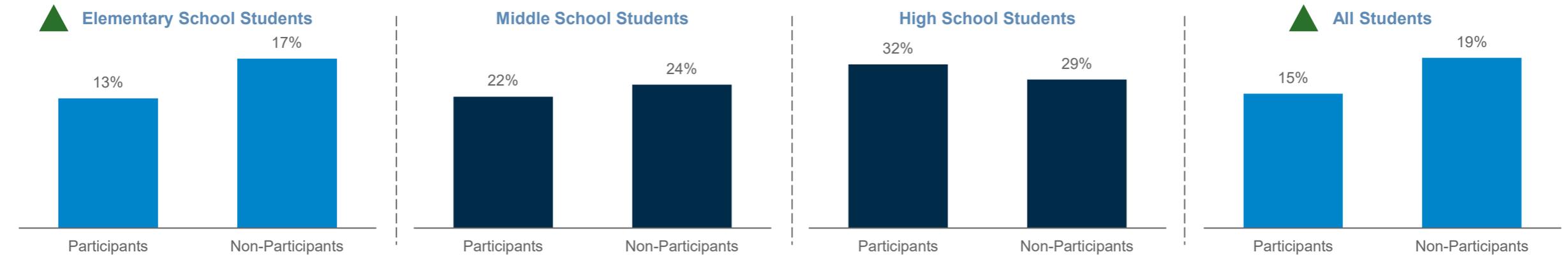


In the mornings, students may benefit from a calm, structured start to the day—receiving breakfast, getting help with homework, or practicing key skills. Afterschool programs often focus on **academic enrichment, homework support, STEM and arts activities, and social-emotional learning**. For many students, this extended time is the **only structured opportunity for enrichment or extra academic support**.

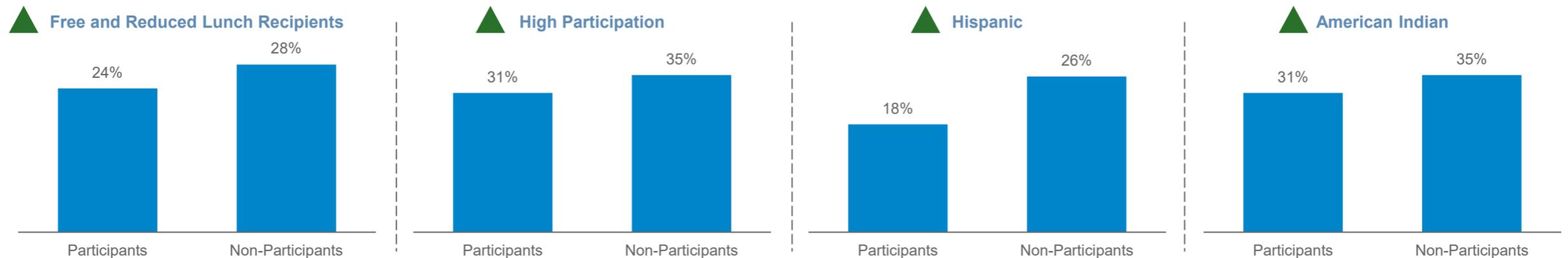
School Engagement: Chronic Absenteeism

The overall chronic absenteeism rate (defined as missing 10% or more of school days) is 15% for participants and 19% for non-participants. There is also a significant difference in the chronic absenteeism rate for certain disadvantaged students such as free and reduced price lunch recipients.

Chronic Absenteeism Rate Comparison by School Level



Chronic Absenteeism Rate Comparison for Select Subgroups



Academic Outcomes: Performance on State Assessments

Findings related to academic achievement are **mixed**. Survey responses from parents, teachers, and participants suggest that 21st CCLC programs offer important academic benefits—including time for homework completion, access to tutoring, and participation in enrichment activities designed to reinforce classroom learning. However, when comparing state assessment outcomes, **participants generally performed similarly to their matched non-participants** in both ELA and Math.

There were **no statistically significant differences** overall, and while some grade-level subgroups show slight advantages for participants—such as in middle school math—these differences do not meet thresholds for statistical confidence. Additionally, results for **high school students should be interpreted with caution**, as the number of matched participants with valid test scores was very low, limiting the reliability of those comparisons.

Despite the overall results, there are **pockets of success**. In a few individual sites, 21st CCLC participants **outperformed their matched peers**, suggesting that specific programming approaches may be driving stronger academic outcomes. While more research is needed to assess causality, these sites may offer valuable insights and could serve as **models for effective academic implementation**

	ELA		Math	
	Participants	Non-Participants	Participants	Non-Participants
All Participants	39%	39%	37%	36%
Elementary School Students	38%	39%	38%	38%
Middle School Students	41%	39%	31%	28%
High School Students	38%	41%	18%	33%

	High Performing Sites	
	Participants	Non-Participants
Devil's Lake - Prairie View - Math	53%	43%
Bottineau Elementary – ELA	67%	47%
Valley – Edinburg at Hoople - Math	69%	38%

Academic Outcomes: Perceived Educational Value

Overall, the program is **well-regarded** for its educational value—but continued effort to **align, differentiate, and elevate instruction** can help it reach its full academic potential.

Helps with Homework.



79% of parents agreed that the program provides **time and space for homework.**

Parents see this program as a cornerstone of their family's daily routine.

Sufficient academic rigor, mostly.

- 78% of school leaders affirmed that the program offers sufficient academic rigor. A subset of school leaders (22%) reported opportunities to increase the academic rigor of their 21st CCLC programs.

Teachers praised engagement, Some noted academic alignment gaps.



90% of teachers agreed that their program's activities and content were engaging..

- 79% of teachers reported that their 21st CCLC programs address students' academic needs.
- 78% of teachers agreed that their program's activities closely related to the content taught during the school day..

These survey results describe the academic potential and impact of 21st CCLC programs, by providing structured time for homework and enhancing .However, the data also suggests areas for refinement and local improvement. For instance:

- The lower score on alignment (4.08) suggests that some sites could strengthen connections to classroom content.
- The rigor rating from school leaders indicates room to push for **deeper academic challenge** in some settings.

Positive Behavior: Perceived Impact on Social and Behavioral Outcomes

Survey results show strong agreement across stakeholder groups that 21st CCLC programs support students' social and behavioral development.

School Leaders Report Improvements on Social and Behavior Outcomes



84% of school leaders agreed with the statement that the 21st CCLC program **improves** students' social and behavioral outcomes, 49% strongly agreeing.

Most Teachers Cite Alignment on Behavior, With Opportunities for Improvement



75% of teachers agreed with the statement that the 21st CCLC program activities address students' behavioral needs, with 41% percent strongly agreeing.

Parents Describe Improvements in Attitude Toward School



70% of parents agreed with the statement that "As a result of this program, my child's attitude towards school has improved."

Younger Participants Learn Strategies to Improve Peer Relationships



81% of child participant reported being part of the 21st CCLC program helps them learn how they can get along with other kids better.



Older Participants also Report Social Benefits, Though at Slightly Lower Rates

69% of middle and high school participants reported that their program helps them learn how they can get along with others better.

"The program has greatly improved our students behavior in the school setting. The program gives students opportunities to learn and practice expected behaviors."

- School Leader Survey Respondent

"It has helped me be able to socialize more and cooperate with peers"

- Child Survey Respondent

"It helped me be around a lot of kids. Because usually when I'm around people I get better at not being overwhelmed"

- Child Survey Respondent

Economic Impact

Over 92% of surveyed parents agreed that afterschool programs like 21st CCLC help them keep their jobs. Parents see this program as a cornerstone of their family’s daily routine.

Estimated Economic Impact

To assess the broader economic value of the program, we estimated the savings to families for before- and afterschool childcare, along with additional labor market activity enabled by that care. Total estimated economic impact ranges from **\$15 million to \$33 million**, based on:

- **\$8 to 14 million** in estimated savings from free or highly discounted childcare
- **\$7 to 19 million** in additional economic activity from enabling parents to work during program hours

1,560,000 total participant hours



Assumptions Behind the Range

- The lower-bound estimate assumes minimum wage childcare costs and conservative assumptions about parental labor force participation and wages
- The upper-bound estimate reflects the median wage for childcare workers in North Dakota and typical state averages for labor force participation and earnings.

These estimates highlight that 21st CCLC is not only an educational asset – but also a meaningful contributor to North Dakota’s workforce and economy



8. Stakeholder Voice



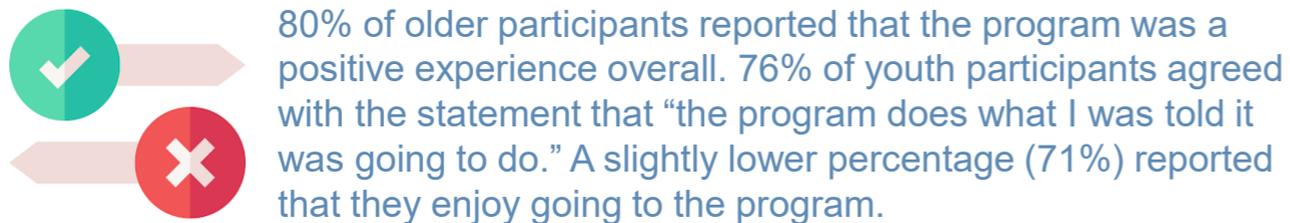
Program Satisfaction: Strong Satisfaction Across Children, Youth, and Parents

Survey results show high levels of satisfaction with 21st CCLC programs across all respondent groups.

High Approval from Parents



Middle and High Schoolers positively rate their program, with a subset indicating opportunities for improvement



Children enjoy the activities in their program



86% of child participant reported that they enjoyed the activities in their 21st CCLC program. Most (77%) reported that they liked going to their program after school.

“I am happy that my child likes the program and is always excited to tell me about their time in the program”
- Parent Survey Respondent

“My learning, math, science, and spelling skills have gotten so much more better and I love it here”
- Child Survey Respondent

“I’m satisfied with this program because it exists at all. As a full-time single parent, I wouldn’t be able to work full time without this program, and I’d never be able to support my children without working full time.”
- Parent Survey Respondent

Together, these results indicate broad satisfaction among families. However, survey results indicate opportunities to solicit input from older participants for potential changes and improvements in programming.

Strength in Collaboration, Room to Elevate Youth Voice

While communication with families and partners is strong, there's a clear opportunity to better engage school-day teachers to close the loop around student learning and support. While adult stakeholders feel engaged, these results point to a clear opportunity to more meaningfully incorporate **student voice and choice** into program design and decision-making.

School Leaders Satisfied with Level of Collaboration



School leaders expressed strong understanding of the program's goals and 92% reported that they have sufficient input and collaboration with their 21st CCLC program

Teachers Identify Opportunities to Improve Communication



High rates of teachers (70%) reported sufficient communication and collaboration but noted room to improve alignment with academic content and clarity around expectation. Only 60% of teachers reported getting regular updates on the progress of students

Community Partners Feel Valued and Satisfied with Collaboration



Nearly all community partner respondents (92%) report strong communication with program staff. Community partners also feel valued and report that they have sufficient input in collaborating on programming.

Parents Satisfied with Communication and Feedback with Staff



89% of parents reported that they were happy with their communication with program staff, especially in understanding of how their child is doing. 88% percent also reported being able to provide feedback to staff

Room to Elevate Youth Voice into Program Design

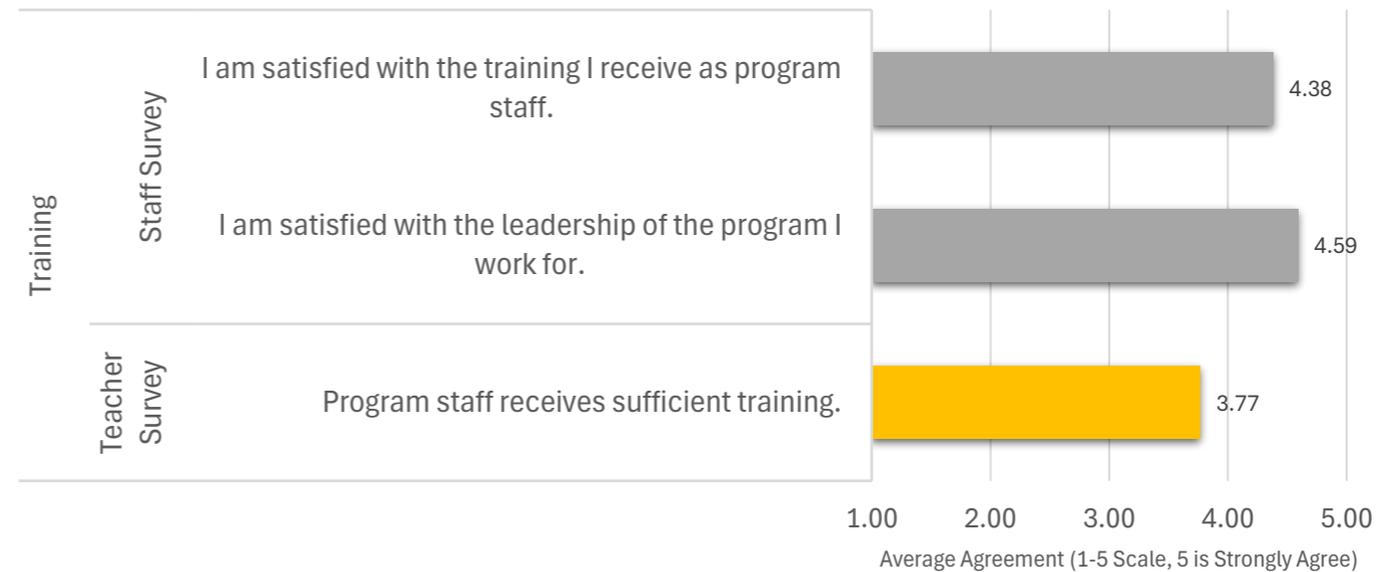


While close to 70% of younger and older participants reported that they are able to share ideas and provide input on programming, participants had the lowest rating across stakeholders. Seeking their input in design may help address participation gaps in certain sites.

Strong Leadership Ratings, with Opportunities to Strengthen Staff Training

Program staff expressed high levels of satisfaction with both the training they receive (4.38) and the leadership guiding their work (4.59), reflecting strong internal support and direction. However, school-day teachers were less confident that program staff receive sufficient training, rating this area significantly lower at 3.77 out of 5. This discrepancy suggests a need to enhance training—particularly in areas that align afterschool support with school-day expectations. Strengthening communication and targeted professional development may help bridge this perception gap and improve program integration.

Teacher & Staff Views on Training and Leadership



More training for those seeing students the most. They could get academic training to help students with homework or other strategies
- Teacher Recommendation

More training on behavior management. I know several teachers have to step in when they see certain behavior.
- Teacher Recommendation

I know that staffing for this is difficult. I know that some staff have no prior experience with kids and so they don't really know how to manage them. It's really hard to listen to the CLC teacher constantly get after kids. I also understand that some kids are just tough kids and when they get to CLC, they've already had a long day and it's hard to keep it together for the rest of the day.
- Teacher Recommendation



9. Strategic Recommendations





Recommendations: Strengthen Staff Support Systems to Improve Supervision and Student Behavior

To address both staffing challenges and student behavior issues, we recommend a coordinated strategy that includes:

- **Enhanced onboarding and professional development** focused on behavior management, trauma-informed care, and inclusive practices.
- **Increased support** from trained volunteers to reduce supervision burdens and enable individualized attention.
- **Clear behavior expectations and consistent disciplinary procedures** shared across staff, students, and families to promote safe and respectful environments.

Given that sizable percentages of staff are high school students, college students, or individuals with limited training on educational best practices, subgrantees and sites should consider reviewing the focus areas and regularity of their trainings. The requests from school day teachers for increased communication and collaboration indicate opportunities for aligning how schools and 21st CCLC programs set expectations and address issues.

By investing in staff training and setting shared behavior standards, programs can build more supportive climates, reduce disruptions, and ensure students feel safe, engaged, and cared for.



Recommendations: Enrichment Variety, Program Structure, and Academic Strategy

To address potential student disengagement and inconsistent routines, sites should consider a twofold strategy:

1. Expand Activity Variety and Relevance

Programs should co-design enrichment opportunities with student input—especially for older youth—to ensure offerings are fresh, developmentally appropriate, and tied to real-world interests (e.g., STEM, creative arts, career exploration, service projects). Partnering with local organizations, universities, and cultural groups can help bring diverse, high-interest programming into each site.

2. Strengthen Daily Structure and Planning

Sites should adopt consistent schedules with clearly defined transitions and purposeful time blocks for academic, enrichment, and recreational activities. Providing staff with tools such as visual agendas, structured choice boards, and pacing guides can reduce downtime and behavior issues while improving engagement. Sites with younger staff may benefit from increased structure and planning resources.

3. Increase the Impact of Academic Time

The impact study suggests opportunities to increase the academic impact of the program. Consequently, programs should consider strategies for boosting the quality—not just quantity—of academic support. This includes:

- Aligning tutoring and homework time with school-day learning goals
- Integrating literacy and math into enrichment formats
- Using formative assessment or progress monitoring tools to target support
- Offering staff training on how to differentiate instruction during academic time

By combining engaging, age-appropriate activities with structured, academically meaningful routines, programs can improve both student experience and learning outcomes.



Recommendation: Strengthen Engagement Strategies for Higher-Need Students

While the program is successfully enrolling higher-need students—including those from low-income backgrounds, low-performing subgroups, and historically underserved communities—it must now focus on **increasing sustained engagement** for these participants. Data show that although these students are getting in the door, they attend less regularly and accumulate only half the program hours of their peers. To address this drop-off, programs should implement targeted strategies such as:

- Personalized outreach and relationship-building with families to identify and reduce barriers to regular attendance
- Culturally relevant and student-driven programming that reflects the interests and experiences of higher-need youth
- Incentives, recognition systems, and flexible participation options to boost consistency and belonging
- Mentoring or case management approaches to provide additional support for students facing complex challenges

By deepening engagement for those who need the program most, sites can close participation gaps and ensure equitable access to the full range of academic, social, and developmental benefits.



Recommendations: Focus Areas for Technical Assistance

Survey responses from staff highlight several recurring areas where additional training and support would be beneficial. While some respondents indicated satisfaction with current offerings or were unsure of what additional training they needed, the majority identified **behavioral strategies, lesson delivery, and student engagement** as high-priority topics.

1. Student Behavior and Emotional Regulation

The most frequently cited area was **behavior management**, including how to handle disruptive behavior, outbursts, and students with autism, ADHD, or other special needs. Staff requested training in:

- De-escalation strategies and conflict resolution
- CPI (Crisis Prevention and Intervention) and trauma-informed care
- Supporting emotional regulation and positive behavior
- Understanding IEPs, 504 plans, and cognitive differences

2. Classroom Management and Instructional Planning

Many staff requested additional support with:

- **Lesson planning and instructional delivery**, especially for staff with less formal education or experience
- Creating **fun, structured, and educational activities** aligned with student needs
- Managing multi-age groups and keeping students focused
- Strategies for academic support in **math, reading, science, and social studies**
- How other successful programs are run (sharing best practices across sites)



Recommendations: Focus Areas for Technical Assistance

3. Enrichment and STEAM/Hands-On Learning

Several staff expressed interest in expanding their skills around **STEM/STEAM**, **project-based learning (PBL)**, and **hands-on enrichment**. Ideas included:

- Creating more partner- and group-based learning opportunities
- Building out STEAM and technology instruction
- Finding creative ways to keep students engaged during extended program hours

4. Communication and Family Engagement

A smaller but important group of responses indicated a need for training in:

- **Parent communication**—particularly during difficult situations
- Collaborating with teachers and understanding school-day expectations
- Navigating conversations with families of students with special needs

These responses suggest that while some staff feel well-supported, there is strong interest in more **practical, hands-on, and targeted training**—particularly in behavior management, instructional planning, and STEAM enrichment. Investing in differentiated professional development opportunities would help ensure that all staff—regardless of background—feel confident and equipped to support diverse learners



Appendix: GPRA Measures & Additional Analysis



Program Activities: Total Participants and Program Hours

The table below summarizes the range of activities offered during the fiscal year, including both summer and academic year participation. It captures the number of participants and total hours spent across key categories such as academic enrichment, STEM, healthy lifestyles, literacy, and more. This data highlights how programs provide comprehensive, year-round support that aligns with both student development goals and federal priorities.

Activity Category	Fiscal Year		Summer		Academic Year	
	Number of Participants	Total Hours	Number of Participants	Total Hours	Number of Participants	Total Hours
Academic Enrichment	5,350	524,387	1,842	97,448	4,763	426,266
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics	4,889	488,891	1,780	127,100	4,248	378,848
Healthy and Active Lifestyle	4,566	300,713	1,557	82,351	4,168	230,684
Well-rounded Education Activities	2,663	141,117	1,144	31,827	2,222	97,849
Literacy Education	1,980	86,997	365	9,244	1,653	76,697
Cultural Programs	440	7,468	138	2,342	152	1,395
Career Competencies and Career Readiness	637	6,481	16	98	637	6,481
Telecommunications and Technology Education	121	2,279			52	141
Activities for English Learners	64	1,513	66	963	9	275
Assistance to Students who have been Truant, Suspended, or Expelled	32	1,140	17	366		
Drug and Violence Prevention and Counseling	502	896			502	896
Parenting Skills and Family Literacy	8	249	8	249		
Services for Individuals with Disabilities	3	9	3	9		

GPRA Requirements Overview

The 21st CCLC program is funded through the U.S. Department of Education and is subject to the Government Performance and Results Act (“GPRA”), which requires that Federal agencies establish program goals. To meet that requirement, the U.S. Department of Education created five quantitative measures to evaluate states’ 21st CCLC programs. Those measures include:



1a

Improvement in state assessment results for reading and language arts

School year and summer participants, grades 4-8



1b

Improvement in state assessment results for mathematics

School year and summer participants, grades 4-8



2

Improvement in GPA for students with less than a 3.0 GPA

School year and summer participants, grades 7-8 and 10-12



3

Improvement in attendance for students with less than 90% attendance

School year participants only, grades 1-12



4

Reduced in-school suspensions

School year and summer participants, grades 1-12



5

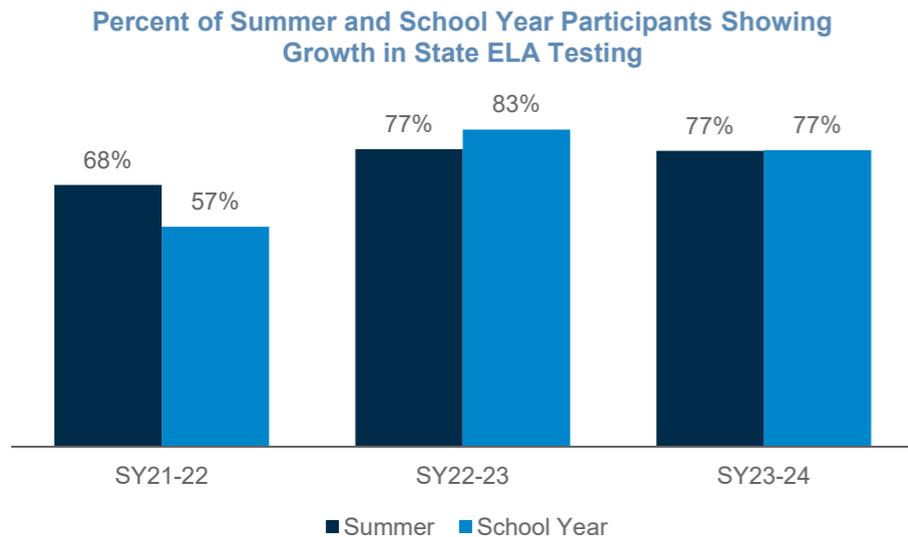
Improvement in engagement in learning, measured through teacher survey data

School year and summer participants, grades 1-5

GPR 1a and 1b

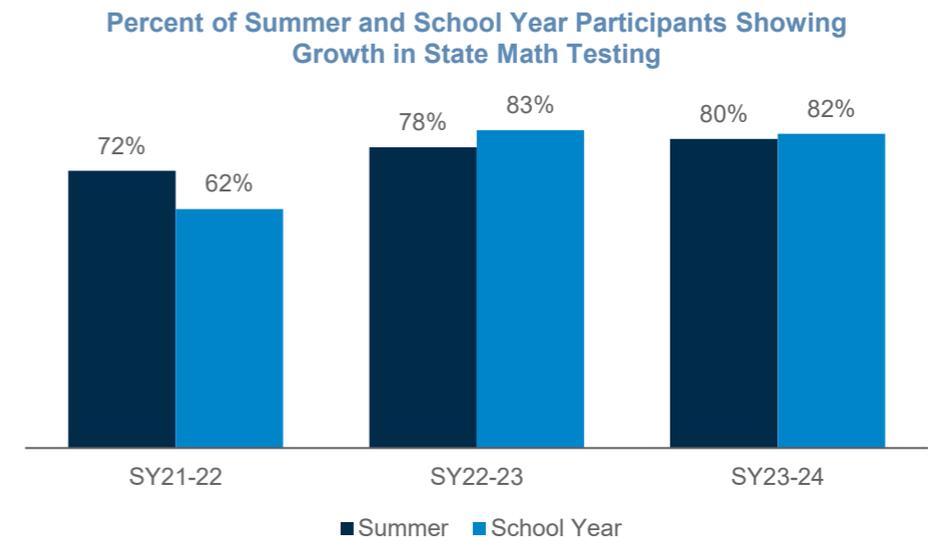
GPR 1a: *Percentage of students in grades 4-8 participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in reading and language arts on state assessments.*

The percent of both school year and summer participants showing growth in state ELA testing increased slightly between the 2021-22 and 2023-24 school years.



GPR 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.*

The percent of both school year and summer participants showing growth in state math testing followed a similar pattern as the percent of students showing growth in ELA testing, also increasing slightly between the 2021-22 and 2023-24 school years.

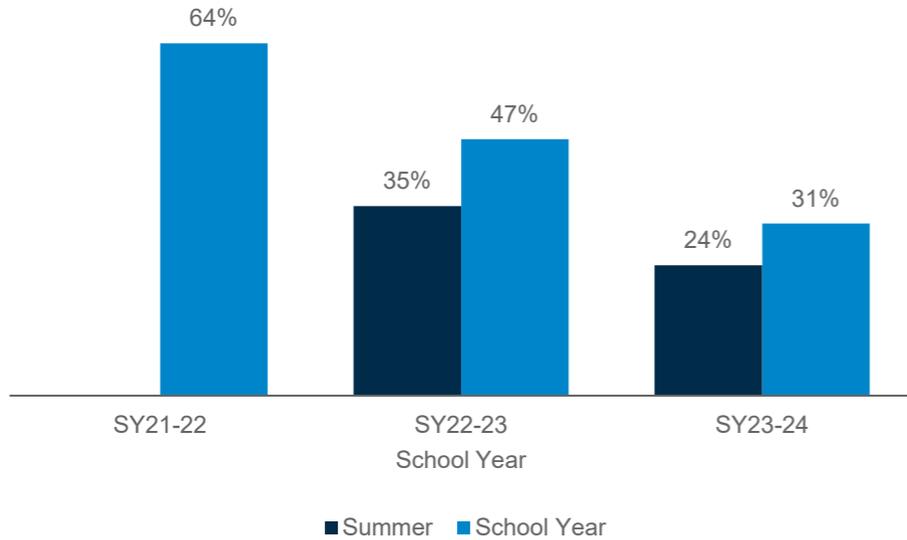


GPRAs 2 and 3

GPRAs 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.**

One in four summer and three in ten school year 2023-24 participants with a prior-year GPA of less than 3.0 reported an improved GPA, a decline from 2022-23 and 2021-22.

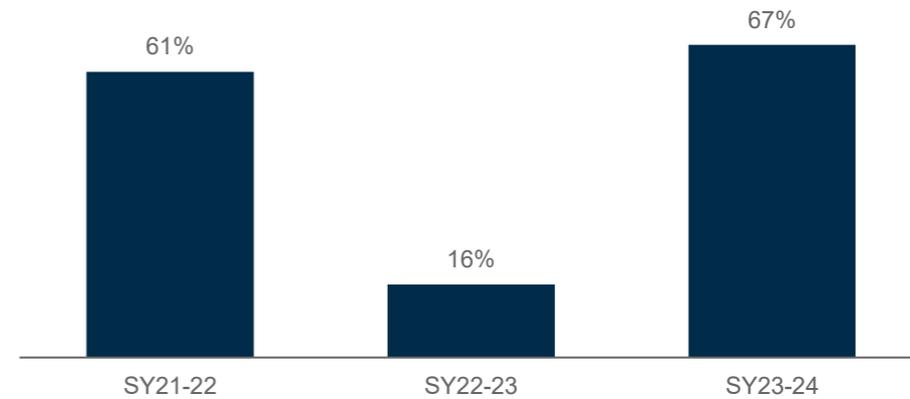
Percent of Summer and School Year Participants with a Prior-Year GPA of Less Than 3.0 with an Improved GPA**



GPRAs 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.*

Two-thirds of 2023-24 school year participants who were chronically absent in the previous year demonstrated improved attendance. That is an increase from one in six during 2022-23 but comparable to the six in ten during 2021-22.

Percent of School Year Participants with Attendance Less than 90% During the Previous School Year with Improved Attendance



* No data was available for students in grades 7-8.

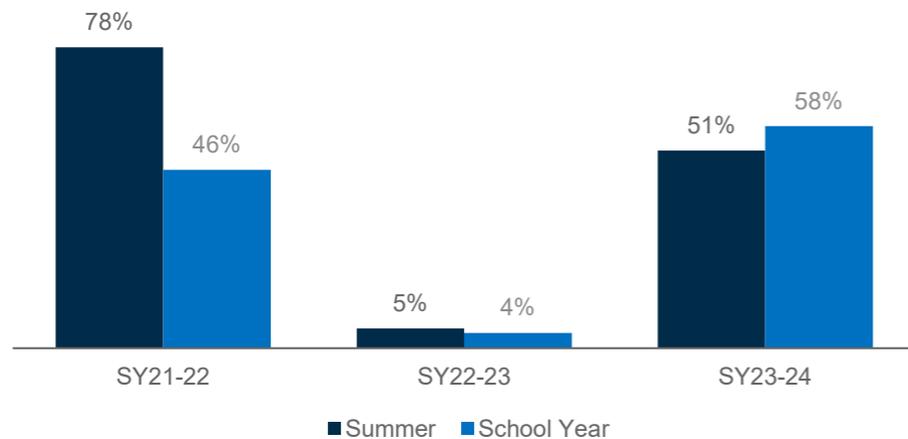
** Summer participant GPA data for SY21-22 is unavailable.

GPR4 and 5

GPR4: *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.*

Over half of participants with previous year in-school suspensions reported fewer in-school suspensions in 2023-24, up from one in twenty in 2022-23 and comparable to the proportion in 2021-22.

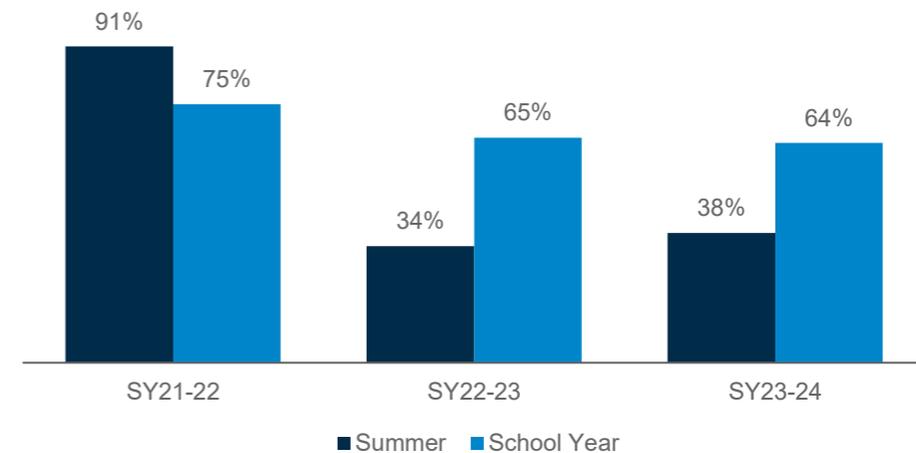
Percent of Participants with Previous Year In-School Suspensions (ISS) Who had a Decrease in ISS



GPR5: *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.*

Over one in three summer and almost two in three school year 2023-24 participants showed improved engagement in learning, comparable to 2022-23 but down from 2021-22.

Percent of Surveyed Summer and School Year Participants Showing Improved Engagement in Learning

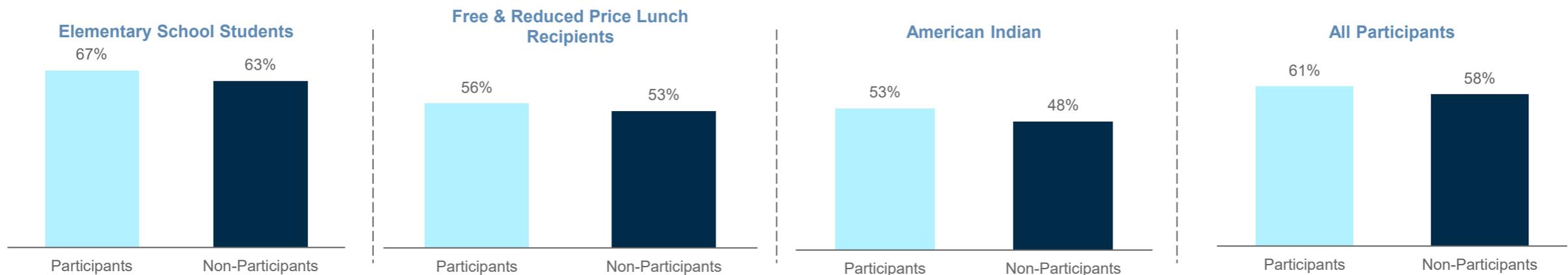


School Engagement: Ratings on Behavioral, Cognitive, and Emotional Domains

As part of the impact study, we compared school engagement outcomes between 21st CCLC participants and their matched non-participants using data from the **Cognia-administered School Engagement Survey (SES)**, which is implemented statewide. The SES measures student engagement across **three key domains**: Behavioral (e.g., attendance and participation), Cognitive (e.g., investment in learning), and Emotional (e.g., connectedness to school). These dimensions capture different aspects of how students interact with their school environment—both in terms of effort and personal connection.

We analyzed the proportion of students rated as “**Committed**”—the highest engagement level—within each domain. This comparison helps assess whether 21st CCLC participation is associated with stronger levels of school engagement. Across the Behavioral domain, 21st CCLC participants were more likely to be rated as “Committed” compared to their matched non-participants. These results align with the independent analysis showing higher school attendance and lower chronic absenteeism among participants; while the differences do not meet the $p < .01$ threshold, they are statistically significant at $p < .05$. In contrast, participants and non-participants fared similarly across the **Cognitive** and **Emotional** domains

Percent Rated “Committed” Comparison by Select Subgroups



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