Evaluating Arkansas 21st Century Community Learning Centers

2018-2019 Report to the Arkansas Department of Education

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2018-2019 Report to the Arkansas Department of Education

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This report provides a comprehensive overview of the two previous detailed data summaries

provided to the Arkansas Department of Education during the 2018-2019 program year:

2018-2019 Site and Network Reports, delivered July 2019
2018-2019 Leading Indicator Survey Memo, delivered August 2019

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Communications Brief

Since 2002, ADE has operated a quality improvement system for its afterschool programs with the explicit model that afterschool programs benefit from training and professional development, coaching, self-assessment activities, and data-driven planning. The purpose of this evaluation report is to examine engagement in the YPQI process during the 2018-2019 program year and identify the important experiences that contributed to student success within ADE 21st CCLC programs. This evaluation addressed the following three ADE program goals for the 2018-2019 program year:

1. Increase academic achievement in participants who regularly attend 21st CCLC programs.
2. Increase non-academic achievement in participants who regularly attend 21st CCLC programs.
3. Offer quality activities to all youth attending the program.

Implementation of the YPQI and complimentary evaluation design included the following activities:

2018-2019 YPQI Implementation and Evaluation Activities	
May – August 2018	Summer APR data collection
July 27-31, 2018	New Grantee Orientation and Quality Kick-Off Planning with Data
July 27 – August 30, 2018	Program Improvement Plans
August 2018 – June 2019	Youth Work Methods
August – December 2018	Fall APR data collection
January – May 2019	Spring APR data collection
January 22-23, 2019	PQA Basics
January 24 – March 1, 2019	Self-assessment using the YPQA or SAPQA
February 18 – April 5, 2019	Leading Indicator Surveys

This report draws upon data from the Program Quality Assessment (School-Age and Youth), Annual Performance Reporting, and Surveys (Grantee Director/Site Coordinator, Afterschool Staff/Youth Worker, Parent, and Youth) to assess the alignment between program goals and outcomes for the 2018-2019 program year.

Summary of Evaluation Data		
Program Quality Assessment Data		84% of sites
Annual Performance Report Data	Summer 2018	66% of sites
	Fall 2018	100% of sites
	Spring 2019	88% of sites
Surveys	*Grantee Director*	128 – 93% of sites
	Afterschool Teacher	573 – 94% of sites
	Youth	3,617 – 96% of sites
	Parent	1,719 – 90% of sites

Key Findings and Recommendations

Goal 1: Increase academic achievement in participants who regularly attend 21st CCLC programs;	
Objective 1.1: 60% of participants regularly attending the 21st CCLC program will increase OR stay in the Advanced or Proficient levels on the statewide assessment for English language/literacy and math.	Progress: Partially Met
Results	
• Improving from the past program year, 61% of regularly attending participants increased or maintained Advanced or Proficient levels in Math and 55% in English. • Compared to the statewide average, both 4th grade and 8th grade AR 21st CCLC participants demonstrated greater academic success than their same age peers in Math and English.	
Objective 1.2: 60% of participants regularly attending the 21st CCLC program will show improvement in classroom academic performance as reported on the ADE Statewide Information System.	Data not collected
Recommendations	
• Given that students who participate in ADE 21st CCLC programs are demonstrating greater academic proficiency then their same age peers, the results suggest that any efforts to increase program recruitment, participation and retention would be beneficial to support the continued academic growth of all Arkansas students.	

Goal 2: Increase non-academic achievement in participants who regularly attend 21st CCLC programs	
Objective 2.1: 75% of youth attending 21st CCLC programs will report high levels of social and emotional skills, as reported on the youth survey administered by the Weikart Center	**Progress:** Met
Results	
• Consistent with the past five years, more than 75% of youth reported high levels of social and emotional development. For the 2018-2019 program year, reported the strengths in: o I can make friends with other kids (88%) o I work well with other kids (86%) o Tell other kids what they thought, even if they disagreed (83%) o Talk with people they did not know (76%)	
Objective 2.2: 75% of youth attending 21st CCLC programs will report high levels of positive academic habits, as reported on the youth survey administered by the Weikart Center.	**Progress:** Met
Results	
• More than 75% of youth also reported strong work habits that are predictive of positive outcomes: o I follow the rules in the classroom (93%) o I make good use of my time at school (91%) o I finish my work on time (89%)	

> **Recommendations**
> - While the majority of participating students reported strong development of social and emotional skills, as well as academic habits, student feedback indicates an opportunity to increase the rigor of program activities in support of youth skill development and academic growth.

Goal 3: Offer quality activities to all youth attending the program.

Objective 3.1: All 21st CCLC programs will offer homework help time to 21st CCLC participants.	Progress: Almost Met

Results
- All but one site offered homework time throughout the program year. Youth also shared the following experiences about homework support:
  - 71% reported that staff "almost always" understand their homework and can provide help when they get stuck
  - 68% almost always get their homework done when they come to the afterschool program
  - 63% "almost always" learn things that help them in school at the afterschool program

Objective 3.2: All 21st CCLC programs will offer academic (beyond homework help) and enrichment activities.	Progress: Met

Results
- Sites offered a range of academic and enrichment activities throughout the year.
  - Homework Help and Literacy were the most frequently offered academic activities.
  - Physical activity and Arts and Music continue to be the most frequently offered enrichment activities.

Objective 3.3: Every data collection term, 90% of 21st CCLC programs will offer quality activities to families of participating students.	Progress: Partially Met

Results
- Compared to the 2017-2018 program year, more than twice as many sites provided family engagement activities throughout the year (74%), with almost all parents reporting high satisfaction with the program and growth in their children's academic skills.

Objective 3.4: All programs will fully engage and complete all elements of the YPQI.	Progress: Not Met

Results
- The majority of Arkansas 21st CCLC sites (84%) submitted program assessment data, and of those only one-third completed all YPQI activities during the 2018-2019 program year.

Objective 3.5: 75% of programs will score a 3.90 or higher on the ITS as measured by the YPQA or School-Age PQA.	Progress: Partially Met

Results
- Arkansas 21st CCLC sites continue to provide high-quality programs throughout the state with ITS averages of 3.77 for sites using the YPQA and 3.92 for sites using the SAPQA. Overall, 52% of sites reported an ITS above 3.90.

Recommendations
- The slight decline in program quality is likely attributed to decreased YPQI fidelity among sites. Additional reinforcements and reminders may be needed to encourage Grantee Directors and After School Teachers to participate in all YPQI activities throughout the program year
- The data show that sites engaged most in the assessment and planning components of the YPQI process, with less participation in improvement activities. Sites may benefit from more intentional planning at the beginning of the program year to assure that staff at all levels understand program expectations and plan to participate in the aligned trainings that will set them up for success.

Program Background

During the 2018-2019 program year, The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) delegated federal funds to support 55 Grantees, representing 81 different 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) sites/centers across the state[1].

ADE 21st CCLC funding was awarded to applicants with the following requirements for the 2018-2019 program year:

1. Provide opportunities for **academic enrichment**, including tutorial services to help students meet the challenging state academic standards.

2. Offer students a broad array of **additional services, programs and activities** designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program.

3. Offer participating students' families' opportunities for active and **meaningful engagement in their children's education**, including opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

ADE 21st CCLC programs operate on the evidence-based premise that frequent, regular attendance in high-quality out-of-school time programs (**Qu**ality) leads to program engagement (**E**ngagement), and to the acquisition of essential 21st Century skills (**S**kills), which in turn contribute to greater success in college, career, and life (**T**ransfer). The Quality-Engagement-Skills-Transfer model is called QuEST (Figure 1).

Figure 1. QuEST Model
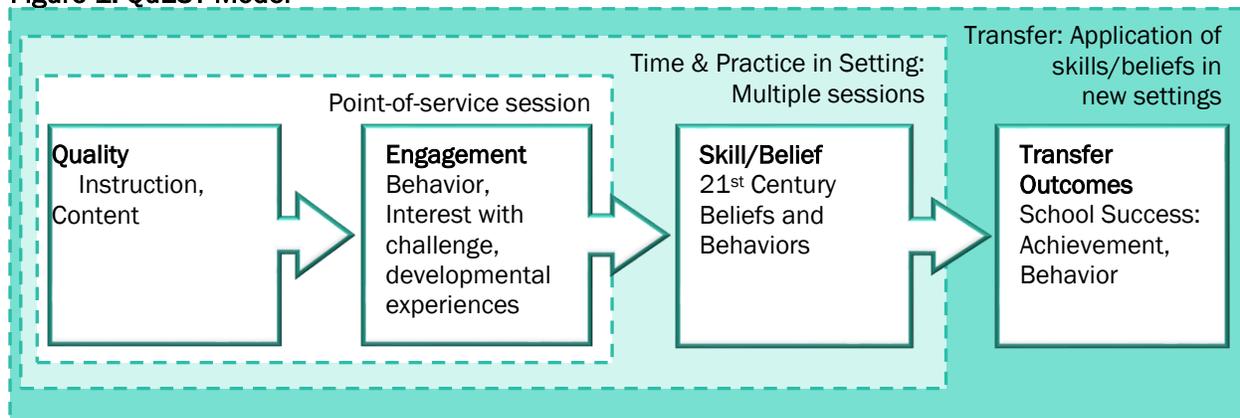
Combined with the 21st CCLC Annual Performance Reporting requirements, the ADE 21st CCLC Program Model begins with high-quality afterschool programming (See Figure 2). If students

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[1] Authorized under Title IV, Part B, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (20 U.S.C. 7171-7176)

are provided high-quality programs (e.g. high-quality staff practices supported by strong organizational capacity for implementation) then ADE will see higher levels of student attendance in the various academic, enrichment, and family engagement activities offered. If activities offered are both high-quality and engaging, then students will have more opportunities to improve their 21st Century skills, such as social and emotional behaviors, homework completion and academic efficacy, which will support students to be more confident and interested in school day content. These students will then show up to the classroom ready to learn, leading them to greater gains in academic performance and post-secondary success.

Figure 2. ADE 21st CCLC Program Model

Quality	Engagement	Skills	Transfer Outcomes

Instructional Quality
• Safe Environment
• Supportive Environment
• Interaction
• Engagement
 	
Implementation Quality
• Staffing
• YPQI Fidelity
    • Assessment
    • Planning with Data
    • Improvement Plans
    • Training
    • Coaching
	Attendance
	
	Academic Support
	
	Enrichment Activities
	
	Family Services & Satisfaction
		Homework Completion
		
		Social Emotional Skills
		
		Academic Efficacy
			Academic Outcomes
			• English/Reading
			• Math
			
			College & Career Readiness

In support of these objectives, ADE has partnered with the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality (Weikart Center) since 2012 to implement the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI), a data-driven continuous improvement process centered on four core staff practices. First, managers and staff are trained to use the Program Quality Assessment (PQA) that aligns best with their program and coordinate self-assessments of instructional quality at their sites. Next, staff participate in a Planning with Data workshop leaving them empowered with a drafted improvement plan to implement changes to improve program quality at their site. Third, managers and staff attend aligned trainings (e.g. Youth Work Methods Workshops, Quality Coaching) to strengthen skills and support quality practices. Finally, managers and other identified coaches provide technical

assistance and ongoing support to program staff[2],[3]. The YPQI process embeds a culture of continuous assessment, planning, and improvement in program quality (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Youth Program Quality Intervention
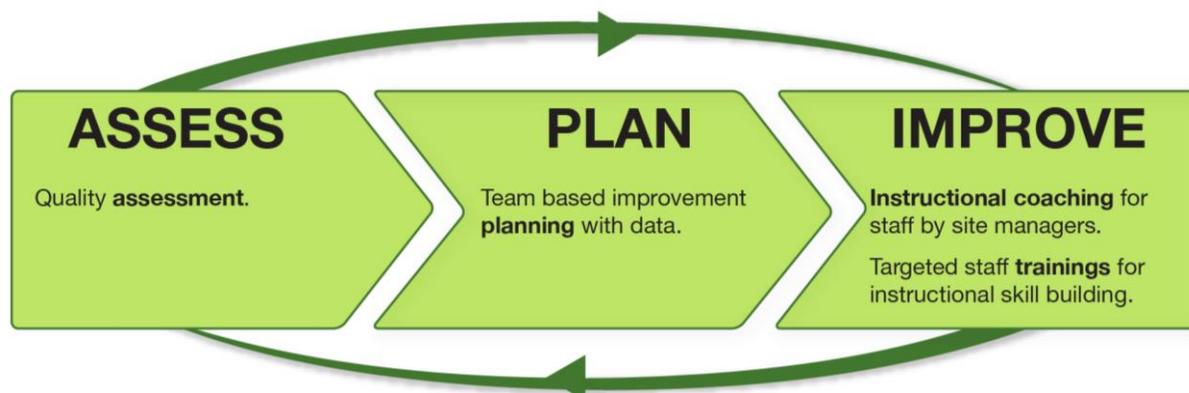
For the 2018-2019 program year, ADE hosted a project kick-off in the summer to establish expectations and timelines for the YPQI (Table 1). Site reports were reviewed at their Planning with Data workshop in 2019; strength and growth opportunities were identified in program improvement plans detailing goals, timelines, necessary resources, and staffing supports to achieve desired improvements. From the end of January through March 2019, objective data about staff practices and staff-youth interactions within programs were collected using the Youth and School-Age PQA. This data was then entered into the Scores Reporter system. In support of statewide objectives and the identified opportunities for improvement, managers and staff where invited to participate in additional training opportunities throughout the fall and spring to improve targeted instructional skills. These professional development opportunities were supplemented by ongoing technical assistance and coaching supports from the ADE team throughout the year designed to reinforce continuous improvement practices.

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[2] Smith, C., Akiva, T., Sugar, S., Lo, Y. J., Frank, K.A., Peck, S. C., Cortina, K.S. & Devaney, T. (2012). Continuous quality improvement in afterschool settings: Impact findings from the Youth Program Quality Intervention study, Washington, D.C.: Forum for Youth Investment.
[3] Smith, C., & Hohmann, C. (2005). Full findings from the youth program quality assessment validation study. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation.

Table 1. 2018-2019 ADE 21st CCLC Timeline

Activity	Timeline	Performance Measures
Summer Programming	June – July 2018	
Planning with Data	July 27, 2018	
Program Improvement Plans	July 27 – August 30, 2018	Program Improvement Plan
New Grantee Orientation and Quality Kickoff	July 30-31, 2018	
Afterschool Programming	August 2018 – May 2019	
Annual Performance Reporting	Summer: May – August 2018 Fall: August – December 2018 Spring: January – May 2019	Youth Participation Staffing Academic, Enrichment and Family Activities
Youth Work Methods	Online: August 2018 – June 2019 Summits: October – November 2018	
PQA Basics	January 22-23, 2019	
Program Quality Assessments	January 24 – March 1, 2019	Self YPQA and SAPQA
Leading Indicator Surveys	February 18 – April 5, 2019	Site Coordinator/Grantee Director Afterschool Teacher/Youth Workers Youth Parent
Youth Outcomes	Assessment: Spring 2019 Data Available: November 2019	Reading and Math State Assessments

Evaluation Design

To assess the impact of ADE 21st CCLC engagement, the partnership with the Weikart Center includes an annual evaluation to assess improvements in program quality, youth engagement in academic and enrichment activities, and the development of 21st Century skills among participating K-12th grade students. The primary purpose of this report is to examine engagement in the YPQI process during the 2018-2019 program year and identify the important experiences that contributed to student success within ADE 21st CCLC programs. Table 2 shows the ADE network-wide program goals and objectives guiding this evaluation.

Table 2: 2018-2019 ADE 21st CCLC Program Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Increase academic achievement in participants who regularly attend 21st CCLC programs;
Objective 1.1: 60% of participants regularly attending the 21st CCLC program will increase OR stay in the Advanced or Proficient levels on the statewide assessment for English language/literacy and math.
Objective 1.2: 60% of participants regularly attending the 21st CCLC program will show improvement in classroom academic performance as reported on the ADE Statewide Information System.
Goal 2: Increase non-academic achievement in participants who regularly attend 21st CCLC programs
Objective 2.1: 75% of youth attending 21st CCLC programs will report high levels of social and emotional skills, as reported on the youth survey administered by the Weikart Center
Objective 2.2: 75% of youth attending 21st CCLC programs will report high levels of positive academic habits, as reported on the youth survey administered by the Weikart Center.
Goal 3: Offer quality activities to all youth attending the program.
Objective 3.1: All 21st CCLC programs will offer homework help time to 21st CCLC participants
Objective 3.2: All 21st CCLC programs will offer academic (beyond homework help) and enrichment activities.
Objective 3.3: Every data collection term, 90% of 21st CCLC programs will offer quality activities to families of participating students.
Objective 3.4: All programs will fully engage and complete all elements of the YPQI.
Objective 3.5: 75% of programs will score a 3.90 or higher on the ITS as measured by the YPQA or School-Age PQA.

In addition to this report, the evaluation approach included steps to guide data collection efforts across sites, as well as support staff in their efforts to interpret the findings and apply these learnings to continuous improvement decisions. In the 2018-2019 year, ADE received the following additional reports that provide more description about individual data sources and site-level findings:

- 2018-2019 Site and Network Reports, delivered July 2019
- 2018-2019 Leading Indicator Survey Memo, delivered August 2019

Performance Measures

Multiple data sources were collected from participating sites throughout the year to evaluate the impact of ADE 21st CCLC programs. Each site was expected to submit Program Quality Assessment (PQA) data, Grantee Director/Site Coordinator, Afterschool Teacher/Youth Worker, Parent and Youth surveys, as well as youth participation, staffing, activities, family engagement and Reading and Math proficiency assessment data in alignment with the Annual Performance Reporting requirements.

Program Quality Assessment

The Program Quality Assessment (PQA) is a validated, observation-based instrument designed to evaluate the quality of K-12 youth programs and identify staff training needs. PQA data spans four domains of program quality: Safe Environment, Supportive Environment, Interaction, and Engagement. ADE used both the School-Age PQA and the Youth PQA to collect site performance data.

- The **School-Age PQA** is composed of 70 items comprising 19 scales. The School-Age PQA is appropriate for observing programs that serve youth Kindergarten – 6th grades.
- The **Youth PQA** is composed of 63 items comprising 18 scales. The Youth PQA is appropriate for observing programs that serve youth in 4th – 12th grades.

PQA data was collected for all sites as a self-assessment. To collect self-assessment data, an internal team was selected at each site to observe staff practices using the PQA. After observations, the team had a scoring meeting to discuss their notes and come to a consensus on the score for each item on the tool. Scores were entered into Scores Reporter, a Weikart Center online data collection platform.

The primary purpose of the Program Quality Assessment is to measure Instructional Quality, defined as the extent to which programs promote positive youth development through evidence-based staff practices implemented consistently across youth activities. Instructional Quality, measured by the Instructional Total Score (ITS), is composed of ratings of staff practice at the point of service, or when staff or youth interact during the program. The ITS is a composite score of three out of the four quality domains: a structured environment facilitated through guidance and encouragement (i.e., Supportive Environment), opportunities for leadership and collaboration (i.e., Interaction), and the capacity to promote planning and reflection (i.e., Engagement).

Annual Performance Reporting

The federal 21st CCLC program requires that site collect and report data across seven key program areas including: centers, activities, staffing, families, participation and outcomes, and program attendance, outlined in Appendix A. To complete this APR data collection, ADE grantees submitted center, activities, staffing, and families data to the Weikart Center via an online survey, and program attendance data to Indistar at three time points throughout the program year (summer, fall, and spring). In November 2019, ADE provided unidentified student demographic information and state assessment scores for Math and English to the Weikart Center for final data submission.

Leading Indicator Surveys

Grantee Directors, Site Coordinators, Afterschool Teachers/Youth Workers, parents, and youth were all invited to complete surveys to share feedback on their experience during the 2018-

2019 program year. Online surveys were created and administered via Qualtrics and electronic links for each were posted to Arkansas 21st CCLC's webpage hosted on the Weikart website (www.cypq.org/ar21cclc). Parents and youth were provided the option to opt out of the survey process with no consequences. Administered surveys' intended audience and length are presented in Table32. The Leading Indicators Framework, five domains of action represented by 13 specific Leading Indicators, is presented in Appendix B.

Table 3. 2018-2019 Surveys Administered

Survey	Intended Audience	Length
Grantee Director/ Site Coordinator	Individual(s) responsible for site operations.	82 items
Afterschool Teacher/Youth Worker	Staff responsible for providing direct programming to youth.	65 items
Parent	All parents/guardians of youth attending the afterschool programs (regardless of youth age).	24 items
Youth	Youth in grades 4 through 12[4] who attended the afterschool programs.	40 items

Evaluation Sample

For the 2018-2019 program year, data were collected from 81 participating sites. Response rates and available data across all sources are presented in Tables 4-6. Additional details about participation demographics can be found in the previous reports delivered to ADE. Table 6 shows the amount of youth with available state assessment data who participated in both the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 program years, and therefore included in analyses to examine change over time.

Table 4. 2018-2019 Available PQA and Survey Data

		# of Submissions[5]	% of Sites
PQA[6]	SAPQA (n=42)	44	88%
	YPQA (n=35)	45	80%
Surveys	Grantee Director	128	93%
	Afterschool Teacher	573	94%
	Youth	3,617	96%
	Parent	1,719	90%

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[4] Surveys are directed only at this age group because the survey method is not developmentally appropriate for children in third grade or lower.

[5] Some sites submitted more than one self-assessment. Multiple site entries were averaged before analysis.

[6] PQA data was not required from four sites; three were summer only programs, and one served youth who were all outside of the age range for assessment.

Table 5. 2018-2019 Available Program Data

% Participating Sites	Summer 2018[7] (n=3)	Fall 2018 (n=78)	Spring 2019 (n=78)
Activities, Staffing and Family Services	66%	100%	88%

Table 6. 2018-2019 Available Youth Outcomes Data

% Participating Youth by Grade		Pre-K – 2nd	3rd – 5th	6th – 8th	9th - 12th
2018-2019 Attendance		2,591	3,760	3,139	2,286
Math	2017-2018	-	2,525	2,993	-
	2018-2019	-	3,684	3,057	-
	Both Years	-	2,493	2,934	-
Reading	2017-2018	-	2,525	2,992	-
	2018-2019	-	3,682	3,054	-
	Both Years	-	2,493	2,931	-

## Evaluation Results

Instructional Quality

Over the past decade, research has proliferated the youth development field demonstrating the significant relationship between high-quality programs and youth outcomes. Studies have shown that youth programs with the highest instructional practices, meaning those that prioritize a safe environment, supportive relationships, positive staff-youth interactions, and active learning principles are more likely to promote youth engagement and attendance, which in turn promotes youth skill development across multiple domains, such as academic, social-emotional, and behavioral skills[8].

Using the Instructional Total Score (ITS) as a measure of high-quality instructional practice, Figure 4 provides ITS scores by PQA tool for the past two program years. **During the most recent 2018-2019 program year, the majority of ADE 21st CCLC sites were successful in continuing to provide high-quality programming** with ITS scores averaging 3.77 for programs using the YPQA and 3.92 for programs using the SAPQA. In response to ADE Objective 3.5, 52% of sites achieved an average ITS score of 3.90 or higher, demonstrating a small decline in the statewide average for program quality from the previous year.

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[7] Summer APR data is only required for programs that operate for 30 days or more. During the 2018-2019 program year, three summer-only sites were the only sites to meet that reporting criteria. These same three sites therefore were not required to submit Fall and Spring APR data.
[8] Durlak, J.A., & Weissberg, R.P. (2007). The impact of after-school programs that promote personal and social skills. Chicago, Il: Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning.

Figure 4. Overall Instructional Total Score, by Tool
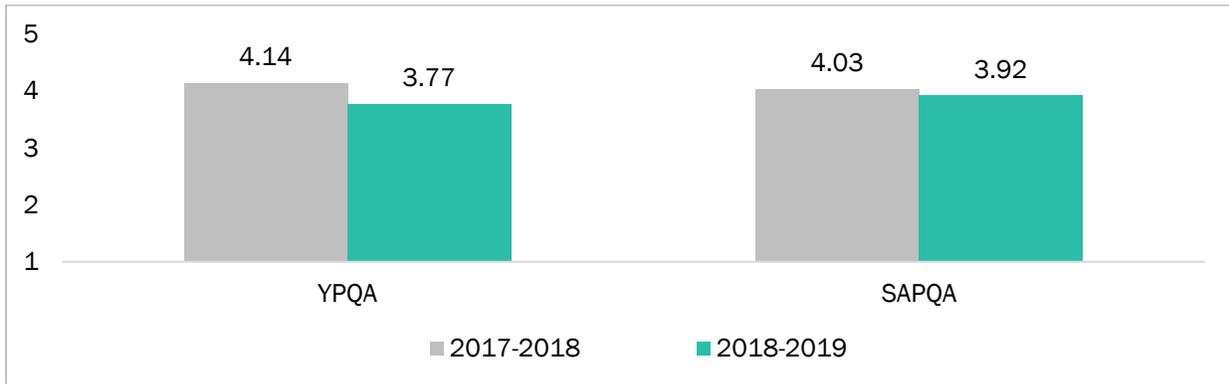
While the ITS provides a broad understanding of instructional quality, quality scores were also broken out by domain to examine more nuanced changes within the program context as shown in Figure 5. Again, the results for the 2018-2019 program year were consistent with previous years, such that **instructional practices within the Safe Environment and Supportive Environment domains were strongest, with slightly lower staff practices reported within the Interaction and Engagement domains.** This pattern is common among all YPQI networks as providing an interactive and engaging program environment for youth requires an advanced set of staff practices and can be more difficult to implement compared to establishing a Safe and Supportive Environment. At the same time, the data show that sites using the SAPQA, meaning they served youth in grades K-6th, reported higher-quality instructional practices in three of the four domains, compared to sites that used the YPQA and therefore served older youth.
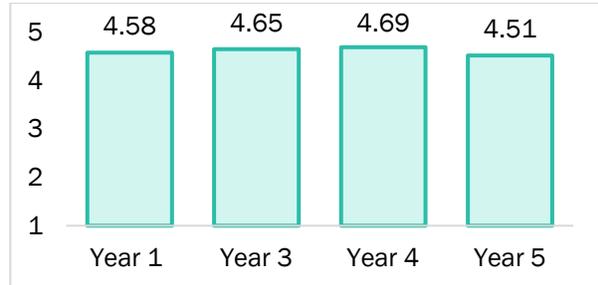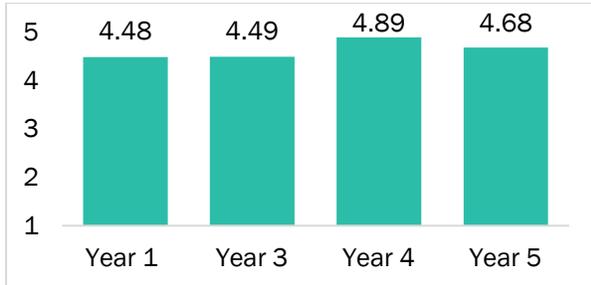
Figure 5. Program Quality Domains
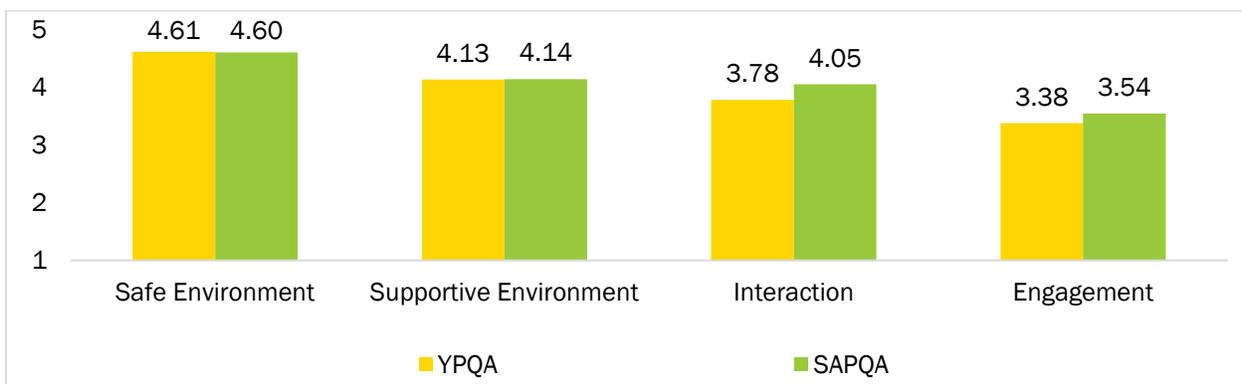
When we compared sites by tenure, the data show a more continuous growth trajectory for sites using the YPQA than sites using the SAPQA[9].
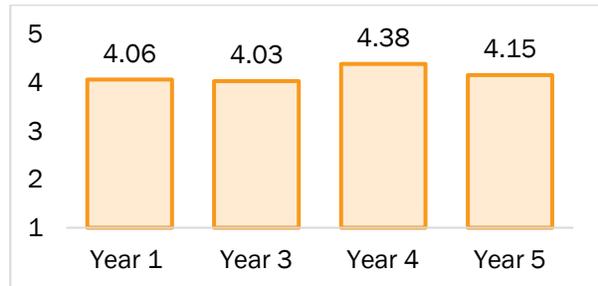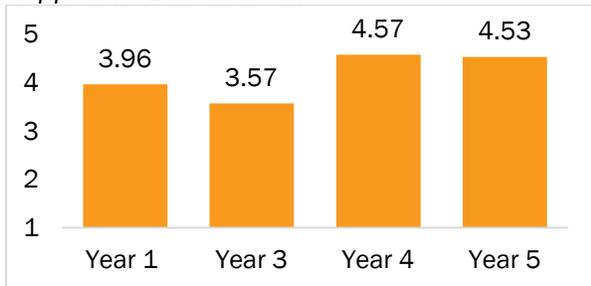
Figures 6-9. YPQA Scores by Grant Year

Safe Environment

Year 1	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
4.48	4.49	4.89	4.68

Supportive Environment

Year 1	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
3.96	3.57	4.57	4.53

Interaction

Year 1	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
3.48	3.40	4.14	4.46

Engagement

Year 1	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
3.04	3.07	3.70	4.16

Figures 10-13. SAPQA Scores by Grant Year

Year 1	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
4.58	4.65	4.69	4.51

Year 1	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
4.06	4.03	4.38	4.15

Year 1	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
4.00	3.75	4.48	4.03

Year 1	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
3.51	3.30	4.05	3.38

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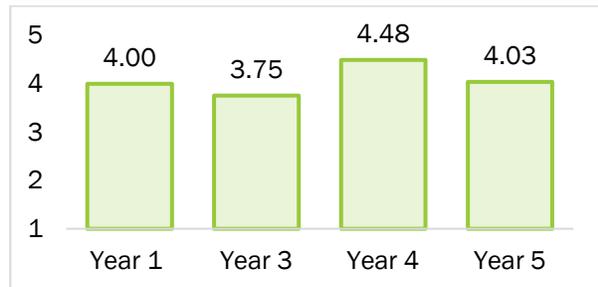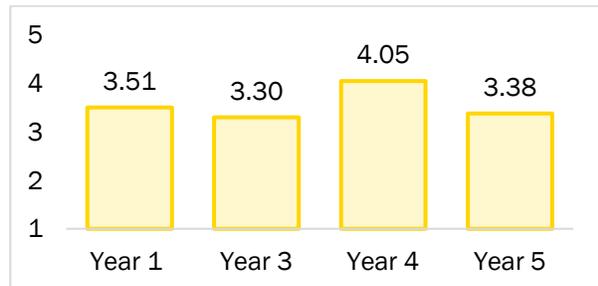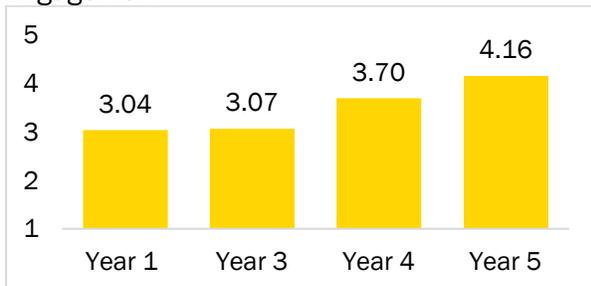
[9] A new cohort was not recruited for the 2017-2018 program year therefore there is no Year 2 to include in the analysis.

Looking at Figures 6-9, sites using the YPQA demonstrated fairly consistent improvements across all domains, meaning each year that sites were engaged in YPQI the presence and consistency of high-quality instructional practices increased, with the greatest gains observed in Years 4 and 5. Comparatively, sites using the SAPQA (Figures 10-13) showed a more inconsistent pattern in program quality, with sites in Years 1 and 4 reporting higher Supportive Environment, Interaction and Engagement instructional practices than sites in Years 3 and 5. Taken together, these results can be used to inform the decisions regarding both the content and timing of program quality supports throughout the five year grant. **While sites serving older youth would benefit from more intensive supports at the beginning of their 21st CCLC grant, the importance of both content and timing suggest that sites serving younger youth will need more consistent supports throughout the five year grant in an effort to sustain high levels of instructional quality.**

Within each domain, specific strengths and opportunities for improvement emerged at the scale level. Scales where the network averages were above 4.25 were identified as stable strengths in Table 7. With all scale scores averaging above a 3.0, opportunities for improvement were selected by identifying scales that averaged below a 3.50, meaning that these staff practices occurred more informally than intentionally, and were not consistently available for all youth.

Table 7. Program Quality Assessment Strengths and Opportunities

YPQA Strengths	SAPQA Strengths
Emotional Safety	Healthy environment
Nourishment	Accommodating Environment
Healthy Environment	Nourishment
Accommodating Environment	Emotional Safety
Session Flow	Session flow
Warm Welcome	Adult partners
Emergency Preparedness	Skill building
	Warm welcome
YPQA Opportunities for Improvement	**SAPQA Opportunities for Improvement**
Adult Partners	Planning
Planning	Reflection
Leadership	Choice
Choice	Leadership
Reflection	

Implementation Quality

Consistent implementation of high-quality instructional practices across sites requires clarity and support from Grantee Directors around YPQI expectations and available resources. Following guidance from the US Department of Education and the goals and objectives communicated from ADE, grantees and sites are well-informed and prepared to implement all four components of the

YPQI intervention, in support of providing students with a variety of high-quality academic, enrichment and family services that will promote their readiness for academic success.

Survey data from Grantee Directors, Afterschool Teachers, parents, and youth was collected to examine staff implementation of the ADE program model. Complemented by APR data regarding program activities, staffing and youth performance, survey responses about YPQI fidelity, instructional context, and youth experiences were analyzed to confirm that ADE programs had the necessary resources to provide positive developmental opportunities for all participating youth.

YPQI Fidelity

As described above, the four staff practices central to YPQI implementation are program quality assessment, planning with data, coaching, and training. Both Grantee Directors and Afterschool Teachers shared similar reports around the implementation of these practices **with the majority of staff reporting engagement in each of these core components of continuous quality improvement** (Figure 14).

**Figure 14. 2018-2019 Self Report of CQI Practices**

Additional questions were examined to see the extent to which staff participated in the various training opportunities provided to support YPQI. Through the surveys, staff indicated whether they attended a specific training, and if they did, whether they attended alone or with someone else at their site. Given that the majority of trainings are designed for management staff, it makes sense that Grantee Directors were more likely to attend the various trainings than other staff (Figure 15). Reflecting on the full YPQI process, these results also show **while the majority of sites engaged in trainings focused on assessment and planning, additional attention and training may be needed to support the improvement process.**

Figure 15. 2018-2019 Self Report of YPQI Supports
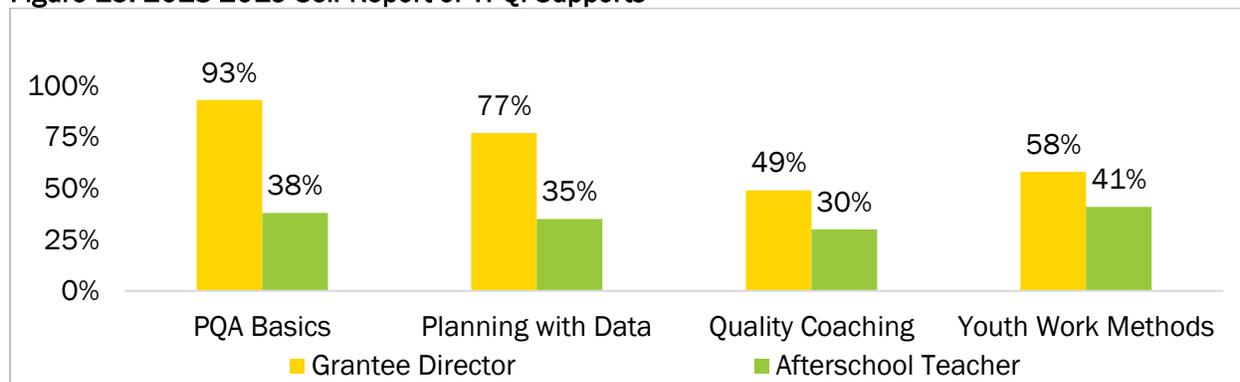
At the same time, it is interesting to compare the alignment between the content of trainings attended and the type of YPQI activities completed. For example, the results show that only one-third of Afterschool Teachers attended PQA Basics and Planning with Data, while at the same time 90% of those same teachers contributed to the self-assessment process and program improvement plans. This discrepancy suggests that **more site-level planning at the beginning of the program year may be beneficial to assure that all staff expected to engage in YPQI activities have the opportunity to participate in the aligned trainings that will set them up for success.**

Figure 16: YPQI Fidelity Improves Program Quality
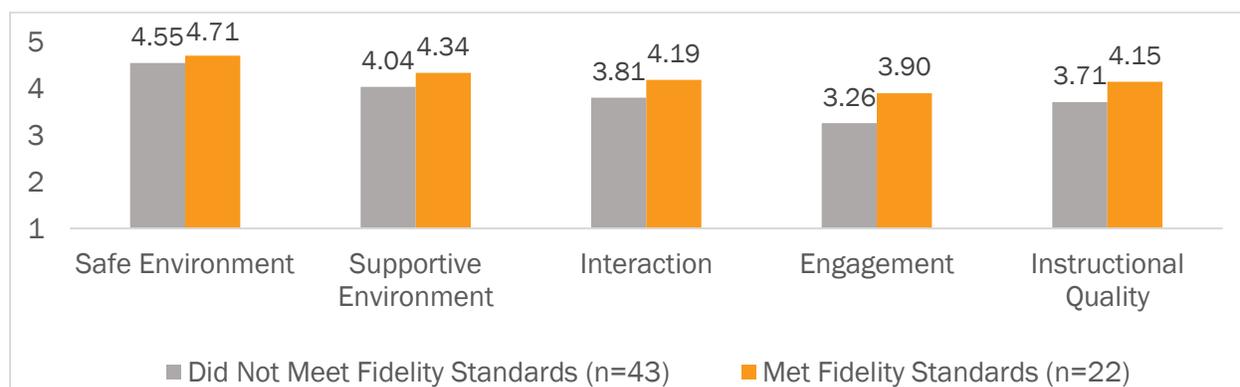
Given the persistent positive relationship between YPQI fidelity and program quality shown in Figure 16, whereby sites that engaged staff in all four components of the YPQI process reported the highest quality programs, **additional reminders and reinforcements may be needed to encourage Grantee Directors and Afterschool Teachers to participate in all YPQI activities throughout the program year.** In response to ADE Objective 3.4, of the 65 sites (84%) that completed the PQA self-assessment process, 22 sites (34%) were fully engaged in YPQI process and completed all four activities throughout the 2018-2019 program year.

Engagement

Academic and Enrichment Activities

The priorities of 21st CCLC funding are to provide students with academic and enrichment activities that will promote youth skills aligned to school-day success. For each APR term, staff reported on the different types of academic, enrichment, and prevention activities that were offered. The results show that the majority of sites offered activities during the school year, in the fall and spring terms (Figures 17, 18, and 19). **In alignment with statewide Objectives 3.1 and 3.2, almost all sites offered academic and enrichment programs throughout the year, with sites offering physical activity, homework help, literacy, and arts & music activities most consistently.** While many other programs were offered across sites, staff reports show that entrepreneurship programs, as well as preventative programs, such a drug and truancy prevention, were not as consistently available to ADE 21st CCLC students.

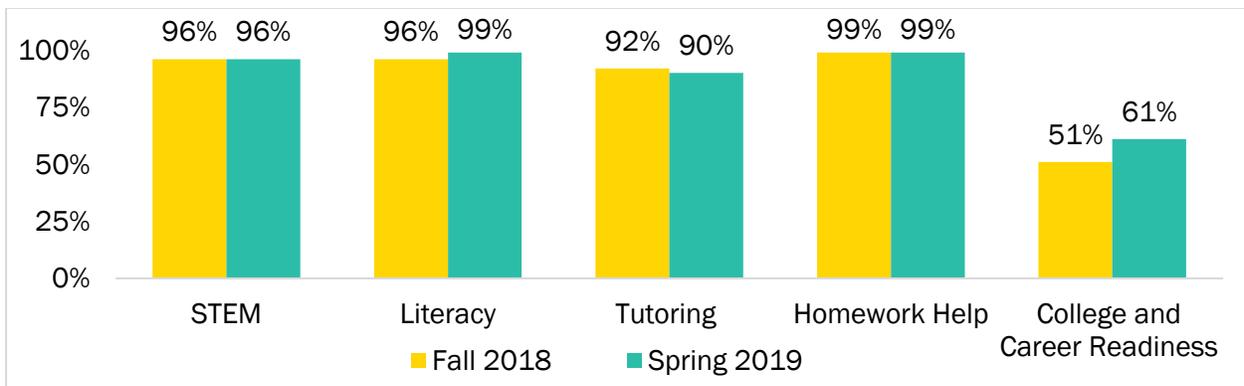**Figure 17. 2018-2019 Academic Enrichment Activities**

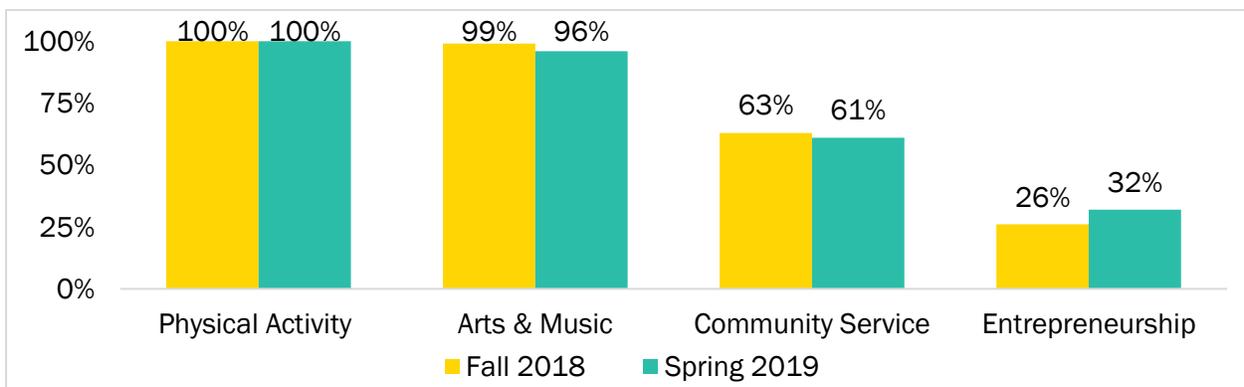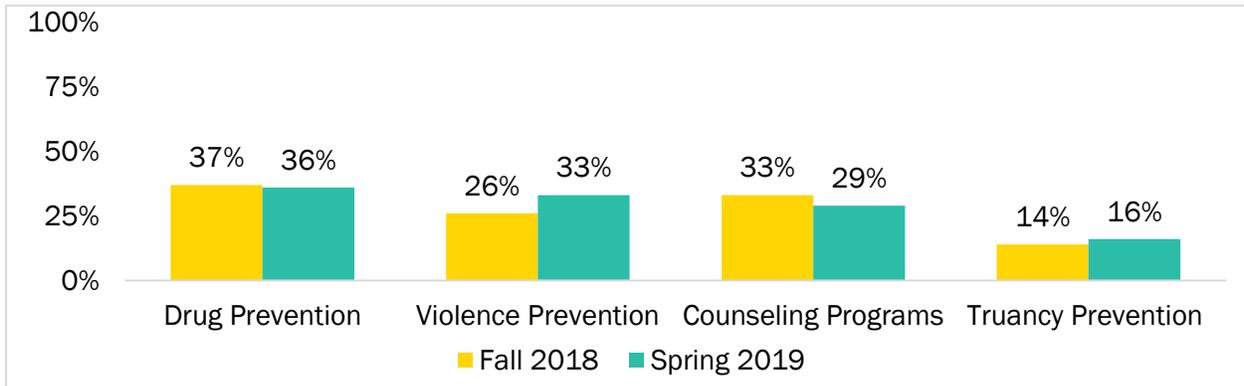**Figure 18. 2018-2019 Enrichment Activities**

**Figure 19. 2018-2019 Positive Decision Making and Prevention Activities**

When considering the impact of programs, both the variety of activities as well as the frequency with which programs are offered are important drivers of youth skill development. Similar to the consistency of program offerings across sites, academic activities were most likely to be offered on a weekly basis, enrichment activities were mostly likely to be offered on a monthly basis, and the majority of prevention activities were offered approximately once per term during the 2018-2019 program year (Table 7).

Table 7. 2018-2019 Activity Offerings

Weekly	Monthly	Once per Term
• STEM • Literacy • Tutoring • Homework Help • Physical Activity • Arts and Music • College and Career Readiness • Mentoring	• Counseling Programs • Community Service • Entrepreneurship • Youth Leadership	• Truancy Prevention • Violence Prevention • Drug Prevention

When examined alongside the expected pattern of out-of-school time attendance (Figure 20), with younger youth participating more frequently than older youth, it makes sense that the programs offered the least, such as entrepreneurship, youth leadership, and prevention programs, are typically prioritized for teens and high school aged youth, the population that has the lowest level of participation in ADE 21st CCLC programs. **These results suggest that one approach to improving program attendance among high school students may be to increase the frequency of teen-focused programming.**

Figure 20. 2018-2019 Average Attendance by Grade Level
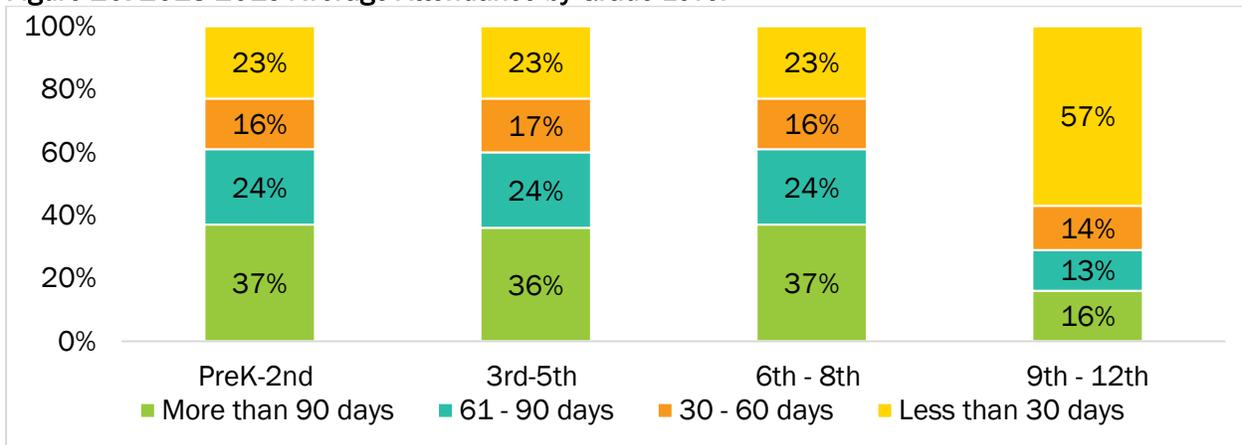
Family Engagement

In addition to youth activities, sites were required to offer active and meaningful family engagement opportunities in support of youth academic success. In response to ADE Objective 3.3, approximately three-quarters of sites offered family engagement activities throughout the year, with sites serving PreK-5th grade reporting greater family participation in activities in comparison to sites serving families of youth in 6th-12th grade (Table 8). It is important to note that **throughout the state the number of sites providing family engagement services more than doubled from the 2017-2018 program year.**

Table 8. 2018-2019 Family Engagement Services

	57 PreK-5th Grade sites	55 6th-12th Grade sites
Fall 2018	43 sites	41 sites
	2,802 families	1,457 families
Spring 2018	41 sites	41
	2,510 families	1,450 families

More importantly, parents reported high levels of satisfaction with ADE 21st CCLC programs, with almost all parents agreeing that their child's program was reliable (94%), provided trustworthy transportation (93%), was cost effective (92%), and that they did not worry about their child when they were at the program (92%). Similarly, the majority of parents reported their child improved their work habits (82%), demonstrated more confidence in reading/English (82%) and math (81%).
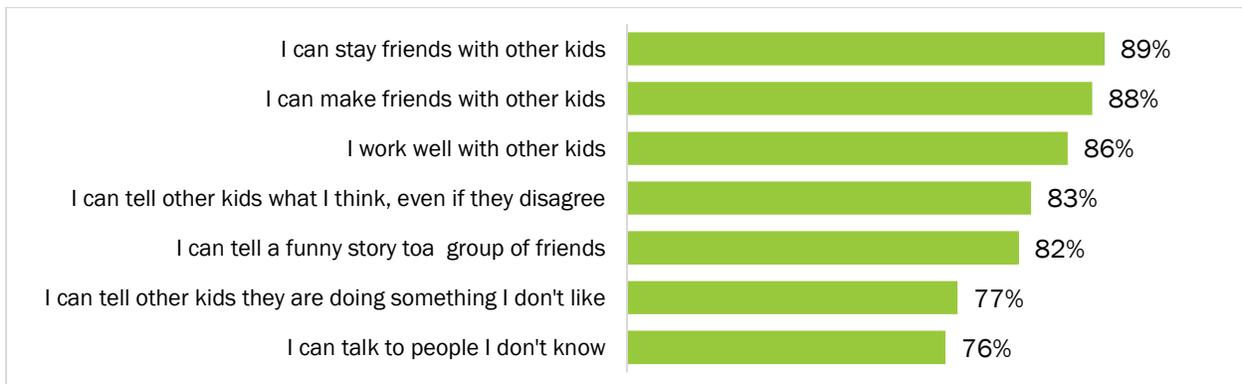
Skill Development

Youth's 21st CCLC Skills

Skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and leadership are similar to a muscle; the more youth practice them, the stronger and more easily accessible they become. When youth have opportunities to regularly practice skills such as social and emotional learning, critical thinking and problem solving, and are supported through intentional activities and staff practices, the skills and confidence gained can be transferred to other settings that allow youth to achieve success across multiple contexts and be better prepared for post-secondary life.[10]

Successfully achieving Objective 2.1, more than 75% of youth attending ADE 21st CCLC programs reported high levels of social and emotional skills for the 2018-2019 program year, measured by a response of *true half the time or more* (Figure 21) . A strong majority of youth reported that the program frequently helped them make friends (88%), work well with others (86%), tell other youth their thoughts, even if there was disagreement (83%), and talk with people they did not know (76%). These findings are consistent with previous years, as ADE 21st CCLC students have reported strong SEL skills for the past five years.

Figure 21: Social and Emotional Skills

I can stay friends with other kids	89%
I can make friends with other kids	88%
I work well with other kids	86%
I can tell other kids what I think, even if they disagree	83%
I can tell a funny story toa group of friends	82%
I can tell other kids they are doing something I don't like	77%
I can talk to people I don't know	76%

Similarly, **Objective 2.2 was achieved with more than 75% of participating youth during the 2018-2019 program year reporting high levels of academic habits**, measured by a response of *true half the time or more* (Figure 22). Youth reported that they follow the rules in the classroom (93%), practice good time management (91%) and finish their work on time (89%).

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[10] Smith, C., McGovern, G., Larson, R., Hillaker, B., Peck, S.C. (2016). Preparing Youth to Thrive: Promising Practices for Social Emotional Learning. Forum for Youth Investment, Washington, D.C.

Figure 22: Academic Habits

I follow the rules in my classroom	93%
I make good use of my time at school	91%
I keep track of my things at school	89%
I finish my work on time	89%
I'm careful and neat with my work	88%
I work well by myself	87%
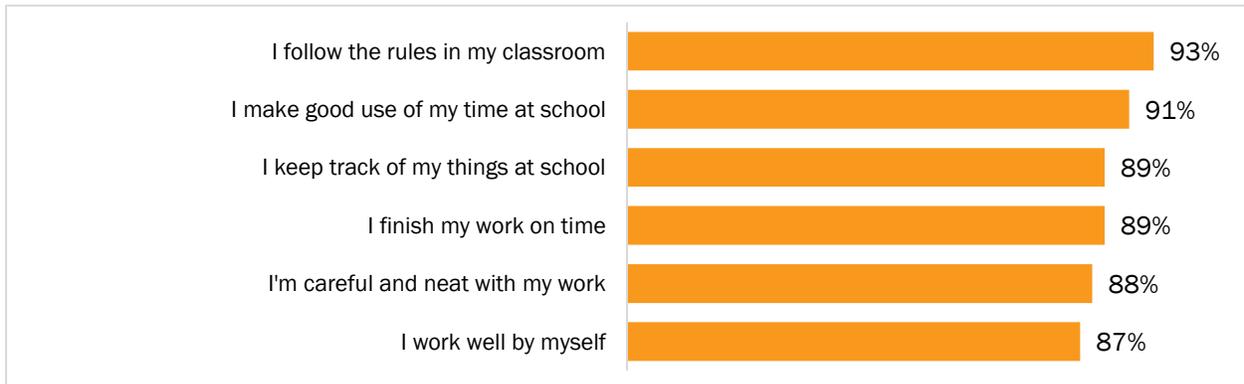
Instructional Rigor

The critical connection between high quality 21st CCLC programming and student academic achievement is the point-of-service interactions where staff practices are responsive to a student's individual needs. While self-assessment of program quality is a valued perspective, it is equally important to check in with students to see if their program experiences align with 21st CCLC program expectations. When asked about the instructional context and content provided during program activities (Figure 23), approximately two-thirds of students reported that the academic support provided and instructional rigor of program activities was supportive of their academic development. While 71% of youth reported that staff understand students' homework, only 68% of youth reported getting their homework done during the program, 67% felt challenged by program activities, and 63% reported that they learned things that would be helpful in school. **While this feedback does show improvement from the 2017-2018 program year, these reports indicate an opportunity to increase the rigor of program activities in support of youth skill development and academic growth.**

Figure 23. Academic Support and Instructional Rigor

I am using my skills	74%
The staff here understand my homework	71%
I am interested in what we do.	70%
I get my homework done	68%
I am challenged in a good way	67%
I try to do things I have never done before	64%
The activities are important to me	64%
I learn things that help me in school	63%
I really have to concentrate to complete the activities	63%

Academic Outcomes

With an emphasis on preparing all students with the skills necessary to promote academic success, the annual state assessments provide an opportunity to reflect on the alignment between instructional quality, program activities and student's academic needs. For the 2018-2019 program year, state assessment results show that 40% of 21st CCLC students achieved proficient or advanced in Math, and 34% achieved proficient or advanced in English. **When compared to statewide averages, both 4th Grade and 8th Grade ADE 21st CCLC students demonstrated greater academic success than their same age peers in Math and English** (Figures 24-25)[11]. At the same time, **more than half of students who regularly attended the program, measured as attending 30 days or more, demonstrated improvement or sustained academic proficiency from the previous year**. Objective 1.1 was partially met as 61% of regularly attending participants increased or maintained proficient or advanced levels in Math, an increase of almost 20 percentage points from the previous year. Similarly, 55% of regularly attending participants increased or maintained proficient or advanced levels in English, a 14-percentage point increase from the previous year.

Figures 24-25: Comparing 21st CCLC Academic Performance to State Average
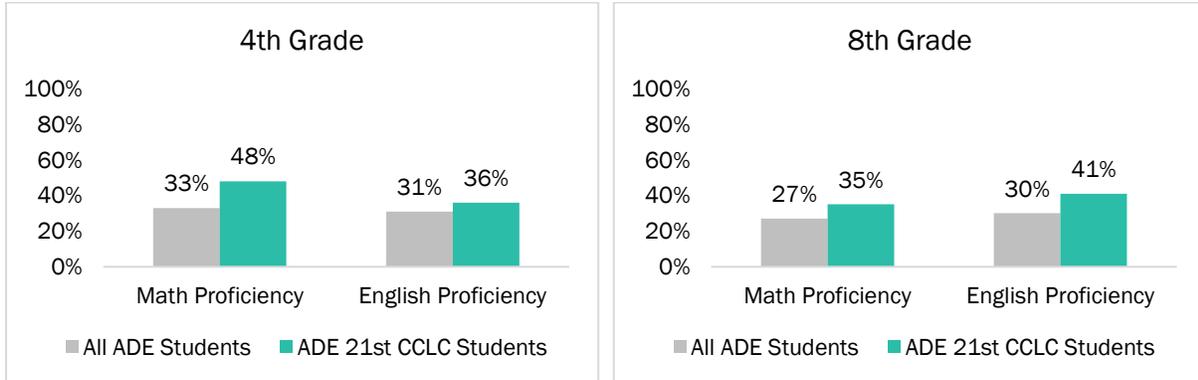
Reflecting on the full implementation of ADE 21st CCLC programs during the 2018-2019 program year, **the evaluation results affirm the program model guiding the work: students who attend high-quality programs are more likely to likely to achieve academic proficiency in math and English, therefore setting them up for greater success in college, work and life** (Figure 26).

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[11] https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/

Figure 26: Higher Quality Programs Promote Youth Academic Achievement
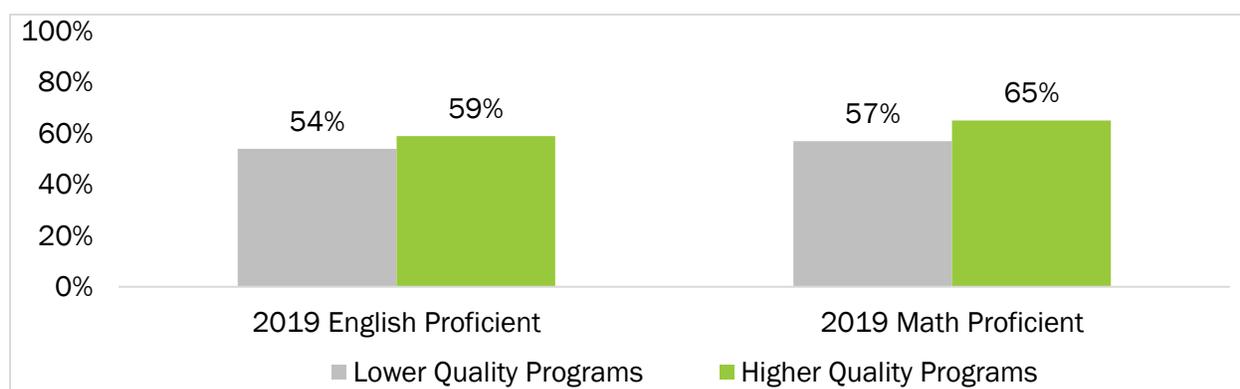
Conclusion and Recommendations

The purpose of this report is to summarize the performance, successes and growth opportunities that emerged for Arkansas 21st CCLC programs during the 2018-2019 program year. With a focus on program quality, implementation fidelity, youth skill development and academic performance, this evaluation included multiple sources of data from staff, youth and parents, as well as program and state assessment data, to inform conclusions and recommendations.

❖ **ADE 21st CCLC programs continue to provide high-quality afterschool activities to students throughout the state.**

During the 2018-2019 program year, the majority of ADE 21st CCLC sties were successful in continuing to provide high-quality programming. While program quality scores did decline slightly from the 2017-2018 program year, just over half of sites (52%) achieved an Instructional Total Score (ITS) of 3.90 or higher. Aligned with the common pattern of results, ADE 21st CCLC sites reported the strong strongest instructional practices for the Safe Environment and Supportive Environment domains, with slightly lower staff practices reported for Interaction and Engagement domains, where more complex skill and greater intentionality is required. An interesting pattern emerged between sites serving different age groups of youth, such that sites using the YPQA, meaning they serve older students, showed consistent improvements in instructional quality for each year of engagement. Comparatively, sites using the SAPQA, meaning they serve younger students, showed more inconsistent improvements in instructional quality over time. These findings suggest that ADE 21st CCLC programs may benefit from differentiated resources and supports depending on the age of youth served.

❖ **Sites that maintained fidelity to the YPQI process implemented the highest quality programs.**

A closer look at YPQI fidelity shows that sites participated more in the assessment and planning phases of the process, with less engagement in improvement activities. Overall, a total of 65 sites

(84%) completed the PQA self-assessment process, yet only 22 sites (34%) were fully engaged in YPQI process and completed all four activities throughout the 2018-2019 program year. Given the persistent positive relationship between YPQI fidelity and program quality, the results suggest that additional reminders and reinforcements may be needed to encourage Grantee Directors and Afterschool Teachers to plan for and participate in all YPQI activities throughout the program year.

❖ **Attention to Family Engagement services doubled from the 2017-2018 program year, with parents reporting high levels of satisfaction with ADE 21st CCLC programs.**

Parents continue to report high levels of satisfaction with ADE 21st CCLC programs, with almost all parents agreeing that not only was their child's program was reliable (94%) and cost effective (92%), but they also saw improvements in their child's work habits (82%) and academic confidence in English (82%) and math (81%).

❖ **ADE 21st CCLC students achieve greater academic success then their same age peers**

For the 2018-2019 program year, state assessment results show that 40% of 21st CCLC students achieved proficient or advanced in Math, and 34% achieved proficient or advanced in English with more than half of regularly attending students demonstrating improved or sustained academic proficiency from the previous year. When compared to statewide averages, both 4th Grade and 8th Grade ADE 21st CCLC students demonstrated greater academic success than their same age peers in Math and English.

Additionally, participating students reported strong social and emotional skills and academic habits that support academic learning during the school day. At the same time, student feedback indicates there is an opportunity to increase the rigor of program activities in support of youth skill development and academic growth.

Appendix A: Annual Performance Report (APR) Requirements for Data Collection

Program Area	Data Collected	Summer [12]	Fall	Spring
Centers	• Center Name, Address, City, State, Zip Code • Contact Name, Email and Phone Number • Center Type: Public School, Charter School, College/University, Community Based, Faith Based, Other • Expanded Learning Time: Yes/No • Feeder Schools • Community Partners	X	X	X
Activities	Frequency, average hours per session, average participants per session, and secondary College and Career Readiness goal for the following: Academics • STEM • Literacy • Tutoring • Homework Help • English Language Learning Support Enrichment • Entrepreneurship • Arts and Music • Physical Activity • Community/ Service Learning • Mentoring Character Education • Drug Prevention • Counseling Programs • Violence Prevention • Truancy Prevention • Youth Leadership College and Career Readiness • College and Career Readiness	X	X	X
Staffing	Number of paid and volunteer • Administrators • College students • Community members • High school students • Parents • School day teachers • Non-teaching school staff • Subcontracted staff • Other	X	X	X
Families	If program serves families of youth Pre-K to 5th Grade and 6th Grade to 12th Grade Number of family members served of Pre-K to 5th Grade youth Number of family members served of 6th – 12th Grade Youth	X	X	X
Participation and Outcomes	Youth Demographic Information: race, gender, English proficiency, free or reduced lunch eligibility, special needs status, grade level Youth Outcomes data: Previous and Current year Math and ELA Performance • Arkansas School Testing Program (OSTP) for youth in grades 3-8 Attendance Data by Term			X

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[12] Summer data is not collected from first year grantees.

Appendix B. Leading Indicator Framework

Organizational Context		
Indicator	Scale	Source
Staffing Model	Capacity	Project Director/Site Coordinator Survey
	Job Satisfaction	Project Director/Site Coordinator Survey Direct Staff/Youth Worker Survey
Continuous Improvement	Continuous Quality Improvement	Project Director/Site Coordinator Survey Direct Staff/Youth Worker Survey
	Participation in YPQI Supports	Project Director/Site Coordinator Survey Direct Staff/Youth Worker Survey
	Horizontal Communication	Direct Staff/Youth Worker Survey
	Vertical Communication	Direct Staff/Youth Worker Survey
Youth Governance	Youth Role in Governance	Project Director/Site Coordinator Survey
Enrollment Policy	Academic Targeting	Project Director/Site Coordinator Survey

Instructional Context		
Indicator	Scale	Source
Academic Press	Academic Planning	Direct Staff/Youth Worker Survey
	Homework Completion	Youth Survey
Engaging Instruction	Youth Engagement and Belonging	Youth Survey
	Growth and Mastery Goals	Direct Staff/Youth Worker Survey
	Instructional Quality	Youth PQA & School-Age PQA

External Relationships		
Indicator	Scale	Source
System Norms	Accountability	Project Director/Site Coordinator Survey
	Collaboration	Project Director/Site Coordinator Survey
Family Engagement	Communication	Parent Survey
School Alignment	Student Data	Project Director/Site Coordinator Survey
	School Day Content	Project Director/Site Coordinator Survey Direct Staff/Youth Worker Survey
Community Resources	Community Engagement	Project Director/Site Coordinator Survey

Youth Skills		
Indicator	Scale	Source
Socioemotional Development	Social and Emotional Competencies	Youth Survey
Academic Efficacy	Work Habits	Youth Survey
	Reading/English Efficacy	Youth Survey
	Math Efficacy	Youth Survey
	Science Efficacy	Youth Survey
	Technology Efficacy	Youth Survey
	Academic Efficacy	Parent Survey

Family Satisfaction		
Indicator	Scale	Source
Family Satisfaction	Confidence in Care	Parent Survey
	Convenience of Care	Parent Survey
	Family School Connection	Parent Survey