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Program Evaluation Report:
Kansas 21st Century Community Learning Centers
2012-2013

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Summary

This state-level evaluation of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program (CCLC)

- Reviews the program history and the current evaluation process;
- identifies validity threats;
- examines the best current examples of local CCLC evaluations;
- briefly reviews the current evidence about measures of effective afterschool programs; and
- suggests improvements in the evaluation measures and process.

Program History & Objectives

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program (CCLC) was passed by Congress in 1994 as part of the Improving America's Schools Act. Its overall aim was to improve achievement through a variety of academic enrichment programs, from tutoring to family services. For schools and communities, it offered federal funding for after-school programming and sometimes, before-school programming.

In 2002, the CCLC program and its \$1 billion budget were incorporated into the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. NCLB emphasized raising students' state assessment scores. With its incorporation into NCLB, the CCLC program found its goals were now the same as NCLB's goals, to raise test scores and reduce dropout rates.

In the same year CCLC was subsumed within NCLB, its administration was transferred from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to the states' education agencies. The Kansas State Department of

Education (KSDE) contracted with the Kansas University Center for Research (KUCR) and the Kansas University Institute for Education Research and Public Service (KIPR) to provide supporting services to local programs. In years in which there were competitions for grants and newly awarded grants, KIPR has provided training workshops. (There was no competition for funding in 2013, thus no workshops for new grantees.) KUCR was the fiscal agent for a time, but its current role is to provide technical assistance, and to visit and observe local programs.

The CCLC program was softly targeted. By statute, CCLC programs are restricted to schools with at least 40 percent or more students receiving free or reduced lunch. Funding limits the program to a yearly competitive process between applicants, with those judged most deserving winning 5-year grants from state agencies. With the increase in single and lower-income parents, the number of schools that meet this requirement has steadily been rising. In 2013, in Kansas, the students qualified for free or reduced lunch reached 49 percent. The trend has been upward since at least 2000, when the percentage qualifying was 17 points lower. From a parental point of view, this trend would suggest that the need for afterschool services has also been steadily rising.

The Evaluation Process

Every local grantee—there are currently 98 in Kansas—is required to have a local evaluator. Each local evaluator must complete yearly reports. The reports follow a KSDE template that asks the following:

1. How closely did the students served match the students targeted in the grant application?
2. How closely did the declared goals in the grant application match what actually was achieved in the last year?
3. There's a required teacher survey report, where teachers retroactively rate how much the students in the program have improved on ten indicators, and
4. a summary and recommendations.

The comparison between the goals declared in the grant and the actual results is called a *component audit*. It and the teacher reporting form are required and must follow KSDE's format (see Tables 1 and 2 below).

This is a simple, straightforward evaluation design. The component audit asks for assurances that declared goals are carried out, and the teachers' survey measures how much progress the participating students made in achieving the program goals. Ideally, if all the data are reported as required by the templates, the components from the local programs, and the teachers' survey responses, could be aggregated to yield a state-level report and state benchmarks. Local programs could then be compared to the state benchmarks: are our student-participants more motivated than the students across the state? Are the classroom behaviors of our student-participants more improved than the state benchmark?

Table 1: Sample Component Audit: X = year 1, Y = year 2, Z = year 3, A = year 4

Program Component	Page #	Fully Accomplished	Partially Accomplished	Not Accomplished
1. Operate after school program in three sites.	7	X Y Z A		
2. Operate summer school in conjunction with recreation program.	7	X Y1 Z A		
3. Operate nutrition and health program.	7	X Y Z A		
4. Provide expanded library hours to serve community.	7	X Y Z A		
5. Provide parenting skills programs.	7	Y2 Z A1	X1	
6. Provide daily snack.	8	X Y Z A		
7. Provide tutoring, direct instruction in reading and math.	8	X Y Z A		
8. Provide recreation, arts activities, computer instruction, and games	8	X Y Z A		
9. Partnership Advisory Board will meet nine (9) times a year.	11	X Y Z A		
10. Initiate program to communicate with parents.	12	X4 Y4 Z3 A		
11. Share successful components and techniques with others.	20	X Y Z A		

Notes:

1. Library at High School was open six days a week with free internet. Virtual Prescription Learning Program was made available for credit completion.
2. Offered Parents Count.Net Program- tips on working with child. No classes offered first year.
3. Program initiated this year. To be expanded in year four.
4. Not scheduled in all schools.

Additional goals include:

1. all students will reach proficiency or higher in reading and math, and
2. all students will graduate from high school.

Because students may be in primary school, the NCLB goal of measuring graduation rates in yearly evaluations isn't relevant. As intermediary steps to

the two larger goals of proficiency and graduation, on State of Kansas Application for 21st CCLC grants (Pub. L. 107-110), the mandatory goals have been broken down into sub-commands:

1. 80 percent of the program-enrolled K-12 participants will maintain high academic achievement and/or demonstrate continuous improvement in mathematics and

reading, based upon grades and results of Kansas State Assessments.

2. 100 percent of the program-enrolled K-12 participants will be offered tutoring support.
3. Day teachers of 60 percent of K-12 participants who are assigned homework will report increased rates of homework completion among their students who attend the program.
4. A variety of services and educational resources will be offered to the families/guardians of 100 percent of all program participants.

For the graduation command the sub-commands are:

1. 90 percent of participants will not be suspended (in-school or out-of-school) while in the program.
2. 90 percent of participants will participate in activities integrating educational activities with real-life problem-solving, arts education, career exploration, recreation, cultural opportunities and activities, and service learning.
3. 80 percent of program-enrolled K-12 participants will not be found to have engaged in violent acts at school.

Note that dropout prevention commands

Table 2: Kansas 21st Century Community Learning Center

Teacher Survey Reporting Form

<i>To what extent has your student changed their behavior in terms of:</i>	<i>Did not need to improve</i>	<i>Acceptable Level of Functioning Not Demonstrated Early in School Year; Improvement Warranted</i>						
		<i>Significant Improvement</i>	<i>Moderate Improvement</i>	<i>Slight Improvement</i>	<i>No Change</i>	<i>Slight Decline</i>	<i>Moderate Decline</i>	<i>Significant Decline</i>
Turning in his/her homework on time								
Completing homework to your satisfaction								
Participation in class								
Volunteering (eg, for extra credit or more responsibility)								
Attending class regularly								
Being attentive in class								
Behaving well in class								
Academic performance								
Coming to school motivated to learn								
Getting along well with others								

numbers 1 (suspension) and 3 (violent acts) are extreme events that may act nearly final precipitating dropout events. They are so far into the process of school and social alienation and dropping out that attempting to prevent dropping out by preventing suspension and violent acts is, in most cases, too late.

Local goals and indicators can be added, but they will be of lesser rank than the mandated achievement goals.

Validity Threats

How do these the mandatory requirements affect the evaluation?

To be able to measure academic improvement in reading and math, or calculate the percentages of students who have improved in each subject, or in their behaviors, individual students would have to be identified, each one's attendance and exposure to each sub-component of the program (what researchers call *dosage*), would have to be accurately recorded. The number of participants would have to be large enough and they would have to attend frequently enough, so that evaluators would have the statistical power to detect significant effects without making a Type I or Type II error (declaring the program successful when it isn't or declaring it isn't when it is).

Evaluators would also need to control for the *quality* of the tutoring, or basketball coaching, or whatever sub-activities were part of the program. As noted above, high-quality programing and implementation are identified characteristics of successful afterschool programs (Yohalem and Wilson-

Ahlstrom, 2010; Holstead and King, 2011).

Individual beginning skill levels for each goal would have to be recorded before students participated in the program—a pre-measure to compare with a post-measure. The teachers' survey does this by asking the teachers to note *how much* the student participants' behaviors and attitudes have improved in the current year.

While this memory method is economical, relying on teachers' memories may bias responses upward. The school is receiving funds for the program. Parents and staff probably want the program. Thus, a teacher may unconsciously find improvements where a more objective measure would not.

Another validity problem is posed by the surveys. If we do not have individual students identified, or surveys that assess the changes in every student-participant, evaluators cannot check to see if there is selection bias. Upward selection bias, in this case, would be caused by those students who *do not benefit* from program participation and are *excluded* from the survey at a higher rate than those student-participants who *did benefit* and were *included* in the survey.

Perhaps the best way to neutralize selection bias is to use random assignment, or, when random assignment isn't ethical, a discontinuity design. As an example of the later, if there were greater demand for each program than each program could supply, then each program could randomly assign students to at least two groups: those who would be admitted to the program, and those who would be waitlisted for later, or assigned to some other program, one that didn't supply tutoring, family services, or real-life educational opportunities. The wait

listed group would then act as a control group.

Control groups eliminate the many other explanations for any effects that we find because the only real difference between the two groups is that one participated in the group that got the CCLC treatment and the other did not. But giving some students what is believed to be a needed service, and not others, seems unethical. Local program administrators may subvert random assignment by assigning students to the treatment group who seem to need it most, or to students whose schedule fits better with the reassignment, or to students who somehow seem more likely to benefit from it.

Because student attendance is voluntary, and the acceptance of offered tutoring is, too, students who do participate in the program may not be those most in need of the tutoring or improved school involvement. If students who scored below proficient were required to enroll in the CCLC program, then we could construct a non-treatment comparison group either through random assignment to waitlist and treatment groups, or through constructing a comparison group that is very, very similar to the treatment group, but not receiving the treatment. But since the students are self-selected, it may be that students who are predisposed to benefit are selecting themselves for the program. The conclusions we draw from the results of these self-selected students would be unreliable. In other words, with self-selection, no matter what we do in an evaluation, we will, at best, have biased insight into whether a program is working or not.

By placing the overwhelming emphasis on state assessments and removing the

goal of engagement or *fun*, poorly executed or poorly designed programs could more deeply alienate some already alienated, poorly performing students (Russell, et al, 2006).

Aggregating the effects of these poorly executed programs with the positive effects of well-executed programs could make *all* the programs look ineffective because the combined effects would cancel each other. This is another reason why the evaluation needs some measures of quality in design and implementation, so we can distinguish well-functioning programs from bad and avoid a type II error.

Not surprisingly, at the national level, studies of CCLC program effectiveness have found positive, negative and no effects (Durlak and Weissberg, 2007; Holstead and King, 2011). This could be due to the aggregation of well implemented and poorly implemented programs.

Finally, even the most carefully reported local evaluations did not faithfully record the data required by the existing evaluation design. This too, means that evaluation conclusions will be unreliable, possibly biased by selective omission of negative or positive results. Because we lack individual student identities of participating students, we can't check for bias by comparing the included students' demographics with those of the excluded students.

The Scope of the Current Evaluation

Currently, there are 98 grantees in 55 districts. Local evaluations give the local administrators the opportunity to reflect on what might be improved in each program. While this isn't a scientific evaluation method, it does re-enforce local

responsibility and autonomy. It also keeps the steps toward improvement within local resource constraints.

But since the local evaluation reports are incomplete, and since local evaluators sometimes have changed the reporting formats so that consolidation of data is invalid, there would be little benefit from attempting to aggregate the reports of all 98 grantees.

The best that might be derived from the current review of local assessments is:

1. Select the 4 apparently best reported local evaluations;
2. Review each based on the exiting evaluation template;
3. Consider how the evaluation

4. make recommendations for improving the evaluation design.

Welborn After-School Kidzone

Summary:

Located in Kansas City, Kansas, USD 500, Welborn Elementary had a fall, 2012 enrollment of 434 students of whom 88 percent qualified for free or reduced lunch. In its academic performance as measured by the Assessment Performance Index, Welborn is in the lowest 25 percent of all Kansas schools. In 2013, its student growth in reading and math respectively, as measured by Student Growth Percentiles, was at the 33rd and 19th percentiles when compared to all Kansas schools.

Table 3: Welborn Elementary Teacher Survey Results

	<i>% students showing improvement</i>	<i>% showing no change or decline</i>
Turning in his/her homework on time	21.9	32.9
Completing homework to your satisfaction	25.7	29.8
Participation in class	32.5	19.0
Volunteering	26.0	28.5
Attending class regularly	13.5	23.0
Being attentive in class	34.3	27.4
Behaving well in class	28.5	33.8
Academic performance	39.2	23.0
Coming to school motivated to learn	27.0	29.8
Getting along well with others	20.4	37.9

The remaining percentage of students (not shown), are students not needing improvement in that row's behavior or disposition.

The program director’s and evaluator’s narratives describe a fully staffed (student / staff ratios ran from 5 / 1 to 9 / 1), combined academic and recreational summer program. The narrative describes a program well integrated with other community organizations, 4-H, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire, National Youth Sports Program, Tendou Martial Arts, and others.

Hispanic population of 24 percent, but only 10 percent of the program participants were Hispanic.

Meeting Academic Goals:

Using the NCLB academic performance measure, the percent proficient or above, the student-participants showed declining proficiency, from 71 percent in 2010-2011, to 48 percent in reading in 2012-2013, and from 80 percent to 48 percent in math. The declines in course grades were even more

Table 4: Welborn Component Audit Results

population analysis	mostly met
average daily attendance goal	met
component audit completed	met
state assessment proficiency goal	not met
report card grade goal	not met
tutoring offered to 100%	not met
homework completion	not met
improvement in homework quality	not met
variety and services and resources offered	almost
suspensions < or = 10% of participants	not met
broad array of ed. activities offered	met
violent acts by participants < or = to 20 %	met

Population Served:

With an average daily attendance of 107 students, and approximately 13 students attending the program from other schools, the program regularly served approximately 22 percent of the Welborn student body. Eighty-one percent of the participants qualified for free or reduced lunch. One discrepancy noted in the report was that Hispanic participation was notably lower than expected. In the 2012-2013 school year, Welborn had an

extreme. The director’s narrative attributes these declines to the introduction of the more rigorous academic standards of the Kansas College and Career Ready Standards.

All 93 of the Welborn students were offered and accepted tutoring. Eight only attended the morning sessions, so, in terms of time spent tutoring, the amount of tutoring they received was less. Without a comparison group, there is no way to judge the

effectiveness of the tutoring, even with the decline in proficiency.

Meeting Behavioral Goals:

Of the 152 student participants in the program, 104 were covered by teachers' surveys evaluating the students' improvement in homework, participation, motivation, etc. In other words, 68 percent of the student participants had teacher reports. Of the 68 percent, students were identified as either needing or not needing improvement. Of those identified as needing improvement, teachers retrospectively classified them as having shown improvement, no improvement, or decline (see Table 2 above for the original survey). Table 3 summarizes the survey results for the Welborn Kidzone.

Of the students needing improvement, the teachers reported that a majority improved in three categories: class participation, being attentive, and academic performance. In the other seven measures, teachers reported that more student participants did not improve or declined.

A face interpretation of the teachers' survey suggests that the program largely failed to improve the students' behaviors and attitudes. But without a comparison group, and without a complete set of teacher surveys, one lacks a standard for judgment. Perhaps the teachers who had complaints about their students were more likely to answer the survey, while those who were satisfied with their students did not. Perhaps in the Welborn neighborhoods, the summer

Table 5: McCandless Elementary Teacher Survey Results

	<i>% students showing improvement</i>	<i>% showing no change or decline</i>
Turning in his/her homework on time	24.0	21.0
Completing homework to your satisfaction	30.0	25.0
Participation in class	34.0	21.0
Volunteering	27.0	19.0
Attending class regularly	10.0	13.0
Being attentive in class	31.0	29.0
Behaving well in class	36.0	32.0
Academic performance	44.0	27.0
Coming to school motivated to learn	23.0	28.0
Getting along well with others	25.0	39.0

The remaining percentage of students (not shown), are students not needing improvement in that row's behavior or disposition.

effects on student attitudes are so pernicious, that if we had a comparison group, we would see that the program succeeded in reducing what would have been a more severe decline in the measures compared to non-participants.

Component Analysis:

Douglas Hager, Ph.D., was the local evaluator who reported the results in Table 4. Of the twelve component goals in the Kidzone application, four were met outright, two were nearly met, and half were not met.

Hutchinson Boys & Girls Club

Summary:

In the afterschool program in Hutchinson, the local Boys and Girls Club collaborated with Kids after School, Inc. and district USD 308. The activities were housed in McCandless Elementary, a school that in 2012-2013 had an audited enrollment of 429, of whom 91 percent qualified for free or reduced lunch. Based on state assessments, McCandless Elementary scored

Table 6: Hutchinson Component Audit Results

operate afterschool 3 hours daily, 5 day per week, 38 weeks per year	met
maintain average daily attendance	met
provide services for Students w Disabilities	met
provide nutritious daily snack	met
provide supplemental math and reading	met
provide supplemental education programs	met
provide fine arts / arts	met
provide physical activities	met
provide social recreation	met
incorporate Delinquency Prevention Initiative	met
provide math and reading tutoring	met
collaborate with community partners	met
implement management plan	met
hold quarterly board of director's meetings	met
McCandless school will provide adequate resources	met
sustainability plan in place	partially met
complete program evaluation	met
complete continuous improvement rubric	NA

among the lowest performing schools in the state in both reading and math. Scores have run downward with almost half of the students falling below proficient in math and almost 30 percent in reading. Student growth in reading, however, is in the normal range, at the 45th percentile. Growth in math was at the 29th percentile when compared to all schools—on the low side, but not in the lowest quarter.

The local evaluator’s narrative describes an intension to focus more on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), and use classrooms less and gyms more. But the report did not make it clear if the program would be sustained after the CCLC funding ended in 2013.

Population Served:

The narrative notes that the school boundary lines were redrawn in in 2012-2013 in a way that actually *increased* the poverty level of the school. Audited enrollment records show the percentage of free and reduced lunch students at about 90 percent for 2009-2010 through spring, 2013. The external evaluator also noted the “world-weariness” of many parents as difficult to deal with.

The average daily attendance ranged from 71 to 86 students per day, five days per week. The charts in the evaluator’s report, *Attendance Pattern by Days*, page 33, show a pattern of more frequent student attendance from the first year of the program in 2008-2009, through the last year of CCLC funding, 2012-2013, suggesting that the program was becoming more popular with students or parents from year to year.

Meeting Academic Goals:

As noted above, the state assessment results from McCandless School from 2011 through 2013 show a pattern of decline in both reading and math. The teachers’ survey results report the opposite pattern, with a majority of the students who needing improvement, reported as achieving it. Academic performance was the category in which students reportedly had the largest improvement. Because we do not know which students were included in the teachers’ surveys, we can’t know if the academic improvement is due to the effectiveness of the program or due to the exclusion of poorer performing students from the teachers’ survey.

Meeting Behavioral Goals:

Teachers responding to the survey reported marginal improvement in homework, participation and attention in the classroom, but a decline in motivation and attendance, and a 14-point decline in getting along with others.

Component Analysis:

The evaluator, Marilyn Graham, Ph.D., reported the successful implementation of all program components. Given the popularity of the program with students and their parents, the threat of closing the program with the ending of the CCLC grant may have been a prospect that some students and families wanted to avoid.

Broken Arrow Boys & Girls Club

Summary:

Broken Arrow Elementary, in 2012-2013 had an enrollment of 296 students of whom 46 percent qualified for free or reduced lunch. That’s a little less than the state average. Based on state assessments as measured by the Assessment Performance Index, the school falls in the top ten percent

of all Kansas schools in both reading and math. In 2013, it continued to improve in reading, but in math it declined slightly. Student growth was high: at the 67th percentile in reading and the 57th percentile in math.

In 2013, the afterschool program completed its fourth year as a collaboration between the Boys and Girls Club and the Lawrence School District. The mode of student daily attendance was 158 days—students who used the service tended to do so loyally, with 80 percent attending 80 or more days. Kirk Longhofer, Ph.D., the program’s external evaluator, was also the academic who designed the evaluation templates.

In his report, he noted the high quality and experience of the program’s director

and staff and the strong support for the program from the building’s principal and staff.

Population Served:

Fifty-three percent of the student participants were qualified for free or reduced lunch, and of these, 77 percent attended the program for 90 or more days.

Meeting Academic Goals:

The scores of Broken Arrow went up. We can’t attribute the change to the program because we have not randomly assigned students to control or wait-listed groups.

Table 7: Broken Arrow Teacher Survey Results

	<i>% students showing improvement</i>	<i>% showing no change or decline</i>
Turning in his/her homework on time	30.0	29.0
Completing homework to your satisfaction	37.0	27.0
Participation in class	28.0	34.0
Volunteering	12.0	42.0
Attending class regularly	12.0	30.0
Being attentive in class	24.0	43.0
Behaving well in class	30.0	36.0
Academic performance	41.0	28.0
Coming to school motivated to learn	23.0	35.0
Getting along well with others	23.0	31.0

The remaining percentage of students (not shown), are students not needing improvement in that row's behavior or disposition.

Table 8: Broken Arrow Component Audit Results

The program will serve 100 students daily, on site at Broken Arrow elementary school.	partially met
The program will be promoted actively to BA staff and parents utilizing notes to parents, the Boys & Girls Club (BAGC) website and participation at Parents Night.	met
A staff to student ratio of 1-12 will be maintained.	met
Homework lab will be staffed by certified teachers during Power Hour.	met
Staff will receive training on state assessment standards and methods for assisting students with achievement.	met
Staff will attend training quarterly.	met
BAGC staff will meet with regular day staff quarterly during early release time.	met
Students will have 30 minutes of physical activity weekly.	met
Field trips will be planned during enrichment times.	met
Community partners will provide programming in their particular areas of expertise.	met
An 8 week summer program will be offered.	met
Community partner will provide drug and alcohol avoidance training.	met
Smart Girls and Passport to Manhood will be offered to students during the summer program.	met
SMART Moves program will be offered to students during the summer program.	met
A monthly newsletter will be sent to parents.	met
Volunteers will be provided by various community organizations and will provide tutoring and homework help for students.	met

Meeting Behavioral Goals:
 Above, in Table 7, the teachers' survey, we see a 10 point improvement in

homework completion and a 13 point improvement in academic performance. The Broken Arrow teachers are reporting no

change or declines in every other category. The largest negative differences are in motivation—11 percent more showed no change or a decline rather than improvement—and getting along with others—8 percent more show no change or a decline than an improvement.

Component Analysis:

The components show staff intentions to improve programming, school and program staff coordination, and parent involvement.

Haysville HOPE Program

Summary:

The combined audited enrollment of the two participating schools, Prairie and Freeman Elementary, was 581 students, of whom 67 percent qualified for free or reduced lunch. Haysville is a suburban community just south of Wichita, Kansas. In its second year, the Haysville Ongoing Pursuit of Excellence (HOPE) program is a collaboration between the Haysville Recreation Department and USD 261.

In 2013, a year when most Kansas schools experienced declines in their academic measures, Prairie Elementary saw large increases which added to a 3-year trend of increases. Its student growth too, as measured by the Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs), was strong, at the 66th and 69th percentiles in reading and math respectively.

Table 9: Haysville HOPE Teacher Survey Results

	<i>% students showing improvement</i>	<i>% showing no change or decline</i>
Turning in his/her homework on time	56.0	25.0
Completing homework to your satisfaction	66.0	18.0
Participation in class	60.0	18.0
Volunteering	46.0	35.0
Attending class regularly	25.0	15.0
Being attentive in class	61.0	23.0
Behaving well in class	27.0	41.0
Academic performance	71.0	19.0
Coming to school motivated to learn	58.0	23.0
Getting along well with others	47.0	27.0

The remaining percentage of students (not shown), are students not needing improvement in that row's behavior or disposition.

Table 10: Haysville HOPE Component Audit Results

The program will serve 40 students daily onsite at Freeman and Prairie Elementary Schools.	partially met
A significant effort will be made to identify high need students and enroll them in the program.	met
The program will be promoted to parents through various means, including notes, teacher conferences and local media.	met
Tutoring will be available from certified teachers.	met
The program will run from the end of school until 6:00pm daily.	met
The program will offer a wide range of enrichment activities.	met
Community partners will provide content and programming in their area of expertise.	partially met
Students in the program will receive a daily snack.	met
Students will be charged a nominal fee for participation in the HOPE program.	met
Staff training will be held a minimum of 4 times per year.	met
A program advisory committee will be established and will meet four times yearly.	partially met
The existing school Site Council will be provided with regular updates on the program.	met
An annual meeting will be held to update various stakeholders on the program.	partially met

Freeman Elementary, while declining slightly in reading and math in 2013, also had relatively high growth at the 63rd and 76th percentiles for reading and math respectively.

The site coordinators at each school are also part of each school’s regular staff. The program offers daily tutoring by the schools’ certified teaching staff.

Kirk Longhofer acted as the local evaluator.

Population Served:

The program aimed to serve 40 students at each site. Seventy-seven percent of students who attended the program were qualified for free or reduced lunch. The mode of total attended days was approximately 68 days with about 60 percent of the students attending 61 days or more.

Meeting Academic & Behavioral Goals:

In every measure but student behavior, the teachers responding to the survey reported large improvements among students needing to improve. The largest improvement of 52 points was in academic performance. In one category, behaving well in class, the ratings declined.

Component Analysis:

The program goals include using certified teachers as tutors and staff training. Having well-trained tutors increases the likelihood of their effectiveness. Since they were part of the school's teaching staff, coordination of afterschool curricula may be more likely than if the tutoring staff were not part of the school's teaching staff.

The rest of the items are standard checklist items.

Improving the Evaluation Process

Previous summary evaluations of the CCLC programs in Kansas called for improvements in the completion of local evaluations. This hasn't happened. Several other components needed for a valid evaluation of the CCLC programs in Kansas are also missing:

- The individual student identification numbers of student-participants so their outcome measures can be tracked over time and matching control groups can be constructed;
- The frequency and duration of their attendance (*dosage*);
- Identification of the each program component and curriculum and measures of the quality of each;

- Measures of the faithfulness of implementation of each program component;
- Measures of student-staff interactions;
- Measures of staff quality; and
- Before and after measures of instrumental student outcomes, like improved behaviors and attitudes.

In the experience of this researcher, the lack of credible evaluation data at the state program level often has repeated itself across federal programs—across large Elementary and Secondary Education programs like No Child Left Behind and smaller programs like Service Learning. Valid, traditional program evaluations—those requiring contract services from university professors or research centers—are expensive and time consuming. Berating local program administrators to collect better data hasn't worked.

Are there alternatives to the extremes of producing poor-quality, inexpensive evaluations that are unlikely to promote program improvement and expensive, rare evaluations that occasionally influence federal program design? Yes. The rest of this evaluation outlines short-term and long-term steps to automate program evaluations while reducing staff reporting burdens.

Make It Continuous Improvement

If a national program like CCLC has already been created out of popular demand, the value of program evaluation is to make the program function better, to act as an engine of continuous improvement. One collects curriculum, resource, and process data to identify where failures or weaknesses enter into the making of improved students. Then

one makes improvements and measures how much the results have been improved.

Research has identified CCLC programs as improving students' academic, socio-emotional, health and wellbeing, and preventing exposures to crime, drug and alcohol used, and sex (Little, et al, 2008). How can the CCLC data collected by KSDE create real baseline data and then measure the improvements made by different programs and components of local CCLC programs? There are at least three approaches to improve the evaluation data.

1. *Require local grantees to uniformly report their results and make the reporting tools more uniform and easier to use.* This appears to be the least expensive, but requiring reporting from grantees hasn't worked in the past.
2. *Hire professional program observers and standardize the data collection process. Improve and standardize the collection instruments.* By using the same professional evaluators, we can improve the quality of data collected. This is more expensive than current approaches, and would involve hiring probably 2 academics or more to visit and observe all the programs while the programs were providing services. In Kansas, this would probably mean hiring the Kansas University Center for Research (KUCR) or the Kansas University Institute for Education Research and Public Service (KIPR) to conduct the evaluations. While this would cost more, compared to

not have valid data or measurements to show that programs are actually working and how much they are working may be more expensive, though we have no way of actually knowing right now.

3. *Automate evaluation data collection.* Integrate the state data collections with improved, local student information systems (SISs) so that local administration tasks like collecting attendance and recording student report cards are integrated with data reporting to the state. This would be a long-term, more expensive approach that would probably require substantial state and perhaps federal investment. The potential benefits are also concomitantly huge. Once the systems were integrated, expenses should greatly decline, the local reporting burden would be greatly diminished, and the information collected could be used to evaluate *all* discrete programs and curricula, whether local, statewide, or federal in origin. If staff-student interactions, especially instructional support, were also measured, the likelihood of putting a virtuous upward performance spiral would be much more likely.

More Short-term Improvements

For more than 15 years, the research on the effectiveness of afterschool programming has been accumulating (Little, et al, 2008). One benefit has been the development of several standardized instruments to measure the effectiveness of afterschool programming. Scholars working for the Forum for Youth Investment have cataloged these evaluation instruments into a useful

guide, *Measuring Youth Program Quality: A Guide to Assessment Tools* (Yohalem and Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2009).

Some of the instruments, for example, the *Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA)*, have been validated. The YPQA was developed by the High/Scope Education Research Foundation and focuses on the experiences the programs provide to students, and on identifying the training needs of staff. Since we know that the quality of staff is an important ingredient for successful programs, we want to include it in our evaluation instruments.

Others instruments, like the *School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS)*, while not fully validated, have good inter-rater reliability, are very accessible, and flexible enough to cover children from Kindergarten through 8th grade. Both the YPQA and SACERS are designed to provide information for program improvement, so they are instruments for continuous improvement. They include environmental measures and staff-student interactions. They would tell us much more than the component audit and retrospective teachers' survey currently used to evaluate CCLC programs in Kansas. KSDE ought to either consider adopting one of these instruments as its standard instrument for local program evaluation—some are free or very inexpensive—or consider developing its own hybrid instrument based upon them.

Another improvement would be the creation of control groups. The KSDE research staff has the technology for creating *synthetic comparison or control groups*. KSDE ought to develop an evaluation protocol that requires, at a

minimum, the use of a synthetic control group when evaluating the effectiveness of programs. Statistical software packages like *R* and *SPSS* have tools that will very closely match, on all available demographic and school measures, the students in a treatment group with matched students.

The use of these comparison groups would require that programs faithfully collect individual student state identification numbers, and program attendance.

Afterschool programs should also *report any adopted curriculum* used, and some measure of how faithfully they implemented their selected curriculum. For example, in the four local CCLC programs reviewed above, one reported using Mindworks Resources and another reported using SMART Moves. With curriculum universally reported, and a measure of how faithful the curriculum was implemented, evaluators should be able to determine which were more effective with whom.

Some local evaluators also reported when there were changes in staff, but did so anecdotally in the narratives of each program's local evaluation. Measures of staff turnover and training should be standardized so they could be incorporated into algorithms to measure the *effects staff change* had on program effectiveness.

Pie-in-the-Sky Improvements

With NCLB, the advocates for data-intensive business management models and the advocates for increased accountability joined forces, and forced state education agencies to construct longitudinal, individual data bases. Some crude measures—individual student's demographics, their assessments, a little

more—accumulate as students move through the public school system, but longitudinal data isn't used well.

There were some very large flaws in the NCLB design. One was that the business data model, what is a Deming's or continuous improvement model, was never adapted from a business world of producing widgets to the complex staging, environments, and social interactions of producing capable human beings. Another was that there was no careful planning process that involved studying school and district student information systems, and what causal factors could be derived from them, and how they might be reported most efficiently. In other words, the process of producing meaningful data was not included in the NCLB design. A true Deming's model would have taken the time to carefully identify the correct data, and then designed a seamless way to integrate its collection with regular classroom and school administration collections rather than add data collection as one more repetitive time-sucking task on teachers' and administrators' to-do lists.

Sooner or most likely, later, some state or states will succeed in fixing this problem. The obvious first steps are:

1. automating attendance at the school level,
2. standardizing and expanding student report cards so they cover the social and behavioral characteristics that are key to academic and career success,
3. adding a low-reporting-burden survey system to a universal collection system, and

4. creating benchmarks, analytics, and comparisons at the State level.

Locally, schools' student information systems (SISs) already collect many key predictors that are stored locally but poorly used. For example, the items collected in the teachers' retrospective survey—about student attitudes and behaviors, about attendance and motivation, are measures that are already collected on the report cards of younger students. These measures are typically stored in the SISs. Rather than forcing local program staff to report something that they already report for all their students, an automated system would use individual student identification, and automated attendance data in all local elective programs like CCLC, to gather useable data from the SISs and report it to KSDE. KSDE would then aggregate, analyze, and report this data back to the schools and districts. Aggregated at the state level, schools can see their relative position compared to all other schools in the state, and do so on any standardized measure.

There are some simple technological fixes, like *automating attendance* for class and program participation, which would improve teacher and staff efficiency. There have been many experiments in using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) student attendance systems (Kassim, et al, 2013). While these automated attendance systems would have many benefits, including automatically measuring attendance in CCLC programs, they are also controversial (Consumers Against Supermarket Privacy Invasion and Numbering (CASPIAN), 2012; RFID Journal, 2014). The potential benefits are large enough to warrant a serious examination of their possible use. Some districts, like Blue Valley in Missouri, are already using them (RFID Journal, 2014).

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