

VIRGINIA'S 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023-2024

Mary Randolph-Frye
Cindy Muzzi
Robert McKinney
Aqdas Khan
Kaley Fluke
Todd Zoblotsky

The University of Memphis
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Executive Summary

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program, funded through the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), provides academic enrichment opportunities outside of the regular school day to help improve student outcomes in areas like academics, behavior, and engagement. This report summarizes the 2023-2024 evaluation procedures and results for Virginia 21st CCLC programs.

The Evaluation Design

The evaluation aimed to assess the extent to which Virginia's 21st CCLC centers, as a whole, achieved the following state-defined objectives from the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measures: 1) growth in reading and language arts and mathematics on state assessments, 2) increased grade point averages (GPAs), 3) improved school day attendance, 4) reduced in-school suspensions, and 5) enhanced student engagement.

The following evaluation questions guided this evaluation: What is the nature of the Virginia 21st CCLC grant program and level of participation by students who are eligible for services; To what degree did centers meet state-defined standardized objectives; and What "promising practices" were identified to help centers meet their required goals? To determine if these objectives were met, data were analyzed from the following sources: (a) the online Annual Local Evaluation Survey (ALERT), (b) the 21st CCLC Annual Performance Report (21APR), and (c) the Student Engagement Survey.

2023-2024 Highlights

- ❖ Grantees reported a total of **585 family members** who attended 21st CCLC programs at 56 centers during the summer of 2023 and **3,982 family members** who attended programs during the regular school year at 127 centers - an increase from the prior summer and regular school year.
- ❖ A total of 130 centers reported providing more than **27,000 hours of activities** to students in the summer and 136 centers reported providing over **111,000 hours of activities** to students during the regular school year.
- ❖ Regular school day teachers reported on the Student Engagement Survey that **98%** of all 21st CCLC students in grades 1-5 in the summer of 2023 and **96%** in the regular school year **demonstrated improvement** in at least one behavior indicator.

Results

The results of the analyses are summarized below by evaluation question.

What is the nature of the Virginia 21st CCLC grant program and level of participation by students?

The Virginia 21st CCLC grant program provides extended learning opportunities during the summer and regular school year, with a strong focus on academic enrichment. In 2023–2024, the program served over 5,500 students in the summer and nearly 16,000 during the regular school year, with substantial participation from economically disadvantaged and underrepresented minority students—key populations the program is designed to support (**Table 1**).

Table 1. Overview of 2023–2024 Virginia 21st CCLC Programs

Category	Summer 2023	Regular School Year (2023–2024)
School Types	89 Elementary/Primary 41 Middle/Intermediate 7 K-8/K-12 18 High Schools	
Students Served	5,548 (20% of eligible participants)	15,903 (58% of eligible participants)
Attended ≥90 Hours	20%	37%
Economically Disadvantaged (ED)	69%	43%
Underrepresented Minority (URM)	55%	58%
Participating Family Members	585 at 56 centers	3,982 at 127 centers
Hours of Activities Offered	27,000+ hours	111,000+ hours
Most Common Activity Type	Academic Enrichment	Academic Enrichment
% of Paid Staff	96%	98%

To what degree did centers, as a whole, meet state-defined standardized objectives?

The state-defined, standardized objectives are applied to students who are considered substantially served—those who attend 21st CCLC programs for at least 90 hours. Overall, Virginia 21st CCLC demonstrated positive impact, particularly in student engagement (Objective 5) – 97% of students who attended 90 hours or more demonstrated growth in engagement in learning during both the summer and regular school year,

surpassing the 90% target. Similarly, centers met the state-defined target for math achievement in the summer (70%) and behavior during the regular school year (70%). However, centers, as a whole, did not meet all the state defined objectives. These results are summarized in **Table 2** below—with objectives that met or exceeded the target shown in **orange**—and are discussed in detail in the Results section of the main report.

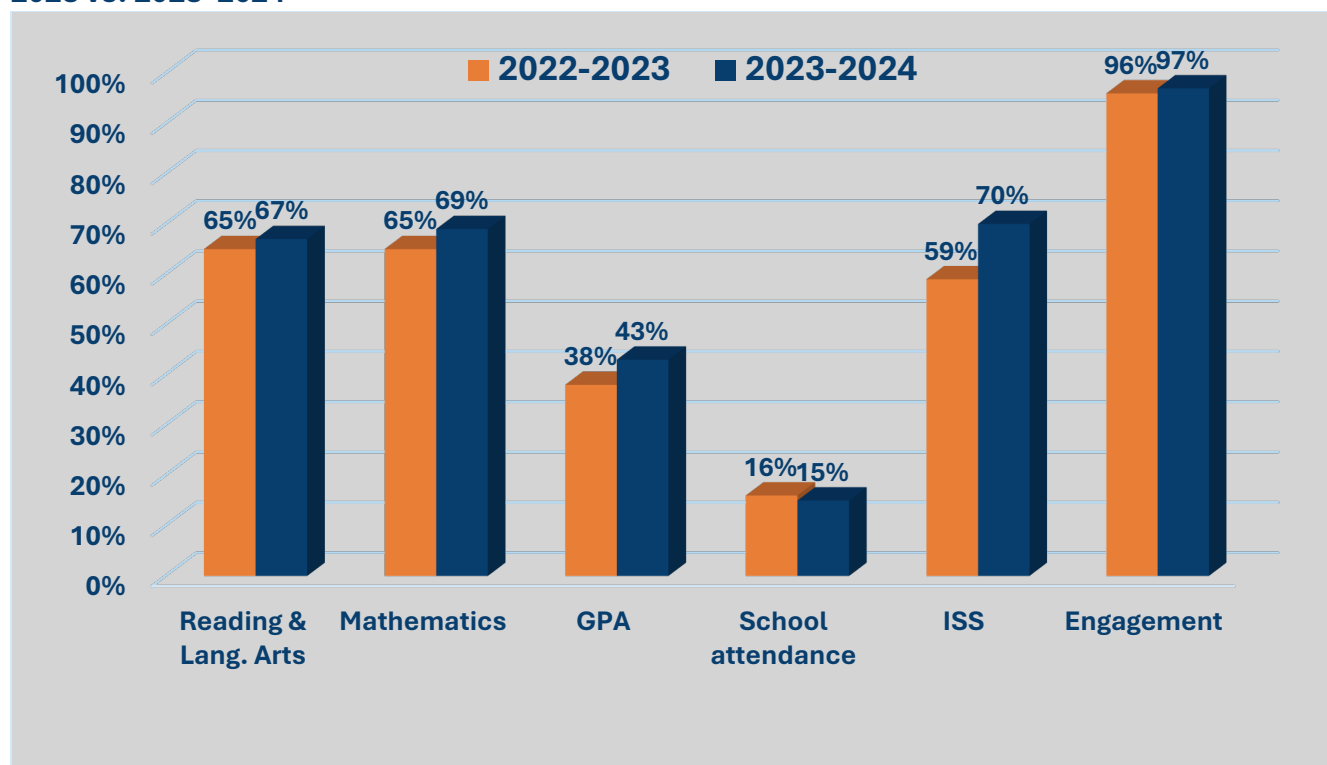
Table 2. Objective-Specific Results for Students Attending More than 90 Hours

Objective	Target	Summer	Regular School Year
1.a. Students in grades 4-8 will achieve a passing score or show growth on the English Language Arts (ELA) assessment.	≥ 70%	69%	67%
1.b. Students in grades 4-8 will achieve a passing score or show growth on the mathematics Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment.	≥ 70%	70%	69%
2. Students in grades 7-8 and 10-12 who had a prior-year unweighted GPA below 3.0, will show at least a 10% increase in their cumulative GPA from the previous year.	≥ 70%	57%	43%
3. Students in grades 1-12 who had a prior-year attendance rate at or below 90% will show improved attendance in the current school year.	≥ 70%	N/A	16%
4. Students in grades 1-12 who had in-school suspensions in the previous year will reduce the number of in-school suspensions in the current year.	≥ 70%	67%	70%
5. Students in grades 1-5 will show improvement in engagement in learning, as reported by their school-day teachers.	≥ 90%	97%	97%

When comparing results from 2022–2023 to this year’s results (2023–2024), student outcomes improved across most state-defined objectives. Gains were observed in Reading and Language Arts (65% to 67%), Mathematics (65% to 69%), Grade Point Average (38% to 43%), and In-School Suspension reduction (59% to 70%). Student engagement

remained consistently high, increasing slightly from 96% to 97%. The only area showing a slight decline was school-day attendance, which dropped from 16% to 15% (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Comparison of Student Outcomes Across State-Defined Objectives: 2022–2023 vs. 2023–2024



What “promising practices” were identified to help centers meet their required goals?

Grantee comments about promising practices across the ten focus areas (reading/language arts, math, grade point average, school day attendance, in-school suspensions, family engagement, enrichment opportunities, engagement in learning, community partnerships, and tutoring/homework help opportunities) revealed three broad themes. First, and most prominently, were **practices that supported students**. These included: academic support, active learning, enrichment activities, social emotional learning, incentives/reinforcement experiences, and assessment of students’ needs. The second broad group involved **communication practices** between afterschool staff, students, families, and regular school day teachers. Finally, there was an emphasis on strong **partnerships**, especially with schools, families and with community resources and maintaining these through regular involvement and collaboration.

Introduction

This report summarizes the 2023-2024 evaluation procedures and results for Virginia's 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program.

Background and Program Description

The 21st CCLC program was established by Congress as Title X, Part I, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and was reauthorized under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA; Title IV, Part B) in 2015 and amended by ESSA in 2024. The program is designed to provide academic enrichment opportunities outside of the regular school day to help students, particularly those attending high-poverty and low-performing schools, meet state and local academic standards. The three primary purposes are:

- To offer academic enrichment activities that support core academic areas such as reading and math;
- To provide a broad array of services, programs, and activities that complement academic learning, including arts, music, recreation, counseling, drug and violence prevention, character education, and technology education;
- To engage families of students served by the program through opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

States receiving federal 21st CCLC funds are required to conduct comprehensive evaluations of their programs. These evaluations must align with the federal Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measures, as well as any additional state-defined measures of progress.

In Virginia, applicants apply annually for competitive 21st CCLC grant funds through the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Programs typically operate on a three-year grant cycle and are required to participate in ongoing data collection, monitoring, and evaluation while providing students with academic and enrichment opportunities before and/or after school, and in some cases during the summer. Collaboration with families and community partners is also expected as a core component of the program's design and delivery.

VDOE contracted with The Center for Research in Educational Policy (CREP) to conduct their statewide evaluation. CREP is part of the College of Education at the University of Memphis and a designated Tennessee Center of Excellence. With a rich history spanning more than 35 years, CREP brings expertise in research design, implementation, and program evaluation across K-12 and postsecondary education, statewide and multi-state initiatives, and various community-based programs.

For 2023-2024, CREP assessed the extent to which Virginia's 21st CCLC programs, as a whole, met the five GPRA measures and state-defined objectives, outlined below:

GPRA Measure #1: Academic Achievement

- *Federal Requirement:* Percentage of students in grades 4–8 participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in reading/language arts and mathematics on the state assessment.
- *State-defined Objective:* **At least 70%** of students in grades 4-8 who participate in a 21st CCLC program for 90 hours or more during the school year and summer will achieve a passing score or show growth on the English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments.

GPRA Measure #2: Grade Point Average

- *Federal Requirement:* Percentage of students in grades 7–8 and 10–12 attending 21st CCLC programs during the school year and summer, with a prior-year unweighted GPA below 3.0, who show GPA improvement.
- *State-defined Objective:* **At least 70%** of students in grades 7-8 and 10-12 who participate in a 21st CCLC program for 90 hours or more, and who had a prior-year unweighted GPA below 3.0, will show at least a 10% increase in their cumulative GPA from the previous year.

GPRA Measure #3: School Day Attendance

- *Federal Requirement:* Percentage of youth in grades 1–12 participating in 21st CCLC programs during the school year who had a school-day attendance rate at or below 90% in the prior year and demonstrated improved attendance in the current year.

- *State-defined Objective: At least 70%* of students in grades 1-12 who participate in a 21st CCLC program for 90 hours or more and had a prior-year attendance rate at or below 90% will show improved attendance in the current school year.

GPRA Measure #4: Behavior

- *Federal Requirement:* Percentage of students in grades 1-12 attending 21st CCLC programs during the school year and summer who experienced a reduction in in-school suspensions compared to the previous year.
- *State-defined Objective: At least 70%* of students in grades 1-12 who participate in a 21st CCLC program for 90 hours or more and who had in-school suspensions in the previous year will reduce the number of in-school suspensions in the current year.

GPRA Measure #5: Student Engagement in Learning

- *Federal Requirement:* Percentage of students in grades 1-5 participating in 21st CCLC programs during the school year and summer who demonstrated improvement in teacher-reported engagement in learning.
- *State-defined Objective: At least 90%* of students in grades 1-5 who participate in a 21st CCLC program for 90 hours or more during the school year and summer will show improvement in engagement in learning, as reported by their school-day teachers or 21st CCLC program staff.

Evaluation Questions

To guide the evaluation, CREP used the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of the Virginia 21st CCLC grant program and level of participation by students who are eligible for services?
2. To what degree did centers meet state-defined standardized objectives?
3. What “promising practices” were identified to help centers meet their required goals?

Methods

Participants

The 2023-2024 evaluation included 149 after-school programs within a three-year grant cycle (Cohorts 20, 21, & 22). The 21st CCLC population consisted of (a) grantees

and/or site coordinators, (b) school-day teachers and administrators from participating schools, (c) after-school teachers, (d) volunteers, (e) student participants, and (f) the parents/guardians of student participants. The study population, along with others associated with the program, is discussed in detail in the report section *Center and Participant Characteristics*.

Data Sources

The data used for this report were drawn from multiple sources:

Annual Local Evaluation Report Template (ALERT). A grantee is required to submit an ALERT annually for each center after a full year of program implementation. Grantees with multiple sites serving different students at each site must complete a separate ALERT for each site. The self-report tool was opened for approximately two months during the summer of 2024. Its purpose was to gather data regarding measurable objectives, activities, and outcomes. Grantees were also asked to describe the “promising practices” they found most helpful in achieving their programs’ stated objectives, as well as the challenges they faced while implementing the program.

21st CCLC Annual Performance Report (21APR). The 21APR is mandated by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and is aligned with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) established by Congress. It is used to track the annual progress of the state’s 21st CCLC programs and key outcome measures. Grantees are responsible for entering and certifying their site-level data annually, including program activities, staffing, and student participation metrics, by the deadline set by VDOE.

Certain student outcome data—such as school attendance and state assessment scores in reading and mathematics—are entered into the 21APR system directly by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), not by the grantees. These data reflect performance on Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments for students in grades 4-8. It should be noted that students with limited English proficiency (at the lowest English Language Proficiency levels) and students with disabilities may participate in approved alternative assessments; however, these alternative assessment scores were not included in the analysis of academic growth on state assessments.

Student Engagement Survey (Teacher APR Survey). Regular school-day teachers are asked to complete one Student Engagement Survey for each 21st CCLC student in grades 1-5 who has attended the 21st CCLC program during the school year for at least 15 hours. For summer programs, surveys are completed by 21st CCLC summer program staff for students in those grades attending at least 15 hours of programming. The survey is designed to assess changes in student behavior, focusing on key areas such as citizenship, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creative thinking.

CREP collected ALERT data, while 21APR and Student Engagement Survey data is submitted in the state’s web-based data collection system, then shared with CREP for analysis and inclusion in this report. These data sources are summarized by evaluation question in **Table 3**.

Table 3. Summary of Instruments and Data Sources by Evaluation Question

Evaluation Question	Data Sources
What is the nature of the Virginia 21st CCLC grant program and level of participation by students?	• ALERT • 21st CCLC Annual Performance Report (21APR)
To what degree did centers meet state defined standardized objectives?	• Standards of Learning (SOL) • ALERT • 21st CCLC Annual Performance Report (21APR) • Student Engagement Survey
What “promising practices” were identified to help centers meet their required goals?	• ALERT

Center and Participant Characteristics

21st CCLC grantees are required to track information about their staff, students, family members, and activities and enter it into the state’s web-based data collection system. One hundred and thirteen (113) centers submitting data for summer 2023, and 139 centers submitting data for the 2023-2024 regular school year. The 21st CCLC population is described in more detail below.

Staff

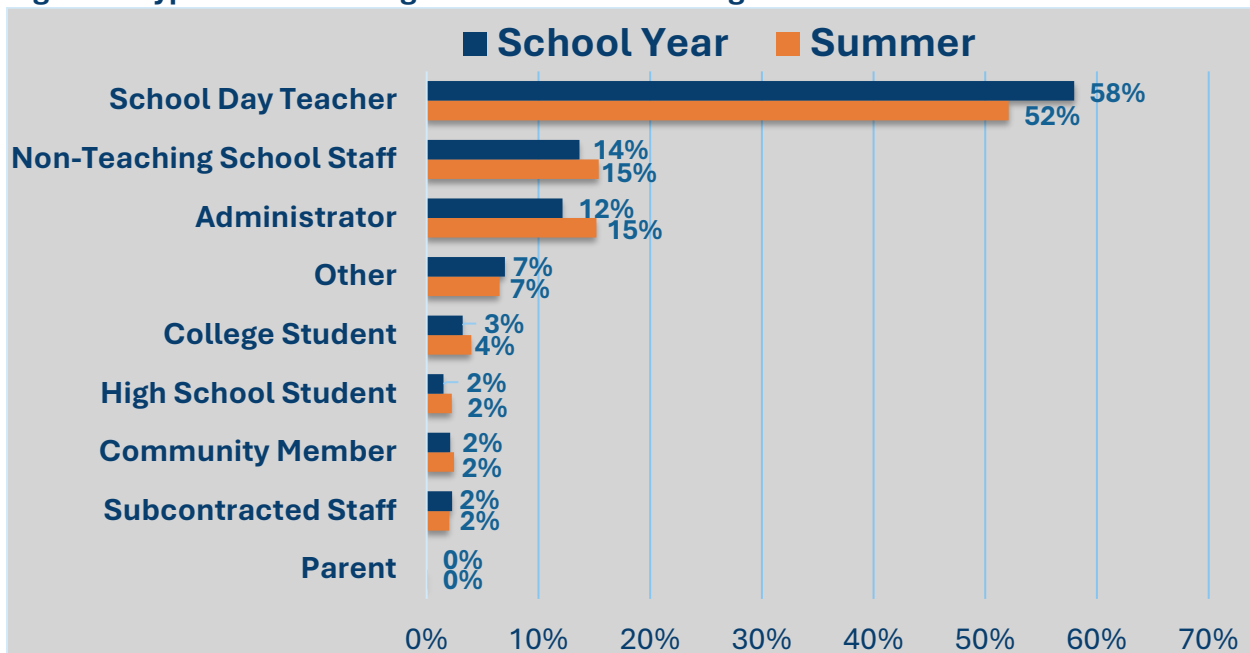
As shown in **Table 4**, during the summer and regular school year, the vast majority of 21st CCLC staff are paid.

Table 4: Staff Composition by Term and Employment Type

Term	Paid		Volunteer		Total # of staff
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
Summer 2023	1,373	96%	55	4%	1,428
Regular School Year	1,932	98%	49	2%	1,981

School-day teachers were the most common type of staff member during both summer 2023 and the 2023-2024 school year (**Figure 2**). Administrators and non-teaching school staff were the next most common type of staff to work in the centers. Parents made up 0% of the center staffing for each term.

Figure 2: Type of Staff during Summer 2023 and Regular School Year



Students

Summer 2023 Program Attendance. During the summer of 2023, a total of 5,548 students in PreK through 12th grade attended 21st CCLC, which is a small increase (3%) over the number of students served during the previous summer (2022; $N = 5,395$). Summer programs are not required to have a minimum length. The majority (80%) of 21st CCLC student participants attended the Summer 2023 programming for less than 90 hours (**Table 5**). Most of the students (87%) were in grades 1-8 (**Table 6**) and were fairly evenly distributed between these grades, with grades 3-6 having a slightly higher proportion of participants. Pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and high school students (grades 9-12) had the lowest levels of participants. This distribution of participants is consistent with the program's funding patterns, as most awarded grant applications are upper elementary (grades 3–5) and middle school (grades 6–8).

Table 5. Summer 2023 Student Attendance by Hours Attended

Hours Attended	Number	Percentage
Less than 15 hours	1,016	18%
15-44 hours	1,857	33%
45-89 hours	1,633	29%
90-179 hours	766	14%
180-269 hours	181	3%
270+ hours	95	2%
TOTAL	5,548	100%

Table 6. Summer 2023 Student Attendance by Grade Level

Grade Level	Number	Percentage
Pre-kindergarten	32	<1%
Kindergarten	145	3%
1st grade	428	8%
2nd grade	470	8%
3rd grade	703	13%
4th grade	773	14%
5th grade	818	15%
6th grade	692	12%
7th grade	507	9%
8th grade	419	8%
9th grade	188	3%
10th grade	141	3%
11th grade	130	2%

Grade Level	Number	Percentage
12th grade	102	2%
TOTAL	5,548	100%

Regular School Year Program Attendance. Grantees reported that 15,903 students were in attendance at least one or more days during the 2023-2024 regular school year (**Table 7**). Of that, 37% attended 90 or more hours. Attendance rose 9% from the 2022-2023 school year, increasing from 14,597 to 15,903 students.

Similar to the summer programs, most 21st CCLC students were in grades 2-8 (75%). Grades 3-8 had the largest number of student participants. Again, pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and high school students (10-12) had the lowest number of participants (**Table 8**).

Table 7. Regular School Year Student Attendance by Hours Attended

Hours Attended	Number	Percentage
Less than 15 hours	3,914	25%
15-44 hours	3,397	21%
45-89 hours	2,819	18%
90-179 hours	2,969	19%
180-269 hours	1,576	10%
270+ hours	1,228	8%
TOTAL	15,903	100%

Table 8. Regular School Year Student Attendance by Grade Level

Grade Level	Number	Percentage
Pre-kindergarten	186	1%
Kindergarten	566	4%
1st grade	858	5%
2nd grade	1,305	8%
3rd grade	1,798	11%
4th grade	1,717	11%
5th grade	1,737	11%
6th grade	2,039	13%
7th grade	1,802	11%
8th grade	1,629	10%
9th grade	722	5%
10th grade	613	4%
11th grade	544	3%
12th grade	387	2%

Grade Level	Number	Percentage
TOTAL	15,903	100%

Demographics. The **summer demographic** information collected in the 21APR reflected slightly more female (53%) than male (47%) participants. The ethnic groups with the highest percentage of students were White (45%), Black (37%), and Hispanic (12%). Approximately 13% of students were English Learners (EL), 22% of students were classified as receiving “special education” services, and the majority (69%) of students were classified as economically disadvantaged.

The 2023-2024 **regular school year demographics** were similar to the summer program. The information showed there were slightly more female (52%) than male (48%) participants. The ethnic groups with the highest percentages were White (42%), Black (35%), and Hispanic (17%). Approximately 14% of students were English Learners (EL), 16% were classified as receiving “special education” services, and the vast majority (69%) were classified as economically disadvantaged. One minor difference when compared to the summer was a slightly *higher* percentage of Hispanic students (17% versus 12%) during the regular school year.

When comparing the 21st CCLC student population to all students served throughout the **Commonwealth of Virginia** for the 2023-2024 school year, the 21st CCLC student population was representative of the Commonwealth in some ways (i.e., percentage of white students, EL, and students with disabilities), but not others. The 21st CCLC programs served a *higher* percentage of Black students, a slightly *higher* percentage of female students, a slightly *lower* percentage of male and Asian students, and a much higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students (**Table 9**).

Table 9. Summer 2023 Student Demographics

Student Demographics	Summer 2023		Regular School Year 2023-2024		Commonwealth Percentage ¹
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
Gender					
Male	2,582	47%	7,621	48%	52%
Female	2,962	53%	8,227	52%	48%
Gender Unknown/Not Reported	4	<1%	55	<1%	NA
TOTAL	5,548	100%	15,903	100%	100%
Ethnicity					
American Indian/Alaskan Native	13	<1%	64	<1%	<1%
Asian	51	1%	217	1%	8%
Black	2,059	37%	5,493	35%	21%
Hispanic	691	12%	2,700	17%	20%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	3	<1%	9	<1%	<1%
White	2,474	45%	6,638	42%	43%
Two or more	236	4%	678	4%	7%
Ethnicity Unknown	21	<1%	104	<1%	NA
TOTAL	5,548	100%	15,903	100%	100%
Population Specifics					
English Learners (EL)	555	13%	2,240	14%	15%
Special Education	956	22%	2,503	16%	15%
Economically Disadvantaged	3,819	69%	10,936	69%	43%

¹ <https://schoolquality.virginia.gov/virginia-state-quality-profile#desktopTabs-3>

Family Members

The Virginia 21st CCLC programs also served family members of 21st CCLC students, which aligns with overall purpose of the federal program—“To offer families of students served by community learning centers opportunities for literacy and related educational development” (ESSA, 2024). Grantees reported a total of 585 family members who attended 21st CCLC programs in 56 sites during the summer of 2023, and 3,982 family members in attendance at 127 sites during the regular school year (2023-2024).

Activities

A wide variety of activities were offered by 21st CCLC centers. A total of 130 centers reported providing more than 27,000 hours of activities in the summer and 136 centers reported providing over 111,000 hours of activities during the regular school year. The activity categories highlighted in light blue—*Academic Enrichment*, *STEM*, *Well-rounded Education*, *Healthy and Active Lifestyle*, and *Literacy Education*—represent the most common activities used in the centers during both the summer and regular school year. Academic Enrichment activities were more frequently utilized during the regular school year, while *Well-rounded Education* and *Healthy and Active Lifestyle* saw slightly higher use during the summer. During the summer, 19,724 activity hours (72%) were dedicated to academic-focused activities, compared to 85,371 activity hours (76%) during the regular school year (**Table 10**).

Table 10. Activities Offered to Students by Term

Activity Category	Summer 2023		Regular School Year 2023-2024	
	Participants	Hours	Participants	Hours
Academic Enrichment	3,687	6,881	12,841	48,932
Activities for English Learners	6	1	156	862
Assistance to Students who have been Truant, Suspended, or Expelled	61	8	252	65
Career Competencies and Career Readiness	419	475	1,460	1,489
Cultural Programs	1,020	794	2,632	2,603
Drug and Violence Prevention and Counseling	336	146	1,390	300
Expanded Library Service Hours	148	24	476	301
Healthy and Active Lifestyle	3,383	6,011	10,044	19,236
Literacy Education	1,570	2,115	4,657	7,683
Parenting Skills and Family Literacy	405	81	2,656	1,294
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)	3,191	3,913	7,630	10,508
Services for Individuals with Disabilities	2	88	105	199
Telecommunications and Technology Education	269	93	408	350
Well-rounded Education Activities, including credit recovery or attainment	2,229	6,722	6,754	17,898
TOTAL	NA	27,352	NA	111,720

Note: The most frequent activities are highlighted in blue.

Results

As outlined earlier in the report, grantees are required to address five GPRA measures while implementing their 21st CCLC program: 1) improve performance on state assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics, 2) increase grade point average (GPA), 3) improve school-day attendance, 4) reduce in-school suspensions, and 5) enhance student engagement in learning. Two key data issues were identified: First, not all grantees fully entered their data into the 21APR. Second, achievement and school day attendance data may not be available for private school students participating in the programs. Missing data can result from various challenges, such as errors during data collection or mistakes in data entry. To address these issues and improve data quality, the state and CREP are actively working with each center to minimize gaps and enhance the accuracy of the data submitted.

The following section details the extent to which the Virginia 21st CCLC program, as a whole, met the objectives. Results for each objective are broken out by student hours of participation (i.e., 15-44 hours) to better understand how varying levels of participation influenced outcomes and the achievement of program objectives. In addition to including the outcomes for the GPRA measures and state-defined measurable objectives, this report includes results on family engagement and a descriptive summary of common themes from the Promising Practices section of the ALERT report.

Objective 1.A. – Academic Achievement – Reading

Federal Requirement: Percentage of students in grades 4–8 participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in reading/language arts on the state assessment.

State-defined Objective: At least 70% of students in grades 4-8 who participate in a 21st CCLC program for 90 hours or more during the school year and summer will achieve a passing score or show growth on the English Language Arts (ELA) Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments.

Result: Summer 69%, School Year 67%—Objective Not Met

21APR: Student academic achievement data added by the state to the 21APR for the **summer** period shows that well over two-thirds (70%) of all eligible 21st CCLC students

in grades 4-8 who had two years of data on the state assessment in Reading and Language Arts obtained a passing score in 2023-2024 or demonstrated growth from 2022-2023 to 2023-2024. For students who attended 90 hours or more, 69% showed growth.

For the **regular school year**, the percentage of students showing growth was slightly lower than in the summer—at 68%. Of students who attended 90 hours or more, 67% showed growth.

Growth rates were fairly consistent across most levels of participation during the **summer**, ranging from 65% to 71%. Students who attended between 45 to 89 hours had the highest rate of growth (71%), while those in the 180 to 269-hour range showed the lowest growth (65%). During the **regular school year**, growth rates were also fairly stable, ranging from 63% to 68%, but none of the groups met the state objective. Interestingly, the group with the highest participation (more than 270 hours) had the lowest percentage of students showing growth (63%). It should be noted that this category also had the lowest number of students (**Table 11**).

Table 11. Summer Academic Achievement 21APR Data – Reading and Language Arts

Summer 2023	Students with two years of data*	# of Students Showing Growth	% of Students Showing Growth
Less than 15 Hours	399	267	67%
15 to 44 Hours	1,157	812	70%
45 to 89 Hours	945	674	71%
90 to 179 Hours	281	197	70%
180 to 269 Hours	85	55	65%
More than 270 Hours	36	25	69%
All students	2,903	2,030	70%
90 hours or more	402	277	69%
State Objective			At least 70%
Regular School Year			
Less than 15 Hours	1,966	1,379	68%
15 to 44 Hours	1,870	1,297	66%
45 to 89 Hours	1,590	1,073	66%
90 to 179 Hours	1,638	1,081	66%
180 to 269 Hours	783	531	67%
More than 270 Hours	550	389	63%
All students	8,397	5,730	68%
90 hours or more	2,971	2,001	67%
State Objective			At least 70%

*Students with two years of data for comparison: 2022-2023 and 2023-2024

Objective 1.B. – Academic Achievement – Math

Federal Requirement: Percentage of students in grades 4–8 participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in mathematics on the state assessment.

State-defined Objective: At least 70% of students in grades 4-8 who participate in a 21st CCLC program for 90 hours or more during the school year and summer will achieve a passing score or show growth on the mathematics Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments.

Results: Summer = 70%, School Year = 69%—Objective Met for Summer

21APR: Similar to the 21APR results for Reading and Language Arts, the summer 2023 data shows that well over half (68%) of eligible students demonstrated growth on the state assessment in math. For students who attended 90 hours or more in the Summer, 70% showed growth, meeting the state-defined objective of at least 70%.

During the **school year**, for students who attended 90 hours or more, 69% showed growth, just slightly less than the state-defined objective.

Rates of growth were generally consistent across total hours of afterschool program attendance. However, those students who attended *more than 270 hours* in the **summer** were slightly *more likely* to show growth (**Table 12**).

Table 12. Academic Achievement 21APR Data – Math State Assessment (Grades 4-8)

Summer 2023	Students with two years of data*	No. of Students Showing Growth	% of Students Showing Growth
Less than 15 Hours	397	252	63%
15 to 44 Hours	1157	794	69%
45 to 89 Hours	944	652	69%
90 to 179 Hours	282	202	72%
180 to 269 Hours	85	53	62%
More than 270 Hours	37	28	76%
All students	2,902	1,981	68%
90 hours or more	404	283	70%
State Objective			At least 70%
Regular School Year			
Less than 15 Hours	1,974	1,344	68%
15 to 44 Hours	1,881	1,171	62%
45 to 89 Hours	1,595	1,054	66%

90 to 179 Hours	1,651	1,116	68%
180 to 269 Hours	787	551	70%
More than 270 Hours	550	383	69%
All students	8,438	5,619	67%
90 hours or more	2,988	2,050	69%
State Objective			At least 70%

*Students with two years of data for comparison: 2022-2023 and 2023-2024

Objective 2 – Grade Point Average

Federal Requirement: Percentage of students in grades 7–8 and 10–12 attending 21st CCLC programs during the school year and summer, with a prior-year unweighted GPA below 3.0, who show GPA improvement.

State-defined Objective: At least 70% of students in grades 7-8 and 10-12 who participate in a 21st CCLC program for 90 hours or more, and who had a prior-year unweighted GPA below 3.0, will show at least a 10% increase in their cumulative GPA from the previous year.

Results: Summer = 57%, School Year = 43%—Objective Not Met

21APR: For summer of 2023, nearly half (48%) of all eligible 21st CCLC students with two years of data demonstrated a 10% increase or more in their GPA. Among students who attended 90 hours or more, 57% showed GPA gains. The highest-performing group was those in the 90–179 hour range (60%), followed by those attending 45–89 hours (55%). Notably, students with the lowest attendance (less than 15 hours) had the lowest growth (35%), and those with the most hours (more than 270) had no students showing growth, although this group had only three students and may not be representative.

During the 2023–2024 school year, over one-third (42%) showed similar growth and for students attending 90 hours or more 43% showed growth. Similar to the summer, no group met the 70% state objective, and even the highest-participating students (more than 270 hours) showed only a 50% growth rate. Interestingly, students with moderate levels of participation (90 to 179 hours) performed slightly worse (41%) than those with either more or fewer hours. (**Table 13**).

Table 13. Grade Point Average 21APR Data (Grades 7, 8, 10, 11, & 12)

Summer 2023	Students with two years of data*	No. of Students Showing Growth	% of Students Showing Growth
Less than 15 Hours	48	17	35%
15 to 44 Hours	148	63	43%
45 to 89 Hours	107	59	55%
90 to 179 Hours	48	29	60%
180 to 269 Hours	12	7	58%
More than 270 Hours	3	0	0%
All students	366	175	48%
90 hours or more	63	36	57%
State Objective			At least 70%
Regular School Year			
Less than 15 Hours	363	169	47%
15 to 44 Hours	419	155	37%
45 to 89 Hours	260	109	42%
90 to 179 Hours	223	92	41%
180 to 269 Hours	77	35	45%
More than 270 Hours	26	13	50%
All students	1,368	573	42%
90 hours or more	326	140	43%
State Objective			At least 70%

*Students with two years of data for comparison (2022-2023 and 2023-2024)

Objective 3 – School-day Attendance

Federal Requirement: Percentage of youth in grades 1–12 participating in 21st CCLC programs during the school year who had a school-day attendance rate at or below 90% in the prior year and demonstrated improved attendance in the current year.

State-defined Objective: At least 70% of students in grades 1-12 who participate in a 21st CCLC program for 90 hours or more during the school year and had a prior-year attendance rate at or below 90% will show improved attendance in the current school year.

Results = School Year = 15%—Objective Not Met

21APR: Of all 21st CCLC students in grades 1-12 attending 90 hours or more during the regular school year with two years of data, 15% improved their school day attendance. Improvement in school day attendance was fairly evenly distributed regardless of hours of afterschool program attendance, with the exception of students who were served more than 270 hours in the summer, who were the *least likely* to show an improvement (**Table 14**).

Table 14. Regular School Day Attendance 21APR Data (Grades 1-12)

Hours of Attendance	Students with two years of data*	No. of Students Showing Growth	% of Students Showing Growth
Less than 15 Hours	3,080	499	16%
15 to 44 Hours	2,547	408	16%
45 to 89 Hours	2,217	373	17%
90 to 179 Hours	2,313	363	16%
180 to 269 Hours	1,112	174	16%
More than 270 Hours	1,078	149	14%
All students	12,347	1,966	16%
90 hours or more	4,503	686	15%
State Objective			At least 70%

*Students with two years of data for comparison (2022-2023 and 2023-2024)

Objective 4 – Behavior

Federal Requirement: Percentage of students in grades 1-12 attending 21st CCLC programs during the school year and summer who experienced a reduction in in-school suspensions compared to the previous year.

State-defined Objective: At least 70% of students in grades 1-12 who participate in a 21st CCLC program for 90 hours or more and who had in-school suspensions in the previous year will reduce the number of in-school suspensions in the current year.

Results = 67% Summer, 70% School year—Objective Met for School Year

21APR: Student-level in-school suspension (ISS) data is reported in the 21APR for schools served by 21st CCLC sites that issue ISS. Seventy-six centers reported ISS use in the schools they served in both the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years, while 42 centers did not use ISS in either school year (8 centers reported ISS use in one school year but not the other). For Summer 2023, the state reported that 27 students had two years of ISS data and for the 2023-2024 regular school year, 97 students had two years of ISS data (**Table 15**). A total of 85% of students in the summer program showed growth by reducing the number of suspensions from the previous year and 82% of students in the regular school year program showed growth. Among students who attended 21st CCLC programs for 90 hours or more, 67% during the summer and 70% during the regular school year had fewer in-school suspensions in the 2023-2024 school year.

Table 15. In-School Suspension 21APR Data (Grades 1-12)

Summer 2023	Students with two years of data*	No. of Students Showing Growth	% of Students Showing Growth
Less than 15 Hours	5	5	100%
15 to 44 Hours	8	7	88%
45 to 89 Hours	11	9	82%
90 to 179 Hours	3	2	67%
180 to 269 Hours	0	0	0%
More than 270 Hours	0	0	0%
All students	27	23	85%
90 hours or more	3	2	67%
State Objective			At least 70%
Regular School Year			
Less than 15 Hours	33	27	82%
15 to 44 Hours	28	25	89%
45 to 89 Hours	13	12	92%
90 to 179 Hours	15	10	67%
180 to 269 Hours	7	5	71%
More than 270 Hours	1	1	100%
All students	97	80	82%
90 hours or more	23	16	70%
State Objective	12,347	1,966	At least 70%

*Students with two years of data for comparison (2022-2023 and 2023-2024)

Objective 5 – Student Engagement in Learning

Federal Requirement: Percentage of students in grades 1-5 participating in 21st CCLC programs during the school year and summer who demonstrated improvement in teacher-reported engagement in learning.

State-defined Objective: At least 90% of students in grades 1-5 who participate in a 21st CCLC program for 90 hours or more during the school year and summer will show improvement in engagement in learning, as reported by their school-day teachers during the school year or by 21st CCLC program staff in the summer.

Results = 97% both Summer and School year—Objective Met

21APR: Grantees are required to survey regular school-day teachers in grades 1-5 during the school year about their 21st CCLC students and enter the results into the 21APR system. Teachers complete a survey for each 21st CCLC student, assessing the student's

level of engagement in learning during the regular school day. Surveys for summer programs are completed by 21st CCLC program staff.

For the 2023-2024 summer and regular school year, teachers reported that almost all (98% and 96%, respectively) of 21st CCLC students in grades 1-5 demonstrated an improvement in *at least one* behavior indicator as determined by the Student Engagement Survey. For students who attended 90 hours or more, 97% in both the summer and regular school year showed improvement. (**Table 16**).

Table 16. Student Engagement 21APR Data (Grades 1-5)

Summer 2023	Students with two years of data*	No. of Students Showing Growth	% of Students Showing Growth
Less than 15 Hours	343	332	97%
15 to 44 Hours	779	762	98%
45 to 89 Hours	878	868	99%
90 to 179 Hours	386	374	97%
180 to 269 Hours	119	113	95%
More than 270 Hours	75	74	99%
All students	2,580	2,523	98%
90 hours or more	580	561	97%
State Objective			At least 70%
Regular School Year			
Less than 15 Hours	909	862	95%
15 to 44 Hours	976	940	96%
45 to 89 Hours	1,188	1,144	96%
90 to 179 Hours	1,503	1,450	96%
180 to 269 Hours	884	859	97%
More than 270 Hours	767	749	98%
All students	6,227	6,004	96%
90 hours or more	3,154	3,058	97%
State Objective			At least 70%

*Students with two years of data for comparison (2022-2023 and 2023-2024)

Increase Family Engagement

21APR: Data entered by grantees in the 21APR showed an increase in family engagement from the 2022-2023 to 2023-2024. For the 2023-2024 school year, grantees reported a total of 351 family members who attended 21st CCLC programs during the summer of 2023, which was a 48% increase from the previous summer ($N = 237$). For the regular school year, grantees reported that 2,527 family members were in attendance, a

24% increase over the number served the previous school year ($N = 2,032$). While centers may be engaging more families, the increase could also be a result of improved data entry by the centers.

ALERT: Grantees were asked questions about the program outcomes for the **family engagement objective** in the ALERT to provide VDOE specific feedback on this objective. Almost half of centers who responded to this question (43%) reported meeting or exceeding the objective, while over half (55%) were progressing toward their objective, and only 2% felt they made no progress towards meeting the objective (**Table 17**).

Table 17. Family Engagement Outcome

The program's outcome for family engagement.	Number	Percentage
Met or exceeded objective	54	43%
No progress made on objective	3	2%
Progressing toward objective	70	55%
TOTAL	127	100%

Grantees were also asked to rate the degree of challenge they experienced with parent participation at their centers. Over half of centers who responded (51%) reported that it was *somewhat of a challenge*, 25% described it as a *major challenge*, while about one-quarter (24%) indicated that parent participation was *not a challenge* (**Table 18**). Overall, parent participation continues to present some challenges for most centers.

Table 18. Parent Participation

	Not a challenge	Somewhat of a challenge	Major challenge	Responses
Parent participation	24%	51%	25%	127

21st CCLC Promising Practices

Grantees reported many different promising practices in the ALERT that were effective in helping them meet their objectives. The most frequently mentioned practices are presented by question and organized by theme below.

1) What activities or promising practices proved to be most effective in helping to meet the site's objective for improving student academic achievement in reading?

The most common promising practices reported by grantees as being effective fell into four categories: **academic and reading enrichment**, **targeted interventions** for individual students, **incentives/reinforcement experiences**, and **partnerships**.

Academic and reading enrichment included reading-related games and activities, hands-on opportunities where a student gets to apply their learning such as reading instructions for cooking, creative writing workshops, and independent reading time with books of students' choice.

Targeted interventions included following individual education plans (IEPs) for students with specific needs, providing small group instruction for reading, offering tutoring and homework help, and conducting RTI and data meetings to determine next steps for students.

Incentives and reinforcement experiences encouraged reading through extracurricular activities tied to reading goals, certificates, opportunities to publish student writing, and access to engaging online reading games.

Partnerships that helped sites meet their reading goals included family engagement done by involving students' homes in their learning and inviting parents and guardians to events, communication with regular school day teachers to be updated on students' progress and areas of need, having an on-site reading specialist, and community vendors.

2) What activities or promising practices proved to be most effective in helping to meet the site's objective for improving student academic achievement in math?

The sites reported meeting their objective for achievement in math through **applied learning**, **targeted interventions**, **technology integration**, and **partnerships**.

Strategies used to help students engage in **applied learning** included games and activities where students used math skills, worksheets, and fun individual and group projects that required math to be used.

Targeted interventions included individual education plans, 504 plans, holding RTI and data meetings to address each student's areas of need, providing small group as well as one on one instruction, offering tutoring and homework help, and using the program Project Learn.

Technology integration through programs such as BrainPOP, DreamBox, iReady, Imagine, Edmentum, IXL, Kahoot!, Mango Math, Study Island, Zearn, ReFlex and ReFrax, and other educational software were used to help students with math.

Partnerships that proved beneficial to this objective were communication with regular school day teachers, community vendors, having an on-site Math specialist, and engaging the families in children's math learning by sending activities home and inviting them to come to events.

3) What activities or promising practices proved to be most effective in helping to meet the site's objective for improving participants' grade point average?

Programs met their grade point average achievement goals through strategies such as **targeted intervention**, **academic enrichment**, conducting **assessments**, and **applied learning**.

Targeted intervention was provided to participants through small group and individual tutoring assistance, time to complete missing assignments, individual education plans, 504 plans, helping students create academic goals for themselves, and remediation opportunities.

Academic enrichment was provided to the participants through the use of tutoring and homework help for all students, games involving standards of learning, and utilizing the program Project Learn.

The strategies for conducting **assessments** included communicating with regular school day teachers about individual students' needs, scheduled grade monitoring, and maintaining homework logs.

Applied learning opportunities included academic games and activities, college trips, project-based apprenticeships, classes for learning study skills, hands-on activities, and field experiences such as visiting parks, zoos, planetariums, and museums.

4) What activities or promising practices proved to be most effective in helping to meet the site's objective for improving participants' school day attendance?

The sites improved their participants' school day attendance through strategies such as **incentives/reinforcement experiences, social-emotional learning (SEL)/student support, communication, and assessments.**

The **rewards** for attendance included opportunities to be in high-interest enrichment activities, field trips, surprise incentives that could only be earned if students were present, recognition and certificates for good attendance, and pizza as well as other food parties if students met certain attendance goals.

SEL/student support was provided through building a positive environment for the students, promoting positive relationships among students, teachers, and staff; explicitly teaching social-emotional skills, providing academic support, free afterschool care for students, mentorship and peer support programs, and success coaching.

Communication was fostered through contacting families via phone, email, and text, calling absent students, conducting home visits if calls were unanswered, providing students and families with information on the importance of attendance, and having an attendance specialist.

Assessments that helped improve attendance mainly involved two strategies: asking students for their interest areas to develop programs accordingly so students are motivated to come to school and monitoring student attendance to make decisions based on the data.

5) What activities or promising practices proved to be most effective in helping to meet the site's objective for decreasing the number of in-school suspensions for participants?

The objective for reducing in-school suspensions was met by the programs through **SEL/student support, incentives/reinforcement experiences, evidence-based practices, and communication.**

SEL/student support included encouraging social emotional learning, building positive relationships among students, teachers, and staff, providing students with

leadership and team-building activities, offering counseling services, creating a safe space for students, and incorporating restorative justice practices.

Incentives/reinforcement experiences for good behavior included being able to participate in engaging high-interest activities, going on field trips, as well as awarding certificates and other recognitions. Athletics was also a helpful rewarding strategy for students, especially to help get aggression out in constructive ways.

Evidence-based practices that were utilized included Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies, SMART Moves prevention program, RULER Yale program, Build Assets Reduce Risk design, Red Slip behavior management program, and the use of behavior forms and behavior plans.

Communication strategies that were utilized by programs included contacting and engaging parents and families, talking to students about expected behaviors and the consequences of their actions, and discussing with them why good behavior is important.

6) What activities or promising practices proved to be most effective in helping to meet the site's objective for providing family engagement?

Programs successfully met their family engagement goals through three core strategies: enrichment activities, **targeted** educational activities, **and** consistent communication.

Enrichment activities promoted family bonding and included cooking classes, field trips, health/fitness events, and a variety of hands-on STEM experiences (e.g., hot air balloons, puppet mechanics, fast fashion). STEM activities were especially popular. Parent education sessions paired with family field trips were reported to have the highest participation rates. These pre- and/or post-trip sessions addressed topics like truancy, technology use, self-esteem, bullying, and middle school transitions.

Targeted educational activities for family engagement ranked high in popularity and impact. These included family literacy events, take-home projects, and workshops facilitated by community partners. Topics covered safety, substance abuse prevention, emotional regulation, resilience, career education, and science. Math and literacy nights provided parents with tools to support student learning at home.

Lastly, strong **communication** practices were key to engaging families. Programs distributed annual event calendars, flyers, emails, and texts with reminders and at least one reported providing a section in their initial application for parents to sign up for classes/activities. Several grantees regularly gathered parent input to assess interests and quite a few mentioned offering meals, particularly dinner as an incentive to attend. By keeping activities engaging and accessible, grantee sites made it easier for families to participate, increasing family interest and attendance.

7) What activities or promising practices proved to be most effective in helping to meet the site's goal for providing enrichment opportunities?

The top three promising practices that helped programs in meeting their enrichment objectives included **community partnerships**, a large **variety** of engaging activities, and student **choice of activities**.

Enrichment opportunities were made impactful by utilizing **community partnerships**, parent and family involvement, and the support of teachers and staff. Activities were offered *at least* one day each week (ideally 3-4 times per week) and rotated each month, allowing students the opportunity to experience a **wide range of quality learning environments** conducive to all learners. The range of activities included was a key component of success, with subjects such as art, healthy habits, sports, reader's theater, STEM, social emotional growth, music, etc. Many clubs were also offered, with examples such as cooking club, game club, running club, and a gardening club. A large component of these activities was rooted in cultural and diversity programs, enhancing cultural awareness, sensitivity, and providing a broader understanding of the world.

Activities such as those offered above align well with educational goals and enhance academic performance and personal development, contributing to the overall growth and preparedness of students. When students ask why they must learn a specific concept in school, it helps to facilitate students being able to locate how it fits and identify its use in their world. To add variety to the regular school schedule, Mondays through Wednesday's students participated in both academics *and* enrichment activities.

Additionally, students were given the opportunity to **choose** which activities and clubs they wished to participate in to better tailor engagement to individual student interests and needs.

8) What activities or promising practices proved to be most effective in helping to meet the site's objective for improving participants' engagement in learning during the school day?

Enrichment options, communication practices, and a **focus on student well-being** were credited as the most frequently reported promising practices for participant's engagement. Engagement was improved in both academic areas and hands-on activities and clubs due to these practices. Remediation and **enrichment** activities were stated to be academically sound and grounded in evidence-based practices but, by intentionally incorporating fun and play, students developed greater self-efficacy. This, in turn, increased their confidence to collaborate, participate, and be more present during the school day. Incentives for positive behavior, completed work, and acts of kindness further empowered students to make healthy choices that enriched the overall learning environment.

Regular **communication** and reinforcement of consistent expectations, along with student surveys, provided opportunities for feedback and continuous improvement. This approach fostered strong relationships and promoted a “team effort” mindset among students and staff. Establishing clear and ongoing communication between regular day teachers, afterschool staff, students, and families proved to be a highly effective practice. Most importantly, the program offered students numerous opportunities to see themselves and their families reflected in the content and activities. Mentors, tutors, and teachers created meaningful and relevant experiences (**enrichment**) that connected with students' lives outside of school, helping to engage all learners in a more personal and impactful way.

Student well-being was addressed through emphasizing a positive and supportive environment and building positive relationships, as well as providing social emotional learning. Some programs mentioned teambuilding lessons or building students' internal and external assets, while others used specific social emotional learning curricula. Meeting one-on-one with students as needed was also reported as enhancing student well-being.

9) What activities or promising practices proved to be most effective in helping to meet the site's goal for improving community partnerships?

A strong variety and prioritization of **communication** and **increased accessibility**, as well as a strong variety of **meaningful engagement opportunities** and **customized programming** were prominent in the most frequently reported promising practices for meeting the community partnership goals. Programs emphasized that successful community partnerships were grounded in trust, open communication, shared objectives, and mutual benefit. By implementing these strategies, organizations were able to strengthen their relationships with community stakeholders, effectively combine resources, and make positive contributions that benefited both the program and the broader community.

Communication was used consistently and in multiple formats to ensure wide-reaching engagement and to clarify both needs and expectations. This intentional communication, combined with time-bound deliverables, helped to reinforce accountability and build trust with partners. Examples included monthly newsletters, shared calendars, emails, phone calls, texts, printed fliers, in-person meetings, and announcements at events. The program also prioritized strong internal practices, such as welcoming communication before collaboration began to establish rapport, understand partner goals, and ensure alignment. Regular "check-ins" with partners were vital for maintaining awareness of any developments, needs, or changes. To improve **accessibility**, the program expanded online options for participation in meetings and

after-school activities, provided ESL services, hosted in-person engagement opportunities, and conducted purposeful outreach. These efforts in communication and accessibility directly supported the creation of targeted and **customized programming**, donations, specialized training, and the strengthening of existing partnerships.

Engagement opportunities further contributed to the program's success by encouraging active involvement from community partners. These partnerships were most successful during events, field trips, interactive activities, and mentor-peer relationships, which fostered connection and collaboration. Promoting upcoming partner-led activities through social media, announcements, and fliers helped build excitement and anticipation among students and families, leading to higher levels of participation and deeper engagement.

10) What activities or promising practices proved to be most effective in helping to meet the site's goal for improving tutoring/homework help opportunities?

The most frequently reported promising practices for meeting the tutoring and homework support goals were rooted in **strong partnerships, flexible but consistent tutoring frequency, targeted instruction, and incentives/reinforcement experiences**. Effective tutoring and homework help involved personalized approaches that addressed individual student needs, encouraged peer-to-peer learning, implemented subject-specific interventions (**targeted instruction**), and incorporated technology when appropriate. These practices helped educational programs support student learning more effectively, improve academic outcomes, and create a positive environment that fostered success. Among the most beneficial **partnerships** were those involving hired tutors, engaged parents and families, peer tutoring, volunteer support, and most notably, the involvement of regular day teachers who could provide continuity and context for the academic support offered after school.

Tutoring sessions **varied in frequency** to meet diverse student needs, with options ranging from daily support to multiple sessions per week, or a **consistent** weekly

schedule. To ensure that every student had access to help when needed, tutoring and homework assistance were embedded into the daily routine from Monday through Thursday, allowing time for extra academic support or the completion of missed assignments. These intentional structures ensured that no student was left without an opportunity to catch up or reinforce their learning.

Incentives/reinforcement experiences played a key role in maintaining student motivation and engagement. These included enrichment games, structured homework breaks, recognition of student achievements, incentives for progress, and hands-on, interactive activities that made learning more enjoyable. By blending academic support with elements of fun and positive reinforcement, the program created a dynamic and supportive environment that significantly improved student participation and progress toward academic goals.

11) What activities or promising practices proved to be most effective in helping to meet the site’s “Other” objective?

Reported practices identified as effective for “Other” objectives differed by the type of objective with some commonalities across goal-directed practices and included **SEL/student support, tutoring, enrichment programs**, and **career planning** as frequent themes. “Other” promising practices reported by grantees tended to align strongly with the previous objectives. For example, several grantees reported their own site objectives for the federal GPRA measures, such as improvement in reading and math scores and a decrease in in-school suspensions. Some of these objectives were focused on achievement scores other than the SOL scores covered in GPRA #1, like the DIBELS reading assessment.

Objectives other than those similar to GPRA measures included participation in college tour or virtual job shadowing, completion of future planning portfolio/college readiness plan, increase in scores on a STEM assessment (pre-post site assessment or state assessment), meeting benchmarks of PALS assessment, improved grades in core

content areas for students in grades K-5 and for those with disabilities (grades 6-8), increase in on-time graduation progress, earning remediation credits, participation rates in fine arts/cultural activities, participation in health programs and increase in positive health/wellness behaviors and knowledge, meeting personal fitness goals, growth in social emotional learning (SEL) competencies, demonstrating improved behaviors, proportion indicating satisfaction with the program, improving writing and speaking skills, .

Strategies incorporating **SEL** and **student support** proved highly effective in meeting many of the “Other” objectives by fostering positive school behaviors, emotional regulation, and strong relationships among students, staff, and families. Grantees mentioned specific programs by name, such as “Igniting Spark” and frameworks like “Advancing Youth Development,” that focused on building developmental assets, improving students’ social-emotional competencies, and creating inclusive, supportive environments. These efforts resulted in notable decreases in disciplinary referrals and in-school suspensions, especially when paired with consistent staff-student relationships, SEL training, and parent-teacher collaboration.

Tutoring was another powerful lever for achieving academic growth objectives, particularly in literacy, math, and science. Small-group, targeted instruction helped students to receive personalized support aligned with their unique learning needs. When tutoring was coupled with regular progress monitoring and integration with school-day content, students demonstrated measurable improvements in reading benchmarks, writing assessments, and core content grades.

Enrichment Programs significantly enhanced student engagement and learning by offering hands-on, cross-curricular activities that extended beyond the traditional classroom. Programs incorporating STEM projects, theater, music, art, and culturally responsive content created dynamic, motivating spaces for skill development.

Finally, **Career Planning** activities helped students connect learning to long-term goals and future opportunities. These experiences were especially impactful for students from under-resourced communities, who often lack access to structured college and

career guidance. Together, these four strategies effectively addressed both academic and developmental objectives, helping students thrive across multiple domains.

Conclusions

Overall conclusions are presented below by evaluation question.

What is the nature of the Virginia 21st CCLC grant program and level of participation by students?

The Virginia 21st CCLC grant program provides extended learning opportunities during the summer and regular school year, with a strong focus on academic enrichment. In 2023–2024, the program served over 5,500 students in the summer and nearly 16,000 during the regular school year, with substantial participation from economically disadvantaged and underrepresented minority students—key populations the program is designed to support (**Table 19**).

Table 19. Overview of 2023–2024 Virginia 21st CCLC Programs

Category	Summer 2023	Regular School Year (2023–2024)
School Types	89 Elementary/Primary 41 Middle/Intermediate 7 K-8/K-12 18 High Schools	
Students Served	5,548 (20% of eligible participants)	15,903 (58% of eligible participants)
Attended ≥90 Hours	20%	37%
Economically Disadvantaged (ED)	69%	43%
Underrepresented Minority (URM)	55%	58%
Participating Family Members	585 at 56 centers	3,982 at 127 centers
Hours of Activities Offered	27,000+ hours	111,000+ hours
Most Common Activity Type	Academic Enrichment	Academic Enrichment
% of Paid Staff	96%	98%

To what degree did centers meet state-defined standardized objectives?

The state-defined, standardized objectives are applied to students who are considered substantially served—those who attend 21st CCLC programs for at least 90 hours. Overall, Virginia 21st CCLC demonstrated positive impact, particularly in student engagement—Objective 5: 97% of students who attended 90 hours or more demonstrated

growth in engagement in learning during both the summer and regular school year, surpassing the 90% target. Similarly, programs met the state target for math achievement in the summer (70%) and behavior during the regular school year (70%). However, centers as a whole did not meet all the state defined objectives. These results are summarized in **Table 20**, with objectives that met or exceeded the target shown in **orange**.

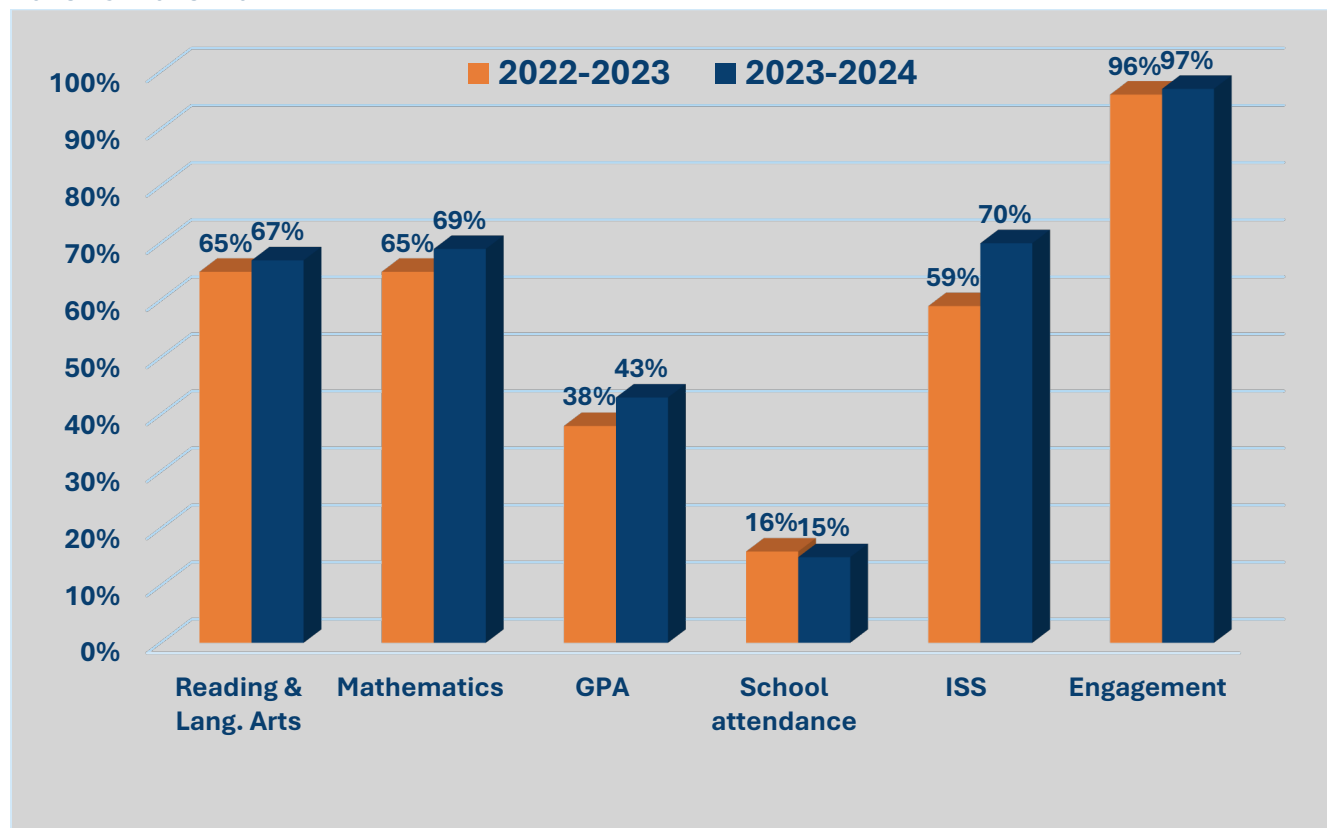
Table 20. Objective-Specific Results for Students Attending More than 90 Hours

Objective	Target	Summer	Regular School Year
1.a. Students in grades 4-8 will achieve a passing score or show growth on the English Language Arts (ELA) assessment.	≥ 70%	69%	67%
1.b. Students in grades 4-8 will achieve a passing score or show growth on the mathematics Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment.	≥ 70%	70%	69%
2. Students in grades 7-8 and 10-12 who had a prior-year unweighted GPA below 3.0, will show at least a 10% increase in their cumulative GPA from the previous year.	≥ 70%	57%	43%
3. Students in grades 1-12 who had a prior-year attendance rate at or below 90% will show improved attendance in the current school year.	≥ 70%	N/A	16%
4. Students in grades 1-12 who had in-school suspensions in the previous year will reduce the number of in-school suspensions in the current year.	≥ 70%	67%	70%
5. Students in grades 1-5 will show improvement in engagement in learning, as reported by their school-day teachers.	≥ 90%	97%	97%

When comparing results from 2022–2023 to this year’s results (2023–2024), student outcomes improved across most state-defined objectives. Gains were observed in Reading and Language Arts (65% to 67%), Mathematics (65% to 69%), Grade Point Average (38% to 43%), and In-School Suspension reduction (59% to 70%). Student engagement

remained consistently high, increasing slightly from 96% to 97%. The only area showing a slight decline was school-day attendance, which dropped from 16% to 15% (**Figure 2**).

Figure 2: Comparison of Student Outcomes Across State-Defined Objectives: 2022–2023 vs. 2023–2024



What “promising practices” were identified to help centers meet their required goals?

Grantee comments about promising practices across the ten focus areas (reading/language arts, math, grade point average, school day attendance, in-school suspensions, family engagement, enrichment opportunities, engagement in learning, community partnerships, and tutoring/homework help opportunities) revealed key themes identified across objectives:

- **Targeted academic interventions** (e.g., tutoring, Response to Intervention (RTI) meetings, Individualized Education Program (IEP/504 alignment) were widely cited as effective for improving reading, math, GPA, and homework completion.

- **Enrichment learning experiences**, such as academic games, project-based and applied learning, as well as hands-on activities, enhanced student engagement and understanding, particularly when aligned with academic standards.
- **Technology tools and educational software** (e.g., iReady, DreamBox, Kahoot!) supported differentiated instruction and student achievement in math and reading.
- **Incentives and reinforcement systems** (e.g., certificates, field trips, enrichment access) positively influenced attendance, behavior, and academic effort.
- **Social-emotional learning (SEL) and student supports**, including mentoring, success coaching, team-building, and restorative practices—were especially effective in reducing in-school suspensions and promoting a positive learning environment.
- **Strong partnerships** with families, school-day staff, and community organizations supported student progress, academic continuity, and holistic development.
- **Family engagement activities** that were culturally responsive, hands-on, and linked to learning objectives (e.g., STEM nights, literacy workshops) resulted in high participation and increased support at home.
- **Student voice and choice** in enrichment activities and club selection increased engagement and motivation, helping students connect learning to their interests and goals.
- **Clear and consistent communication**—both internal (with school-day teachers and staff) and external (with families and community partners)—was a recurring theme in successful sites.
- Programs that **blended academics with enrichment, SEL, and partnerships** created the most well-rounded and impactful learning environments.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this 2023-2024 evaluation, the following recommendations are provided to enhance the quality and impact of the Virginia 21st CCLC program and support continuous improvement.

Redefine Substantial Participation Thresholds

- Using stakeholder feedback, reevaluate and redefine what it means for students to be “substantially served.”
- Explore the feasibility and potential impact of lowering the threshold from 90 hours to 60 hours or more, particularly for the summer period which has a much smaller time window for programming.
- Conduct pilot tests to assess whether reduced thresholds lead to similar outcomes and maintain program quality.

Evaluate and Adjust State-Defined Goals

- Collaborate with CREP to determine if the current state-defined objectives are set too high.
- Analyze how each center performed on the objectives and use these data to establish more realistic, evidence-based percentage targets. For instance, if the majority of centers consistently achieve 50-60% on specific objectives, consider setting the target percentage within this range to better align with actual performance while still encouraging realistic progress.
- Pilot test adjusted goals to ensure they align with statewide performance trends while still promoting high expectations.

Administer the Student Perceptual Survey

- Reinstate the administration of the Student Perceptual Survey to collect direct feedback from 21st CCLC participants on their engagement, satisfaction, and perceptions of program quality.

- This survey provides centers and the state with valuable student voice data offering deeper insight into how students experience the program.
- Student perceptions can highlight strengths and uncover hidden areas for improvement—especially in areas like engagement, relationships with staff, and the perceived relevance of activities—that might not be captured through attendance or academic data alone.

References

Title IV, Part B of the ESEA, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2024).

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