

21st Century Community Learning Centers Program 2024-25 State Evaluation Report

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Pennsylvania
Department of Education

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Key Findings.....	4
Implications	5
Conclusion and Recommendations	5
Program Highlights.....	6
Participation and Program Reach	6
Student Population and Access	6
Program Design and Implementation.....	6
Academic Outcomes	7
Student Engagement and Behavior	7
Attendance and Participation Outcomes	7
Credit Recovery and Student Progression.....	8
Professional Learning and Staff Development	8
Introduction.....	9
Program Overview	9
Evaluation Approach	10
Organization of This Report.....	10
Program Design & Implementation.....	11
Program Offerings and Instructional Focus.....	11
Intervention Selection and Alignment.....	13
Student Identification, Enrollment and Needs Assessment	14
Staff Capacity: Professional Learning and Technical Assistance	15
Subgrantee-Level Professional Learning	15
State-Level Professional Learning and Technical Assistance	16
Professional Learning and Support Needs.....	17
Collaboration and School Day Integration.....	18
Student Engagement, Behavior and Attendance Strategies	18
Core Engagement and Behavior Strategies	18
Attendance-Focused Strategies	19
Creative and Innovative Approaches to Engagement.....	19

Program Structure and Operations	20
Summer 2024 Operations	20
2024-25 School Year Operations	21
Staffing and Student-Teacher Ratios	22
Transportation and Access	22
Student Participation and Characteristics	24
Subgrantee and Program Context	24
Overall Participation	26
Student Characteristics.....	27
Grade Levels Served	28
Participation Intensity and Patterns	30
Overall Participation Intensity.....	30
Participation Intensity by Cohort.....	30
Participation Intensity by Grade Level	30
Participation Performance and Challenges	31
Actual Participation Relative to Proposed Targets	31
Average Daily Attendance (ADA).....	32
Recruitment and Attendance Challenges and Strategies	33
Student Outcomes	34
Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Outcomes	34
GPRA Indicators and Measures.....	34
Summary of GPRA Results.....	35
Standardized Academic Outcomes.....	36
State Assessment Performance.....	36
State Assessment Results by Participation Level.....	37
State Assessment Results by Program Term.....	38
State Assessment Score Levels.....	38
Score Distribution by Participation Level	39
State Assessment Scores by Program Cohort	40
School-Based Academic Outcomes.....	41
Student GPA Outcomes.....	41
GPA Outcomes by Participation Level	41
GPA Outcomes by Cohort and by Program Term	42

GPA Completion Rates	43
Teacher-Reported Academic Performance	43
Comparison of Academic Outcome Measures	44
Summary of Academic Outcomes	45
Student Engagement, Behavior, and School-Day Outcomes	45
21 st CCLC Teacher Survey Overview.....	45
Teacher Survey Student Engagement and Behavior Findings	46
Impact of Participation on Teacher Survey Outcomes.....	47
School Behavior and Discipline.....	48
School-Day Attendance	48
Promotion and Graduation	49
High School Credit/Course Recovery.....	50
Summary of Student Engagement, Behavior, and School-Day Outcomes	51
Reflections, Implications, and Recommendations	52
Considerations for the State Team	52
Considerations for Subgrantees	53
Appendix A: Data Sources and Measures.....	56
21 Annual Performance Report (21APR).....	56
State Data Collection	56
Other Data Sources	56
Appendix B: Detailed Evaluation Methodology	57
Appendix C: 21st CCLC 2024-25 Webinars	58
Appendix D: 21st CCLC Students Served by Program Hour Bands and Cohort.....	59
Appendix E: Teacher Survey Responses by Program Hour Bands (Grades 1-5).....	60
Appendix F: Teacher Survey Indicator Outcomes (Grades 1-5)	61
Appendix G: School Day Attendance Results by Total 21st CCLC Program Attendance (For Students Who Needed to Improve)	62

Executive Summary

The Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program provides federal funding to support academic enrichment, youth development, and family engagement opportunities for students attending high-poverty, low-performing schools during non-school hours. These programs are designed to help students meet academic standards while offering safe, engaging environments that extend learning beyond the school day.

During the 2024–25 program year (summer 2024 and the 2024–25 school year), Pennsylvania funded 129 subgrantees across three cohorts, operating 381 centers statewide. Subgrantees included schools and school districts (46 percent), community-based and nonprofit organizations (43 percent), intermediate units (6 percent), and higher education institutions (5 percent). Programs primarily served elementary-grade students and offered a wide range of services, with strong emphasis on STEM, literacy, academic enrichment, and healthy lifestyle activities. Family engagement remained a core component, with 8,907 adult participants served.

Subgrantees served 25,938 students (about 1.4 percent of Pennsylvania’s public school enrollment) exceeding projected enrollment by 14 percent. However, overall participation declined compared to the prior year, and participation remained concentrated among elementary-grade students, with lower engagement among middle and high school youth.

Key Findings

Evaluation findings demonstrate consistent and meaningful relationships between program participation and student outcomes:

- **Academic Outcomes:** Students demonstrated improvement in both reading and math, with 18 percent of students needing improvement showing gains in each subject area. Higher levels of participation were associated with stronger academic performance, including higher rates of proficiency and GPA improvement.
- **Student Engagement and Behavior:** Teachers reported improvements across multiple indicators, including homework completion, class participation, academic performance, and overall engagement. Among students with prior in-school suspensions, 88 percent reduced suspensions during the program year.
- **School-Day Attendance and Progression:** Sixty-seven percent of students with prior attendance challenges improved their school-day attendance, and nearly all students (99 percent) were promoted to the next grade level. Credit recovery programs, while serving a smaller group of students, also demonstrated strong success rates.
- **Participation Patterns Matter:** Across outcome areas, students with higher levels of program attendance consistently demonstrated stronger outcomes, reinforcing the importance of sustained engagement.

Implications

While findings highlight the program's positive impact—particularly for regularly attending students—they also point to several areas for improvement. These include declining overall participation, variation in program intensity across sites, barriers to access such as transportation, and lower engagement among older students. Additionally, the availability of targeted supports for specific student populations varies across subgrantees, which may influence program effectiveness.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Pennsylvania's 21st CCLC programs continue to provide valuable academic and enrichment opportunities that support student success. To build on these strengths and enhance program impact, key recommendations moving forward include:

- Strengthening strategies to improve student retention and sustained participation;
- Expanding access by addressing structural barriers such as transportation and scheduling;
- Increasing engagement among middle and high school students;
- Enhancing the use of data to inform program improvement and decision-making;
- Strengthening supports for diverse and high-need student populations; and
- Aligning state performance measures and benchmarks with federal requirements.

By focusing on these priorities, Pennsylvania can further strengthen the effectiveness, consistency, and reach of its 21st CCLC programs and ensure continued positive outcomes for students and families.

Program Highlights

This section of the report presents program highlights that showcase the success and progress of Pennsylvania's 21st CCLC programs during the 2024-25 program year. Program areas for improvement are addressed in the [Reflections, Implications, and Recommendations](#) section at the end of this report.

Participation and Program Reach

- Nearly 26,000 students benefited from structured, safe, and educational after-school programming. Subgrantees served 25,938 students during the summer 2024 and school year 2024-25 program year, representing approximately 1.4 percent of Pennsylvania's K-12 public school population (1.7 million students).
- Participation declined slightly compared to the prior program year, reflecting ongoing challenges in recruitment and retention following pandemic-era enrollment peaks.
- Participation was concentrated in elementary grades, with lower levels of participation among middle and high school students.

Student Population and Access

- The program continued to serve a high-need population. Seventy-two percent of participating students were identified as economically disadvantaged, and programs served a higher proportion of students of color compared to statewide enrollment.
- Programs engaged 8,907 adult family members of participating students, extending program benefits beyond students to their families.
- Programs reflected diverse geographic contexts. Among subgrantees, 54 percent classified their context as urban, 27 percent as rural, 4 percent as suburban, and 15 percent as a combination of these settings.

Program Design and Implementation

- The majority of subgrantees prioritized STEM and literacy programming, with 90 percent providing both as part of their 2024-25 programs. Daily academic enrichment was a core program component with 77 percent of subgrantees implementing daily literacy-related activities and 72 percent implementing daily math activities.
- Strong partnerships with schools supported student success. Nearly all grantees maintained ongoing communication with school administrators (98 percent) and/or classroom teachers (97 percent) and 83 percent employed school-day teachers in program roles, creating a strong link between the school day and afterschool programming.

- Program intensity and structure varied across sites, including differences in hours of operation, program duration, and attendance patterns, which may influence student participation and outcomes.

Academic Outcomes

- Among students with data on at least one academic measure (reading/math state assessments, GPA, or teacher-reported academic performance), nearly half demonstrated improvement, with 9,721 students (48 percent) improving in at least one measure.
- Among students in grades 4-8 needing improvement, 18 percent improved in math and 18 percent improved in reading on their state assessments.
- Forty-eight percent of students who needed to improve their GPA did so. On average, their GPAs increased 35 percent, from 1.7 to 2.3. Additionally, students who attended 270 or more hours had the highest percentage of improvements compared to students in other program attendance hour bands.
- Most students maintained passing GPAs. Eighty-nine percent of students completed the 2024-25 school year with a passing GPA of at least 1.3 (C-).

Student Engagement and Behavior

- Teacher survey results reflected broad student growth. Classroom teachers consistently reported improvements across multiple areas, with large percentages of students improving on each measure, and more than half of regular attendees (who needed improvement) showing gains on all eight survey indicators:
 - 66 percent improved homework completion
 - 66 percent improved class participation,
 - 65 percent improved academic performance,
 - 63 percent increased engagement in learning,
 - 58 percent improved class attentiveness,
 - 57 percent improved motivation to learn,
 - 54 percent improved class behavior, and
 - 51 percent improved volunteering in class.

Attendance and Participation Outcomes

- Two-thirds of students who needed to improve their school attendance did so. Sixty-seven percent increased their school day attendance rates, with data indicating that greater program attendance hours had a positive impact on these rates.
- Students participated for an average of 119 program hours, with higher levels of participation associated with stronger outcomes across academic performance, attendance, and student engagement.

- Across outcome areas, higher levels of program attendance were consistently associated with stronger academic performance, improved school-day attendance, and greater gains in student engagement.

Credit Recovery and Student Progression

- High school students demonstrated measurable academic progress toward credit recovery. Four hundred and forty-six students recovered 716 credits toward graduation, including 163 literacy, 201.5 math, and 351.5 other subject area credits. Credit recovery students comprised 2 percent of total program participants.
- Nearly all students (99 percent) were promoted to the next grade level, reflecting strong overall student progression among participants.

Professional Learning and Staff Development

- Each subgrantee provided some form of professional development for their staff, the most common offerings being staff orientations (93 percent), health and safety training (81 percent), and participation in state/national afterschool conferences (79 percent).

Introduction

This report presents findings from the 2024–25 evaluation of Pennsylvania’s 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program. It examines program implementation, participation, and outcomes across subgrantees operating during summer 2024 and the 2024–25 school year. Findings are based on data reported by subgrantees and state-level systems and are intended to support continuous program improvement and inform decision-making at both the state and local levels.

Program Overview

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program provides federal funding to support out-of-school-time programs that offer academic enrichment, youth development, and family engagement opportunities¹. Programs are designed to serve students attending high-poverty, low-performing schools and to help them meet state and local academic standards through engaging, evidence-based learning experiences².

Across Pennsylvania, 21st CCLC programs provide a wide range of services, including academic support, STEM and enrichment activities, social-emotional learning, and career exploration. Programs are expected to complement—rather than replicate—the school day by offering hands-on, relevant learning opportunities that support both academic growth and overall student development. Family engagement is also a core component, with programs providing educational and enrichment opportunities for adult family members.

Subgrantees are required to align programming with academic standards, use data to inform instruction, and implement evidence-based practices. Programs are also expected to foster strong connections with school-day staff and engage students and families as active participants in the program.

Data collected in this report are aligned with Pennsylvania’s three 21st CCLC performance measures:

1. Participants in 21st CCLC programs will demonstrate educational and social benefits and exhibit positive behavioral changes,

¹ In accordance with Section 4203(a)(3) of federal law, eligible applicants for 21st CCLC funding include public and private organizations that propose to serve students attending schools eligible for schoolwide programs under Title I or schools in which at least 40 percent of students are from low-income families, along with their families. Non-school applicants are required to collaborate with local education agencies and may establish formal or informal agreements to support program implementation, coordination, and data sharing.

² Eligible participants include students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12, as well as their families. Programs are expected to prioritize students most in need of services, particularly those performing below academic proficiency or identified as at risk. Risk factors may include poor academic performance, chronic absenteeism, behavioral challenges, substance use concerns, or other indicators identified by the program.

2. Increasing percentages of students regularly³ participating in the program will meet or exceed state and local academic achievement standards in reading and math, and
3. Students participating in the program will show improvement in the performance measures of school attendance, classroom performance, and reduced disciplinary referrals.

Evaluation Approach

This evaluation includes data from 129 subgrantees across three funding cohorts operating during the 2024–25 program year. Data were drawn from multiple sources, including federal reporting systems, state data collection tools, and program-level data submissions (see [Appendix A](#)).

The evaluation examines program performance across three primary areas (see [Appendix B](#) for a detailed evaluation methodology):

- Student academic outcomes,
- Student behavior and engagement, and
- School-day attendance and related indicators.

Together, these data provide a comprehensive view of program implementation, participation, and outcomes across the state.

Organization of This Report

The sections that follow present findings in a structured progression, beginning with program design and implementation, followed by the students served, patterns of participation, and student outcomes. The report concludes with key findings and recommendations to support ongoing program improvement.

³ Beginning with 2021-22, the concept of regular attendees is no longer used for the federal GPRA measures. This objective may be revisited and updated.

Program Design & Implementation

Pennsylvania's 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) programs are designed within a flexible framework that allows subgrantees to tailor services to the needs of their local communities while meeting federal and state requirements. This section examines how programs are structured, the types of services offered, and the strategies used to support student learning, engagement, and overall program quality.

Program Offerings and Instructional Focus

Pennsylvania's 21st CCLC program guidance includes 14 allowable activity categories (see Table 1), providing a broad framework for academic support, enrichment, and targeted services. These categories are designed to ensure that subgrantees can address a wide range of student and family needs while maintaining a focus on academic achievement and youth development.

Table 1. 21st CCLC Allowable Activity Categories

Activity Categories	Description of Activity
Academic Enrichment	Activity that provides direct support for academic achievement and helps students meet State academic standards.
Activities for English Learners	Activity that provides direct support to students classified as English language learners.
Assistance to Students who have been Truant, Suspended, or Expelled	Activity that promotes school attendance and/or improved student behavior.
Career Competencies and Career Readiness	Activity that prepares students to enroll and succeed in a credit bearing course at a post-secondary institution or a high-quality certificate program with a career pathway to future advancement.
Cultural Programs	Activity that fosters inclusion and awareness about cultural diversity and helps prepare students to thrive in an increasingly diverse world.
Drug and Violence Prevention and Counseling	Activity that provides information about alcohol or other drug use prevention; promotes peaceful conflict resolution; and/or provides socio-emotional counseling services.
Expanded Library Service Hours	Activity that utilizes expanded library services and hours.
Healthy and Active Lifestyle	Activity that engages students in a physical activity and develops an appreciation of health and nutrition.
Literacy Education	Activity that contributes to the development and enjoyment of reading and writing skills.
Parenting Skills and Family Literacy	Activity that promotes parental involvement, parenting skills, and literacy at home and in the larger community.
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), including Computer Science	Activity that contributes to the development of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) skills.
Services for Individuals with Disabilities	Activity that supports the learning needs of students with disabilities.
Telecommunications and Technology Education	Activity that supports a student's understanding of how to use, evaluate, and access technologies for learning and communication.
Well-rounded Education Activities, including credit recovery or attainment	Activity that provides students with a diverse set of learning experiences across a variety of classes, activities, and programs and an enriched curriculum.

Within this framework, subgrantees reported offering a wide range of activities, with a strong emphasis on academic and enrichment programming. The most commonly offered activities included:

- STEM activities (98%)
- Academic enrichment (97%)
- Healthy and active lifestyle programming (91%)
- Literacy education (90%)

This distribution reflects a clear prioritization of core academic skill development, particularly in literacy and STEM-related areas, alongside enrichment opportunities that support student engagement and overall well-being.

Less frequently offered services included:

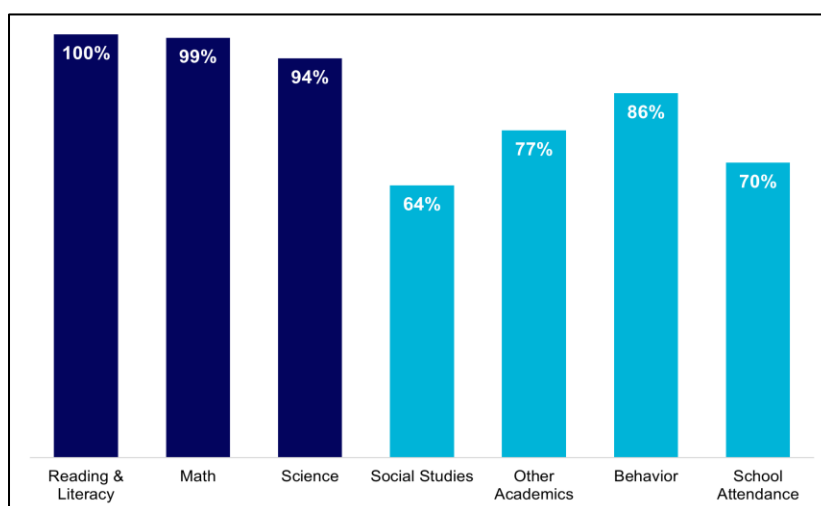
- Activities for English learners (43%)
- Drug and violence prevention and counseling (43%)
- Services for individuals with disabilities (41%)
- Assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled (24%)
- Expanded library service hours (12%)

While the range of allowable activities is broad, these findings suggest that more specialized or targeted supports are not implemented as consistently across subgrantees. This variation may influence the extent to which programs are able to fully address the needs of specific student populations.

In addition to the types of activities offered, subgrantees reported on the frequency of academic programming during a typical program week. These findings are based on responses from 124 subgrantees, representing the majority of programs operating during the 2024-25 program year.

Every subgrantee offered reading and literacy activities on a weekly basis, with nearly all providing math (99 percent) and science activities (94 percent) (see Figure 1). Reading and mathematics were also the most consistently delivered activities on a daily basis, with 83 percent of subgrantees reporting daily literacy instruction and 72 percent reporting daily math activities. Social studies and other content areas were offered less frequently.

Figure 1. Most subgrantees offered reading/literacy and math activities at least once a week.



This pattern further illustrates the program’s focus on foundational academic skills, particularly in literacy and mathematics, which aligns with program goals related to improving student academic outcomes.

Overall, 21st CCLC programs demonstrate a strong emphasis on academic enrichment, particularly in literacy, mathematics, and STEM-related areas. Programming is most consistently concentrated in core academic and enrichment areas, while more targeted services—such as supports for English learners, students with disabilities, and students with behavioral challenges—are less consistently implemented across subgrantees. This pattern highlights an opportunity to strengthen supports for diverse student populations.

Intervention Selection and Alignment

In addition to understanding what programs offer, it is important to examine how subgrantees select the tools and approaches used to deliver these services. Subgrantees reported selecting interventions and program models based on a combination of alignment with academic standards, local priorities, and prior experience with specific programs. The most commonly cited factors influencing intervention selection included:

- Alignment with Pennsylvania academic standards (81 percent),
- Prior experience with a given program (66 percent),
- Alignment with district offerings (61 percent), and
- Demonstrated success with specific student groups (59 percent).

These findings suggest that subgrantees prioritize familiarity and alignment when choosing program components, drawing on approaches that are already integrated into school-day instruction or have been effective in prior implementation.

In practice, subgrantees reported using a variety of academic and enrichment programs to support student learning, including both pre-packaged and locally developed activities.

The most commonly used program types included:

- General education virtual learning platforms (e.g., IXL, iReady),
- STEM/STEAM curricula and resources,
- Math-focused programs,
- Literacy and language arts programs, and
- Social-emotional learning (SEL) curricula .

Less commonly reported program types included those focused on college and career readiness, arts and enrichment, health and wellness, environmental education, and test preparation.

Overall, these patterns indicate that subgrantees rely on a combination of established tools and locally adapted approaches to support program delivery. While this may promote consistency and ease of implementation, it may also result in variability in how programs are adapted to meet the needs of different student populations across sites. Understanding how subgrantees identify and enroll students provides important context for how these approaches are applied in practice.

Student Identification, Enrollment and Needs Assessment

Subgrantees rely on a combination of school-based partnerships and community outreach to identify and enroll students in 21st CCLC programs. The most common methods for identifying participants included:

- Teacher or school recommendations (93%),
- Parent referrals (80%), and
- Open enrollment (77%).

In addition to general enrollment strategies, subgrantees reported actively recruiting students from priority populations, including academically at-risk students (67 percent), low-income students (65 percent), English learners (36 percent), students experiencing homelessness (25 percent), migrant students (12 percent), and refugee students (8 percent). These recruitment patterns reflect a clear focus on reaching students with the greatest academic and social needs.

In addition to identifying students for participation, subgrantees use multiple approaches to assess student needs and inform program supports. The most common methods included:

- Teacher or school input (95%),
- Parent feedback (84%),
- Observation (82%), and
- Assessment data (81%).

These findings indicate that subgrantees use a combination of formal and informal data sources to guide both enrollment and service delivery. The strong role of school staff in identifying and assessing student needs further reinforces alignment with school-day priorities.

Overall, these patterns suggest that subgrantees are intentionally targeting students with the greatest academic and social needs and using multiple sources of information to tailor program supports. This targeted approach provides important context for understanding participation patterns and outcomes presented later in the report.

Staff Capacity: Professional Learning and Technical Assistance

Effective program implementation depends not only on program design, but also on the capacity of staff to deliver high-quality programming aligned with student needs. Subgrantees reported providing a range of professional learning opportunities to support staff development, strengthen program quality, and ensure alignment with program expectations.

Subgrantee-Level Professional Learning

All subgrantees reported offering some form of professional learning opportunities to staff, either directly through the program or through their home school or organization. The most common types of professional learning included:

- Staff orientations (93 percent),
- Health and safety training (81 percent), and
- Participation in state or national afterschool conferences (79 percent)⁴.

Professional development and training sessions were delivered through a variety of providers. Most frequently, training was facilitated by:

- Subgrantee staff (90 percent),
- Conference presenters (69 percent),
- Contractors or vendors (60 percent),
- Community partners (56 percent), and
- School districts or local education agencies (47 percent).

Professional learning content and resources were most commonly shared with staff through emails (96 percent), staff meetings (96 percent), informal conversations (90 percent), and other methods to a lesser extent.

These findings indicate that subgrantees are leveraging multiple delivery methods and partnerships to support staff development, with an emphasis on accessible and ongoing communication.

⁴ In addition to locally determined offerings, subgrantees were contractually required to participate in specific professional learning and conference opportunities detailed in the following section.

State-Level Professional Learning and Technical Assistance

In addition to locally provided supports, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), in partnership with the Center for Schools and Communities, offered a range of statewide professional learning opportunities and technical assistance.

During the 2024–25 program year, state-supported professional learning was provided through four primary formats:

- Promising Practices – Proven Strategies Conference,
- Annual 21st CCLC Grantees' Meeting,
- Regional trainings, and
- Webinars offered throughout the year.

The 2025 Extra Learning Opportunities (ELO) Conference, which was held in person from February 26–28 in conjunction with PSAYDN's Empower 2025 Conference, featured six three-hour institutes, twelve 90-minute workshops, and two two-hour deep dive sessions. Topics included emerging and high-priority areas such as:

- Generative AI and chatbots,
- Engineering and STEM learning,
- Logic modeling and continuous quality improvement, and
- Student resilience and well-being.

The annual 21st CCLC Grantees' Meeting provided updates from PDE, guidance on monitoring and grant requirements, and technical assistance resources, with approximately 120 attendees.

Regional in-person trainings were held across three locations in October 2024 and focused on topics such as intentional STEAM programming and strategies for student recruitment and retention, with approximately 199 participants across sessions.

In addition, eight webinars were offered throughout the year. The most highly attended sessions focused on program requirements and grant processes, including:

- 21APR updates (246 participants),
- Cohort 10 grant closeout (142 participants), and
- Cohort 12 grant writing sessions for LEAs and non-LEAs (86–92 participants).

These state-level efforts provide consistent opportunities for subgrantees to build capacity, access technical assistance, and stay aligned with program requirements and expectations. See [Appendix C](#) for more details.

Professional Learning and Support Needs

Subgrantees also identified areas in which additional training and support would be beneficial. Approximately 56 percent of subgrantees provided substantive responses regarding professional learning needs.

Common themes included:

- **Identification, Recruitment, and Retention**
 - Strategies for recruiting and retaining students, particularly from specific populations (e.g., multilingual learners, students experiencing homelessness, rural students),
 - Approaches for maintaining student engagement and participation amid competing demands,
 - Strategies to increase family engagement and involvement, and
 - Building relationships with school and community partners.
- **Program Operations and Implementation**
 - Training for both new and returning staff,
 - Identifying engaging evidence-based and best practice strategies, activities and programs,
 - Classroom and behavior management strategies,
 - Ongoing professional development opportunities,
 - Staff motivation and retention strategies,
 - Access to program resources and instructional tools,
 - Networking and peer learning opportunities,
 - Strategies for aligning programming with academic standards,
 - Balancing academic standards with 21st CCLC goals, and
 - Training in trauma-informed care and social-emotional learning (SEL).
- **Data and Evaluation**
 - Data collection and reporting processes, including use of the 21st CCLC Dashboard and 21APR system,
 - General understanding of program evaluation processes, and
 - Strategies for using data to inform program improvement and daily operations.

Subgrantee feedback highlights a strong interest in professional learning opportunities that enhance program quality, strengthen staff capacity, and support improved student outcomes. A comprehensive system of professional learning and technical assistance is in place at both the subgrantee and state levels, with a variety of training formats and providers supporting staff development. At the same time, identified needs and variation in the depth and focus of professional learning suggest opportunities to further strengthen staff capacity and promote more consistent, high-quality implementation across programs.

Collaboration and School Day Integration

Strong collaboration between 21st CCLC programs and school-day staff was a defining feature of program implementation. Subgrantees reported maintaining consistent communication with school partners to support alignment between program activities and school-day learning.

Nearly all subgrantees maintained ongoing communication with school administrators (98%) and school-day teachers (97%), and 83% employed school-day teachers as program staff, further strengthening connections between in-school and out-of-school learning environments.

Subgrantees also reported using multiple strategies to align programming with school-day instruction, including:

- Providing academic support to students, such as tutoring or homework assistance,
- Communicating with school staff and families about student needs and goals,
- Aligning programming with school-day curricula and state standards, and
- Used data to inform programming and service delivery decisions.

These practices indicate a high level of integration between school-day and out-of-school-time programming. This alignment may support more consistent academic reinforcement and help ensure that program activities are responsive to student needs identified during the school day.

Student Engagement, Behavior and Attendance Strategies

While strong alignment with the school day provides a foundation for program relevance, subgrantees also implement a range of strategies to actively engage students, promote positive behavior, and encourage consistent participation.

Core Engagement and Behavior Strategies

Subgrantees reported using a combination of relationship-based, instructional, and behavioral strategies to support student engagement and promote positive behavior. The most commonly reported approaches included communication with parents (95 percent), communication with school staff (93 percent), and implementation of a Student Code of Conduct or discipline protocol (76 percent).

In practice, these strategies were often complemented by additional efforts to support student engagement and social-emotional development. Subgrantees reported incorporating social-emotional learning (SEL) activities and curricula, fostering supportive staff-student relationships, providing opportunities for peer interaction and teamwork, and using incentives to encourage participation and positive behavior. Many programs also offered individualized supports to address specific student needs, leadership opportunities, mentoring, trauma-informed practices, and creative approaches such as art therapy and student voice initiatives.

Together, these approaches reflect a comprehensive model that emphasizes relationship-building, clear expectations, and the development of social-emotional skills alongside academic support.

Attendance-Focused Strategies

In addition to promoting engagement and positive behavior, subgrantees reported implementing targeted strategies to support consistent attendance in both program participation and the school day. The most common approaches included communication with parents (90 percent), requiring school-day attendance for continued program participation (85 percent), and communication with school staff (85 percent).

These strategies reflect an emphasis on reinforcing expectations across settings and maintaining consistent communication with families and school partners. By linking program participation to school-day attendance and maintaining regular communication, subgrantees aim to support improved attendance habits and sustained engagement.

While most subgrantees reported incorporating attendance-related strategies into their programming, a small number indicated that improving student behavior (12 percent) or attendance (5 percent) was not a primary program focus. This variation suggests that the prioritization of attendance and behavior may differ across programs.

Creative and Innovative Approaches to Engagement

In addition to more common strategies, a large share of subgrantees (78 percent) reported implementing creative or innovative approaches to better engage students and respond to their interests and needs.

The most frequently reported approach involved identifying student needs and interests through surveys, focus groups, assessment data, and student-led activities. This student-centered approach allowed programs to tailor activities and supports in ways that were more relevant and engaging for participants.

Additional strategies included:

- Specialized academic support and tutoring initiatives,
- Hands-on STEM/STEAM enrichment projects (e.g., robotics, coding, 3D printing),
- Opportunities for creative expression (e.g., writing, music, dance, theater),
- Integration of social-emotional learning (SEL) and wellness activities,
- Partnerships with community organizations to enhance programming,
- Ongoing communication with students, families, and school staff,
- Parent engagement events and resource fairs,
- Incentive and reward systems to encourage attendance and positive behavior,
- Marketing strategies to support recruitment,
- Career readiness opportunities (e.g., resume workshops, mock interviews, guest speakers),
- Student-driven clubs based on participant interests, and
- Themed program days or weeks.

These approaches highlight efforts to make programming engaging, responsive, and relevant to students' experiences. By incorporating student voice and offering diverse, high-interest activities, programs may be better positioned to promote sustained participation and meaningful engagement.

Overall, subgrantees employ a combination of structured behavior supports, relationship-based strategies, and creative programming approaches to engage students and encourage consistent participation. These efforts reflect a recognition that student engagement is a key driver of both program attendance and outcomes. At the same time, variation in the extent to which behavior and attendance are prioritized—and in the types of strategies implemented—may contribute to differences in participation patterns across programs. These patterns are explored further in the following section on student participation.

Program Structure and Operations

While engagement strategies influence how students experience programming, operational factors such as schedule, staffing, and transportation shape the extent to which students are able to participate consistently.

Within the 21st CCLC framework, subgrantees were permitted to operate 21st CCLC programs during summer 2024, the 2024–25 school year, or both⁵, allowing flexibility to align programming with local school calendars and community needs. Program guidance required Cohorts 11 and 12 to operate a minimum of 30 weeks during the school year and provide 12–15 hours of programming per week, unless approved for an alternative schedule.

Operational data were reported through the state's 21st CCLC Dashboard and were available for 116 subgrantees.⁶ Across these subgrantees, programming was delivered at 381 centers statewide.

Summer 2024 Operations

A total of 246 centers (65 percent of all known centers) operated during summer 2024, with detailed operational data available for 214 centers. Summer programming was primarily delivered on weekdays⁷ during daytime hours.

⁵ Generally, subgrantees were required to operate during both summer and school year or school year only, depending on their contract. In some cases, a subgrantee contract ended early making them eligible to operate during a portion of the year.

⁶ Incomplete 2024–25 center operations data is due to 13 subgrantees having already begun entering 2025–26 operations data at the time of extraction, which resulted in some 2024–25 records being unavailable or incomplete.

⁷ One center operated on Saturday.

Key summer operations findings include:

- **Hours per week:** Centers operated between 12 and 45 hours, with an average of 21 hours per week; the most common schedule was 16 hours per week.
- **Days per week:** Centers operated between two and six days per week, with 96 percent operating four or five days per week.
- **Program duration:** Programs ran between one and 10 weeks per center, with 57 percent of centers (107) operating for five or more weeks.⁸

These findings indicate that summer programming was widely available and generally consistent in structure, with most centers offering multi-week, weekday programming aligned with typical summer schedules.

2024-25 School Year Operations

During the school year, programming was offered at 317 centers (83 percent of all centers), indicating a broad implementation across the state.

Key school year operations findings include:

- **Hours per week:** Centers reported between eight and 22 hours of programming per week, with an average of 12 hours per week.
- **Days per week:** Programs operated between four and six days per week, averaging four days per week.
- **Program duration:** Centers operated between seven and 41 weeks, with an average of 33 weeks.

While the minimum weekly requirement was 12 hours of programming per week, only 57 percent of centers (180) met or exceeded this threshold, indicating variability in program intensity across sites.

Overall, **80 percent of centers met the required 30-week minimum.** Nearly all Cohort 11 centers (95 percent) met this requirement, compared to 69 percent of Cohort 12 centers, reflecting expected differences in implementation timelines for newer subgrantees.

These findings suggest that while most programs met minimum operational requirements, there is variability in program intensity and duration across centers, particularly among newer subgrantees.

⁸ Among the 214 centers that reported summer programming, 189 had specific 2024-25 summer programming dates provided.

Staffing and Student-Teacher Ratios

Subgrantees reported average student-to-teacher ratios during programming.⁹ Among 117 respondents, the most common ratio was 10 students to one teacher (32 percent), followed by 12:1 (19 percent) and 15:1 (14 percent). The smallest reported ratio was four students to one teacher and the largest was 24 students to one teacher. On average, programs had a student-teacher ratio of 11 students to one teacher.

These findings indicate that most programs maintained relatively small group sizes, supporting individualized attention and effective program delivery.

Transportation and Access

Transportation approaches varied across subgrantees, reflecting differences in local context and resource availability. Among the 120 subgrantees that operated in person during the 2024–25 program year, transportation was provided through a combination of family, school, and program-based supports.

Transportation approaches can be understood in terms of both mode of access and program context.

Mode of Transportation

- 74%: Parent/caregiver-provided transportation (most common)
- 38%: School/district-provided transportation
- 19%: Public transportation use
- 34%: Students primarily within walking distance
- 19%: No transportation provided
- 8%: Transportation not needed

Program-Provided Transportation

- 43%: School year transportation
- 39%: Summer programming transportation
- 40%: Transportation for field trips or special events
- 28%: Weekday transportation provided
- 3%: Weekend transportation

These findings indicate that transportation access varies widely across programs. While many subgrantees offer transportation supports, reliance on families and local infrastructure suggests that access to programming may depend on family capacity and available community resources, which may present barriers to consistent participation, particularly for students with limited access to transportation options.

⁹ Some subgrantee responses included multiple student-to-staff ratios depending on summer- or school-operating years, grade levels, or types of programs offered.

Pennsylvania's 21st CCLC programs demonstrated flexibility in program design, scheduling, and service delivery during the 2024–25 program year. While most centers met minimum operational requirements and maintained staffing structures that support individualized instruction, variation in program hours, duration, and transportation access indicates that program intensity and accessibility differ across sites. These operational differences may influence students' ability to participate consistently and should be considered when interpreting participation patterns and student outcomes presented in later sections of this report.

Student Participation and Characteristics

The program design and implementation strategies described above shape how students access and experience 21st CCLC programming. This section examines participation patterns and the characteristics of students served during the 2024–25 program year, including summer 2024 and the 2024-25 school year.

Subgrantee and Program Context

During the 2024–25 program year, **129 subgrantees participated across three funding cohorts**. Subgrantees were primarily schools, school districts, charter schools, or career and technical centers (46 percent), as well as community-based or nonprofit organizations (43 percent) (see Figure 2). This distribution reflects a balance between school-based and community-based providers, supporting diverse program delivery models across the state¹⁰.

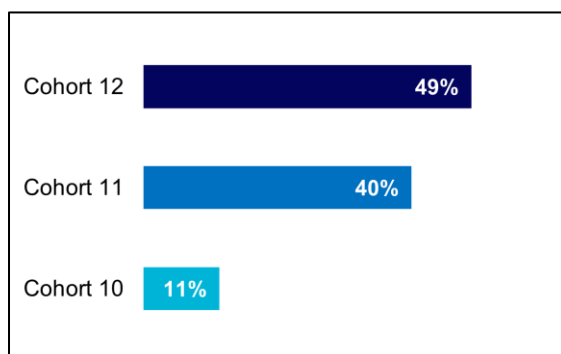
Figure 2. Almost 90 percent of PA 21st CCLC Subgrantees were Schools/Districts or Community Organizations.



Subgrantees operated programs at a total of **381 centers**, including 43 Cohort 10 centers, 152 Cohort 11 centers, and 186 Cohort 12 centers (see Figure 3). Further, subgrantees operated between one and 16 centers, with an average of three centers per subgrantee; however, most operated a single center. This indicates that while a small number of larger grantees manage multiple sites, the program is primarily composed of smaller, locally focused providers.

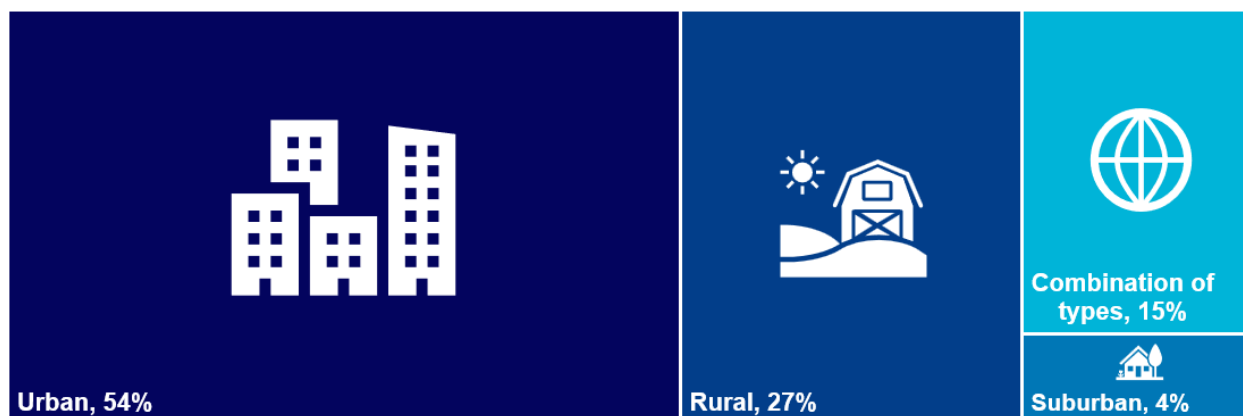
¹⁰ It is important to note that subgrantee organization type refers to the entity holding fiscal and contractual responsibility for the program; however, services were delivered across one or more program sites (centers), which may differ from the subgrantee's organizational type. For example, community-based organizations often operate programs within school facilities, while school districts may have partnered with community organizations to provide programming in non-school settings. This flexibility supports broader access and stronger community partnerships.

Figure 3. Nearly half of 21st CCLC centers were operated by Cohort 12 subgrantees.



Geographically, subgrantees operated across a range of community contexts with 54 percent (67) operating in urban areas followed by 27 percent (34) in rural areas, 4 percent (5) in suburban areas, and 15 percent (18) as a combination of these types (see Figure 4).¹¹

Figure 4. Over half of subgrantees operated in urban geographic areas.



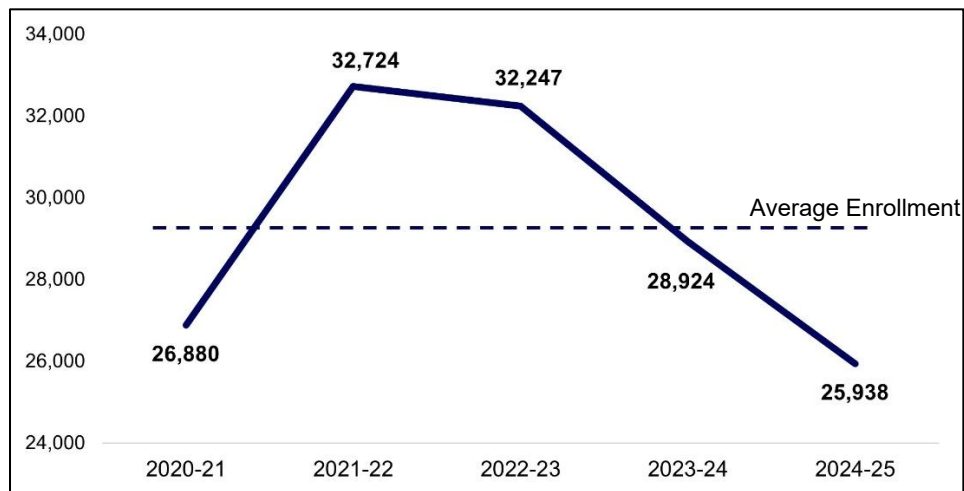
Overall, Pennsylvania's 21st CCLC subgrantees represent a diverse mix of organization types, program sizes, and geographic contexts. This diversity reflects the program's flexibility and its ability to adapt to local needs, while also requiring differentiated supports to ensure consistent program quality across settings.

¹¹ Geographic context determinations were made by each subgrantee in its annual Implementation Survey submission.

Overall Participation

Subgrantees served **25,938 students** during the 2024-25 program year, representing approximately 1.4 percent of Pennsylvania's public school population¹². This reflects a 10 percent decrease in total students served compared to the prior year (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Student enrollment has steadily decreased since the 2021-22 program year.



Participation varied widely across subgrantees, ranging from seven to 927 students per program, with an average of 204 students per subgrantee. Across cohorts, Cohort 11 served the largest share of students (50 percent), followed by Cohort 12 (46 percent) and Cohort 10 (4 percent).

The majority of participating students (81 percent) attended 21st CCLC programming during the school year only. Ten percent attended during both summer and school year terms, and 9 percent attended during the summer term only.

While most students participated in a single program, a small number (approximately 228 students) were served by more than one program due to factors such as grade progression, participation across multiple cohorts, or relocation. These duplicated instances accounted for less than two percent of total participation and had minimal impact on overall findings¹³.

¹² In 2024-25, Pennsylvania's public school enrollment was 1,742,505 students, based on PDE 2024-25 public enrollment records.

¹³ In 2024-25, approximately 228 students across 41 subgrantees were served by more than one program. As a result, the total count served that is provided above (25,938) includes 456 duplicated instances.

Student Characteristics

Student demographic data were available for 99 percent of participants¹⁴ (approximately 25,600¹⁵ students). These data help subgrantees identify and prioritize services for students most in need, particularly those from low-income and at-risk populations, and provide a comprehensive view of the populations served.

Among students with available demographic data, participation was distributed across cohorts, with 50 percent from Cohort 11, 46 percent from Cohort 12, and four percent from Cohort 10.

A substantial **majority of participants (72 percent) were identified as economically disadvantaged**, compared to 52 percent statewide (see Table 2), indicating that programs are successfully reaching low-income students.

Participant demographics also reflect strong representation among historically underserved populations. Among students:

- 39 percent identified as Black or African American,
- 33 percent as White,
- 20 percent as Hispanic or Latino, and
- 8 percent as other racial and ethnic groups.

Compared to statewide enrollment, 21st CCLC programs served a significantly higher proportion of students of color, particularly Black or African American students.

Students were nearly evenly distributed by gender (52 percent female and 48 percent male), closely mirroring statewide enrollment patterns. Additionally, 8 percent of students were identified as English learners, slightly above than the statewide rate of seven percent, and 23 percent of students were identified as having a disability, comparable to the statewide levels (20.7 percent).

These findings suggest that 21st CCLC programs are reaching a diverse population of students, including many with elevated academic and social support needs.

¹⁴ These data were obtained through the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) using PASecureIDs (a unique number assigned to each student in Pennsylvania's public school system) or reported directly by subgrantees when identifiers were unavailable.

¹⁵ This figure has been rounded to the nearest hundredth.

Table 2. 21st CCLC Participants Are More Likely to Be Economically Disadvantaged and Students of Color Compared to Statewide Enrollment, 2024–25.

Demographic	Count	Program Percentage	Statewide Percentage
Race/Ethnicity			
American Indian / Alaskan Native	56	<1%	<1%
Asian	457	2%	5%
Black or African American	10,069	39%	14%
Hispanic	5,007	20%	16%
Two or more races	1,638	6%	5%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic)	29	<1%	<1%
White	8,355	33%	59%
Economically Disadvantaged			
Yes	18,103	72%	52%
No	7,060	28%	48%
Sex			
Female	13,382	52%	49%
Male	12,251	48%	51%
English Learners (ELs)			
Yes	2,081	8%	7%
No	23,489	92%	Not available
Disability			
Yes	5,799	23%	20.7% ¹⁶
No	19,282	77%	79.3%

Grade Levels Served

Subgrantees most frequently served students in elementary grade levels, with between 58 percent and 70 percent offering programming for grades K–5 (see Table 3). Grades 3–5 had the highest levels of participation, with 68 percent to 70 percent of subgrantees serving these grade levels.

In contrast, fewer subgrantees offered programming for middle and high school students, and very limited programming was available for pre-kindergarten populations.

¹⁶ Data obtained from the [Pennsylvania Department of Education's \(PDE\) Special Education Data Reporting 2024-2025 State Report](#).

Table 3. 21st CCLC Centers Are Primarily Operated by Community-Based Organizations and School Districts and Concentrated in Elementary Grades (K–5).

Organization Type	All Subgrantees	Pre-K	K – 5 th Grade	6 th - 8 th Grade	9 th – 12 th Grade
Career and Technical Center	3	--	--	1	3
Charter School	32	--	25	16	7
Community-based Organization	166	1	89	62	28
Higher Education	12	-	10	2	1
Intermediate Unit	25	-	12	12	2
School District	143	2	82	40	14

Participation data further reflect this distribution (see Table 4). Of the 25,930 students with grade level data:

- 56 percent were in Pre-K through 5th grade,
- 21 percent were in grades 6 through 8, and
- 23 percent were in grades 9 through 12.

Table 4. Participation is concentrated in elementary grades, with peak enrollment in grades 3-5.

Grade Level	Count	Percentage
Pre-K	15	<1%
Kindergarten	1,213	5%
1 st Grade	1,915	7%
2 nd Grade	2,337	9%
3 rd Grade	3,257	13%
4 th Grade	2,800	11%
5 th Grade	2,727	11%
6 th Grade	2,425	9%
7 th Grade	1,685	6%
8 th Grade	1,544	6%
9 th Grade	1,767	7%
10 th Grade	1,703	7%
11 th Grade	1,409	5%
12 th Grade	1,121	4%
TOTAL	25,938	100%

These participation patterns closely mirror program availability, with both service provision and student enrollment concentrated in elementary grades. While programs are offered across grade levels, participation declines progressively in middle and high school grades. This trend may reflect a combination of factors, including increased competing demands for older students, differences in program design, and challenges related to sustained engagement at higher grade levels.

These patterns provide important context for understanding differences in participation intensity and outcomes across grade levels and suggest an opportunity for targeted strategies to strengthen engagement among middle and high school students.

Participation Intensity and Patterns

In addition to understanding who participates in 21st CCLC programs, it is important to examine the extent to which students engage in programming. Participation intensity—measured through total hours of attendance—varies across students and programs and is a key factor influencing program outcomes.

Overall Participation Intensity

Student attendance was grouped into six participation hour bands based on federal GPRA reporting categories. Distribution of students across these categories was relatively even, with the largest proportions in:

- 90–179 hours (20 percent),
- 15–44 hours (19 percent), and
- 45–89 hours (18 percent).

Sixteen percent of students attended less than 15 hours, 15 percent attended 180–269 hours, and 12 percent attended 270 or more hours of programming.

Across all programs, students attended an average of 119 program hours, with a median of 78 hours, indicating that the average was skewed by a small group of high-attending students.

Overall, approximately 47 percent of students attended 90 hours or more of programming, meeting the research-based threshold associated with positive student outcomes under federal guidelines. This indicates that nearly half of participants received a level of engagement considered sufficient to support meaningful impact. These findings indicate that while participation is broadly distributed, just under half of students meet the attendance threshold considered sufficient to support meaningful program impact.

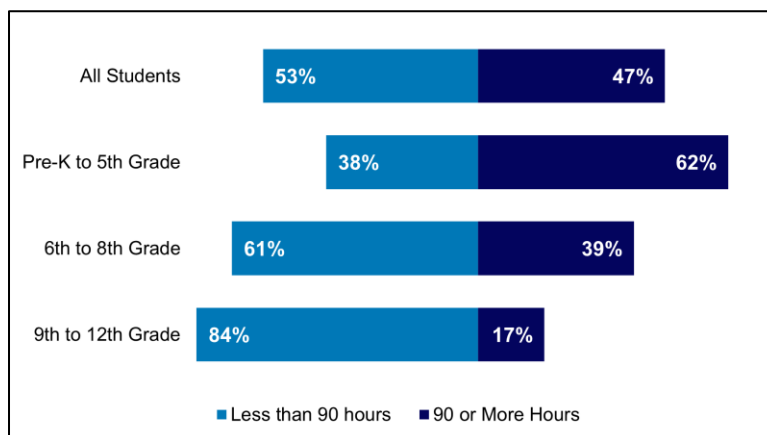
Participation Intensity by Cohort

Participation intensity varied across cohorts. Over half (53 percent) of Cohort 12 participants met or exceeded the 90-hour threshold, compared to 44 percent of Cohort 11 participants. Cohort 10 participants showed a different pattern, with relatively few students attending fewer than 90 hours, likely due to a shorter program cycle (see also [Appendix D](#)).

Participation Intensity by Grade Level

Participation intensity also varied significantly by grade level. While nearly half of all students (47 percent) met or exceeded the 90-hour threshold, younger students were substantially more likely to reach this level of engagement compared to older students (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Participation intensity declines with grade level, with high school students least likely to reach 90+ hours.



As shown in Figure 6, 62 percent of students in Pre-K through 5th grade attended 90 or more hours of programming, compared to 39 percent of middle school students and just 17 percent of high school students. Conversely, the majority of high school students (84 percent) attended fewer than 90 hours.

These findings indicate a clear decline in sustained participation as grade level increases, reinforcing patterns observed in overall participation. This trend may reflect increased competing demands for older students, differences in program relevance or structure, or barriers to consistent attendance such as transportation or scheduling conflicts.

Overall, participation intensity varies widely across students and programs, with fewer than half of participants meeting the recommended attendance threshold associated with positive outcomes. Variation across cohorts and grade levels—particularly the decline in sustained participation among older students—highlights the importance of program design, engagement strategies, and operational supports in promoting consistent attendance. These patterns provide important context for interpreting student outcomes and identifying opportunities to strengthen program impact.

Participation Performance and Challenges

While participation data indicate broad program reach and varied levels of engagement, additional measures of program performance provide further insight into how effectively subgrantees are meeting participation goals and sustaining consistent attendance.

Actual Participation Relative to Proposed Targets

As part of the 21st CCLC grant application process, subgrantees are required to propose the number of students they intend to serve annually. Proposed targets are expected to reflect realistic estimates based on program capacity and community need and are used to guide program planning and serve as a benchmark for assessing program reach.

During the 2024–25 program year, subgrantees collectively exceeded their proposed participation targets. Among the 127 subgrantees that reported data, programs proposed to serve 22,263 students but ultimately served 25,938—3,675 more students than planned, representing a 14 percent increase over target.¹⁷

Despite this overall success, performance varied across subgrantees:

- 47 percent exceeded their targets, serving between one and 702 more students than proposed, with an average increase of 132 students per program,
- One percent met their target exactly, and
- 52 percent served fewer students than planned, falling short by four to 228 students, with an average of 64 students per program.

These findings indicate that, while overall program demand and reach were strong, individual subgrantee performance varied considerably. Differences in recruitment capacity, program size, and local context likely contributed to this variation.

Average Daily Attendance (ADA)

As part of 21st CCLC program requirements, subgrantees are expected to meet at least 85 percent of their proposed Average Daily Attendance (ADA) targets for each month of operations (or summer cycle). ADA provides a measure of consistent daily participation and reflects the extent to which enrolled students attend programming regularly.

During the 2024–25 program year, performance against ADA targets was more limited than overall enrollment outcomes.

- Among the 46 subgrantees that offered summer programming, 30 percent met the ADA target, with performance ranging widely from 6 percent to 358 percent of target and averaging 72 percent of targeted daily attendance.
- Among the 103 subgrantees that offered at least seven months of school-year programming, 31 percent met the ADA target for at least one month.
- Across the 119 subgrantees that offered at least one month of school-year programming, 71 percent did not meet ADA targets in any month of the school year, while only 10 percent met the requirement in every month they operated.

These findings indicate that, while subgrantees are generally successful in enrolling students and often exceed overall participation targets, maintaining consistent daily attendance remains a significant challenge across programs.

¹⁷ Some duplication may be present in the overall count of students served, as students served by multiple subgrantees may be counted more than once. While duplicates are removed, if identifying information is missing from a student's record, it is not possible to verify that the record is truly a duplicate, and it remains in the dataset.

This gap between enrollment and regular attendance suggests that structural and contextual factors—such as transportation access, competing after-school commitments, and varying levels of student engagement—may limit students’ ability to participate consistently. These patterns highlight the importance of continued efforts to strengthen attendance supports and address barriers to sustained participation.

Recruitment and Attendance Challenges and Strategies

Subgrantees reported several factors that may limit both recruitment and sustained participation. The most frequently identified challenges included:

- Competition with other programs (59 percent),
- Securing parent commitment to consistent attendance (55 percent), and
- Limited parent involvement or awareness (45 percent).

While these were also the most commonly reported challenges in the prior program year, fewer subgrantees reported experiencing them, and 18 percent indicated no challenges—an increase of eight percentage points from the previous year.

In response to these challenges, subgrantees employed a range of strategies to promote regular attendance. The most common approaches included:

- Offering high-interest activities (98 percent),
- Contacting parents of students who were absent from the program (85 percent), and
- Requiring regular attendance for continued enrollment (68 percent).

These strategies were also the most frequently reported in the prior program year.

Taken together, these findings suggest that while subgrantees are actively implementing strategies to encourage participation, persistent barriers—particularly those related to family engagement and competing demands—continue to affect consistent attendance. This aligns with ADA findings, which indicate that maintaining regular daily participation remains a challenge for many programs.

Student Outcomes

This section presents student outcome findings for the 2024–25 program year across multiple domains, including academic performance, student engagement and behavior, school-day attendance, Grade Point Average (GPA), credit recovery, and promotion and graduation outcomes.¹⁸

Outcome data were collected through multiple sources, including state assessment results, subgrantee-reported student data, and the annual 21st CCLC Teacher Survey. These data provide a comprehensive view of student progress and program impact across participating sites.

The following section presents federally required Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) outcomes, followed by detailed analyses of student outcomes across academic, behavioral, and school-day domains.

Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Outcomes

The federal 21st CCLC program establishes performance objectives under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). These objectives provide a standardized framework for evaluating program effectiveness across states and are used to assess student outcomes related to academic achievement, engagement, behavior, and school-day performance.

State-level GPRA results presented in this report are based on analyses of individual student data submitted by subgrantees. As such, these results may differ slightly from federally reported outcomes, as subgrantees report aggregate data through the 21APR system and federal calculation methodologies are not fully available to Pennsylvania.¹⁹

GPRA Indicators and Measures

The following indicators are used to assess performance across the GPRA objectives:

- **Measure 1.1:** Percentage of students in grades 4–8 participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in reading and language arts on state assessments.
- **Measure 1.2:** Percentage of students in grades 4–8 participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in mathematics on state assessments.

¹⁸ Results described in this report include all students having data reported that could be analyzed and may not represent all students served by the program. Relevant percentages describe the portion of students served who were included in analysis.

¹⁹ The PA evaluation team used analysis methods provided under the previous federal evaluator American Institutes for Research. Additionally, limitations in 21APR data export functionality prevent direct comparison between subgrantee-reported aggregate data and the student-level datasets used in this analysis.

- **Measure 2.1:** Percentage of students in grades 7–8 and 10–12 attending 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer with a prior-year unweighted GPA of less than 3.0 who demonstrate an improved GPA.
- **Measure 3.1:** Percentage of students in grades 1–12 participating in 21st CCLC during the school year who had a school-day attendance rate at or below 90 percent in the prior school year and demonstrate an improved attendance rate in the current school year.
- **Measure 4.1:** Percentage of students in grades 1–12 attending 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who experience a decrease in in-school suspensions compared to the previous school year.
- **Measure 5.1:** Percentage of students in grades 1–5 participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate improvement in teacher-reported engagement in learning.

Summary of GPRA Results

Across the 2021-22 through 2024-25 program years, GPRA results indicate generally stable patterns in student outcomes, with variation by performance areas (see Table 5).

Academic growth measures in reading and mathematics remain modest overall. Reading growth has declined in recent years, while mathematics has remained relatively stable with slight improvement in the most recent year. In contrast, outcomes related to student engagement, attendance, and behavior demonstrate stronger and more consistent performance. Teacher-reported engagement in learning and reductions in disciplinary incidents, in particular, show positive trends, suggesting that programs are having a meaningful impact on student engagement and behavior.

More specifically:

- GPA improvement rates have gradually declined, though nearly half of eligible students continue to demonstrate improvement.
- School-day attendance improvements have remained stable, with approximately two-thirds of eligible students improving attendance rates.
- Reductions in in-school suspensions have increased over time, indicating positive trends in student behavior.
- Teacher-reported engagement in learning has shown steady improvement, representing one of the strongest areas of program impact.

Overall, these findings suggest that 21st CCLC programs are most consistently effective in supporting student engagement, behavior, and attendance, while academic achievement outcomes show more modest gains.

These patterns provide important context for the detailed outcome analyses that follow, particularly in identifying where program impacts are strongest and where additional gains may be needed.

Table 5. GPRA Results (2021-2025): Engagement, behavior, and attendance outcomes consistently outperform academic growth measures.

GPRA Measure		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Current Trend
1.1	Growth in reading and language arts (grades 4–8)	22%	25%	22%	18%	↓
1.2	Growth in mathematics (grades 4–8)	18%	18%	15%	18%	↑
2.1	GPA improvement among students below 3.0 (grades 7–8 and 10–12)	56%	52%	50%	48%	↓
3.1	Improvement in school-day attendance among students with prior attendance ≤90%	72%	72%	66%	67%	↑
4.1	Reduction in in-school suspensions	62%	83%	74%	88%	↑
5.1	Improvement in teacher-reported engagement in learning (grades 1–5)	46%	58%	58%	63%	↑

Standardized Academic Outcomes

This section presents student standardized academic outcomes for the 2024–25 program year, including state assessment performance in reading and mathematics, as well as related analyses by participation level, program term, and cohort.

State Assessment Performance

State reading and mathematics assessment outcomes were evaluated for students in grades 4–8 using prior-year (2023–24) and current-year (2024–25) PSSA/PASA results. Students were classified as “improved” if they moved to a higher performance level (below basic, basic, proficient, or advanced). Students who scored at the advanced level in the prior year were considered as not needing improvement and were excluded from improvement analyses.

Among the 11,181 21st CCLC students in grades 4–8, approximately 86 percent had sufficient data for comparison.

After excluding students who did not need to improve:

- 17 percent improved in mathematics,
- 18 percent improved in reading,
- 66 percent showed no change in math and 62 percent showed no change in reading, and
- 17 percent declined in math and 20 percent declined in reading.

These results indicate that most students maintained their performance levels rather than demonstrating significant improvement, with similar overall patterns across both subject areas.

State Assessment Results by Participation Level

Assessment outcomes were also analyzed across participation hour bands to examine the relationship between program attendance and academic performance.

Mathematics

Mathematics results show a modest relationship between participation and improvement. Improvement rates increased slightly as participation hours increased, from 15 percent among students attending fewer than 15 hours to 18–19 percent among those attending higher levels of programming, with the highest improvement observed among students attending 180–269 hours.

Despite this increase, differences across participation levels are relatively small, and the majority of students (63–68 percent) experienced no change in performance across all hour bands (see Table 6).

However, when comparing students who attended fewer than 90 hours to those who attended 90 or more hours, results indicated a statistically significant association ($p < .05$), indicating that students with higher participation levels were slightly more likely to demonstrate improvement.

Table 6. Math assessment improvement increases slightly with higher participation levels, though most students show no change.

Score Level	All students	Less than 15 hours	15-44 hours	45-89 hours	90-179 hours	180-269 hours	270 or more hours
Improved	18%	15%	15%	16%	18%	19%	18%
No change	66%	68%	67%	65%	65%	65%	63%
Declined	17%	17%	18%	19%	17%	16%	19%

Reading

Compared to mathematics, reading results show little overall relationship between participation and improvement. Improvement rates were relatively consistent across participation levels, ranging from 17 percent to 25 percent, with most students (56–64 percent) showing no change in performance (see Table 7).

A notable exception occurs among students attending 180–269 hours, where the improvement rate increases to 25 percent, compared to approximately 17–19 percent across other participation levels. Despite this isolated increase, there is no consistent pattern indicating that higher participation is associated with improved reading outcomes.

Table 7. Reading outcomes show minimal differences across participation levels.

Score Level	All students	Less than 15 hours	15-44 hours	45-89 hours	90-179 hours	180-269 hours	270 or more hours
Improved	18%	18%	18%	18%	17%	25%	19%
No change	62%	64%	62%	61%	62%	56%	59%
Declined	20%	18%	20%	21%	21%	19%	22%

When comparing students who attended fewer than 90 hours of programming to those who attended 90 hours or more, results did not indicate a statistically significant association. This suggests that increased participation was not consistently associated with improved reading performance.

State Assessment Results by Program Term

Assessment outcomes were analyzed by participation term (summer only, school year only, and both). Results were similar across all groups, indicating that term of participation did not meaningfully influence assessment outcomes.

State Assessment Score Levels

State assessment score level data were available for approximately 91 percent of students in grades 4–8.

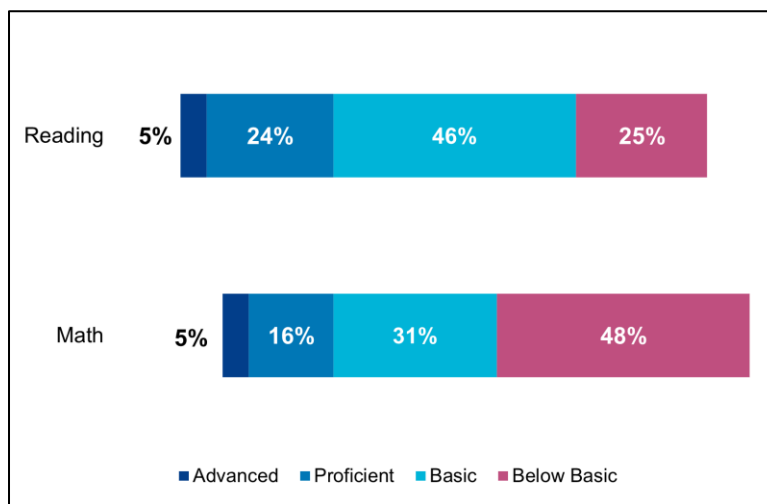
Overall, students were more likely to score at higher levels in reading than in mathematics: (see Figure 6).

- **Reading:** 29 percent of students scored at the proficient or advanced level.
- **Mathematics:** 21 percent of students scored at the proficient or advanced level.

Conversely:

- **71 percent** of students scored at the basic or below basic level in reading,
- **79 percent** scored at the basic or below basic level in mathematics.

Figure 6. The majority of students remain below proficient, with stronger performance in reading than mathematics.



These findings indicate that while overall performance is stronger in reading than in mathematics, a substantial proportion of students in both subject areas remain below proficiency, particularly in mathematics where nearly half of students score at the below basic level.

Compared to prior years, results reflect slight improvement in mathematics proficiency rates, alongside an increase in the proportion of students scoring below basic in reading.

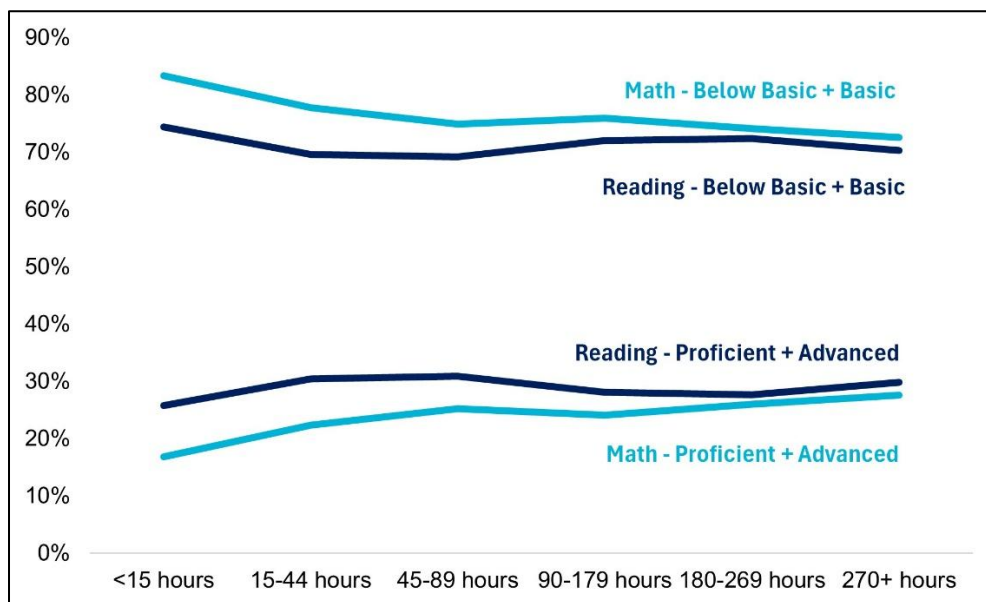
Score Distribution by Participation Level

Analysis of assessment score distributions across participation levels highlights differences in outcomes by level of program attendance (see Figure 7).

In mathematics, higher levels of participation were associated with more favorable score distributions. The percentage of students scoring at the below basic level decreases steadily as participation increases, from 58 percent among students attending fewer than 15 hours to 40 percent among those attending 270 or more hours. At the same time, the percentage of students scoring at basic or above increases, indicating a shift away from the lowest performance category. This trend is most pronounced among students initially performing at the below basic level.

In reading, this relationship is weaker and less consistent. Score distributions remain relatively stable across participation levels, with little change in the percentage of students scoring at advanced levels and no consistent decrease in below basic performance as attendance increases.

Figure 7. Increased participation is associated with improved math score distributions, while reading remains largely stable.



When comparing students who attended fewer than 90 hours of 21st CCLC programming to those who attended 90 or more hours, results indicated a statistically significant association between attendance level and assessment score distributions for both mathematics ($p < 0.001$) and reading ($p < .05$). This indicates that students who attended 90 or more hours were less likely to score at the below basic level and more likely to score at basic or above, particularly in mathematics. In reading, differences in score distributions were smaller and less consistent.

State Assessment Scores by Program Cohort

Assessment outcomes were also analyzed by program cohort to examine potential variation in performance across grant cycles.

Overall, cohort-level results were consistent with statewide patterns, with no substantial differences observed across cohorts in either mathematics or reading outcomes²⁰. That is, across cohorts, patterns reinforced the broader finding that higher levels of participation are associated with more favorable outcomes in mathematics with less consistent patterns in reading.

²⁰ Cohort 10 demonstrated some variation, including slightly higher proportions of students scoring at proficient or advanced levels and lower proportions scoring below basic compared to other cohorts. However, Cohort 10 represents a relatively small share of the overall student population (approximately 4 percent), limiting the extent to which these differences influence statewide results.

School-Based Academic Outcomes

In addition to standardized assessment results, school-based academic outcomes provide a broader view of student performance within the classroom setting. These measures—including Grade Point Average (GPA) and teacher-reported academic performance—capture aspects of student learning that may not be fully reflected in state assessments.

The following section examines changes in GPA and classroom-based academic performance, as well as the extent to which these outcomes are associated with program participation.

Student GPA Outcomes²¹

Student GPA outcomes were analyzed for students in grades 7–8 and 10–12 using comparable data from the 2023–24 and 2024–25 school years. To be considered improved, students were required to increase their GPA by at least one-tenth. Students with a GPA of 3.0 or higher in the prior year were considered not in need of improvement.

A total of 5,807 students (78 percent of eligible students) had comparable GPA data. Across these students, the overall average GPA remained stable at 2.6 (equivalent to a “B-”) across both years.

Of the students with comparable data, 57 percent needed to improve their GPA. Among these students:

- 48 percent demonstrated improvement,
- 40 percent declined, and
- 12 percent remained the same.

Students who improved their GPA showed substantial gains, increasing on average from 1.7 (a “C”) to 2.3 (a “B-”).

GPA Outcomes by Participation Level

GPA outcomes were further analyzed by program attendance. Results indicate little to no relationship between participation level and GPA improvement (see Figure 8).

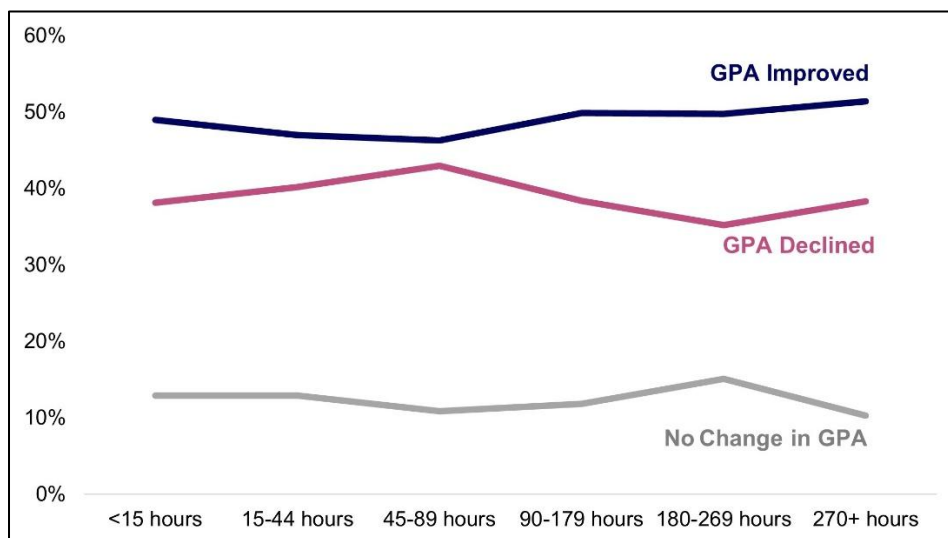
Among students who needed to improve:

- 48 percent of students attending fewer than 90 hours improved their GPA, compared to
- 50 percent of students attending 90 hours or more.

²¹ Grantees reported individual student GPAs using the state de-identified student data workbook. In cases where a school provided only report card grades, grantees were required to convert those grades into a GPA using a provided calculator or their own method.

Similarly, while the highest improvement rate was observed among students attending 270 or more hours (51 percent), a comparable proportion (39 percent) experienced declines. Overall, differences across participation levels were minimal²².

Figure 8. GPA outcomes show similar patterns across participation levels.



GPA Outcomes by Cohort and by Program Term

GPA outcomes were generally consistent across cohorts, with no significant differences observed at the overall level²³.

GPA outcomes varied slightly by program term. Students who participated during the school year only demonstrated somewhat higher improvement rates (42 percent) and lower decline rates (42 percent), as well as the highest proportion maintaining their GPA (16 percent).

Students attending summer only showed slightly lower improvement rates (40 percent) and higher decline rates (49 percent), while students attending both terms showed the lowest improvement rates (35 percent) and highest decline rates (56 percent). However, these differences should be interpreted with caution, as the majority of students (85 percent) participated during the school year only.

²² Consistent with these findings, no statistically significant association was found between attendance level and GPA improvement outcomes.

²³ Cohort 11 students were slightly more likely to improve and less likely to decline compared to the overall population. Cohort 10 students were less likely to improve, likely reflecting the limited duration of programming (summer only) during the 2024–25 program year.

GPA Completion Rates

A total of 6,175 students in grades 7, 8, and 10-12 had 2024-25 GPA data, representing 88 percent of all students in these grades.

Among these students, 89 percent completed the 2024-25 school year with a passing GPA (1.3/C- or higher), indicating that the majority of participating students maintained sufficient academic standing to progress academically.

Completion rates were consistent across grade levels:

- 88 percent of students in grades 7–8 earned a passing GPA, and
- 89 percent of students in grades 10–12 earned a passing GPA.

Cohort 12 had the highest proportion of students with passing GPAs (89 percent), followed closely by Cohort 11 (88 percent), while Cohort 10 had a lower proportion (82 percent).²⁴

Overall, GPA completion rates indicate that the majority of participating students remained academically on track, regardless of participation level or cohort.

Teacher-Reported Academic Performance

Teachers assessed students' academic performance through the annual 21st CCLC Teacher Survey.

Among students in grades 1–5 with reported data (n=9,094), 82 percent were identified as needing improvement in academic performance. Of these students:

- 65 percent demonstrated improvement,
- 31 percent showed no change, and
- 4 percent declined.

These results indicate that a majority of students identified as needing improvement demonstrated gains in classroom-based academic performance.

When comparing students who attended fewer than 90 hours of programming to those who attended 90 hours or more, results indicated a statistically significant association between attendance level and academic performance outcomes ($p < 0.001$), indicating that students with higher levels of participation were more likely to demonstrate improvement in academic performance based on teacher assessments.

²⁴ It should be noted that more students may have passed their courses, as these calculations are based on conversions to the standard 4.0 GPA scale with a C- grade considered passing.

While teacher-reported outcomes reflect strong gains in classroom-based academic performance, these findings differ from patterns observed in GPA and standardized assessment results. The following section compares outcomes across these measures to provide a more comprehensive view of student academic progress.

Comparison of Academic Outcome Measures

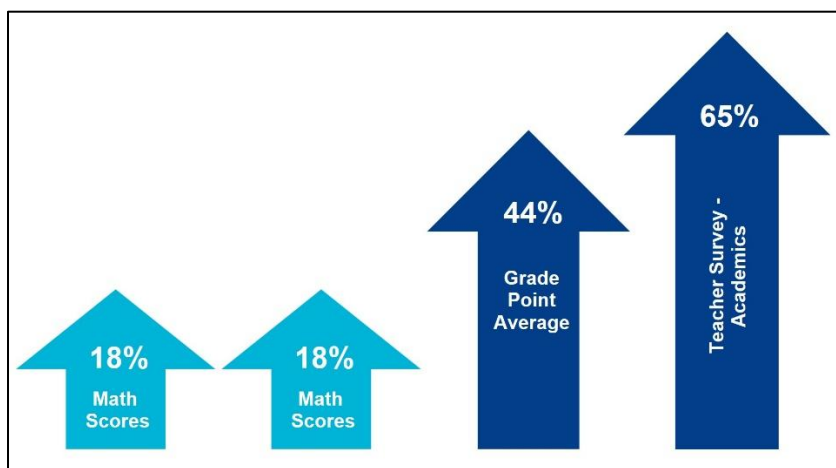
To provide a more comprehensive view of student academic progress, outcomes were compared across multiple academic-related measures, including state assessments, GPA, and teacher-reported academic performance.

As shown in Figure 9, improvement rates vary substantially across these measures. Approximately 18 percent of students demonstrated improvement in mathematics and reading state assessments. In contrast, 44 percent of students demonstrated improvement in GPA, and 65 percent demonstrated improvement in teacher-reported academic performance.

These differences indicate that student progress is more evident in classroom-based measures than in standardized assessment outcomes. While GPA and teacher-reported performance reflect improvements in day-to-day academic work and classroom engagement, state assessments may be less sensitive to shorter-term or incremental gains.

Notably, the relationship between participation and outcomes also differs across measures. Higher levels of participation are associated with more favorable outcomes in mathematics assessments and teacher-reported academic performance but show little to no consistent relationship with GPA outcomes.

Figure 9. Academic outcomes show stronger gains in GPA and teacher-reported performance than in state assessments.



Summary of Academic Outcomes

Overall, academic outcomes for 21st CCLC participants show modest gains in standardized assessment performance, alongside stronger improvements in classroom-based measures.

State assessment results indicate that most students maintained their performance levels in both mathematics and reading, with relatively small proportions demonstrating improvement. Increased participation was associated with more favorable outcomes in mathematics, particularly through shifts in score distributions away from the below basic level; however, this relationship is weaker and less consistent in reading.

School-based outcomes provide a more varied picture. GPA results show that nearly half of students demonstrated improvement, although outcomes were mixed overall and not strongly associated with participation level. In contrast, teacher-reported academic performance indicates more substantial gains, with a majority of students identified as needing improvement demonstrating progress, and stronger associations observed between participation and outcomes.

Taken together, these findings indicate that 21st CCLC programs are supporting student progress most consistently in classroom-based academic performance and mathematics outcomes, while gains in standardized assessment performance—particularly in reading—are more limited. These patterns suggest that program impacts may be more readily captured through measures that reflect day-to-day learning and classroom engagement.

Student Engagement, Behavior, and School-Day Outcomes

While academic outcomes provide insight into student performance, additional measures are needed to understand how students engage in learning, behave in the classroom, and persist in school. This section presents findings related to student engagement, behavior, and school-day outcomes, drawing primarily on teacher-reported data and school records.

Data from the annual 21st CCLC Teacher Survey offer valuable insight into changes in classroom behavior, engagement, and learning-related skills that may not be fully captured through standardized assessments or GPA. These data are complemented by school-day indicators, including attendance, disciplinary outcomes, and promotion or graduation status.

Together, these measures provide a more comprehensive view of student progress, particularly in areas related to motivation, participation, and overall school success.

21st CCLC Teacher Survey Overview

Teachers rated students on eight key indicators of classroom engagement and behavior through the annual 21st CCLC Teacher Survey using the following standardized scale: *did not need to improve, improved, no change, or declined*. Indicators included:

- Homework completion
- Class participation

- Volunteering in class
- Attentiveness
- Classroom behavior
- Academic performance
- Motivation to learn
- Engagement in learning

Surveys were completed for students in grades 1–5 ($n = 13,036$). For each indicator, between 9,047 and 9,108 responses were collected, representing approximately 70 percent of all participants in these grades. Response counts vary slightly by indicator, as teachers were not required to rate every student on every item (see also [Appendix E](#)).

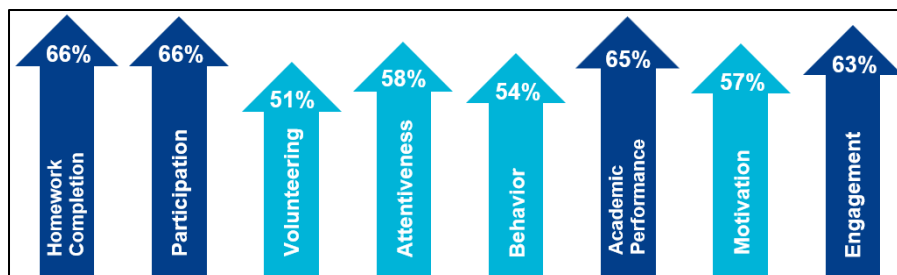
The following subsection presents key findings across these indicators, highlighting areas where students demonstrated the greatest levels of improvement in engagement and classroom behavior.

Teacher Survey Student Engagement and Behavior Findings

Results from the 21st CCLC Teacher Survey indicate substantial improvements in student engagement, behavior, and learning-related skills among participants in grades 1–5.

Across all eight indicators, the majority of students identified as needing improvement demonstrated progress, with improvement ratings ranging from 51 percent to 66 percent (see Figure 10). Relatively small proportions of students experienced declines (2 percent to 8 percent across indicators) (see also [Appendix F](#)).

Figure 10. The majority of students demonstrated improvement across all teacher survey indicators.



The strongest areas of improvement included:

- 66 percent of students improved in homework completion and class participation,
- 65 percent improved in academic performance, and
- 63 percent improved in engagement in learning.

Additional indicators also showed the following meaningful gains:

- 57 percent improved in motivation to learn,
- 58 percent improved in attentiveness in class, and
- 54 percent improved in classroom behavior.

Volunteering in class showed the lowest improvement rate, with 51 percent of students improving; however, most remaining students showed no change rather than decline, indicating stability rather than negative outcomes.

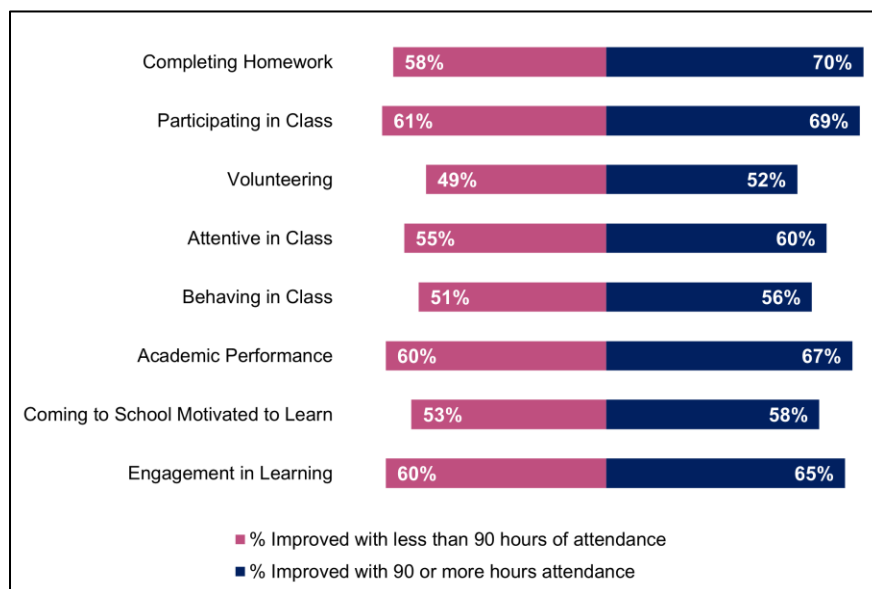
Impact of Participation on Teacher Survey Outcomes

While improvements were observed across all indicators, additional analysis examined whether outcomes differed based on level of program participation.

Across all eight teacher survey indicators, students who attended 90 or more hours of 21st CCLC programming demonstrated consistently higher rates of improvement compared to those who attended fewer than 90 hours. Differences in improvement rates ranged from approximately 3 to 12 percentage points, depending on the indicator.

The largest differences were observed in areas related to homework completion, class participation, and academic performance, while smaller but consistent differences were present across indicators such as engagement in learning, motivation to learn, attentiveness, and classroom behavior (see Figure 11). Even in areas with the smallest differences, such as volunteering in class, students with higher participation still demonstrated slightly greater improvement.

Figure 11. Higher participation in 21st CCLC programming is associated with greater improvement across all teacher survey indicators.



These differences were also statistically significant across all indicators ($p < 0.5$)²⁵, indicating that students who attended 90 or more hours were more likely to be rated by teachers as having improved compared to those with lower attendance.

School Behavior and Discipline

In addition to teacher-reported improvements in classroom behavior, school-day disciplinary data provide additional context for understanding student behavior.

During the 2023–24 and 2024–25 school years, only 2 percent of students in grades 1–12 received at least one in-school suspension. Among the 273 students who received a suspension in 2023–24, 88 percent experienced a decrease in suspensions in 2024–25, including 75 percent who had no suspensions in the current year.

While these findings suggest improvements among students with prior disciplinary incidents, the relatively small number of students affected limits the usefulness of suspension data as a statewide indicator of behavioral change. It is unclear whether observed reductions reflect actual improvements in student behavior or differences in school disciplinary practices.

As a result, teacher-reported measures of classroom behavior and engagement provide a more comprehensive and reliable view of student behavioral outcomes. While disciplinary data provide limited insight at the statewide level, school-day attendance offers a more robust and widely applicable measure of student engagement and persistence.

School-Day Attendance

School-day attendance provides a key indicator of student engagement and persistence and is aligned with federal GPRA performance measures.

Attendance data were available for 97 percent of students in grades 1–12 across the 2023–24 and 2024–25 school years. Among these students, 29 percent (7,009 students) had prior-year attendance rates at or below 90 percent and were identified as needing improvement. Of these students:

- 67 percent improved their attendance in 2024–25,
- 28 percent experienced a decline, and
- 5 percent showed no change.

Attendance outcomes have remained relatively stable over time. The percentage of students who improved their attendance increased slightly compared to the prior program year, while the proportion of students experiencing declines has remained consistent since the 2021–22 program year (between 27 and 29 percent) (see Table 8).

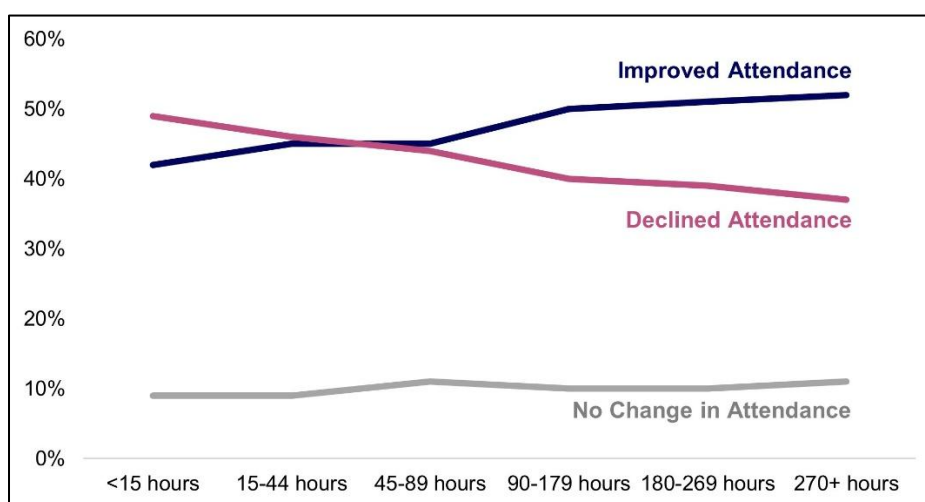
²⁵ $p < 0.001$ for all indicators except volunteering, where $p = 0.022$.

Table 8. Higher participation is associated with greater improvement in school-day attendance.

School-Day Attendance	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-24
Improved	72%	72%	66%	67%
Declined	27%	28%	29%	28%
No Change	1%	<1%	5%	5%

Results indicated a statistically significant association between program participation and school-day attendance outcomes ($p < 0.001$)²⁶, with higher levels of participation associated with higher rates of improvement and lower rates of decline. Improvement rates generally increased across participation hour bands, with the largest differences observed between students attending 270 or more hours and those attending fewer than 15 hours (52 percent vs. 42 percent improved) (see Figure 12). Complete results by participation level are provided in [Appendix G](#).

Figure 12. Higher participation is associated with greater improvement in school-day attendance.



Promotion and Graduation

Promotion and graduation outcomes provide additional insight into student persistence and overall school success.

Promotion and graduation status was reported for 25,050 students (97 percent of all 21st CCLC participants). Of these students, 99 percent were either promoted to the next grade level or graduated at the end of the 2024–25 school year.

²⁶ Association tested using a chi-square test of independence examining the relationship between program participation hour bands and school-day attendance outcomes.

Among the 299 students (1 percent) who were not promoted or did not graduate:

- 88 percent (261 students) were retained in their current grade level,
- 11 percent (33 students) dropped out of school enrollment, and
- 1 percent (5 students) did not have a reported reason.

These findings indicate that the vast majority of participating students remained on track for academic progression during the program year.

High School Credit/Course Recovery

Credit recovery programs provide targeted academic support for students who are behind in coursework and are at risk of not progressing or graduating on time.

In 2024–25, 16 subgrantees (13 percent) offered credit recovery programs. Instruction was most commonly delivered through face-to-face instruction (56 percent), followed by a blended format (38 percent) and computer-based instruction only (6 percent).

Most subgrantees reported that students participating in credit recovery also engaged in other 21st CCLC activities; when they did not, common barriers included competing family, school, or work responsibilities.

Credit recovery was offered during both the school year and summer. Among subgrantees offering summer programming, 58 percent reported that it typically took the full summer term for a student to recover a credit, while 42 percent reported shorter recovery timelines. Among those offering school-year programs, most reported that students were able to recover credits within a semester or less.

Additional data were reported for 498 students (2 percent of all participants) enrolled in credit recovery programs. Of these students, 90 percent (446 students) successfully recovered one or more credits, totaling 716 credits recovered.

Credit recovery occurred across subject areas, including literacy-related, mathematics, and other academic areas, with 446 students recovering credits in more than one subject:

- 152 (34 percent) recovered a total of 163 literacy-related credits,
- 185 (41 percent) recovered a total of 201.5 math-related credits, and
- 275 (62 percent) recovered a total of 351.5 credits for other subjects.

Among students who successfully recovered credits and had available promotion or graduation data, 88 percent were promoted to the next grade level or graduated, indicating that credit recovery programs supported continued academic progression for participating students.

Summary of Student Engagement, Behavior, and School-Day Outcomes

Overall, findings indicate that 21st CCLC programs are supporting positive outcomes in student engagement, behavior, and school-day success.

Teacher-reported data show strong and consistent improvements across measures of classroom engagement, behavior, and learning-related skills, with the majority of students identified as needing improvement demonstrating progress. Higher levels of participation were associated with greater rates of teacher-reported improvement across all indicators, suggesting that sustained engagement in programming is linked to stronger classroom-based outcomes.

School-day attendance outcomes further reinforce these patterns. Most students identified as needing improvement demonstrated gains in attendance, and higher levels of program participation were associated with greater likelihood of improvement and lower likelihood of decline. In contrast, disciplinary outcomes were limited in scope due to the small number of students affected, though teacher-reported behavior measures provide a more comprehensive view of student behavioral change.

Student progression outcomes were also strong. Nearly all students were promoted or graduated, and credit recovery programs—while serving a small proportion of participants—demonstrated high success rates and supported continued academic progression for participating students.

Taken together, these findings suggest that 21st CCLC programs are most consistently effective in supporting student engagement, attendance, and overall school persistence, particularly among students with higher levels of participation.

Reflections, Implications, and Recommendations

The findings from the 2024–25 statewide evaluation of Pennsylvania’s 21st CCLC program reaffirm several core strengths while also identifying opportunities to strengthen program effectiveness, access, and consistency across the state. Overall, results continue to demonstrate that 21st CCLC programs are most effective when students participate consistently, with higher levels of attendance strongly associated with improved academic outcomes, school-day attendance, and student engagement.

At the same time, the evaluation identified several persistent and emerging challenges. These include declines in overall participation, variability in program intensity and implementation across subgrantees, and ongoing barriers to consistent attendance. Findings also point to gaps in availability of targeted supports for specific student populations, as well as reduced engagement among middle and high school students. Additionally, variation in transportation access and reliance on family transportation may limit participation for some students, particularly those with the greatest need.

Taken together, these findings suggest that while Pennsylvania’s 21st CCLC programs are achieving positive outcomes, particularly for regularly attending students, there is an opportunity to strengthen program reach, improve consistency of implementation, and more intentionally target services to high-need populations. Continued emphasis on data-informed decision making, strategic use of attendance data, and responsive professional development for staff are critical to advancing program impact.

The following recommendations are designed to support PDE’s 21st CCLC team and its subgrantees in building on program strengths while addressing these key areas for growth to better position programs for long-term success and sustainability.

Considerations for the State Team

1. Update State Performance Measures and Establish Clear GPRA Benchmarks

Recommendation: The state team should consider revising the second state performance measures, so it aligns with updated federal GPRA measure language about attendance.

2. Deepen Analysis and Use of Attendance Data to Drive Program Improvement

Recommendation: Building on existing analyses, the state team should consider expanding the use of longitudinal and statistical approaches to better understand the relationship between program participation and outcomes. These findings could then be used to create clear attendance benchmarks and shared with subgrantees to help them identify and address unique barriers to attendance. This can be accomplished through targeted guidance, tools, and training focused on improving recruitment, retention, and sustained participation.

3. Address Barriers to Access and Participation

Recommendation: The state team should consider further exploration of structural barriers to participation, including transportation limitations, competing student responsibilities, and program scheduling. Providing guidance, promising practices, or targeted supports in these areas may help subgrantees reduce barriers and increase equitable access to programming.

4. Strengthen Guidance on Serving Diverse and High-Need Student Populations

Recommendation: Given the variation in the availability of targeted supports (e.g., for English learners, students with disabilities, and students with behavioral needs), the state team should consider providing additional guidance and professional learning opportunities focused on inclusive program design and differentiated supports.

5. Provide Targeted Professional Learning Aligned to Identified Needs

Recommendation: The state team should consider continuing to refine its professional development offerings based on subgrantee feedback, with a focus on high-priority areas such as student recruitment and retention, behavioral management, social-emotional learning, and trauma-informed practices, and effective academic intervention strategies (e.g., tutoring, credit recovery, and assessment readiness).

6. Promote Consistency and Quality Across Subgrantees

Recommendation: Given the variability in program intensity and implementation, the state team should consider strategies to promote more consistent minimal expectations and share high-quality models across subgrantees to strengthen overall program quality. The new desk audit process may also help with addressing variability and communication of subgrantee expectations.

7. Continue to Advocate for Federal Clarity and Improved Data Systems

Recommendation: The state team should consider continuing to collaborate with federal partners and other states to improve clarity and consistency in GPRA definitions, enhance usability of the 21APR federal data system, and strengthen alignment between federal reporting requirements and state-level evaluation practices.

Considerations for Subgrantees

1. Refine Student Identification Using Multiple Data Sources

Recommendation: Subgrantees should continue to strengthen student identification processes by combining objective indicators (e.g., attendance, GPA, assessment data) with teacher and family input. Using multiple data sources will help ensure that students with the greatest need are prioritized for services. Further, where possible, subgrantees should analyze feeder school data to flag students who may not have afterschool supports.

2. Prioritize Student Retention and Consistent Participation

Recommendation: Subgrantees should focus on increasing the percentage of students who attend 90+ hours, as these students demonstrate the strongest outcomes. This may include examining participation patterns, identifying barriers to attendance, and adjusting program design or scheduling as needed. Subgrantees should also consider conducting cost-benefit analyses to identify persistently under-attended sites for program restructuring.

3. Strengthen Engagement Strategies for Middle and High School Students

Recommendation: Given lower participation among older students, subgrantees should consider implementing targeted strategies to increase engagement in middle and high school grades, such as career exploration, leadership opportunities, credit recovery supports, and student-driven programming.

4. Enhance Programming to Support Academic Recovery and Growth

Recommendation: Subgrantees should continue to strengthen alignment between programming and academic needs, including the use of progress monitoring tools and targeted supports for reading, math, and GPA improvement, particularly for students with the greatest academic gaps.

5. Regularly Analyze and Use Program Data for Continuous Improvement

Recommendation: Subgrantees should work with their local evaluators to conduct regular (e.g., mid-year) data reviews and use findings to inform program adjustments if needed. Sharing data with staff and stakeholders throughout the year, and not just at year-end, can improve support more responsive programming and strengthen sustainability efforts.

6. Strengthen Family Engagement Strategies

Recommendation: Given the decline in adult participation, subgrantees should prioritize family engagement by using multiple communication methods, being flexible with family event scheduling, and providing activities aligned with family interests. Strengthening family engagement is important because it may also support improved student attendance and retention.

7. Address Access and Participation Barriers at the Local Level

Recommendation: Subgrantees should assess local barriers to participation, including transportation, scheduling, and competing responsibilities, and consider strategies to mitigate these challenges where possible.

As Pennsylvania's 21st CCLC program continues to navigate evolving student needs, post-pandemic recovery, and changing federal requirements, maintaining a strong focus on continuous improvement will be essential. By leveraging data, strengthening program consistency, and addressing barriers to access and participation, both the state team and subgrantees can further enhance the reach and impact of 21st CCLC programs. These efforts

will help ensure that programming remains responsive, equitable, and effective in supporting the academic success and well-being of the Commonwealth's highest-need students.

Appendix A: Data Sources and Measures

To support the evaluation of Pennsylvania’s 21st CCLC program, multiple data sources are used to capture information on program implementation, participation, and student outcomes at both the federal and state levels.

21 Annual Performance Report (21APR)

As a federally authorized program, all 21st CCLC subgrantees are required to report data through the 21st Century Annual Performance Report (21APR) system.

The 21APR system captures information on program operations and outcomes, including staffing, activities offered, student participation, and student characteristics. It also includes federally defined outcome measures such as state assessment performance in reading and math, student GPA, school-day attendance, in-school suspensions, and teacher-reported measures of student engagement.

State Data Collection

In addition to federal reporting, Pennsylvania collects state-level data through several tools, including the PA Implementation Survey, Center Operations Report, and Student Data Spreadsheet. These sources provide detailed information on program implementation, staffing, and participant characteristics across subgrantees, cohorts, and centers.

Student demographic and enrollment data for public school participants are obtained through the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS), using PASecureIDs collected through the Student Data Spreadsheet. The state-contracted evaluator, the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU), aggregates and analyzes these data to support statewide evaluation efforts.

Other Data Sources

Additional program information is collected by PDE and its technical assistance subcontractor, the Center for Schools and Communities, to support program monitoring and improvement.

Subgrantees also conduct annual local evaluations in partnership with external evaluators. These findings are submitted directly to PDE and reviewed by program staff; however, local evaluation results are not included in this statewide evaluation report.

Together, these data sources provide the foundation for the statewide evaluation described in the following section.

Appendix B: Detailed Evaluation Methodology

This evaluation examines the implementation and outcomes of Pennsylvania’s 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program during the 2024–25 program year, including summer 2024 and the 2024–25 school year.

The analysis includes data from subgrantees across three funding cohorts—Cohorts 10, 11, and 12—reflecting variation in program implementation timelines. In total, 129 subgrantees participated in the 2024–25 program year, including 9 Cohort 10 subgrantees, 46 Cohort 11 subgrantees, and 74 Cohort 12 subgrantees. Cohort 11 operated across the full program year, while most Cohort 12 subgrantees began implementation at the start of the 2024–25 school year. Cohort 10 subgrantees, whose funding concluded on September 30, 2024, operated during summer 2024 only.

The evaluation assesses subgrantee progress toward three core performance measures established by PDE:

1. Participants in 21st CCLC programs will demonstrate educational and social benefits and exhibit positive behavioral changes,
2. Increasing percentages of students regularly participating in the program will meet or exceed state and local academic achievement standards in reading and math, and
3. Students participating in the program will show improvement in the performance measures of school attendance, classroom performance, and reduced disciplinary referrals.

Data for this evaluation were drawn from multiple sources, including the federal 21APR system, the Pennsylvania 21st CCLC Implementation Survey, Center Operations data, the Student Data Spreadsheet, and additional data collected by PDE and the Center for Schools and Communities. These sources provide comprehensive information on program implementation, participation, and student outcomes.

To meet federal evaluation requirements under Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, PDE contracted the AIU to conduct an independent, statewide evaluation.

Together, these data sources and methods provide a comprehensive view of program performance across implementation, participation and outcomes, and inform the findings presented in this report.

Appendix C: 21st CCLC 2024-25 Webinars

This table summarizes the 21st CCLC webinars conducted during the 2024–25 program year, including session topics, presenters, dates, and participation levels. These webinars were designed to support subgrantees in areas such as program evaluation, fiscal management, risk assessment, and instructional strategies. Participation remained strong across most sessions, with several webinars exceeding 100 attendees, indicating continued engagement with statewide technical assistance opportunities.

Webinar Title	Presenter(s)	Date of Webinar	Participants
21 st CCLC Evaluation Overview/Orientation	Sheila Bell, Falon Weidman, and Jesse Thornton, Allegheny Intermediate Unit	October 2, 2024	121
Communicating Skills for Challenging Conversations	PDE 21 st CCLC Team Lisa Casper, EPIC	November 19, 2024	31
Risk Assessment Tool	PDE 21 st CCLC Team	December 17, 2024	120
Creating a love of reading in the digital, AI age	Dr. Monica Burns, Class Tech Tips, Inc.	March 18, 2025	39
Data and Evaluation Orientation	Sheila Bell, Falon Weidman, and Jesse Thornton, Allegheny Intermediate Unit	April 15, 2025	103
Fiscal Webinar	PDE 21 st CCLC Team	May 8, 2025	121

Appendix D: 21st CCLC Students Served by Program Hour Bands and Cohort

This table presents the distribution of students served across Cohorts 10, 11, and 12 by total program attendance hours. It illustrates how participation varies by cohort and highlights overall engagement intensity. The data show that the largest concentration of students participated in mid-range attendance bands (15–179 hours), while a smaller but meaningful proportion engaged in higher-intensity programming (180+ hours).

Cohort	<15 hours	15-44 hours	45-89 hours	90-179 hours	180-269 hours	270+ hours	Total Number of Students
Cohort 10	87	464	358	47	--	--	956
Cohort 11	2,298	2,521	2,537	2,310	1,698	1,708	13,072
Cohort 12	1,865	1,904	1,842	2,816	2,186	1,297	11,910
Total # of Students	4,250	4,889	4,737	5,173	3,884	3,005	25,938

Appendix E: Teacher Survey Responses by Program Hour Bands (Grades 1-5)

This table displays teacher-reported student outcomes for grades 1–5 across key academic and behavioral indicators, disaggregated by program attendance hours. The results provide insight into how varying levels of participation are associated with changes in student performance, engagement, and behavior. Overall, higher levels of program participation are associated with increased rates of improvement across most indicators.

Teacher Survey Measure	<15 hours	15-44 hours	45-89 hours	90-179 hours	180-269 hours	270+ hours	Total Number of Students
Completing Homework to Satisfaction							
Improved	53%	56%	61%	69%	73%	67%	4,482
No Change	42%	37%	34%	27%	22%	27%	1,961
Declined	5%	7%	5%	4%	5%	6%	347
Participating in Class							
Improved	58%	61%	63%	69%	69%	68%	4,745
No Change	37%	35%	35%	28%	29%	29%	2,216
Declined	5%	4%	2%	3%	2%	3%	182
Volunteering (e.g., for extra credit, etc.)							
Improved	48%	46%	50%	51%	52%	52%	3,585
No Change	48%	50%	48%	46%	46%	45%	3,308
Declined	4%	4%	2%	3%	2%	3%	171
Being Attentive in Class							
Improved	54%	54%	56%	60%	60%	59%	4,107
No Change	40%	41%	40%	36%	34%	35%	2,595
Declined	6%	5%	4%	4%	6%	6%	375
Behaving in Class							
Improved	48%	49%	53%	56%	57%	56%	3,424
No Change	42%	44%	40%	37%	34%	36%	2,374
Declined	10%	7%	7%	7%	9%	8%	488
Academic Performance							
Improved	57%	58%	62%	68%	68%	66%	4,801
No Change	39%	38%	35%	29%	28%	31%	2,341
Declined	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	270
Coming to School Motivated to Learn							
Improved	51%	51%	55%	59%	58%	56%	3,845
No Change	43%	43%	41%	37%	38%	40%	2,685
Declined	6%	6%	4%	4%	4%	4%	285
Engagement in Learning							
Improved	55%	59%	61%	66%	64%	65%	4,522
No Change	40%	37%	35%	31%	32%	32%	2,386
Declined	5%	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%	257

Appendix F: Teacher Survey Indicator Outcomes (Grades 1-5)

This table summarizes overall teacher-reported outcomes across key indicators for students in grades 1–5, regardless of attendance level. It highlights the percentage of students who improved, showed no change, or declined, as well as the proportion of students identified as needing improvement. The results demonstrate generally positive outcomes, with a majority of students showing improvement across most indicators.

Indicator	% Needed to Improve	% Improved	% No Change	% Declined	Total Number Students
Homework Completion	75%	66%	29%	5%	9,068
Class Participation	78%	66%	31%	3%	9,108
Volunteering in Class	78%	51%	47%	2%	9,047
Attentiveness in Class	78%	58%	37%	5%	9,097
Class Behavior	69%	54%	38%	8%	9,100
Academic Performance	82%	65%	31%	4%	9,094
Motivation to Learn	75%	57%	39%	4%	9,102
Engagement in Learning	79%	63%	33%	4%	9,103

Appendix G: School Day Attendance Results by Total 21st CCLC Program Attendance (For Students Who Needed to Improve)

This table presents school-day attendance outcomes for students identified as needing improvement, disaggregated by total 21st CCLC program participation hours. It illustrates the relationship between program engagement and changes in attendance, with higher levels of participation associated with greater rates of improvement and lower rates of decline.

School Day Attendance Outcome	<15 hours	15-44 hours	45-89 hours	90-179 hours	180-269 hours	270+ hours	Total Number of Students
Improved	60%	63%	63%	71%	74%	76%	4,658
No Change	6%	5%	6%	6%	4%	4%	377
Declined	34%	32%	31%	23%	22%	20%	1,974
Total # of Students	1,368	1,523	1,308	1,417	841	552	7,009