

21st Century Community Learning Centers

2018-2019

Site Visit Report

Saint Johnsbury School District-CatCH Program

Submitted by Emanuel Betz

21st CCLC State Coordinator



Project Director: Sarah Wiley

Visit Dates: July 10, 2018, November 15, 2018

Visiting Team: Emanuel Betz (Agency of Education) Mabika Goma (Agency of Education) Anne Hatch (Kingdom East Unified School District) Anne Carrol (Kingdom East Unified School District)

Report Date: December 6, 2018

The site visit, or peer review process uses a team of practitioners and other educators to review, assess and develop this report. The focus of the peer review process will use the 21c state evaluation plan as its framework along with additionally selected focus items* for 2018-19. The statewide evaluation results as detailed in the 21c statewide evaluation plan and the associated 2017-18 *Cognito* Annual Performance Report (APR) questions and data points will frame the agenda and questions, with the Annual Performance Report serving as a baseline data set.

Authority to Monitor

Title IV Part B of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* Section 4202 (a) (3) (A)

Goals

1. To provide accountability and oversight as required by law
2. To provide projects with an on-going opportunity to reflect and improve in their practice
3. To promote regular dialog and information sharing with and among projects

Response to this Report

Please submit a written response(s) to Emanuel Betz at Emanuelbetz@vermont.gov. The responses should include detailed steps to address any 'Findings' and "Priority Action Items" by the date indicated. Recommendations and comments do not require a formal response. See *definitions* below to guide your thinking on how to interpret this report. Items needing a response are numbered sequentially within each column from top to bottom.

Definitions:

- **Findings:** Steps that need to be taken immediately to be in compliance with a law or regulation.
- **Priority Action Items:** Action items requiring follow-up by the grantee to meet a 21C afterschool standard.
- **Recommendations:** Recommendations are judgments that could be classified as a "strong suggestions." They do not require action on the part of a project.
- **Evidence Statements:** Evidence statements are -generated from the team or from observations that warrant sharing. No action is required of a statement.

Overview Narrative

The Afterschool Programs were visited for one day in the summer and one day during the school year where interviews were conducted and programs were observed. Extensive documentation was provided and analyzed in its entirety including self-assessments, program

materials, policy handbooks, promotional information and registration materials, evaluation information, Annual Performance Reports and grant and budget information. Interviews and/or discussions were completed with the project director, superintendent, principals, staff, partners, and students.

The project continues to grow and evolve in a positive direction into its fourth year of operation. The project is successfully meeting its potential at an impressive rate, even versus other projects in similar stages of development. As the report was created, the diversity of successes across many domains jumped off the page. Some highlights of note include:

- There are very clear expectations, boundaries, norms and structure provided for youth in the afterschool program
- Consistency and excellence of the project director; as well as hiring caring and competent staff
- Deployment of an evolving integrated summer program model with partnership, school, and enrichment components
- Systems and policy development in safety, program expectations, and sustainability
- Successfully meeting statewide evaluation plan indicators
- Achieving the above within the context of a school that went through multiple leadership changes

The following areas of growth/opportunity include:

- The Director posed a summer question, “How can we have more unity?” Developing summer strategies that enhance unification in the areas of structure, bussing, nursing, and consistency between all parts (for example) are suggested. Offering more choices during less structured times in the afternoon is expected as part of 21c partnership funding
- Building out local summative evaluation measures
- Implementing the four youth generated recommendations and other recommendations.

Thank you for all the hard work, as well as preparing for and participating in this process. We hope that the process has and will have a positive impact on the program and youth outcomes.

Review Area and Alignment to Statewide Evaluation Plan	Evidence and Analysis (Evidence Statements, Recommendations Priority Action Items, Findings)
<p>1. Success Stories <i>What is working well and how do you know?</i></p>	<p>Overview: Review successes above</p> <p>Regular attendance: 58 regular attendees last year, Average daily attendance currently reported (40-50 students per day).</p> <p>Family: They are motivated, happy and engaged in program activities. Staff are motivated, creative and innovative. Kids stay until the end of the program – kids enjoy the program and parents see value in enrichments.</p> <p>Partner Support: Program has support from the highest level of leadership in the school, principals, staff, and partners.</p> <p>Multi-faceted Design: The program has separate but aligned enrichment, academic and recreational components in both afterschool and summer program designs</p> <p>Linkage to the day includes principal and school day staff support.</p> <p>Program Assistant provides consistent support to program, director and students.</p> <p><u>Principal(s) & Superintendent Comments</u></p> <p>“It’s clear that our children want to go to this program”</p> <p>“They’re talking about it and making connections”</p> <p>“Highly organized and efficient program”</p> <p>“Kids so excited to go to CatCH every day”</p> <p>“Everyone knows where they are going”</p> <p>“Everyone supports the program”</p> <p>“By far the strongest model that I’ve seen”</p> <p>“Really valuable resource for our students”</p> <p>“Brings people in from outside community”</p> <p>“Everything is planned way ahead of time”</p>

Review Area and Alignment to Statewide Evaluation Plan	Evidence and Analysis (Evidence Statements, Recommendations Priority Action Items, Findings)
<p>2. Youth Centered Leadership and Activity <i>How are programs youth centered?</i> <i>How do programs support youth leadership?</i></p>	<p>Youth: Students have a say in the after-school programming. They are given a survey to evaluate the program and make suggestions. Ambassadors were very happy and reported positive experiences. Staff: debriefs after programming includes youth centered activity as part of discussion Student Interviews:“ We learn and do activities and stuff with our friends after school...best part is you get to learn but you get to hang out and meet new people in the programs...you meet a lot of new friends” “It doesn’t seem like you’re learning, but you’re learning... learn about math in math games... learn styles of painting...Strict enough but not cuckoo” “We do feel listened to... if they call on you they listen to you... staff listen to you a lot” “They give you free meals...its cafeteria food”</p> <p>Youth Recommendations as quoted</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Put forms in everyone’s mailboxes. 2) Do more safety drills; I feel like there should be a whole school evacuation afterschool. 3) For programs, do things you can make things in. <p>Recommendation: Develop and grow intentional strategies in this area over the next three years</p>
<p>3. Challenges/ Lessons Learned <i>What barriers or challenges are you encountering this year that may be affecting the continuous quality improvement of your program?</i></p> <p><i>What lessons have you learned about your project and what adjustments will be made to ensure the site is continuously improving?</i></p>	<p>Staffing – It has been a challenge to get every staff on board with changes in the program. Some staff do not follow through and have received feedback from Program Director. One of the examples was that some staff call last minute that they can’t make it to CatCH. Also, taking on responsibilities/initiative, attending meetings, finding subs have been challenges. Title 1 Funding: The program has some challenges in trying to figure out the best way to use Title I fund and making sure the expenses align with the funding requirements. Business Office: There is a need for more regular meetings. Important and needed meetings have been cancelled by the business office. Parent Access: There is some concern with parent access to the building after 4pm. Director Performance Evaluation: No evaluation for the Director has been given yet in four years. Off-site Afterschool Programming: No bus drivers available until 4pm</p>

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<p>3. Evaluation Plan</p> <p>4. Local evaluation outcomes</p> <p><i>What are the components of your comprehensive evaluation plan?</i></p>	<p>State evaluation outcomes reported are either duplicative, or not in a fully developed SMART format The parent survey is very thoughtful and clear.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>1) Create different summative efficacy measure(s) in the SMART format separate from the state plan that can be accessed, used annually, and will add value.</p> <p>2) Review FERPA as it relates to maintaining student records and confidentiality.</p>
<p>5. Equity and Access; Dosage and Numbers</p> <p><i>Result 1.2: 21c funded programs are open for enough hours, days, and weeks to meet student and family needs during the school year.</i></p> <p><i>Result 1.3: 21c funded programs provide enough summer programming to address summer learning loss</i></p> <p><i>Result 1.4: 21c funded programs have a solid base of regular attendees</i></p> <p><i>IEP and Low income rates meet or exceed school averages*</i></p> <p><i>Program income practices do not limit program access</i></p>	<p>35% of regular attendees on an IEP 66% of regular attendees receive free/reduced lunch</p> <p>The program does not turn down any students because of lack of funds. Every student is eligible to the scholarship regardless of family income. Program hours, duration and location meet the needs of students and families. Afterschool transportation is available for all students with 10 bus stops daily. Good communication with Director of Student Services regarding incoming students to CatCH. Project Director may attend IEP meetings if needed on occasion. Increase to nine half day program days occurred. No homeless student attends the program. The program does not have students from a refugee background, or those who speak English as their second language.</p> <p>Priority Action Item #1 (next session brochure-send form)</p> <p>At top of payment options include “no one will be turned away for inability to pay or similar language and “There is no fee for math and literacy clubs” (or any title one supported program)</p>

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	<p>Recommendations</p> <p>1) Other projects have trained a regular staff member to be a bus driver. This could be an option if the right structure and person exists.</p> <p>2) Increase awareness of potential homeless youth through the homeless liaison and /or other strategies.</p>
<p>6. Leader information</p> <p>7. Staffing (Including Licensed Teachers)</p> <p><i>Result 3.1: 21c funded programs are led by experienced leaders (includes adults and youth)</i></p> <p><i>Result 3.2: 21c funded programs utilize high quality staff to run programs</i></p> <p><i>Result 3.3: 21c funded programs have appropriate staff retention rates</i></p> <p><i>Result 3.4: 21c leaders participate in professional development and networking opportunities</i></p>	<p>The Program Director has been in the role for four years.</p> <p>Director hours increased to full time.</p> <p>The program employs teachers from the school, para educators and temporary, part time employees.</p> <p>Program uses a hands-on approach to learning.</p> <p>Staff are qualified.</p> <p>Many volunteers participating: NVU- Lyndon Men's soccer team, high school students (language, dance, woodworking) community members (archery club, Television Studies)</p> <p>“The structure is strong”-principal</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>1) Consider adapting and or following these expectations: vermontafterschool-program leader expectations</p> <p>2) Implement an annual personnel evaluation process for the Project Director.</p>

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<p>8. Physical activity <i>Result 2.3: 21c programs provide healthy food and physical activity</i></p>	<p>Recess, Fun Fridays, and structured enrichment offerings. Meal offered through school cafeteria food service.</p>
<p>9. Linkage to the school day including principal involvement <i>Result 4.1: 21c funded programs link with the school day</i></p> <p><i>How does the program align and integrate with the regular school day programs and systems?</i></p>	<p>School pays for bus transportation (which is also open to other afterschool programs). School day space available and used. 4 school day paras are regular CatCH staff. 30% of staff are licensed teachers from 16-17 data. Area for growth in curriculum connections. Facebook linkage, website inclusion, family newsletter inclusion. Principals on advisory team.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>1) Have program strategies listed as an aligned strategy in the schools Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP), using that framework to consider upgrades/changes as appropriate.</p> <p>2) It was noticed that in both photography and STEM, old equipment did hamper the program lessons' intent and impacted the education of youth. In both cases, engaging teamwork work was being done, but had issues due to tech concerns. Continued work accessing technology equitably is an expectation of 21c funding as the program is considered and is an extension to the education and the school day.</p> <p>Quotes "The school day staff have warmed up to the program; They now make referrals to it." Superintendent: "It's an extension of the school day."</p>

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<p>10. Culminating end products or performances <i>Result 2.2: 21c funded programs allow participants to experience interests in depth</i></p> <p><i>Result 2.4: 21c programs support learning</i></p>	<p>Examples provided as part of annual reporting. Site visit review shows results are consistent. Programs meet twice a week.</p> <p>Students were in different groups: NEXT LEGO robotics, Expressions in Art, Photography and CATCH astronomers. Students were engaged, asked questions, explained to the class things they learned, explored new experiences, challenged the learning and closed with a final product.</p> <p>The EPIC music program meets this goal as well and is a great model, although not part of CatCH.</p>
<p>11. Intentional Academic Components <i>Result 2.4: 21c programs support learning</i></p> <p><i>Does the site have at least one program strategy, beyond homework help, that is specifically designed to support students who are performing below grade level or struggling academically?</i></p>	<p>Literacy and math clubs-is a tier II support with 4/5 grade classes full. Director provides oversight of summer school program.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>Superintendent: “Having it (the program) count is important. How can we better document the learning?” Recommend trying to answer this question with a new strategy.</p>

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<p>12. Sustainability and partnerships <i>Result 4.2: 21c funded programs utilize diverse sources of funding</i></p> <p><i>Result 4.3: 21c funded programs benefit from meaningful community partnerships</i></p>	<p>Nine partners including a variety of organizations, youth, colleges/universities/and local groups exist. Partnership with Lyndon soccer team exists. Partners are on advisory team. Title 1 funds being used. Applying for 21C expansion grant. Met with school board to request funds for CatCH. Works in nice partnership with EPIC program-space good communication observed. Movie night as fundraiser occurred. The Program Director presented at annual meeting and 6 parents showed up.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Create a revised sustainability plan; last one is from 2016. 2) Have advisory board be responsible for sustainability or create an alternative structure to support it. <p>Leadership quotes: "I will whole heartedly support CatCH...families rely on this program...we want it to grow...sustainability is a concern."</p>
<p>13. Family engagement and parent communication <i>Result 4.3: 21c funded programs benefit from meaningful community partnerships</i></p>	<p>Fundraiser occurred Facebook account Lights On! event in 2018 Sign behavior contract with three parties including parents. Director reports parents are grateful for the program. Families don't come early to pick up youth, which is a good indicator. "Its clear families rely on this program...There are happy kids."</p>

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14. Private school participation <i>Result 4.3 21c funded programs benefit from meaningful community partnerships (private schools)</i>	Legal obligations met and reported as part of annual reporting.
15. Safety standards <i>See 21c safety standards and annual reporting safety questions</i> <i>Result 2.4: 21c funded programs strive for continuous improvement through the use of the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA)</i>	No behavior issues in program at all reported. Students, staff and the community feel safe. Students and staff know what to do in case of emergencies. Have keys on lanyards to lock down spaces. Thorough staff handbook and protocols on clipboards. There is a door person until 5, but on occasion they are not present and sometimes the door is unlocked if 5pm door person is absent. Regular afterschool workers will be included in January ALICE training. Recommendations 1. A radio located outside at the door could be used by parents to call a staff member to come let them in the building. If this approach is not used, find another.
16. Governance <i>How does a governance system meet regularly with diverse stakeholders who help guide the program?</i>	Strong CatCH advisory team with a diversity of representation from the school and community meets four times per year.

Review Area and Alignment to Statewide Evaluation Plan	Evidence and Analysis (Evidence Statements, Recommendations Priority Action Items, Findings)
<p>17. Budget <i>How does the director maintain a well-developed system and provide sound fiscal management for the program?</i></p> <p><i>How does the fiscal agent provide proper oversight, organizational support, and fiscal management for the program?</i></p>	<p>Budget is clear and appropriate, structure is solid. Expenditures meet expectations.</p> <p>Recommendation/Standard Expectation/Need</p> <p>At least monthly scheduled meetings with the business office are essential for effective program management and will be become even more important in the future as budget sources grow and projecting becomes all the more challenging with more moving parts to follow and manage.</p>
<p>18. Annual Performance Report Statewide Evaluation other items <i>Which systemic items or expectations may need new strategies or additional funding to be achieved?</i></p>	<p>The afterschool program finish time at 5 to 5.15 puts program weekly hours under the national average according to most recent data.</p>

Program Observations

Youth	<p>Students were attentive, engaged in high interest activities, treated each other and staff members with respect, and followed established routines with minimal supervision. During the time that I observed activities, most students were following directions, absorbed in activities, and were engaging with energy and enthusiasm, including running with excitement to the next task.</p> <p>Students know what they are signed up for the afternoon. Youth know routines, where to go, what comes next. “Can you play with us?” (to staff during recess) “I’ve been waiting!” (to staff during activity) “This is amazing! I have the perfect angle on this!” (during photography) “It’s kind of cool with the lighting.” (during photography) “I tried to get to zoom in.” (during photography) “Look at this one!” “I have a question.” (during art) “I didn’t know robots could exercise... you could have neuro-sensitivity”(Robotics)</p> <p>Youth were engaged in the program activities. Activities were students focused. At the meeting, students spoke openly about things they like in the programs and the ones they would like leadership to make some changes. One student suggested that they would like the program to be able to recruit more staff and extend the services to all students up to grade eight.</p>
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Program Observations

Staff

Enrichment leaders were well prepared with structured plan, materials, and equipment. The lesson plans were clearly articulated to students. In all activities observed, students seemed to have a clear understanding of the activity and expectations. Support staff engaged with students in a low-key, friendly way. They circulated, spoke softly, gave students individual attention when needed, and monitored activities for any problems

Staff were engaged and enthusiastic. They gave students autonomy to learn on their own pace. Students were given some responsibilities in groups to learn and report their final product to the class. Staff talked to students with respects while keeping boundaries to maximize their learning. One staff seemed to be more worried about keeping discipline and order in the class, than letting kids explore their own ways of learning.

Staff very purposefully engaged with students.

Instructors are prepared with supplies, activities, and are knowledgeable.

Good staff to student ratio – highest I saw was 15:2.

“Our hands are off.”

“How’s your day going?”

“Can you say that again in a little nicer voice?”

“Nice fast hands!”

“I need a helper...That looks really good”

“Let me get some napkins.”

“You’ve been waiting so patiently.”

“Do you want to do it this way, or this way?”

“That doesn’t sound kind.”

“You are very creative, Bud!”

“Remember, your theme today is books.”

“What’s the goal today?”

“A good photographer looks around...”

“How did we fix that last time?”

“Are you guys all set here or do you need some help?”

“Sam the man, we gotta pack up.”

“How could we use those robots in the real world?”-Discussion followed... “I’m glad we could hear some good ideas.”

Program Observations

Art: "I like the concentration going on here."
Art: "You are using muscles you are not used to using."

**Space
Climate
Materials**

The school has safe, attractive, well-lit, spacious rooms that all were appropriate to the activity. Instructors had the equipment and materials that were needed for their group. For the most part, equipment functioned well. (But see above) The playground allowed plenty of space for running and games, but small enough to make student monitoring manageable. Signs on walls clearly show sitting spots for snack time. Program spaces are numerous, large, & accommodate a variety of activities. All youth and staff were expected & prepared to go outside, even though it was a cold day. Kids had what they needed to work of their activities except one time when the computers did not work. Music playing (a Strauss Waltz) in art added a nice feel to the climate.

Other

Snack is served by non-program staff. "Would you like macaroni or tossed salad?" Food: fruit choice, salad, hamburger, milk. "Bread is good." Some students were unenthusiastic about their meal. "They give us what is left over from lunch."

One youth was picked up outside by his dad early. His neck shrugged back and his hands slapped his side, disappointed. As the dad passed me he said: "I'm sorry. Tomorrow you can stay. How does that sound?"

	Program Observations
Analysis	<p>This is a great program. I had a chance to see in session things that were discussed during our meetings with different stakeholders.</p> <p>The longer enrichment block, plus the fact that all classes meet twice a week, provide for a strong focus on the program providing extracurricular activities.</p> <p>Overall, kids and staff have very positive relationship. Youth look to adults for leadership, guidance, company, and instruction. Staff support youth with positive, encouraging statements that reinforce expectations and prior knowledge. Staff & students know the routines and can focus on learning and having fun in the afternoon because the activities and transitions are well-organized and practiced. The number of spaces available in the building to the program, high staff engagement, high staff numbers, and availability of one-on-one staff as needed seems to help diffuse disruptive behaviors.</p> <p>Students seemed to be genuinely enthusiastic and happy to be in the CatCH Afterschool Program. They are able to eat, play, and learn in a safe, supporting, enriching environment. Students were challenged and exposed to new ways of thinking.</p>

Youth Centered Engagement Observations

Programs observed: Meal, Outside, Art, Robotics, Photography, Astronomy

Total minutes observing: 120

X=observed by one team member

<p>Spirit: Smiling ___xxx___ Laughing ___xxx___ Choosing ___xxx___</p> <p>Playing ___xxx___ Calming/Relaxing ___xx___</p>
<p>Health/Physical: Moving ___xxx___ Eating ___xxx___ Drinking ___xx___ Handwashing ___</p>
<p>Dialog: Speaking ___xxx___ Listening ___xxx___ Questioning ___xxx___ Discussing ___xxx___</p> <p>Explaining ___xx___</p>
<p>Doing:</p> <p>Thinking ___xxx___ Reading ___xxx___ Writing ___ Researching ___x___ Performing ___</p> <p>Making ___xx___ Creating ___xxx___ Designing ___xxx___ Collaborating ___xxx___</p> <p>Focusing/Immersing ___xx___</p> <p>Collaborative Problem Solving ___xx___ Persevering ___xx___ Productive Failing ___x_</p> <p>Reflecting/Evaluating ___xx_</p>
<p>Leadership: Leading ___ Facilitating ___ Planning ___ Prioritizing ___</p>
<p>Social/Emotional: Cooperating ___xxx___ Advocating ___ Helping ___x___ Negotiating ___x___</p> <p>Empathizing ___x_</p>
<p>Negativity: Arguing ___ Complaining ___x_ Not-doing/Not-interested ___x___</p>