21st Century Community Learning Centers at Boys & Girls Clubs of Larimer County

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Dates of Service:
August 26th, 2018- Present

Truscott Elementary
Monroe Elementary

Cohort: VIII
Table of Contents

Program Description

- Program History
- Program Goals
- Program Activities

Evaluation Background

- Evaluated Components
- Purpose of Evaluation

Evaluation Methods

Results

- Demographics of Participants
- Findings

Conclusion

Appendix

- Weikart Center for Youth Development, Youth PRogram Assessment Tool
- Family Survey Example
- Reading Enjoyment Survey Example
Program Description

Program History

Boys & Girls Clubs of Larimer County’s mission is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. Since 1989, we have provided a safe, positive, and enriching environment for youth ages 6-18. In Larimer County, BGCLC is the only comprehensive, facility-based, after-school and school-break program that includes academic support, meals, program enrichment for positive youth development, and mentoring.

In partnership with Thompson School District, Boys & Girls Clubs of Larimer County opened two 21st Century Community Learning Centers in 2018. These centers are located at Monroe and Truscott Elementary Schools in Loveland. Both schools have over 70% of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch. These schools were also either underperforming or nearly underperforming in student academic achievement scores according to state report cards. Specifically, students who qualify for free and reduced lunch, speak English as a second language, or have a diagnosed learning disability and were falling more behind, according to district scores.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Larimer County, along with Thompson School District, devised a robust plan that gives students at these two targeted schools access to quality out-of-school programming. These sites offer reading and literacy programming, incorporate robust enrichment activities in conjunction with community partners, and create more family engagement opportunities for parents.

Program Goals

These 21st CCLC Boys & Girls Club sites, have four main goals:

1. To decrease chronic absenteeism,
2. To help students meet the challenging state academic standards,
3. To increase student’s essential skills,
4. To increase family involvement in their child’s education.

Boys & Girls Club sites at Monroe and Truscott Elementary aim to decrease chronic absenteeism in regular BGC attendees by 10%. In order to achieve this, BGC offers fun and engaging enrichment activities that students want to participate in. Our attendance policy requires youth to attend school in order to participate in Boys &
Girl Club during out of school time. To measure this result we used school attendance records to compare student's attendance at the beginning of the year and end of the year.

Boys & Girls Clubs has the goal of having 20% of students improving their CMAS scores by the third year of the grant. To help students meet the challenging State academics standards, we offered a variety of literacy and math programs and activities in order to support students in these areas. To measure these results, we compare CMAS scores of students from year to year. We also evaluate student’s enjoyment of reading by offering pre and post surveys each year.

We aim to increase student’s essential skills by offering targeted enrichment programming. This effort was focused on in our Essential Skills or Social Emotional Learning program. Growth in student’s essential skills is measured through pre and post surveys as well as staff observation of students.

Boys & Girls Club sites aim to increase active and meaningful engagement of families with their child’s education. This was done by offering monthly family nights focused on engaging children in literacy and math skills with their families. This is measured through family surveys offered each semester.

**Programming offered at Boys & Girls Club**

Boys & Girls Club 21st Century Community Learning Centers offer a wide range of academic and enrichment programming for participants. Please see our offerings in the table below. Each of these programs are offered at an age appropriate level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music &amp; Art</th>
<th>National Arts Contests enable youth to develop their creativity and cultural awareness through visual arts and design. Youth have the opportunity to participate in art competitions that are exhibited and judged locally, regionally and nationally. Mediums include: watercolor, pastels, oil and acrylic paint, printmaking, collage, mixed media, colored pencil, monochromatic and group project.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MusicMakers, a music education program. In this program youth will learn basic music making through movement, songs, rhymes and simple instrumental instruction in a group setting. Basic musical concepts are taught by utilizing common playground equipment such as rubber balls and jump ropes in a musical fashion, as well as basic drum and guitar techniques on acoustic instruments.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Athletics</strong></td>
<td>Triple Play, is a comprehensive health and wellness initiative that strives to improve the overall health of youth by increasing their daily physical activity while teaching them good nutrition habits through cooking lessons and interactive activities.</td>
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</table>
| **STEM** | Hour of Code is a program designed to expose youth to coding and computer science. Youth are taught the basics of coding and can earn program advancements by completing different tasks.  
STEM programs focus on building youth’s skills in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math. During STEM Time, youth compete in teams and independently in different real-world STEM challenges after learning about a new STEM concept. |
| **Homework Help** | Power Hour is designed to support youth both completing their homework assignments and skill building based on lessons from school. This program provides resources for incorporating technology, supporting tutoring and making homework fun.  
Project Learn is a program designed to bridge knowledge and skill gaps of youth. This program helps support learning by providing educational-based fun and hands-on activities. All activities are age specific and are designed to reinforce what students are working on in the classroom, i.e. lego robotics, spelling competitions, poetry design and more. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social &amp; Emotional Learning</th>
<th>The SMART (Skills Mastery and Resilience) Moves program is a nationally acclaimed prevention program, tailored for all different ages. Participants will be exposed to various activities designed to develop their decision-making and critical-thinking skills, as well as learn how to avoid unhealthy choices such as alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and unhealthy relationships.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Our Essential Skills Program focuses on building skills around self awareness, personal responsibility, resiliency, teamwork, civic engagement, and character.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Youth for Unity is a program that supports and promotes diversity and inclusion. Youth for Unity helps youth better understand diversity and combat prejudice, bigotry and discrimination while building empathy and compassion for others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Initiatives</td>
<td>Youth of the Year has been Boys &amp; Girls Clubs of America’s premier recognition program since 1947, celebrating the extraordinary achievements of Club youth. Each year, members of the Boys &amp; Girls Clubs of Larimer county compete at the Club and county level for the opportunity to represent our organization at the state, regional and national level.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Million Members, Million Hours of Service is an initiative to involve youth in community service activities year-round. As a national organization, it is our collective goal that at least 1 million youth will perform 1 million hours of service each year.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The goal of the LGBTQ Inclusion Initiative and the Safe Zone Project is to increase the capacity of Boys &amp; Girls Clubs to provide a safe, positive and inclusive environment for youth, teens, staff and families of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation Background

Evaluated Components

Though our goals center on our 21st CCLC Grant Performance Measurements, we also evaluate the overall program using the Weikart Center for Youth Development Program Quality Assessment. You can learn more about the Weikart assessment tool in the Evaluation Methods section.

Other elements of programming are evaluated based on student and parent feedback collected through surveys or information provided by Thompson School District. These include family engagement, reading enjoyment and social emotional skill surveys. Student attendance and CMAS scores are collected through our partnership with Thompson School District.

Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of evaluating our program is to ensure continuous quality improvement. Continuous quality improvement ideally means that our program will continue to evolve and get better over time. By evaluating the program, we’ve learned what is currently working and what needs to be changed in order to reach the goals.
**Evaluation Methods**

Boys & Girls Clubs’ 21st CCLC sites evaluate the areas of overall program quality, family engagement, student school attendance, essential skill development and academic achievement.

To assess overall program quality, we use the Weikart Center for Youth Development Program Assessment Tool. The Weikart assessment tool is a validated instrument designed to measure the quality of youth programs and identify staff training needs. The assessment includes domains of safe environment, supportive environment, interaction, engagement, youth-centered policies and practices, high expectations for youth and staff, and access. Staff at both sites had the opportunity to observe and assess the implementation of programs. This year, we were also able to have an external assessor come to both locations. A copy of the assessment tool used in both the internal and external assessment can be found in the appendix.

To evaluate family engagement, surveys for youth and families were created by the Area Director to measure reading enjoyment and essential skill development. These surveys can be found in the appendix.

To assess student attendance and academic achievement, we partner with Thompson School District to measure the achievement of BGC participants. The data gathered is compared to data collected throughout the year and from years past. Student CMAS scores are compared from year to year, while attendance is collected and analyzed each month.
Results

Below is the breakdown of Age, gender and race of all 222 (123 Monroe and 99 Truscott) 21st CCLC Participants.
Findings

Program Quality
Using the Weikart assessment tool, we aim to perform two self-assessments as well as one external assessment a year to continually evaluate and improve our program. During the 2020-2021 grant year we were able to complete one external and one internal assessment. Only one internal assessment was completed due to the difficulty completing our fall assessment simultaneously with remote learning. Staff did not have the time to prepare or complete the assessment due to the extra hours spent with children and the difference in how that time was spent.

Our external assessment showed that both locations did well in the areas of Emotional Safety, Healthy Environment, Active Engagement, Encouragement and Belonging. At Monroe Elementary, both our internal and external assessments showed a need for growth in planning and reflection. At Truscott Elementary, our internal and external assessments showed a need for growth in the areas of planning and reflection as well as student leadership.

Family Engagement

At both the Monroe and Truscott Elementary School sites we normally host monthly family engagement activities within the Club. These events are centered around connecting families through literacy based activities. However, due to Health Department guidelines, we were unable to host in person activities for families this year. Instead we created take home and virtual events for our families. These ranged from Zoom bingo to literacy based games and activities. These activities allowed for students and their families to engage together at home. However we were not able to gauge the change in family dynamics as easily as if they were in person. We believe as we move into this next grant year, we will be able to move back to in person family nights and build on those skills with families.

Through our parent survey, which can be found in the appendix of this report, we found that 66.25% of families at Monroe Elementary report engaging in literacy or academic based activities with their children at home. Though we saw a decrease from 4+ times a week in the fall to 2-3 times a week during the spring being the most common answer, we believe this is due to the rise in family involvement in remote learning. As we progress into a more standard operating model, we believe our family engagement nights will allow us to help families connect more regularly for academic and literacy based activities.

At Truscott we were able to get only a small number of families to engage in our family survey in the fall. That made comparison for the spring very difficult. Though 25 participated in the spring survey, we were only able to compare 8 family responses to the Fall. However, two families showed great improvement in engaging
in literacy and academic based activities with their children. To help reach our projected number in the future, we will be offering our survey for a longer period of time as well as incentives to families who participate.

**School Attendance**

During the 2020-2021 grant year, Truscott Elementary exceeded our projected attendance goal, with 93.47% of highly-attended students having attendance that averaged 85% or higher throughout the school year. We believe Truscott was able to exceed their projected attendance goal by using a few best practices. Boys & Girls Club staff worked closely with teachers and school administration to develop a continuous approach to student support. This was especially helpful when it came to remote learning. Our Site Coordinator was added to student Google classrooms so she could immediately check on schedules and assignments to help keep students on track. Because almost half of student attendance was based on attendance of remote classes, we believe this helped us exceed our projected attendance goal. Truscott Elementary has also worked hard to provide an emotional support system for its students that Boys & Girls Clubs of Larimer County is able to benefit from as we are working with the same students. When students feel they are safe and belong at school, they want to come more often.

Monroe Elementary did not meet our goal of 90%, but was close with 83.33% of students having an attendance of 90% or higher throughout the year. The main contributor to falling short of this goal was the amount of times we were required to quarantine students, or students were quarantined by the school. However, as we move into the new year we have plans to help increase this number. Boys & Girls Club staff will be following the model created by our Truscott location in partnering with teachers and school administration to help support students. We are also using ESSER funds to employ a mental health specialist. This person will travel between locations to help offer social-emotional support and education that will help to create a more enjoyable atmosphere for students. We hope by continuing to offer fun and engaging programs and increasing our level of SEL support, our school day attendance will increase.

**Academic Data**

We do not currently have access to any academic data from TSD. This portion of the report will be updated when that data becomes available.
Conclusion

Through many of our evaluation efforts for the 2020-2021 school year, we have found the following information.

Through the Weikart Program Assessment Tool, we found that both locations need to increase opportunities for reflection and planning. It also found that our Truscott location was lacking opportunities for youth leadership. The next step was for both sites to develop action steps for improving in these specific areas. To improve leadership opportunities the sites planned to implement: creating class jobs, assigning group leaders to help explain activities, allow students to lead community builders, and create table captains to help field questions that other students may have. To improve reflection and planning opportunities the sites planned to implement: ensuring staff have adequate time to share students' work and ideas, writing reflection questions on the board so students are prepared and feel comfortable sharing when the time comes, and using multiple techniques to encourage students to share work.

Our family surveys indicated that at our Monroe Elementary location, families reported that their participation decreased. However, we believe this is due to the large amount of time required for families to support their child during remote learning. Overall, we believe our family nights helped to increase family involvement in their child's academics during the normal part of the school year. At our Truscott location, we were unable to do an adequate comparison due to low response rates to our fall survey. With our spring results we were able to see significant growth in a couple of families and to gather excellent suggestions on how to increase family participation.

School day attendance at our Truscott location was able to meet and exceed our projected goal. Our staff were able to partner with teachers and school staff to help support students in attending online learning, as well as in person. Unfortunately, our Monroe location was just shy of our projected school day attendance goal. However, we have developed a plan to model after our Truscott location to help increase school day attendance by partnering even more closely with school staff.

Our conclusion based on academic data will be added as that data becomes available.
Appendix

Weikart YPQA Tool
Family Survey  
Fall 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with the way Clubstaff interact with my child.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with the variety of activities at the Club.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Club is a safe place for my children to work, learn and have fun.</td>
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<tr>
<td>At this Club, my child feels they belong.</td>
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<td>My child usually enjoys the time they spend at the Club.</td>
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<td>My child has formed positive relationships with Club staff.</td>
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<td>I feel welcome at the Club.</td>
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<td>I feel well informed of Club activities, programs and events.</td>
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<td>There is someone I can talk to at the Club about my child.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Club is helping my child do better in school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Club is helping my child develop appropriate social skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would recommend the Club to others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>On average, how many times a week do you engage in literacy or academic activities with your child?</td>
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