

**21st Century Community Learning Center
Site Evaluations - Narrative
2017-2018 School Year**



**NESC
Northeast Education Services Cooperative
Devils Lake ND**

Conducted June 19 and September 13, 2018

**Prepared by:
Westwood Research & Statistical Services
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Introduction

As part of the 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) evaluation process, a standardized set of quality indicators is used to assess, plan, design, and implement strategies for ongoing quality improvement. This process provides CCLC grantee staff and stakeholders a uniform means for identifying challenges, strengths, and opportunities for improvement.

The standardized set of quality indicators used for North Dakota's CCLC program evaluation process is the Colorado Department of Education's Monitoring and Quality Improvement Tool (MQIT). The instrument is specifically designed to:

1. Serve as a self-assessment tool to improve the quality of CCLC programs; and
2. Serve as a monitoring tool for the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction.

The MQIT is organized into eight categories:

- A. Grant Management and Sustainability
- B. Program Management
- C. Staffing and Professional Development
- D. Partnerships
- E. Center Operations
- F. Programming/Activities
- G. Health and Safety
- H. Evaluation/Measuring Outcomes

Section A: Addresses the grantees' performance level with regard to individual grant requirements (accountability). This section includes examples of evidence and performance ratings for each grant expectation.

Sections B – H: Addresses program quality in a broader sense. These sections include examples of evidence, performance ratings, and timeframes for improvement for each quality indicator.

During the grantee-specific site visits each of the MQIT's standardized set of quality indicators is examined by the State CCLC Program Evaluator and the grantee (two to four hours). In addition, visits are made to a minimum of three randomly selected schools to further assess the CCLC's out-of-school day programs/activities and interactions between student and teacher/staff (approximately one hour).

Subsequently, the State CCLC Program Evaluator, as evidenced by documentation provided by the grantee and school-specific site visits, arrives at a rating (score) for each of the standardized set of quality indicators and an overall rating (score). In addition, the State CCLC Program

Evaluator identifies strengths and opportunities for improvement and if appropriate recommends plans of action and timeframes for completion of “lower” rated quality indicators. Any questions regarding the results of the evaluation are addressed by the State CCLC Program Evaluator and grantee.

This report summarizes: visit details; MQIT results (narrative); program strengths; and opportunities for improvement and associated timeframes for action. Detailed MQIT results (tabular) are available by contacting the Project Director.

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Visit Details

MQIT Visit Date, Location and Program Staff Involved

- September 12, 2018 – Devils Lake ND
 1. Julie Schuler, 21st Century Project Director NESC

Site Visit Dates, Locations and Program Staff Involved

- June 19, 2018 – Tate Topa Tribal School (Fort Totten ND)
 1. Mena de la Paz, Site Coordinator
- June 20, 2018 – Prairie View Elementary (Devils Lake ND)
 1. Lynn Goodwill, Elementary School Principal
 2. Katie Kramer, Site Coordinator
- September 13, 2018 – Minnie H. (Devils Lake ND)
 1. Mary Vilandre, Site Coordinator

MQIT Results (Narrative)

Grant Management and Sustainability

1. NESC continues to identify and serve eligible students/families consistent with their grant application. Students and families benefit from an experienced and dedicated staff, community involvement, and agency partners. As in past years, staff and programs are committed to bring the afterschool program and community together to shape a learning environment which encourages students to reach their full potential and live a quality life.
2. Regarding outreach to eligible participants, each site is provided a “Family Handbook” which describes: the program mission, program vision, program goals/objectives, program site information, program cost, CCLC staff, holidays/storm day policies, release of students, visitor information, field trips, snacks, accident/illness, medications, volunteers, responsible behavior, dismissal procedures, nondiscrimination/sexual harassment statements, access to student records, technology/computer/network facilities, staff/family partnership agreements, and field trip permission forms. The handbook is updated annually.
3. Schools also conduct outreach via: individual school newsletters, principal’s school newsletters, program brochures, school hallway posters, family night flyers, periodic structured parent/family meetings (with agendas), press releases to newspaper/radio, Facebook, and the NESC and school-specific websites. Many sites have begun to publish their own school-specific CCLC newsletters. For example, Tate Topa Tribal School’s newsletter continues to offer sections such as “What’s Happening This Month”, “Number of Students with Perfect Attendance for the Month”, and a “Schedule of Activities” for each day of the week for each month. In addition, Tate Topa promotes the afterschool program by means of “Registration Information Posters”, which provides various program related information.
4. NESC continues to house programs in safe and accessible facilities/environments. In past years various concerns related to individual(s) potentially entering schools “unrecorded/ unchecked” by any day school or afterschool staff, making it relatively easy for this/these individual(s) to potentially cause turmoil at the site. Further details can be found in the “Health and Safety” section of this evaluation.
5. During the 2017-18 school year, all the grantees’ sites averaged the required seven hours or more per week.
6. Each site continues to offer a snack/socializing, math, reading, spelling, homework/tutoring, enrichment programming, recess/recreation, and computers/games. Furthermore, schools focus on STEM with respect to daily programming. In addition, some sites offer Reader’s Theatre, drama, art, cooking to enhance math and reading skills, keyboarding, and additional computer skill activities.

7. NESC's program continues to provide numerous opportunities for parent/family activities including: annual parent meetings and family fun nights (book fairs, suppers, carnivals, book walk, math/math bingo, smart board activities, Legos/robotics presentations, etc.). Family nights are conducted periodically. During the 2017-18 time-period, CCLC staff collectively with Title I staff organized and conducted the afore-mentioned family fun night activities.
8. Generally, all afterschool participants are transported (bussed), except Rolette.
9. As in previous years, NESC sites continue to meet their goals of increased numbers of students, number of regular attendees, increased partnerships, and are working toward an innovative curriculum to entice students and family involvement. The continuation of an innovative curriculum includes WeDo Robotics, Reader's Theater, and STEM camps, for example.
10. The grantee makes available a written sustainability plan, one which addresses issues should federal funding be discontinued or should school buildings no longer be eligible to receive funding. Specifically, a minimum of a 25 percent local donation from each site; additional resources including the national School Lunch program, transportation, and the North Dakota State University Extension Program; increased assistance from partnerships and the business community, including additional monetary contributions/materials and volunteers; and meeting and activity space.
11. NESC continues to maintain appropriate documentation for employees as evidenced by timesheets, background checks, etc. Background checks are conducted for all CCLC staff.

Program Management

1. The grantee's organizational structure remains clearly defined and provides site coordinators to supervise staff and oversee daily programming.
2. NESC staff is provided a comprehensive "Employee Handbook" which includes: program mission and vision, program goals and objectives, program information, dress code, cell phone use, active involvement, curriculum, communication, evening check-out, accident/illness policies, behavioral guidelines, staff development/evaluation, sexual harassment/non-discrimination statements, warnings/dismissal policies, and job descriptions/performance responsibilities. The handbook is updated annually.
3. Student/staff ratios for NESC schools continue to be appropriate for all program activities and meet student needs.
4. The grantee holds quarterly meetings with site coordinators and school principals. Scheduled meetings are published on the NESC website. Furthermore, individual sites hold monthly staff meetings and more frequently if necessary. Detailed agendas are provided for the meetings. Additional time is also allotted at the meetings for ad-hoc questions/discussions.

5. NESC remains committed to promote programs through numerous means including: school newsletters, daily school program/activity schedules, parent/family nights, newspaper articles, “Family Handbook”, “Employee Handbook”, and NESC and school-specific websites.
6. The grantee has one established advisory board for each of the schools in the region; the boards meet at a minimum twice annually. In previous years the grantee acknowledged that some boards needed more parents to act as members, this, however, has not been the case during the last four school years, demonstrating the parent’s interest in the program.
7. The NESC continues to provide a monitoring document which is reviewed during annual fall meetings of site coordinators and principals. Typically, site coordinators submit monitoring documentation to the Project Director for review; the Project Director then visits each site using the monitoring document as the focus for discussion; followed by site-specific reports completed by the Project Director. The reports include specific requirements and recommendations for compliance.
8. The grantee maintains ongoing documentation of contributions by partners as evidenced by YouthServices.

Staffing and Professional Development

1. The grantee’s Project Director and program staff are highly qualified and competent as demonstrated by their job descriptions/requirements. All new employees are provided an orientation through a site visit. Orientation typically includes: explanation of the program, program requirements, registration, program hours, care of materials, managing homework and specific skills, YouthServices.net training, and transportation. Through quarterly meetings with site coordinators and principals all aspects of the program are reviewed to assure compliance with the grant requirements.
2. As discussed earlier, all employees must pass appropriate background checks.
3. Generally, staff evaluations are conducted periodically by principals to provide them with clear feedback for continuous performance improvement. Annually the NESC Project Director conducts program site visits/evaluations, examining such areas as program attendance, staffing, leadership, fiscal management, and program planning/implementation, for example. Each written evaluation also includes staff/program commendations and recommendations for improvement.
4. In addition to the above, in previous years, the NESC 21st Century Project Director was also evaluated on an annual basis. The written evaluation, based on a series of Likert scale ratings and areas for additional comments, were completed by individual site coordinators, school principals, and the NESC Executive Director. Program areas examined included: general leadership, staff relations, cooperative procedures, student programs, public relations, and project direction/fiscal management. Although no Project Director evaluation was conducted during the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school-years, plans are to perhaps re-introduce the practice for the 2018-19 school-year.

5. During site visits staff were observed to be particularly sensitive to culture and language disparities. The grantee provides ongoing training relating to sensitivity of culture and language disparities.
6. NESC staff is provided handbooks and policies/procedures (“Employee Handbook”) and is aware and can explain the relationship between program goals and the activities carried out to reach the goals. NESC assesses staff training needs quarterly and provides appropriate professional development based on the results of the assessments. Professional development, for example, included STEM-related MindWorks training and updates for YouthServices. In addition, during the 2017-18 school year, 20-plus staff, including teachers, attended/participated in the annual July/August CCLC statewide conference.

Partnerships

1. NESC recruits and retains partners to address unmet needs. Partners include a variety of public, private, and governmental sector agencies. The grantee currently enjoys numerous partners including the following:

7 Generations, American Legion, Benson County Extension, Benson County Press, Devils Lake Fire Department, Devils Lake High School BLAB program (volunteer program), Devils Lake Journal, Devils Lake Police Department and School Resource Office, Gateway to Science (STEM Zone), Girl Scouts, Dakota Horizons, Girl Scouts of America, Good Samaritan Center, Good Samaritan Society, Heartland Care Center, High School Cross Country Program (coach and parents), Jeanne Aasand, Lake Region State College Tech Simulator Program, Medicine Horse Counseling, Minnewaukan Community Club, Minnewaukan Fire Department, Relay for Life, Rolla FCCLA, Rolla FFA, Rolla Park District, Salvation Army, Sara Plemel, School Resource Officer, Sex Education Program (Spirit Lake), Spirit Lake Health Center, Spirit Lake Victim Assistance Program, Sweetwater PTO, The Hope Center, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Sully’s Hill Game Preserve, and the VFW Ladies Auxiliary.
2. NESC partners are aware of the afterschool goals and objectives. The grantee collaborates/communicates regularly with partners and seeks input from them. NESC acknowledges partners via school-specific letters and newsletters informing/updating them on programs/activities and thanking them for their continued support.
3. During the 2017-18 school year the grantee did not subcontract with any individuals/organizations.

Center Operations

1. NESC application forms, program hours, schedules, locations, activities, services, etc. continue to be available and promoted through various methods, including: school-specific activity schedules, school newsletters, open houses for students/families, student/family nights, the grantee's website, Facebook, and school-specific websites.
2. Standards of behavior for participants are communicated clearly and encourage parental involvement. These standards are provided in the "Family Handbook." Departures from these standards are documented and reported to the site coordinator and parent/guardian. A letter sent to the parent/guardian describes the behavior in question and asks them to discuss and correct the behavior exhibited by the participant.
3. NESC continues to promote parental involvement in decision making regarding program operations and provides activities for student families as evidenced by annual parent meetings, membership on advisory boards, and family fun nights (book fairs, suppers, carnivals, book walk, math/math bingo, smart board activities, Legos/robotics presentations, etc.).

Programming/Activities

1. The grantee provides a variety of evidence-based academic and enrichment programs/activities. During the 2017-18 school-year, for example, one site offered a "Lego Robotic Academy", a class held two days a week for four weeks. The Academy/class emphasized the science, technology, engineering, and math components of the Lego Robotic approach. In addition to such unique offerings, typically, students participate in an array of ongoing programs/activities including math, reading, science, homework help/tutoring, technology units, arts, music, character education, and numerous recreational activities. All grades place emphasis on reading, language arts, math, science, and technology. Programs are targeted and based on student need.
2. All programs/activities have an excellent schedule, flow, and duration, and are based on student needs and interests. Generally, schools within the NESC begin the afterschool program at approximately 3:30pm when a snack is provided; followed by 20 minutes of physical activity; then approximately one hour or slightly more of time dedicated to math, reading, spelling homework, and enrichment activities; followed by approximately one-half hour of hands-on computer time and games. However, each school decides on daily schedules based on student and family situations. Eight of the nine NESC sites met the mandated objective requiring that more than 65.0% of daily programming offered at each site be of high quality in the core academic areas of reading/literacy, math, science, technology/computer, and art/music. For the site that did not meet the requirement, discussions with the Project Director focused on whether data entered into YouthServices.net was in fact correct. Seemingly some of the subject category data may have been incorrectly entered into areas other than the core academic areas, specifically, into "health/nutrition." Based on program schedules, lesson plans, and site visits to the region's schools, it is likely that the requirement was met. (Note that 64.7% of total hours for that site related to the required core academic areas).

3. NESC day school and afterschool teachers continue to collaborate/communicate verbally and via written documentation at least weekly regarding specific assistance that individual afterschool students need. The specific assistance is typically academic tutoring and/or social skill development.
4. NESC began using WeDo LEGO Education programming in 2013-14 and further developed the program in subsequent years, specifically by continuing to train staff for more effective program use. The WeDo concept helps teach in what manner technology plays an active role in the students' everyday life. The programming is best fit for teaching various topics/subjects at primary levels including literacy, science, math, technology, and engineering. For example, science related learning processes include: working with simple machines, gears, levers, pulleys and exploring various other science topics. Targets are also provided for math, literacy, engineering, technology, and computing. Besides WeDo LEGO, the grantee has been using MindWorks at all sites (required for summer programming) since the 2016-17 school-year, with additional staff training provided during 2017-18. MindWorks (an afterschool curriculum which includes teacher guides complete with objectives based on the common core standards; pre-and post-tests; comprehensive project based learning (PBL) components; and materials kits for hands on learning). Typically, students participate in a different subject each week such as: Math Matters (math), Around the World (social studies), Art in Action (art), Exploration (science), Bring on the Books (reading), and Spreading the Word (language). In addition, NESC also uses MANGO Math, a lesson-based curriculum which help students learn and practice essential skills needed to succeed in math and teaches critical thinking skills that allows students to become life-long learners by teaching them how to think analytically and conceptually. Other curriculums include Reader's Theater Jr., and Stemfinity.
5. Many of the grantee sites also employ the "Skillastics" program, an effective and simple means to execute a series of standard-based fitness and sport specific activities that encourage students, regardless of age or ability, to have a positive experience about being physically active. The program complements other afterschool activities by building pro-social competencies (collaboration, problem solving and decision making) and "readies" the brain for tutoring/academics.
6. NESC also offers numerous other "hands-on" activities for students, such as: critical thinking, problem solving, "Art after School"; Relay for Life (service learning), participation with the "Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign", and periodic visits to nursing homes during which they provide music and/or reading for residents.
7. The program continues to accommodate students with special needs as supported by registration/attendance records.

Health and Safety

1. NESC area school essential health and safety issues are attended to as required; for example: safe spaces/areas for program activities, daily nutritional snacks, addressing unique health issues (such as allergies), clearly defined procedures for participant pick-ups, emergency contact

information and readiness plans, and internet access (firewall, etc.). The grantee acknowledges that all appropriate staff is/will be certified in first aid/CPR “sometime” during the school year. At least one afterschool staff certified in first aid and CPR is always present at each NESC site.

2. Fire/safety drills are conducted at all CCLC program sites during program times.
3. NESC houses programs in safe and accessible facilities/environments (schools). Family members/visitors of the afterschool programs have access to the school by only a single entrance, one which is typically staffed by an individual who “checks-in” persons entering the school or has a controlled access feature where family members/visitors are “buzzed-in.”
4. NESC continues to update their emergency readiness plan and has provided the plan to staff/students/families. The instant alert system includes telephone calls, text messaging, e-mail, and radio broadcasts, among others. Furthermore, community law enforcement is aware that afterschool programs are in session before and/or after the regular school-day starts/finishes, should any security/safety issues arise.

Evaluation/Measuring Outcomes

1. NESC has adopted an evaluation processes collecting both qualitative and quantitative information. During the 2017-18 school year each of the grantees’ sites conducted the YouthServices-based teacher survey and SurveyMonkey-based partner, parent, student, and teacher surveys.
2. The grantee plans to provide feedback from completed surveys to staff during their November 2018 staff meeting. Such feedback offers staff and other stakeholders’ useful information to be used in delivering fundamental CCLC programs and services. These stakeholders have an investment in programs and services and greatly influence what can and will be accomplished, consequently their input and providing feedback to them is critical in achieving successful outcomes. Effective feedback also encourages stakeholders to buy-into the program while lack or ineffective methods of feedback most often lead to program indifference.
3. NESC continues to collect and share site-specific stories and photos about the afterschool program’s impact on the students/families, generally in newsletters or newspaper articles. In addition to these stories/pictures, the grantee’s schools share and request promising practices internally and among the remaining regions in the state.

Strengths

1. NESC staff and programs are committed to bring the afterschool program and community together to shape a learning environment which encourages students to reach their full potential and live a quality life. Their organizational structure continues to be clearly defined and provides site coordinators to supervise staff and oversee daily programming. Furthermore, the Project Director and program staff are highly qualified as demonstrated by their job descriptions/requirements. All new staff participates in staff orientation through a site visit.
2. The grantee holds quarterly meetings with site coordinators and school principals. Scheduled meetings are published on the NESC website. Furthermore, individual sites hold monthly staff meetings and more frequently if necessary. Detailed agendas are provided for the meetings. Additional time is also allotted at the meetings for ad-hoc questions/discussions.
3. Generally, staff evaluations are conducted periodically by principals to provide them with clear feedback for continuous performance improvement. Annually the NESC Project Director conducts program site visits/evaluations, examining such areas as program attendance, staffing, leadership, fiscal management, and program planning/implementation, for example.
4. All programs/activities have an excellent schedule, flow, and duration, and are based on student needs and interests. The program also provides numerous opportunities for parent/family activities including annual parent meetings and family fun nights. Family nights are held periodically.
5. The grantee provides a variety of evidence-based academic and enrichment programs/activities. Students participate in an array of programs/activities including math, reading, science, homework help/tutoring, science/technology, arts, music, character education, and numerous recreational activities. Programs are targeted and based on student need. Examples of complementary educational programming include: WeDo LEGO, MindWorks, MANGO Math, and Skillastics, among others.
6. NESC day school and afterschool teachers continue to collaborate/communicate verbally and via written documentation at least weekly regarding specific assistance that individual afterschool students need. The specific assistance is typically academic tutoring and/or social skill development.
7. The grantee has one established advisory board for each of the schools in the region; the boards meet regularly. In previous years the grantee acknowledged that some boards needed more parents to act as members, this, however, has not been the case during the last three school years, demonstrating the parent's interest in the program.

8. NCEC houses programs in safe and accessible facilities/environments (in schools). Family members/visitors of the afterschool program have access to the school by only a single entrance, one which is typically staffed by an individual who “checks-in” persons entering the school or has a controlled access feature where family members/visitors are “buzzed-in.”
9. The grantee continues to improve their evaluation processes including collecting and feeding-back qualitative and quantitative information to selected stakeholders. The information includes YouthServices-based teacher surveys and SurveyMonkey-based partner, parent, student, and teacher surveys. Plans are to provide feedback from completed surveys to staff during their November 2018 staff meeting.

Opportunities for Improvement and Timeframes for Action

The following recommendations are based on the information/observations/discussions provided/made during the MQIT completion and site visit phases of the NESC visit. A majority of these recommendations are based on 21st CCLC grant award requirements. The following should be addressed and completed during the 2018-19 school year.

1. NESC continues to provide quality programs at their sites. Students and families benefit from an experienced and dedicated staff, community involvement, and agency partners. The challenge is to maintain the positive qualities of the program, explore new means to potentially enhance the program, and maintain a dedicated and knowledgeable staff to offer and provide the best for the program’s attendees, families, and other stakeholders.
2. Although the grantee plans to provide feedback from completed YouthServices and SurveyMonkey-based surveys to staff during their November 2018 staff meeting, they should also consider providing similar feedback to other stakeholders, such as teachers, parents, and partners. Providing feedback to these stakeholders offers them useful information to be used in delivering fundamental CCLC programs and services. These stakeholders have an investment in programs and services and greatly influence what can and will be accomplished; consequently, their input and providing feedback to them is critical in achieving successful outcomes. Effective feedback also encourages stakeholders to buy-into the program while lack or ineffective methods of feedback most often lead to program indifference.