



# **SOAR: Southwest Outreach Academic Research Evaluation and Policy Center**

## **New Mexico 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Statewide Evaluation Mid - Year Report Fall 2023**

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## Executive Summary

The New Mexico State University SOAR Evaluation and Policy Center partnered with the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) to conduct a statewide evaluation of this afterschool and summer program. The goals of this evaluation are to examine the impact that the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program has on students and to assess participation demographics and activities. This report summarizes Fall 2023 participation, initial academic performance, and student engagement among 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC schools.

### *Who Participated?*

- During the Fall 2023 semester, a total of 8,068 students participated, up from 7,966 students in the Fall 2022 report and 6,986 in the Fall 2021 report. A near equal portion of males and females participated, with 81% Hispanic or Latino and almost all (95%) who qualified for free or reduced-price lunch.

### *How did Students Engage?*

- Over the course of the semester, students engaged in 600,196 hours of activities (up from 547,001 hours the prior fall). The top activity categories included Healthy and Active Lifestyle (151,724 hours), Academic Enrichment (150,179 hours), and STEM activities (125,913 hours).

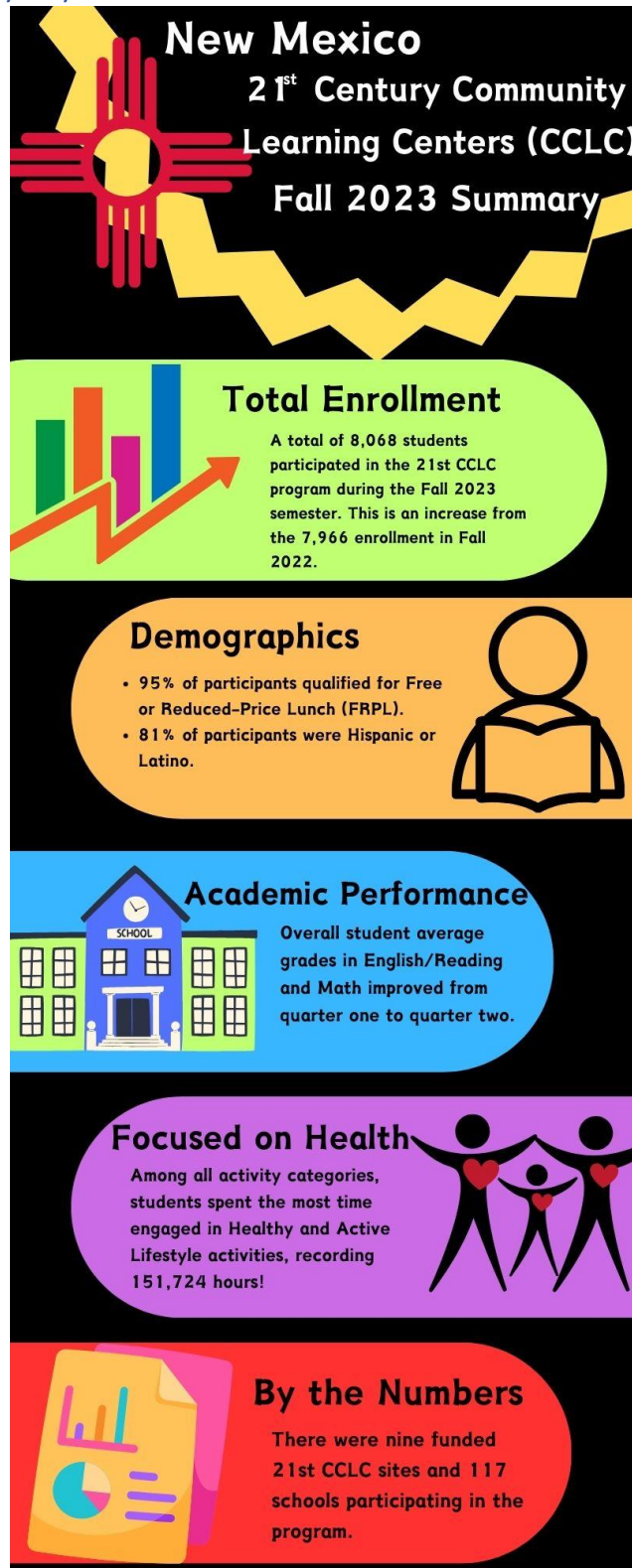
### *What were Initial Student Math and English Grades? How did Different Demographics Perform?*

- Across all students combined, there were increases in average math and English grades from quarter one to quarter two, with more pronounced improvements in math. Many, but not all, student sub-groups grew in their average grades in these two subjects from quarter one to quarter two.
- Students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch and English Learners had lower averages than their counterparts across both time points for both subjects, but these students grew in both subjects and time points as well. Hispanic or Latino students had higher averages than students who are not Hispanic or Latino as well.

### *Preliminary Findings*

- Participation in the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program has consistently increased in the last few Fall reports, and with the increase in students engaged, the number of activity hours has greatly increased, too. Students have shown great interest in activities that focus on academic enrichment, STEM, and healthy and active lifestyles.
- It is worth noting that the academic performance for students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, English Learners, and American Indian or Native Alaskan students is lower than their peers across both subjects of focus. Hispanic students outperformed those who are not Hispanic, but there is still a need to continue to offer academic supports to many students across the state.

## One Page Publicity Flyer



## Introduction and Purpose of Report

The SOAR Evaluation and Policy Center at New Mexico State University partnered with the New Mexico Public Education Department to perform a statewide evaluation of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) that examines student outcomes, program characteristics, and comparisons between this program and other afterschool and extended instructional time models across the state. Findings are also meant to help identify best practices for supporting students in after school settings. This report presents mid-year data collected during the 2023-2024 academic year. Data were pulled for students in the new 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC cohort that began in the 2021-2022 academic year and includes those who were active from August 15, 2023 to December 31, 2023.

This report focuses primarily on demographics of students who participated in 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC, with discussion of student engagement and the types of activities that were the most popular and presents an initial look at student grades. The final report for the year will summarize student, teacher, and parent survey feedback that is currently being collected and will present similar demographic data for students in other programs under the Community Schools and Extended Learning Time Bureau. NMSU Institutional Review Board approval was obtained for this evaluation.

## Program Requirements

The Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) is a federal program that offers students high quality afterschool activities in a variety of areas, including STEM enrichment, college and career readiness, and arts, among others. The federal goals for the program are:

*To establish community learning centers that help students in high-poverty, low performing schools meet academic achievement standards; to offer a broad array of additional services designed to complement the regular academic program; and to offer families of participating students opportunities for education development.*

This program requires that sites track student enrollment very closely, including the demographics of those who participate, detailed information about what activities they engage in and for how many minutes, and that sites survey their students, parents, and teachers about the quality and impact of the program. Additionally, student grades in English and math are collected four times per year. Elementary and secondary schools are eligible for funding, as are community-based organizations that can deliver the program as intended and obtain key outcome data required for reporting.

## Continuous Quality Improvement

A key component of the New Mexico 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program is a partnership with a Quality Management Consultant (QMC) team. This group works closely with sites and grantees to help ensure that they are entering the required data and using data to inform decision making and goal setting. Sites are required not only to set goals and monitor progress, but to update provided templates that outline progress toward each goal and to create an action plan if their goals are not achieved. These templates help facilitate data driven decision making across the state, and the sites regularly meet with their QMC consultants to achieve continuous monitoring and use of data throughout the year.

## Guiding Evaluation Questions

The statewide evaluation focuses primarily on the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC and is guided by research questions that look closely at who is participating in the program, what are their outcomes, and what stakeholders are saying about their program experience. Additionally, a report that will be produced at the end of the year will assess the five Government Performance and Results Act (GPRAs), which are required data that are reported to the federal government each year.

### Research Questions

The guiding questions for the current evaluation include the following and are still being refined as the evaluation continues and the team learns about what data are obtainable.

#### *Overview of Participants and Program Characteristics:*

- 1) Among 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC and other Community Schools and Extended Learning Time Bureau participants:
  - a) What are the demographics of students who participate in these programs?
    - a. This includes breakdowns for gender, race, ethnicity, and free/reduced price lunch status. What are the numbers and percents of each?
  - b) What activities do students engage in the most often and for the most amount of time?
    - a. Looking at attendance, what activities are the most popular in terms of the total time engaged in the activities?

#### *Student Outcomes*

- 2) Among 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC sites, do students improve in their math and English/reading performance during the year?
  - a) Are there differences in academic performance and changes by demographic groups?

#### *Deeper Dive into 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC with Rich Survey Data*

- 3) Among 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs:
  - a) What feedback are the stakeholders providing about what is working well in their 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs?
  - b) What feedback are the stakeholders providing about what the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program can do to better serve students and their communities?
  - c) What are the best practices identified and main recommendations that can be gleaned from these analyses to inform the NMPED about how to more effectively serve their students?

### 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC GPRAs

The federal government identified five Government Performance and Results Act (GPRAs) for the current grantees, down from 14 in the last five-year cycle. The current report does not explore these data, but for reference, this cycles GPRA's are:

- 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.
- 2) 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 demonstrated an improved GPA.
- 3) 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% in the prior school year and who demonstrated an improved attendance rate in the current school year.
- 4) Percentage of students in grades 1-12 attending 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who experienced a decrease in in-school suspensions compared to the previous school year.
- 5) Percentage of students in grades 1-5 participating in 21st CCLC programming in the school year and summer who demonstrated an improvement in teacher reported engagement in learning.

## Who is Participating?

### Sites

There are nine funded 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC sites, with the NMSU STEM Center serving as a hub for six districts in southern New Mexico. Within these sites are 117 schools participating in the program. Several sites are also around Albuquerque and Santa Fe, but there are many sites participating that are in the southern part of the state as well. The districts and community-based organizations that are part of the current 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program are:

- AppleTree Educational Center
- Boys & Girls Club of Central New Mexico
- Community for Learning
- Espanola Public Schools
- Farmington Municipal Schools
- Gadsden Independent School District (NMSU)
- Hatch Valley Public Schools (NMSU)
- Hobbs Municipal Schools (NMSU)
- Las Cruces Public Schools (NMSU)
- Lordsburg Municipal Schools (NMSU)
- Raíces del Saber Xinachtli (NMSU)
- Rio Grande Educational Collaborative
- Santa Fe Public Schools
- South Valley Preparatory School

### Student Demographics

The first part of the report presents demographic information for the 8,068 students (up from 7,966 students last fall) who participated in 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC activities during the Fall 2023 semester.

Table 1 shows a breakdown of participants by grade level. Most students are in first through fifth grade, as these students combined make up almost 70 percent of the group. High school grades (nine through 12) had the lowest makeup of the group but still participated in the program.

**Table 1***Demographics of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Participants: Grade Level*

	Count	Percent
<b>PK or K</b>	603	8%
<b>1</b>	868	11%
<b>2</b>	1,057	13%
<b>3</b>	<b>1,194</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>4</b>	1,134	14%
<b>5</b>	1,212	15%
<b>6</b>	764	10%
<b>7</b>	487	6%
<b>8</b>	481	6%
<b>9</b>	96	1%
<b>10</b>	60	<1%
<b>11</b>	64	<1%
<b>12</b>	48	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,068</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Gender

Table 2 provides a breakdown of participants by gender. The split was nearly equal, with a slightly higher portion of females (52%) than males.

**Table 2***Demographics of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Participants: Gender*

	Count	Percent
<b>Female</b>	<b>4,183</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>Male</b>	3,869	48%
<b>Other</b>	16	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,068</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Ethnicity

Data presented in Table 3 below identifies participants by reported ethnicity. A total of 6,569 Hispanic or Latino students represent 81% of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC participants.

**Table 3***Demographics of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Participants: Ethnicity*

	Count	Percent
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	<b>6,569</b>	<b>81%</b>
<b>Not Hispanic or Latino</b>	1,449	18%
<b>Unknown</b>	50	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,068</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Race

The most common race reported was White (74 percent of all students), with Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander and Asian students having the smallest numbers. Table 4 provides the count and percent of participants by race.



**Table 4***Demographics of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Participants: Race*

	Count	Percent
<b>American Indian or Native Alaskan</b>	312	4%
<b>Asian</b>	41	1%
<b>Black or African American</b>	214	3%
<b>More than One Race</b>	175	2%
<b>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</b>	26	<1%
<b>Some Other Race</b>	1,160	14%
<b>White</b>	<b>5,975</b>	<b>74%</b>
<b>Unknown</b>	165	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,068</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Lunch Status

Almost all students (7,663; 95%) qualify for the federal free or reduced price lunch program, while few do not qualify. These data are provided in Table 5 below.

**Table 5***Demographics of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Participants: Free and Reduced Price Lunch Status*

	Count	Percent
<b>Qualify for FRPL</b>	<b>7,663</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Unknown</b>	78	1%
<b>Do Not Qualify for FRPL</b>	327	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,068</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Student Engagement

The next section of the report presents the activities that students engaged in during the Fall 2023 semester. Table 6 provides data consisting of how many hours were spent, by the students, on each activity. A total of 600,196 hours were recorded, which is an increase from 547,001 hours in last Fall's report. The categories in which students engaged in the most were the *Healthy and Active Lifestyle* and *Academic Enrichment* activities, with more than 150,000 hours each during the Fall. A visual is also provided in Figure 1 which highlights the top five activities in which students engaged. The numbers below also include family activities that are for students and their parents/caregivers as well.

**Table 6**

*Student Engagement: Hours Spent on Each Activity*

Activity Category	Hours
<b>Healthy and Active Lifestyle</b>	151,724
<b>Academic Enrichment</b>	150,179
<b>Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics</b>	125,913
<b>Well-rounded Education Activities</b>	77,018
<b>Literacy Education</b>	44,056
<b>Activities for English Learners</b>	38,782
<b>Career Competencies and Career Readiness</b>	11,023
<b>Parenting Skills and Family Literacy</b>	635
<b>Assistance to Students who have been Truant, Suspended, or Expelled</b>	539
<b>Other</b>	209
<b>Cultural Programs</b>	109
<b>Drug and Violence Prevention and Counseling</b>	9
<b>Total</b>	600,196

**Figure 1**  
*Student Engagement: Top Five Activities*



### Student Grades

First and second quarter English/reading and math grades for the students who participated in 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC during the Fall semester were collected and converted to numerical scores. The numerical range is 1 through 13 which corresponds to letter grades F through A+, respectively. Changes in quarter one to quarter two scores were compared for all students and then broken down by demographic groups. Note that the numbers in the next tables only include students who had a grade for both quarter one and quarter two. The grade to number equivalencies are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7**  
*Grade and Numerical Conversions*

Letter Grade	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
EZReports Scale	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

## Student English/Reading Scores and Math Scores Overall

A summary of the English/reading scores is provided in Table 8. Overall, average grades increased slightly from quarter one to quarter two, with many, but not all, sub-groups seeing small gains as well. A visual (Figure 2) is provided at the end of the report which captures the number of hours students spent engaged in literacy education activities.

**Table 8**

*English/Reading Performance Changes – Quarter One to Quarter Two*

	Quarter One			Quarter Two	
	N	Average	Standard Deviation	Average	Standard Deviation
<b>All Students</b>	5,140	7.27	3.05	7.38	2.98
<b>Females</b>	2,617	7.46	3.02	7.62	2.97
<b>Males</b>	2,515	7.08	3.05	7.14	2.98
<b>Other</b>	8	Low N	-	Low N	-
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	4,337	7.28	2.99	7.39	2.94
<b>Not Hispanic or Latino</b>	775	7.17	3.33	7.28	3.19
<b>Unknown</b>	28	8.11	3.51	8.07	3.23
<b>American Indian or Native Alaskan</b>	259	6.57	3.06	6.80	3.00
<b>Asian</b>	22	9.23	3.31	8.32	3.44
<b>Black or African American</b>	125	6.81	3.48	6.87	3.29
<b>More Than One Race</b>	129	7.19	2.95	6.71	2.82
<b>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</b>	20	6.05	2.26	5.75	2.97
<b>Some Other Race</b>	852	7.29	3.24	7.12	3.28
<b>White</b>	3,597	7.30	2.98	7.50	2.89
<b>Unknown</b>	136	8.15	2.87	8.01	2.77
<b>Free/Reduced Price Lunch</b>	4,776	7.23	2.99	7.34	2.95
<b>Not FRPL</b>	298	7.50	3.82	7.66	3.35
<b>Unknown</b>	66	9.24	2.89	9.06	3.01
<b>English Learner</b>	1,250	6.84	2.92	6.95	2.87
<b>Not English Learner</b>	3,722	7.39	3.09	7.49	3.02
<b>Unknown</b>	168	7.86	2.64	8.04	2.59

Finally, in looking at math scores, Table 9 also shows overall growth in this subject, with slightly more pronounced changes compared to English/reading. More student sub-groups also grew in math compared to English/reading.

**Table 9**

*Math Performance Changes – Quarter One to Quarter Two*

	Quarter One			Quarter Two	
	N	Average	Standard Deviation	Average	Standard Deviation
<b>All Students</b>	5,126	7.27	3.04	7.46	3.01
<b>Females</b>	2,607	7.31	3.01	7.56	2.96
<b>Males</b>	2,511	7.22	3.06	7.36	3.06
<b>Other</b>	8	Low N	-	Low N	-
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	4,323	7.30	2.98	7.47	2.98
<b>Not Hispanic or Latino</b>	775	7.06	3.36	7.42	3.19
<b>Unknown</b>	28	7.64	3.23	7.57	3.40
<b>American Indian or Native Alaskan</b>	259	6.48	3.27	6.93	3.06
<b>Asian</b>	22	8.05	3.39	8.91	2.76
<b>Black or African American</b>	124	6.57	3.19	6.83	3.40
<b>More Than One Race</b>	129	7.04	2.95	7.46	3.29
<b>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</b>	20	6.05	2.91	6.50	2.80
<b>Some Other Race</b>	852	7.27	3.26	7.19	3.12
<b>White</b>	3,587	7.33	2.95	7.55	2.95
<b>Unknown</b>	133	8.05	2.87	8.31	2.97
<b>Free/Reduced Price Lunch</b>	4,762	7.24	2.99	7.42	2.99
<b>Not FRPL</b>	298	7.39	3.67	7.78	3.38
<b>Unknown</b>	66	8.56	2.98	8.62	2.91
<b>English Learner</b>	1,245	7.07	2.87	7.21	2.96
<b>Not English Learner</b>	3,712	7.30	3.11	7.51	3.04
<b>Unknown</b>	169	8.01	2.49	8.14	2.62

**Figure 2**  
*Student Engagement: Literacy Education*

