

2019 – 2020 PrePrep21 21st Century Program



Annual Evaluation Report
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Executive Summary

The Niagara Falls City School District (NFCSD) was awarded a Round 7 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) grant from the New York State Education Department (NYSED) in the summer of 2017 to provide out-of-school time programming to students at four sites:

- Harry F. Abate Elementary School (Abate)
- Hyde Park Elementary School (Hyde Park)
- Henry J. Kalfas Elementary School (Kalfas)
- Niagara Street Elementary School (Niagara Street)

This evaluation report focuses on information related to Year 3 (2019-2020) of NFCSD's elementary 21st CCLC Program, called PrePrep21. It includes information about program design, the evaluation framework and plan, evaluation findings, progress toward objectives, and recommendations.

PrePrep21 provided programming to students in grades 3-6. Overall, the program at each site operated at least 8.5 hours each week, with a blend of academic enrichment and enrichment or recreation activities offered each day of program before and after school. School-day counseling was offered by a local psychologist for 1 hour each week at two sites based on need. Programming was also provided to students during the summer at each site.

Key findings for this program year include:

- PrePrep21 generally operated as designed in the grant application and according to the program logic model;
- 314 participants attended 30 or more hours of programming (the usual NYSED participation requirement), falling short of the target of 360;
- 460 participants attended 15 or more hours of programming (the reduced NYSED participation requirement due to the COVID-19 pandemic), passing the target of 360;
- 62 (20%) of traditionally-defined participants were regular participants (i.e., attended 90+ hours);
- PrePrep21 met most performance indicators related to program offerings, providing a variety of highly-engaging activities to participants before COVID-19 school closures;
- student and parent surveys indicated overall satisfaction with the program.

The following recommendations are presented for the purpose of program improvement:

- continue to offer a variety of high quality activities in Year 4,
- focus on program recruitment and retention in Year 4,
- continue efforts to increase family involvement, and
- create an instructional alignment plan and continue to work with schools to improve student academic performance.



Program Description

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program (21st CCLC) is a federal grant program provided to states. 21st CCLC funding supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. In general, 21st CCLC programs:

- intend to help students meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math;
- offer students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs; and
- offer literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children.

In the current Round 7 of 21st CCLC funding, NFCSD was awarded two 21st CCLC grants from NYSED in the summer of 2017 to implement their 21st CCLC program at select elementary and preparatory schools in NFCSD. This report focuses on the elementary 21st CCLC program, referred to as PrePrep21, at:

- Harry F. Abate Elementary School (Abate),
- Hyde Park Elementary School (Hyde Park),
- Henry J. Kalfas Elementary School (Kalfas), and
- Niagara Street Elementary School (Niagara Street).



Program Information

PrePrep21 is a multi-site 21st CCLC program operating in a diverse, multicultural, and high-need public school district. PrePrep21 program sites (Abate, Hyde Park, Kalfas, and Niagara Street) serve students in grades 3-6.

The vast majority of the student population at each school is classified as economically disadvantaged. The table below provides school-wide demographic information, by school.

Table 1.

2019-2020 School-Wide Student Demographic Information, by School

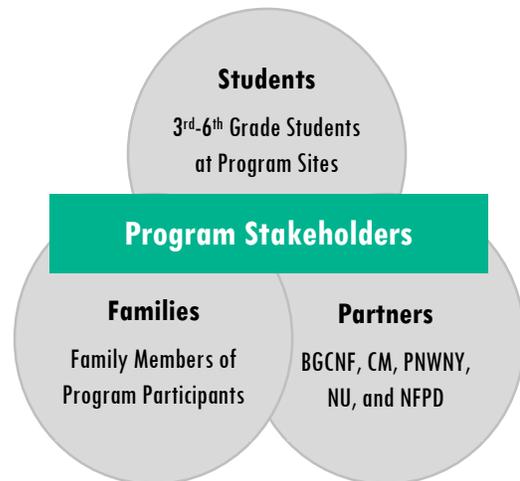
Demographic Indicator	Abate	Hyde Park	Kalfas	Niagara Street
Total Students	713	493	428	633
Grade Levels	3yo-6 th grade	PK-6 th grade	3yo-6 th grade	3yo-6 th grade
Students with a Disability	13%	20%	5%	19%
Econ. Disadvantaged	80%	87%	81%	83%
Limited English Proficient	<1%	0%	7%	<1%

At each site, PrePrep21 provided academic, enrichment, and recreation programming to students in the summer and during the school year to grades 3-6 students. Some school-day counseling was provided to students. Students, their family members, and community partners are the key stakeholders in this project (see Figure 1 to the right).

Partners include: Boys and Girls Club of Niagara Falls (BGCNF), Community Missions of Niagara Frontier (CM), Parent Network of Western New York (PNWNY), Niagara University (NU), and the Niagara Falls Police Department (NFPD).

Figure 1:

PrePrep21 Program Stakeholders





Program Goals and Activities

The mission of the PrePrep21 program is “to reverse the negative academic and social-emotional trends among NFCS D students while supporting their parents and families to improve the future outcomes of all for a stronger, safer, and healthier community.” Program sites were chosen based on a variety of factors, including low academic achievement and chronic absenteeism.

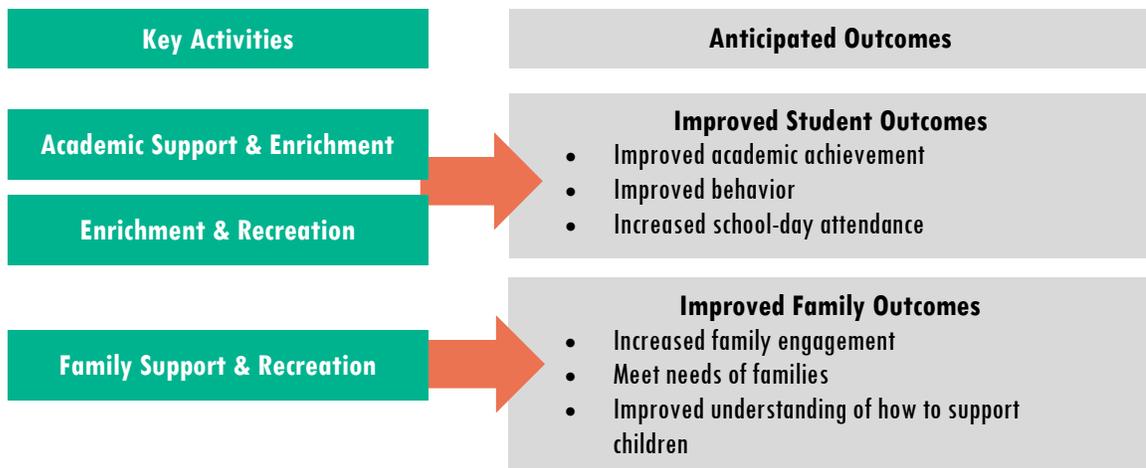
All academic and behavior objectives were written to support student growth in these areas, while aligning to the program’s mission and capacity. The objectives and performance indicators were written in cooperation with the evaluator during the application process to ensure alignment to state and federal objectives.

Program Theory of Change and Logic Model. It is anticipated that PrePrep21 can improve the academic achievement and behavior of participating students by offering a variety of high-quality academic support, enrichment, and recreation activities.

In addition, family support activities are intended to increase family engagement and help family members, meet the needs of families, and improve their understanding of how to support their children in school. The figure below summarizes key activities and outcomes from the program logic model.

Figure 2:

Key Program Activities and Outcomes



The complete program logic model is included as Appendix A. The program logic model was created by the evaluator in cooperation with program staff and stakeholders at the beginning of the program year. The logic model includes a variety of outputs and outcomes. To stay within the evaluation budget, only the items in bold are measured by the external evaluator for the project.



As seen in the attached logic model, academic, behavioral, and family engagement outcomes are expected to result from a variety of high-quality academic, enrichment, and recreation activities. The quality of these activities was assessed through site visits and ongoing discussions between the evaluator and program staff. The specific program goals and indicators are listed in the Evaluation Framework and Plan section.



Evaluation Framework & Plan

NFCSD selected Via Evaluation (VIA) as the project evaluator for this grant. VIA has worked with NFCSD since 1999 and has extensive experience evaluating 21st CCLC and other programs in New York State. The assigned evaluator for this project, Amy Puca, M.A., M.S., had primary responsibility for the evaluation, and was supported by research associates, data entry staff, and other evaluators in completion of the project.

Evaluation Approach

VIA takes a utilization-focused approach to evaluation. This approach emphasizes the involvement of stakeholders in the project development and evaluation process to enhance the usefulness of evaluation. To this end, VIA worked with staff and program stakeholders to:

- create and review the evaluation plan and logic model;
- discuss progress toward objectives;
- create and revise templates for data collection;
- create and review surveys and results;
- compile and analyze program data as soon as available;
- request and analyze district data; and
- generally advise program staff and stakeholders about evaluation, collecting high-quality data, and project outcomes.

VIA and NFCSD district staff collaborated during the application process to write objectives and performance indicators.

The evaluation team participated in quarterly Advisory Council meetings, conducted site observations twice during the program year, and assisted the program with survey administration and analysis. They also completed all required elements in the 21st CCLC Evaluation Manual in addition to providing ongoing consultation; assisting with Annual Performance Report (APR) completion; requesting data from NFCSD; retrieving data from the district; compiling and transforming the data for local, APR, and Annual Evaluation Report (AER) reporting; and conducting appropriate analyses of data.

The evaluation plan was created at the beginning of the project to detail the data to be collected, by date needed and person responsible. The evaluation plan was created to minimize interference with program activities while ensuring sufficient data were collected. It is attached as Appendix B. The evaluation plan was reviewed and agreed upon at the first Advisory Council meeting with stakeholders this year.

The methods of data collection, transformation, and analysis are reported under Sources and Methods, at the end of this section. This report is intended to inform project staff and stakeholders about fidelity of implementation and progress toward project objectives.

The table on the following page details the program objectives and performance indicators. The performance indicators are measured annually for the project.



Table 2.

PrePrep21 Objectives and Performance Indicators

Objective	Performance Indicator
<p>High-quality academic enrichment, with a focus on math and ELA skill development will be provided each afterschool and summer PrePrep21 program day.</p>	<p>Program Offerings</p>
	<p>Each site will offer 1 or more hours of academic enrichment afterschool during the school year each program day.</p>
	<p>Each site will offer 2 or more hours of academic enrichment during the summer each program day.</p>
	<p>The Site Coordinator/Education Liaison (SC/EL) will provide each afterschool teacher with an instructional alignment plan each year.</p>
<p>Engaging and diverse enrichment and recreation activities, inclusive of youth development will be provided each day of the afterschool and summer PrePrep21 program.</p>	<p>Each site will offer 1 or more hours of enrichment or recreation activities after school during the school year each program day.</p>
	<p>Each site will offer 2 or more hours of enrichment or recreation during the summer each program day.</p>
	<p>The PrePrep21 Program will survey students annually about activity preferences.</p>
<p>All PrePrep21 sites will offer an average of 7.5 hours of services to 100% of targeted students services to their parents after school during the school year, and 30 hours of services to 100% of targeted students & services for their parents over the summer, per week.</p>	<p>Afterschool academic and enrichment programming will be provided 2 hours per day after-school, 3 days per week for 30 weeks at each program site. Additionally, select programming will be offered 1 hour before school, up to 5 days per week for 30 weeks at each program site. Academic, enrichment, and recreation programming will be provided 6 hours per day, 5 days per week, for 6 weeks over the summer at each program site.</p>
<p>Community Involvement</p>	
<p>NFCSD PrePrep21 staff will actively engage with program partners and vendors, families, and community members and organizations to increase collaboration opportunities and stakeholders in program planning, implementation, and sustainability, and continuous improvement.</p>	<p>The District Advisory Committee (DAC) will meet quarterly with core PrePrep21 members.</p>
	<p>The PrePrep21 Advisory Committee (AC) will meet quarterly.</p>
	<p>The project team will meet monthly.</p>
	<p>The Prep21 will conduct annual surveys of parents and stakeholders.</p>



Objective	Performance Indicator
Services to Parents and Other Adult Community Members	
Parents of students who participate in PrePrep21 will be offered programming, at each site, that are designed to meet their needs as well as help them meet the needs of their child(ren).	PrePrep21 will offer a minimum of 60 hours of parent/family programming each year. Annually, 75% of parent/family members completing surveys will respond programs they attended met their needs.
Academic Achievement	
Students who consistently participate in the PrePrep21 program who scored below a 3 on the prior year's NYS assessment will increase their Math and ELA scores, and students who scored above a 2 on the prior year's NYS or ELA Math assessment will maintain or increase their Math and ELA proficiency.	Annually, 10% of regular attendees who scored a 1 or 2 on the previous year's Math exam will score a 3 or a 4. Annually, 90% of regular attendees who scored a 3 or 4 on the previous year's Math exam will maintain or improve their score. Annually, 10% of regular attendees who scored a 1 or 2 on the previous year's ELA exam will score a 3 or a 4. Annually, 90% of regular attendees who scored a 3 or 4 on the previous year's ELA exam will maintain or improve their score.
Behavior Change	
Students who consistently participate in the PrePrep21 program will demonstrate increased engagement in school evidenced by improved school-day attendance and a reduction in ODRs.	Annually, 25% of regular attendees who were chronically absent the previous school year will exit chronically absent status in the current school year. Annually, 25% of regular attendees who had ODRs the previous school year will have fewer ODRs in the current school year. Annually, 90% of students who complete the survey will indicate the afterschool program was engaging.



Sources & Methods

This section presents data collection and analysis methods for each type of objective/performance indicator, as well as surveys and site visits.

Program Attendance and Demographic Information

Attendance recorded by site staff was used to calculate student dosage.

Activity-Level Attendance

Activity-level attendance recorded by site staff was used to calculate student dosage. The evaluator calculated final program attendance by summing the total number of hours of program attendance from all program activities.

Demographics

NFCSD provided participant demographic information [e.g., special education status (students with an Individualized Education Plan), economically disadvantaged status, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) status]. Minimal student demographic data was missing.

Program Offerings

To measure the amount of time the program offered activities, VIA reviewed the program schedule and calendar and discussed them with the project director. At site visits, VIA observed the timing and quality of the activities. If any inconsistencies were noted, VIA discussed them with the project team for clarification.

Community Involvement

VIA participated in advisory meetings, and sign-in sheets were collected to monitor stakeholder involvement in meetings. PrePrep21 program staff participated in district-level planning and PrePrep21 staff meetings; they provided dates and meeting minutes to the evaluator.

Services to Families and Other Community Members

The Project Director provided the evaluator with the date, title, and number of hours of each family event offered.

Academic Achievement & Behavior Change

Due to COVID-19 closures, NYS assessments were not conducted this school year. School-day attendance, disciplinary information, and survey results were intended to be used to measure behavior change among program participants. Due to COVID-19 closures in March 2020, attendance and discipline data for this year are not comparable to the prior academic year.



Surveys

PrePrep21 participants and families completed surveys at the end of the program year to assess program satisfaction, gather information about program impact, and gather suggestions for improvement. Multiple surveys were created, including a family survey and a grades 3-8 participant survey. The evaluation team at VIA designed the surveys using best practices in survey design, particularly for youth in out-of-school-time settings. Surveys were aligned to program goals and the language was carefully chosen and simplified for readability based on the age groups.

PrePrep21 administered student and family member surveys in Spring 2020. Student and family surveys were hosted online by VIA. All 720 students who participated in the program were provided an opportunity to complete the student survey, even if they did not reach the 30-hour minimum participation requirement. A total of 33 students (14 at Abate, 12 at Hyde Park, 6 at Kalfas, 1 at Niagara Street) responded to the student survey. There was a disparity in response rates, with Abate and Hyde Park students completing 26 (79%) of the 33 surveys. With so few surveys completed, results are likely not be representative of overall attitudes or needs of students and families.

A total of 20 respondents (6 at Abate, 3 at Kalfas, 6 at Hyde Park, 5 at Niagara Street) completed the family member surveys. For survey analyses presented in this report, multiple response scales were coded into favorable and unfavorable responses (summarized in the table below).

Table 3.

Summarized Survey Response Options, by Response Scale

Response Scales	Favorable Responses		Unfavorable Responses	
Student Agreement	Yes	Kind Of	Not Really	
Family Agreement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Family Frequency	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

Overall student and family survey results for the current program year are included in Appendix C.

Site Visits

VIA conducted one site visit at each program site in Fall 2019. The first visit, as required by the evaluation manual, was a check of evaluability and fidelity of implementation. The program schedule, attendance collection methods, and school-day alignment were reviewed and discussed.

The second visits were not completed this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The second visits were scheduled for the end of March 2020; following school shutdown the second week of the month, no visits were conducted.



Evaluation Findings

This section includes evaluation findings related to:

- program implementation and
- participant academic and behavior change.

Program Implementation

In general, PrePrep21 operated as designed in the grant application and according to the program logic model. Program sites partnered with local community-based organizations to offer academic, enrichment, and recreation activities to students each day of program.

Program staff marketed PrePrep21 to all students at participating sites. Students were also recruited to the program through teacher recommendations.

Site coordinators reported that stronger academic activities were offered to students this year, and that academic activities were aligned to school-day curriculum. School closures related to the COVID-19 pandemic became the greatest challenge for the PrePrep21 program and had a strong negative impact on program participation.

Program Quality

Site Visits

As mentioned earlier in this report, VIA only conducted one site visit at each of the PrePrep21 sites. The visits highlighted positive, respectful relationships between the PrePrep21 staff and students, and meaningful and highly-engaging academic enrichment and enrichment or recreation activities. Activities were innovative and strongly aligned to 21st CCLC. Suggestions for improvement were provided after visits.

Student and Family Feedback

In Year 3, the majority of student and family survey respondents indicated overall satisfaction with the program. As mentioned earlier in this report, student and family member survey results for the current program year are included in Appendix C.

Student

Very few students completed surveys. Survey respondents indicated overall satisfaction with the program. Most like the program (94%), feel that program staff treat them well (100%), and want to come back next year (94%).

The majority of respondents (72%) responded with a “Yes” that they learn new things in this program. A summary of qualitative student feedback is provided in the figure on the next page.



Figure 3:

PrePrep21 Student Feedback Summary

What Students Like Best	Student Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being able to be with their friends.• The different programs that allow them to do sports and activities.• Helping them branch out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer more high-quality food.• Keep offering fun activities and offer new options.• Expand the program to run longer.

Family

Only a few family surveys were completed this year. All believe the program is good for their children. Most report that their children enjoy attending the program (95%), that the program schedule meets their needs (95%), and that they would recommend the program to a friend (95%). Overall, family members reported that they send their children to PrePrep21 for the following reasons:

- An opportunity for their children to try new things and cultivate new skills.
- To help build reading and writing skills.
- Their children expressed interest and parents believed it was in their best interest.

A summary of other qualitative family feedback is provided in the figure below.

Figure 4:

Family Feedback Summary

Family Event Recommendations	Family After-School Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exercise and Yoga• Cooking with your child• Drama and art classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the frequency and duration of program• Offer a greater variety of activity options• More interactions with counselors, and more staff in general.



Program Attendance

PrePrep21 aimed to serve 360 students each year of program—90 at each site. According to NYSED program guidelines, only students who participated in at least 30 hours of program were considered program participants. Regular participants attended 90 or more hours of program. Program participants who attended between 30 and 89 hours of program were defined as “not regular” participants.

In Year 3, 720 students attended at least one PrePrep21 activity. Among the 720 students, 314 (44%) met the NYSED 30-hour participation requirement, falling short of the goal of 360 participants defined in the grant proposal. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this year, though, many students fell short of the requirements. This year, 146 students had 15-29 hours, and an additional 260 had 1-14 hours of programming. In total, there were 460 students (64%) who attended 15 hours or more of programming, which is meaningful this year. Among the 314 participants who met the 30-hour participation requirement, 62 (20%) were regular participants (see Figure 5 below).

Figure 5:

Regular and Total Attendees, Overall and by Site, 2019-2020

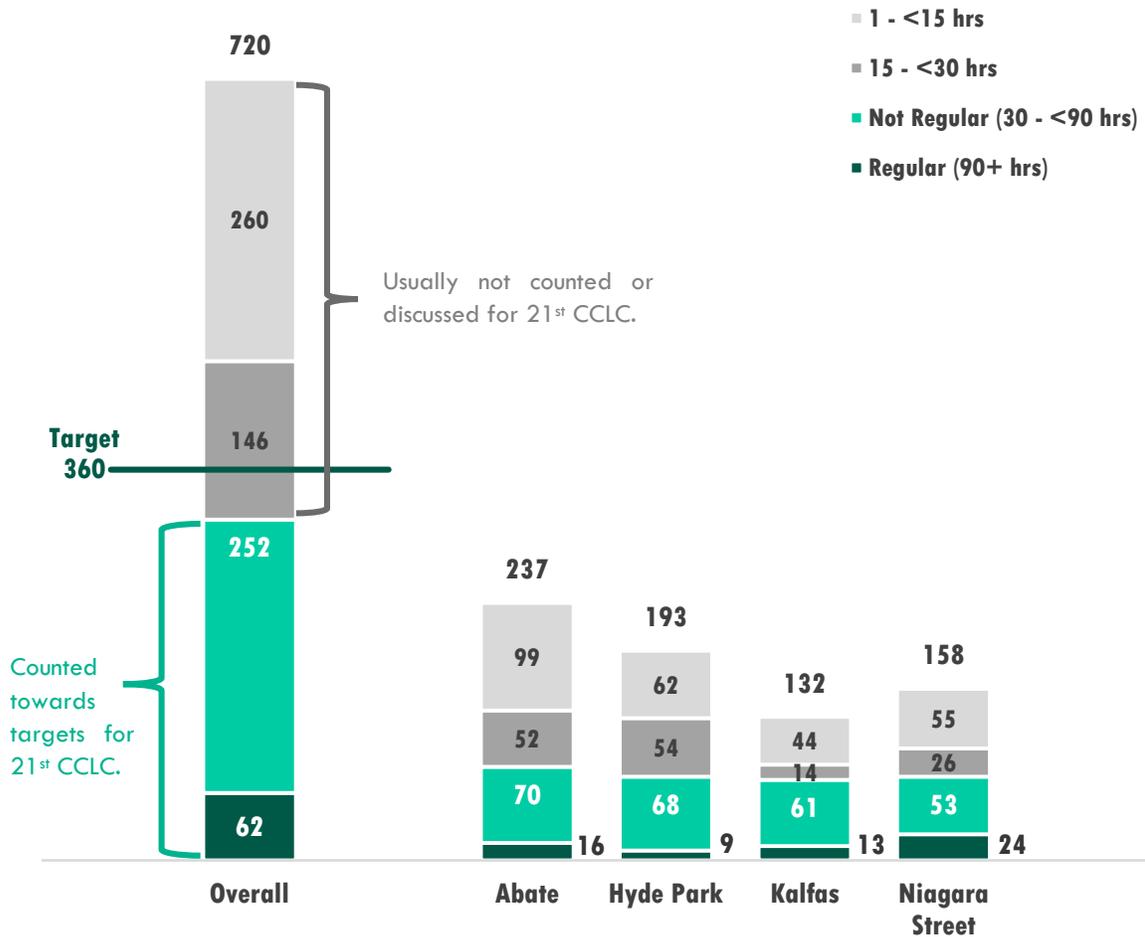


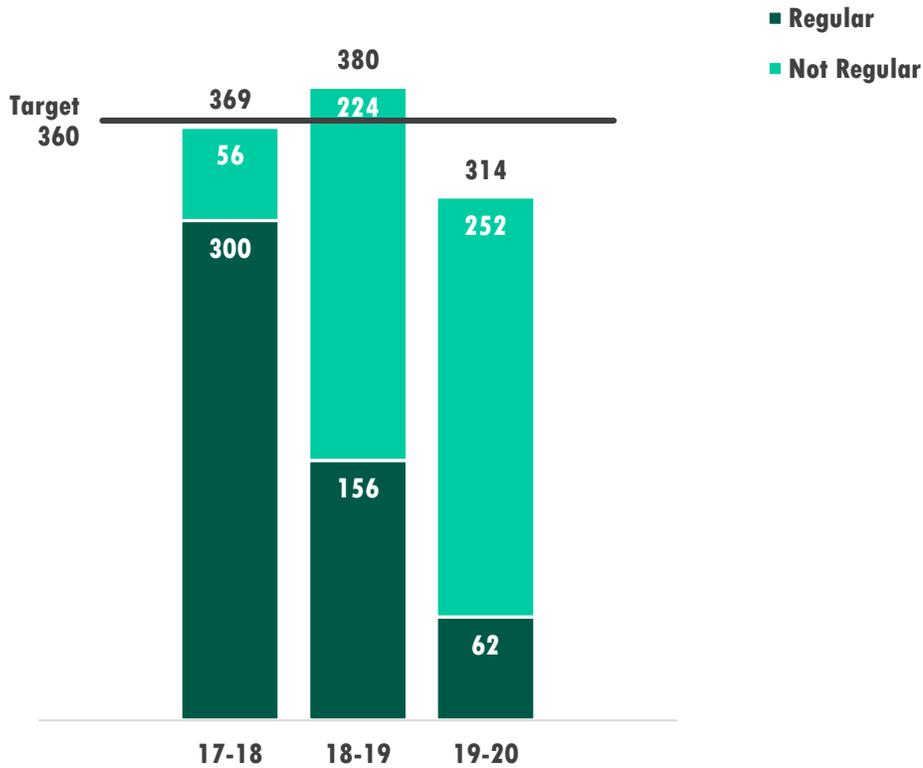


Figure 5 also shows program attendance by site. Abate had the most 30+-hour participants (86) and Kalfas has the least (74); this is to be expected given the relative size of each school’s population. Of the 62 overall regular participants, 16 (26%) attended Abate, 9 (15%) attended Hyde Park, 13 (21%) attended Kalfas, and 24 (39%) attended Niagara Street.

The number of regular and overall participants drastically fell from Year 2 to Year 3, but as previously stated, this is likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the early closure of schools (see Figure 6 below).

Figure 6:

PrePrep21 Program Participation, 2017-2020





Participant Demographics

Grade Levels

Students participated from grade levels 3 through 6 at each site. Participants were mostly evenly distributed across all grade levels, with 5th grade having the most students (29%) and 4th grade having the least (21%). Participation by grade level and site is presented in the table below.

Table 4.

Participant Grade Level, Overall and by Site

Grade Level	Abate	Hyde Park	Kalfas	Niagara Street	Overall
Grade 3	15%	29%	32%	33%	27%
Grade 4	24%	21%	28%	12%	21%
Grade 5	29%	29%	22%	36%	29%
Grade 6	31%	22%	18%	20%	23%
Total Participants with Data	86	77	74	77	314

Gender

As shown in the table below, female students represented 53% (167) of the program participants and males represented 47% (146). Gender data were available for 313 of the 314 program participants.

Table 5.

Participant Gender, Overall and by Site

Gender	Abate	Hyde Park	Kalfas	Niagara Street	Overall
Female	49%	56%	55%	53%	53%
Male	51%	44%	45%	46%	47%
Total Participants with Data	86	77	74	76	313



Special Classifications

As shown in the figure and table below, of the 314 program participants, 19% (58) were classified by NFCSD as Special Education. Students classified as Economically Disadvantaged represented 90% (282) of program participants. Only 6 (2%) of the program participants were classified as LEP students.

Figure 7:

Participants with Special Classifications

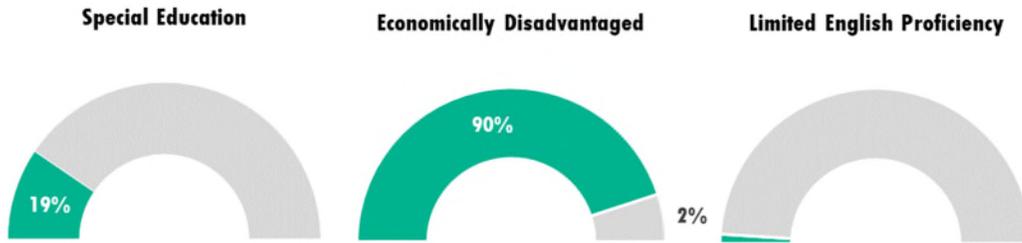


Table 6.

Participants with Special Classifications, Overall and by Site

Special Classification	Abate	Hyde Park	Kalfas	Niagara Street	Overall
Special Education	19%	18%	12%	25%	19%
Economically Disadvantaged	88%	92%	93%	86%	90%
Limited English Proficient	-	1%	7%	-	2%
Total Participants with Data	86	77	74	77	314



Program Implementation Performance Indicator Progress

The table below summarizes PrePrep21 program implementation-related performance indicators, and the status of progress toward meeting each this year. The status is presented in a circle of a corresponding color. The status options are:

-  **Met**
-  **Did not meet, but progressed**
-  **Did not meet**
-  **Unable to Measure**

Table 7.

Performance Indicator Status

Status	Performance Indicator
Program Offerings	
	Each site will offer 1 or more hours of academic enrichment afterschool during the school year each program day.
	Each site will offer 2 or more hours of academic enrichment during the summer each program day.
	The Site Coordinator/Education Liaison (SC/EL) will provide each afterschool teacher with an instructional alignment plan each year.
	Each site will offer 1 or more hours of enrichment or recreation activities after school during the school year each program day.
	Each site will offer 2 or more hours of enrichment or recreation during the summer each program day.
	The PrePrep21 Program will survey students annually about activity preferences.
	Afterschool academic and enrichment programming will be provided 2 hours per day after-school, 3 days per week for 30 weeks at each program site. Additionally, select programming will be offered 1 hour before school, up to 5 days per week for 30 weeks at each program site.
	Academic, enrichment, and recreation programming will be provided 6 hours per day, 5 days per week, for 6 weeks over the summer at each program site.
Community Involvement	
	The District Advisory Committee (DAC) will meet quarterly with core PrePrep21 members.
	The PrePrep21 Advisory Committee (AC) will meet quarterly.
	The project team will meet monthly.
	The PrePrep21 will conduct annual surveys of parents and stakeholders.



Status	Performance Indicator
Services to Families and Other Community Members	
●	PrePrep21 will offer a minimum of 60 hours of parent/family programming each year.
●	Annually, 75% of parent/family members completing surveys will respond programs they attended met their needs.

Program Offerings

PrePrep21 met most performance indicators related to program offerings, and made progress on others in Year 3 before the program ended in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Summer Program

During the summer, the Prep21 program offered services to participants 6 hours per day, 4 days a week, for 4 weeks.

The academic portion of the program ran in the morning from 9am-12pm and included 90 minutes of math followed by 90 minutes of reading and writing. Enrichment activities ran in the afternoon from 12-3pm and included activities such as: Boy Scouts, Intro to Spanish, Soccer, and Yoga to name a few.

School-Year Program

During the school year, all but one of the PrePrep21 programs offered services to participants 2-5 days before school for 1 hour each day and 3 days after school for at least 2 hours each day, for a total of at least 8.5 hours weekly at each site (see the table below). Hyde Park only offered afterschool programming this year. School-day counseling was offered 1 hour a week at 2 sites in Year 3.

Table 8.

PrePrep21 School-Year Weekly Program Hours, by Site

Site	Before School Hours	School-Day Hours	After School Hours	Total Weekly Hours Offered
Abate	1.75	1	6	8.75
Hyde Park	0	0	6	6
Kalfas	4	1	6	11
Niagara Street	3	0	6	9

Academic enrichment and enrichment or recreation activities were typically offered daily for at least 1 hour at each school, including before- and after-school activity offerings. NFCSD teachers facilitated academic activities during the first hour of program. BGCNF facilitated enrichment activities after the first hour of program, typically in the schools.



PrePrep21 offered a variety of academic enrichment and enrichment or recreation activities to participants. A sampling of program activities is provided on the next page.

Figure 8:

PrePrep21 Before- and After-School Program Activities

Academic		Enrichment or Recreation	
• ELA	• Math & Movement	• Arts & Crafts	• Girls/Boys Groups
• Math	• Newspaper Club	• American Sign Language	• Fitness
• Spelling Bee Wizards	• Learn to Type	• Board Games	• Leadership
• Literacy-Based Technology	• STEM Club	• Ambassador's Club	• Photography
	• Book Club		• Swim
			• Yoga & Meditation

Niagara University, a program partner, provided some additional academic enrichment activities, including Literacy/STEM activities and a book club.

Students were also surveyed in Year 3 about activity preferences. Student feedback was discussed earlier in this report.

COVID-19 Closure

After the closure of NFCSD in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some SEL support was offered to Prep21 participants. Counselors called their caseload of students each week and provided a variety of social-emotional support services. However, other virtual ASP activities did not continue. The full ASP operated for 21 weeks from mid-September-mid-March, when schools were closed.

Afterschool Instructional Alignment Plans

The Site Coordinator/Education Liaison (SC/EL) did not provide each afterschool instructor with an instructional alignment plan each year but activities were aligned to the school day and provided students with fun opportunities designed to enrich school-day content.

Youth Development Activities

Boys and Girls Club of Niagara Falls (BGCNF) and Community Missions (CM), program partners, provided PrePrep21 students with opportunities for personal and social growth through student-led groups. These groups focused on preventing at-risk behaviors (SMART Moves); counteracting gang activity and violence (Street SMART); promoting positive perceptions of, and behaviors in, young men (Passport to Manhood); teaching principles of justice, freedom, and democracy (Torch Club); understanding diversity and combating prejudice (Youth for Unity); and promoting positivity and self-confidence in young women (One Circle Girls' Group).

Social Emotional Supports

According to the Project Director, PrePrep21 implemented Check & Connect as a system for monitoring the behavior, academics, and attendance of students who required additional supports. Students who required individualized supports worked with psychologists from



Living Wellness of Niagara, who specialize in providing social-emotional and trauma-informed support to youth. The psychologists assessed student need and made specialized referrals as needed.

Community Involvement

PrePrep21 did not meet all performance indicators related to community involvement but made progress in Year 3.

Advisory Committee Meetings

The Advisory Committee included key stakeholders and met quarterly (see the table below). The Advisory Committee included PrePrep21 and Prep21 (the preparatory 21st CCLC program) stakeholders, including district staff, Project Directors for both programs, Site Coordinators, students, and family members. According to the Project Director, joint meetings were held to facilitate information sharing between the elementary and preparatory programs.

Table 9.

Quarterly Advisory Committee Meetings

Quarter	Meeting Date
Quarter 1	8/28/19
Quarter 2	12/17/19
Quarter 3	3/10/20
Quarter 4	6/16/20 (virtual)

There were four Advisory Committee (AC) meetings in total, with one each quarter. One PrePrep21 parent and student attended one advisory meeting. The parent and student voiced satisfaction with the program at one of the sites. The Site Coordinators present all commented that they were having trouble recruiting more families to attend the advisory meetings.

There was one parent and student present at the last AC meeting in Quarter 4, which was held virtually. The evaluator attended 3 of 4 advisory meetings and provided necessary data updates for each meeting in person, over the phone, and through email.

In June 2019, NYSED released a memo to 21st CCLC grantees to clarify advisory meeting requirements. According to the memo, advisory meetings should be held in July/August, November/December, February/March, and May/June annually. NYSED also provided guidance related to advisory meeting membership:

“Program and partnering administrative staff, school and partnering agency representatives, students, parents and community members should be represented on the program advisory committee



and should have meaningful involvement in program design, planning and assessment. Included in the list of required Advisory Board members is the Local Evaluator.”

PrePrep21 mostly met these requirements. In Year 4, PrePrep21 intends to meet these requirements.

District Advisory Committee Meetings

The District Advisory Committee (DAC) met monthly with core PrePrep21 members, including the Project Director, Superintendent, and other key staff, as appropriate.

Project Team Meetings

According to the Project Director, the PrePrep21 project team met informally as needed but no formal meetings were held for this project year.

According to the Project Director, because Site Coordinators are school-day teachers, it is difficult to hold formal meetings. Due to this challenge, the PrePrep21 project team finds email and document sharing tools to be the most effective forms of communication.

Annual Surveys

PrePrep21 did distribute annual surveys for families, though few responses were received. Improving survey response rates will be a focus in Year 4.



Services to Families and Other Community Members

PrePrep21 did not meet the performance indicators related to the family offerings, though they improved tracking of events in Year 3. According to the Project Director, family offerings will be a focus in Year 4.

Family Offerings

PrePrep21 offered 19 hours of family events and programming, less than the target of 60 hours, but an improvement from 16 hours of activities offered to families in Year 2.

Table 10.

Family Event Offerings

Site	Event Name	Date of Event	Total Event Hours
Niagara Street	Open House	9/4/2019	2.00
Abate	Open House	9/12/2019	2.00
Niagara Street	Parent Tech Night	10/18/2018	2.50
Abate	Family STEAM Night and Vendor Fair	11/14/2019	2.00
Abate	Girl Circle Graduation	12/11/2019	1.00
Niagara Street	Girl Circle Graduation	12/11/2019	1.00
Hyde Park	Girl Circle Graduation	12/12/2019	1.00
Abate	STEM & Literacy Science Fair	12/14/2019	3.75
Kalfas	Girl Circle Graduation	12/16/2019	1.00
Niagara Street	Character Ed Celebration	1/22/2019	0.75
Niagara Street	Family Engagement Night & Auction	5/12/2020	2.00
Overall		11 events	19 hours

Satisfaction with Family Offerings

The following student survey item was used to measure whether or not the Prep21 family programs they attended met their needs.:

- “The after-school family programs are worthwhile.”

Due to low survey response rate (20 respondents), the performance measure might not reflect the opinions of the overall program participants’ families. However, 19 (95%) respondents did report that the program met their needs.



Academic Achievement & Behavior Change

Student outcomes are related to improved academic achievement and behavior change. Student outcome-related performance indicators for PrePrep21 are summarized in the table below with the status of progress toward meeting each this year.

Due to COVID-19 closures, limited data were available to measure academic achievement and behavior change. NYS assessments were not conducted this school year and attendance and discipline data for this year are not comparable to the prior academic year.

Table 11:

Performance Indicator Status

Status	Performance Indicator
Academic Achievement	
●	Annually, 10% of regular attendees who scored a 1 or 2 on the previous year's Math exam will score a 3 or a 4.
●	Annually, 90% of regular attendees who scored a 3 or 4 on the previous year's Math exam will maintain or improve their score.
●	Annually, 10% of regular attendees who scored a 1 or 2 on the previous year's ELA exam will score a 3 or a 4.
●	Annually, 90% of regular attendees who scored a 3 or 4 on the previous year's ELA exam will maintain or improve their score.
Behavior Change	
●	Annually, 25% of regular attendees who were chronically absent the previous school year will exit chronically absent status in the current school year.
●	Annually, 25% of regular attendees who had ODRs the previous school year will have fewer ODRs in the current school year.
●	Annually, 90% of students who complete the survey will indicate the afterschool program was engaging.

Academic Achievement

NYS Math Assessment Performance

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, NYS exams were not administered this year.

NYS ELA Assessment Performance

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, NYS exams were not administered this year.



Behavior Change

School-Day Attendance

This year's school-day attendance could not be reliably compared to last year's attendance due to the early closure of schools from the COVID-19 pandemic.

School-Day Discipline

Disciplinary referrals could not be reliably measured this year due to the early closure of schools from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Student Engagement

The following student survey item was used to measure whether the PrePrep21 program was engaging:

- “I like coming to this program.”

Among the 32 PrePrep21 students who completed the survey, 88% (28) responded that they like coming to the program, just below the goal of 90%.



Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary of Successes and Lessons Learned

PrePrep21 operated generally as designed in the grant application and according to the program logic model. PrePrep21 provided programming to students in grades 3-6. Overall, the program at each site operated for approximately two hours each day, with a blend of academic and enrichment/recreation activities. Summer programming, which included academic and enrichment or recreation activities, was offered to students at each site.

Some social-emotional support was provided by Community Missions' Girls Circle, Young Men's Club, and from psychologists through Living Wellness of Niagara. Boys and Girls Club provided daily recreational enrichment programming and Community Missions facilitated Girls Circles at all PrePrep21 sites or at the 17th Street Boys and Girls Club site.

PrePrep21 staff used evaluation data to inform program decisions and participated in ongoing internal quality monitoring. Program staff communicated regularly to review program implementation, address concerns, and plan program activities. PrePrep21 program staff attended 21st CCLC conferences.

Site visits generally confirmed that the program was operating as intended as a quality 21st CCLC program aligned to state and federal goals. Visits highlighted positive, respectful relationships between the PrePrep21 staff and students, and meaningful and highly-engaging academic enrichment and enrichment or recreation activities. The majority of student and family survey respondents indicated overall satisfaction with the program, in alignment with site visit findings.

Other successes from Year 3 include: strong program partnerships, increased teacher interest in the program, increased family event offerings from the previous program year, and high student engagement while program was offered. SEL support was also offered to select students during COVID-19 school closures.

PrePrep21 also experienced a variety of challenges in Year 3. Prior to the shutdown, transportation and having a late program continued to be a challenge, with young children arriving home late each night.

Offering adequate family activities and tracking these activities also continued to be a challenge in Year 3. There is still a general lack of family participation in advisory meetings and the family feedback survey.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was the greatest PrePrep21 challenge. With all of the uncertainty, PrePrep21 was unable to continue providing academic and enrichment activities after schools closed in March 2020. NFCSD prioritized the implementation of virtual learning for all students in the district. In Year 4, PrePrep21 will need to begin implementing virtual program activities, as necessary, if the COVID-19 pandemic continues



for a large portion of the program year. However, these challenges did not prevent the delivery of high-quality programming while program was offered.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are provided to inform decisions about Year 4 of programming. These recommendations will be discussed with program stakeholders at the first Advisory Committee meeting and can be reviewed and discussed as appropriate throughout the program year.

Continue to offer a variety of high-quality activities in Year 4.

PrePrep21 offered a variety of high-quality academic and enrichment activities in Year 3 and student participation was strong before schools were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Continue to offer a variety of high-quality academic and enrichment activities in Year 4 to carry on the success of the program. Explore the best way to implement virtual program activities.

Focus on program recruitment and retention in Year 4.

The target of 360 program participants has been a challenge for the PrePrep21 program since Year 1. Due to the added challenge of decreased participation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, program staff should focus on the recruitment and retention of program participants in Year 4. Virtual program activities should be explored and offered to PrePrep21 students and families.

Continue efforts to increase family involvement.

Progress was made from Year 2 to Year 3 related to family involvement. However, more progress needs to be made to meet the goals of the program. Program staff should continue to communicate with family members of participants to identify activities of interest and offer those activities to PrePrep21 family members. Families should also have the opportunity to provide feedback about interest in virtual PrePrep21 activities.

Program staff should also collaborate with the Parent Network of Western New York, a program partner, to offer activities to families. Program staff should work to encourage more responses to family feedback surveys as well.

Create an instructional alignment plan and continue to work with schools to improve student academic performance.

Afterschool teachers should be provided with an instructional alignment plan, as stated in the program's performance indicators. Program staff should continue to provide program activities that will help to improve student performance on NYS Assessment exams. Instructional alignment plans should also include guidance for virtual program activities.

2019 – 2020

**Niagara Falls City School District-
PrePrep**

Annual Evaluation Report Appendices

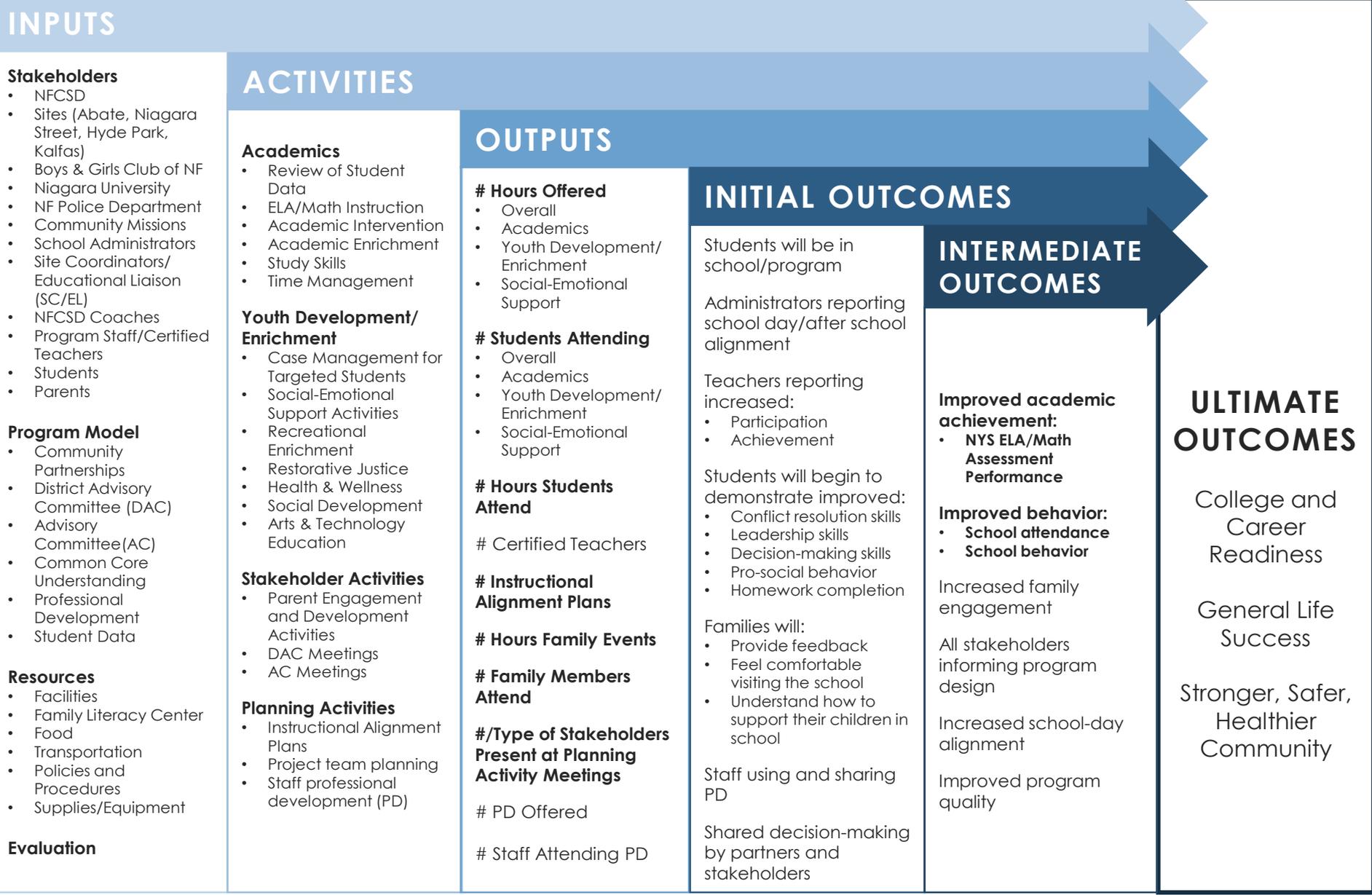
2019 – 2020

**Niagara Falls City School District-
PrePrep**

Appendix A: Logic Model

Niagara Falls City School District-PrePrep21 Program (Elementary)

21st Century Community Learning Centers Round 7 Logic Model



Prepared by Via Evaluation. Items in bold will be measured annually by the evaluator.

2019 – 2020

**Niagara Falls City School District-
PrePrep**

Appendix B: Evaluation Plan

PrePrep21 (Elementary) and Prep21 (Preparatory) Programs
Niagara Falls City School District, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Round 7 Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Activities (Person Responsible: Amy Puca)	Program/Client Responsibilities (Tom Fisher, John Briglio)	JUL/AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL/AUG
Update the program logic model, as necessary	Review and provide feedback on program logic model	<input type="checkbox"/>											
Regular check-in on activities and data review/analysis (as available)	Provide available program data to Via Evaluation (see next page)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
Attend Advisory Council (AC) meetings (as necessary)	Facilitate quarterly AC meetings		<input type="checkbox"/>										
Complete the Fall Site Visit and provide visit summary to program staff	Facilitate the completion of the site visit by providing blackout dates and other information to Via Evaluation (program schedule)			<input type="checkbox"/>									
Complete mid-year check-in report and review with stakeholders	Provide available program data for mid-year check-in to Via Evaluation; Complete interim evaluation report							<input type="checkbox"/>					
Complete the Spring site visit and provide report to program staff	Facilitate the completion of the site visit by providing blackout dates to Via Evaluation									<input type="checkbox"/>			
Prepare, analyze, and provide reports for program surveys	Administer electronic family and student program surveys										<input type="checkbox"/>		
Facilitate district data request and collect data from NFCSD	<i>Via Evaluation will submit the NFCSD data request on behalf of program staff</i>									<input type="checkbox"/>			
Complete the third-party Local Evaluation Reports (PrePrep21 and Prep21)	Provide available program data for end-of-year reporting; review the Annual Evaluation Report and submit to NYSED											<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete the third-party Annual Evaluation Reports (PrePrep21 and Prep21)	Provide available program data for end-of-year reporting; review the Local Report											<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete Quick Facts Reports (PrePrep21 and Prep21)	Review the Quick Facts Reports												<input type="checkbox"/>

The following **program data** and **district data** must be provided to Via Evaluation for the evaluator to complete evaluation activities for both the PrePrep21 and Prep21 programs:

Program Data

- 1 Program schedule and calendar, summer and school year
- 2 Program roster with student ID and demographic information
- 3 Monthly, electronic, activity-level attendance data
- 4 Site Coordinator/Education Liaison instructional alignment plans (general, one per site)
- 5 District Advisory Committee meeting minutes and sign-in sheets
- 6 PrePrep21 Advisory Committee meeting minutes and sign-in sheets
- 7 Project Team meeting minutes and sign-in sheets
- 8 Event information from parent and family-focused activities (name of event, date, time, and location)

District Data

- 1 NYS ELA Assessment Scores, by student ID
- 2 NYS Math Assessment Scores, by student ID
- 3 School Attendance (total absences and total membership days), by student ID
- 4 School Discipline, by student ID

I have reviewed the evaluation plan with my evaluator, and we have agreed to meet our responsibilities outlined in the plan. I am aware that this evaluation plan will be appended to the contract my organization has with Via Evaluation. Any changes to the plan will be discussed and agreed upon in writing by both parties. I understand that the program is responsible for collecting and retaining written parent permissions for evaluation activities.

Elementary Project Director Signature: _____

Date: _____

Prep Project Director Signature: _____

Date: _____

Evaluator Signature: _____

Date: _____

2019 – 2020

**Niagara Falls City School District-
PrePrep**

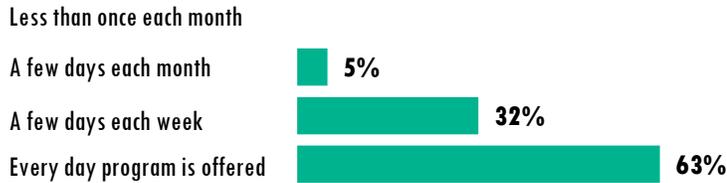
Appendix C: Survey Reports

2019-2020 21st Century Family Feedback Survey Report

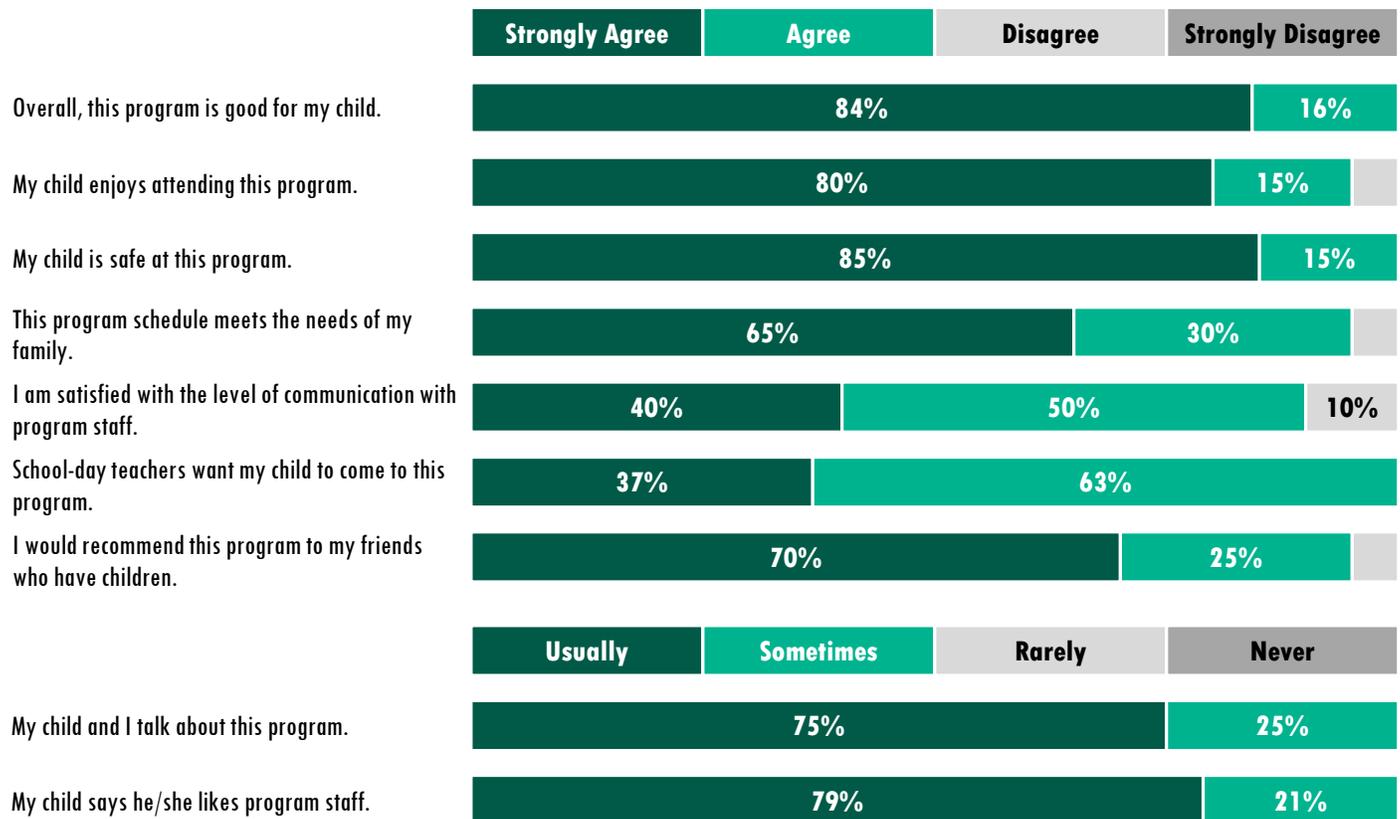
21st Century Program at Harry F. Abate, Henry J. Kalfas, Hyde Park, and Niagara Street Elementary Schools

Number of Respondents **20 Overall** **6 at Abate, 6 at Hyde Park, 3 at Kalfas, and 5 at Niagara Street**

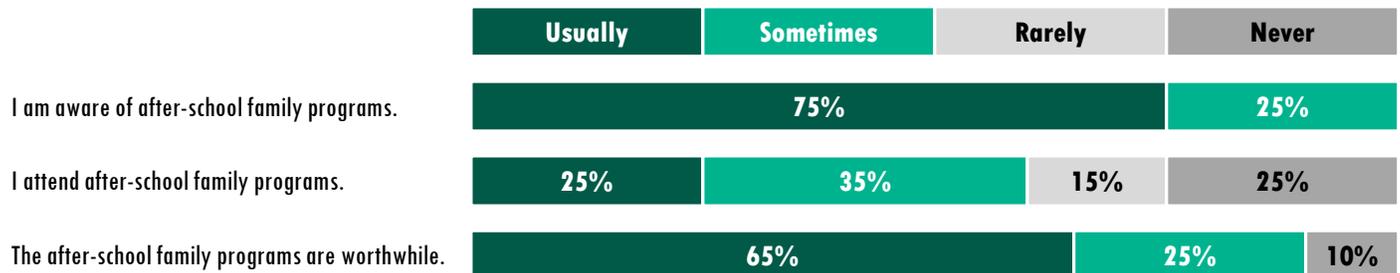
How often do survey respondents' children attend the program?



What do families think of the program?



What do families think of the after-school family programs?



2019-2020 21st Century Family Feedback Survey Report

21st Century Program at Harry F. Abate, Henry J. Kalfas, Hyde Park, and Niagara Street Elementary Schools

What impact did the program have?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Since starting this program, my child has become interested in new areas (such as new subjects, sports, technology, etc.)	50%	25%	25%	
Since starting this program, my child has fewer behavior problems.	30%	40%	25%	
Since starting this program, my child is more interested in school.	30%	50%	20%	
Since starting this program, my child has improved in school.	30%	55%	15%	

Themes from qualitative responses are summarized below.

Why do families send their children to the program?

Many parents viewed the program as an opportunity for students to try new things and to cultivate new skills, like painting, coloring, and cooking

Several parents placed their children in the program to build reading and writing skills through interactions with others

"My child wanted to attend and he needs this. It gives him confidence and allows him to be with others."

What would make the program better?

The majority of parents believe that the program would be better if it were to be offered more frequently

Other parents articulated that more interactions with counselors and more staff is needed

One parent suggested that letting students cook would be positive

What family programs would be most helpful?

Exercise and Yoga

Cooking with parents

Drama and Art classes

What else did families share about the program?

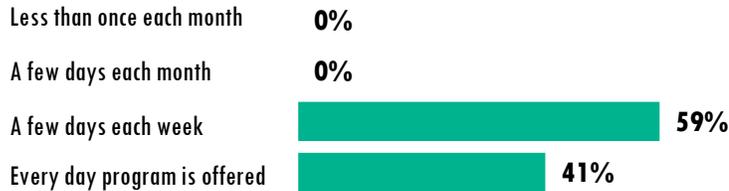
Parents noted specific programs that their children enjoyed, like garden club, and found the program to be a "good extended learning" opportunity. Overall, parents were pleased with the program, and their suggestions for improvement mostly centered around expanding programs for children and families.

2019-2020 21st Century Student Feedback Survey Report (Grades 3-6)

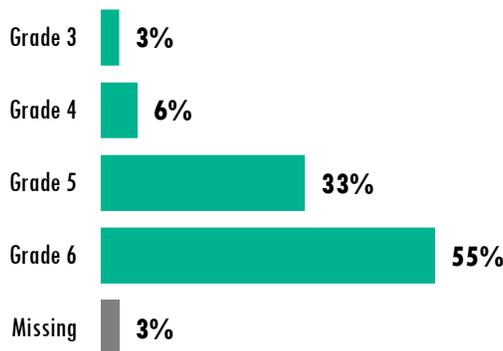
21st Century Program at Henry J. Kalfas, Hyde Park, Harry F. Abate, and Niagara Street

Number of Respondents **33 Overall** **14-Abate, 12-Hyde Park, 6-Kalfas and 1-Niagara Street**

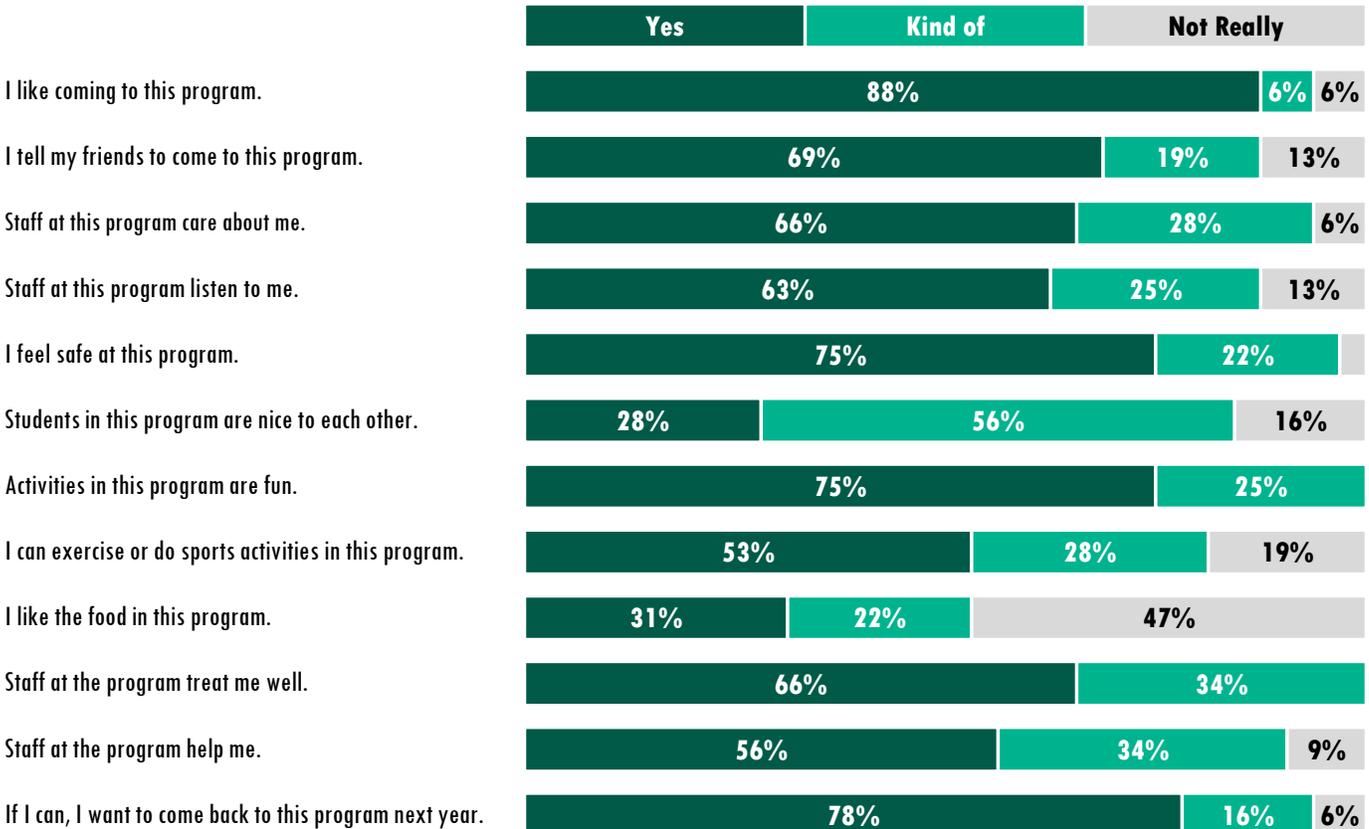
How often do survey respondents attend the program?



Grade Level of Respondents



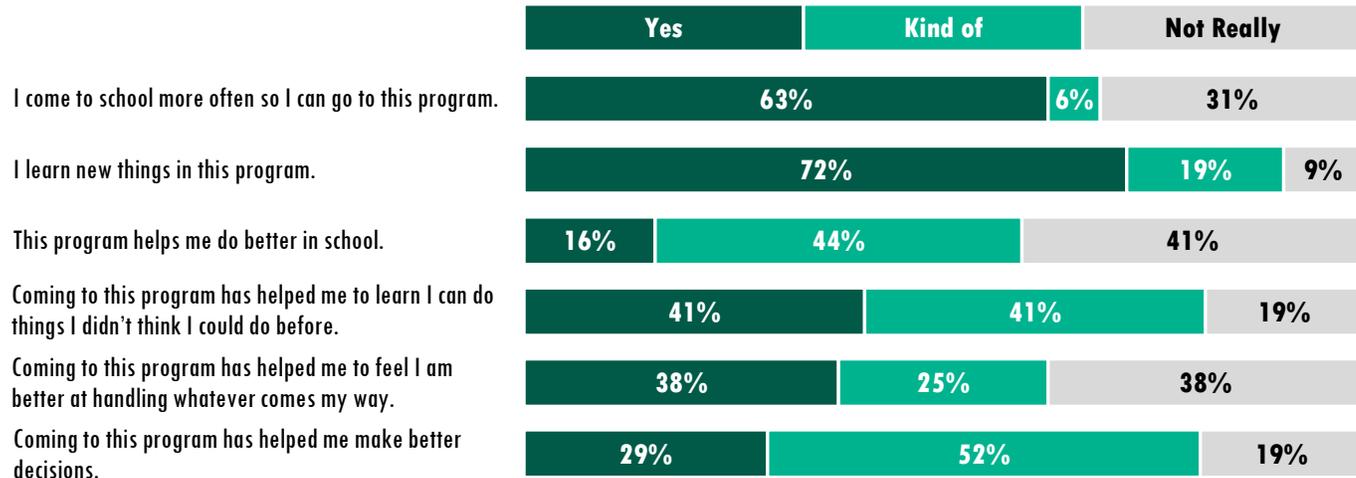
What do students think of the program?



2019-2020 21st Century Student Feedback Survey Report (Grades 3-6)

21st Century Program at Henry J. Kalfas, Hyde Park, Harry F. Abate, and Niagara Street

What impact did the program have?



Themes from qualitative responses are summarized below. Complete survey comments are included at the end of this report.

What do students like best about the program?

Being with friends

Exercise and sports

"It helped me branch out and become more comfortable in front of people."

What would make the program better?

More days and times available

More activity choices

Better snack options

What would students do after school if they didn't attend the program?

Spend time with family at home

Other sports or athletic programs

Play video games at home

What else did students share about the program?

Students provided specific examples about how they appreciate the program. They thanked Mr. Hudson and Ms. Lachorce for being "some of the best teachers in the school," and stated that program staff and other attendees "are like a second family."