

# Michigan Nita M. Lowey 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Evaluation

*2023-2024 Annual Report*

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# Key Findings

In the 2023-2024 program year, 71 grants were awarded to 23 grantees who oversaw 250 sites.

## Demographics

Michigan 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) programs served predominantly non-White (74%), academically low-performing (82%), and economically disadvantaged (85%) students.

## Participation

In the 2023-2024 program year, 16,656 students enrolled in the program—1,112 students less than in the previous year. More than half of students (58%) were in elementary grades (K–5); 20% were in middle school grades (6–8) and 22% in high school (9–12). Three-quarters (76%) of students participated year round, in school year semesters and in the summer.

## Academic Activities

Almost all students participated in at least one academic activity for more than five hours. Almost half of high school students (47%) participated in credit recovery sessions. Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) activities were prevalent, particularly among younger students. Most students reported that their program gave them opportunities to learn school subjects in a fun way. The results suggest that Michigan 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs have successfully provided academic enrichment opportunities to participants.

## Non-Academic Activities

Youth development and arts programming were the top non-academic activities offered. Research suggests that non-academic experiences can lead to positive youth outcomes, especially for disadvantaged students.

## Student Perceptions of Their Programs' Impact

Most students across all age groups reported that they had been asked what activities they like. High school students were given significantly more decision-making opportunities than other age groups, though typically they contributed to decisions about activities rather than to organizational governance. Most participants, and especially high school students, thought their

program created an atmosphere in which students could ask questions and develop new skills. Students also gave high ratings to indicators of their engagement in their program.

## **School Connections**

More than 87% of site coordinators reported that their programs had frequent communications with schools and paid attention to grade-level content standards. Eighty percent said their programs used any school-day curricula, and 69% had access to students' grades and standardized scores. Only 56% of the programs had a designated person to attend teacher staff meetings.

## **Changes Affecting Programs**

Six out of 23 project directors (26%) were new in 2023-2024, similar to the six (25%) in 2022-2023. The turnover rate indicates the continued need for external support from the state leadership team. School changes also affected 21st CCLC programs, including new school leadership, moves from one school to another, and school reorganizations.

## **Enrollment and Attendance Policies**

About one-third (36%) of programs had a formal enrollment policy. Other programs enrolled students on a "first come, first served" basis or had an informal policy. Programs that gave priority to specific groups of students tended to focus on students with academic or behavioral issues and on returning students.

Formal and informal attendance policies have been adopted by programs in nearly equal proportions this year, with 47% implementing a formal policy and 46% operating under an informal policy where youth were expected to attend regularly.

## **Youth Outcomes**

The federal reporting requirements for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs changed starting in 2021–2022. Programs are now required to report subject grades for participants in grades 7, 8, and 10–12. In 2023–2024, 25% of academically low-performing students showed improvement in their grades. Rates of improvement in standardized test scores for participants in grades are also included in this report.

Outcomes based on teacher ratings show that, among students in need of improvement, 60% improved their homework completion, 68% improved their classroom behavior, and 68% improved in social-emotional development. Student surveys showed overwhelmingly positive assessments of programs' support for social-emotional skill development.

# Introduction

The US Department of Education website<sup>1</sup> describes the Nita M. Lowey 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) program as follows:

This program supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. The program helps students meet state and local academic standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math; offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs; and offers literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children.

This report describes the organizations that received 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grants from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE, now known as Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential or MiLEAP), their program sites, and the types of activities program sites provided. It also describes the students who participated in the program, the types of activities they took part in, and the outcomes they achieved.

Following the same approach used in previous years, the 2023-2024 annual report continues to use the leading indicators symbol ⓘ to highlight program-level quality characteristics that are known from research and practice to affect student development. Although these quality measures are important to creating a context for overall development, they are not necessarily directly related to academic improvement.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/21st-century-community-learning-centers/>

# Who Participates in the Program?

Participation in the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program statewide is influenced by the types of organizations that receive grants, the staff who lead program activities, and the characteristics of students that programs recruit. MDE provides guidelines for entities applying for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grants, specifying (1) types of organizations that may apply, such as public schools, charter schools, and community organizations; (2) program factors that qualify for priority points, including school eligibility for Title I funding, serving students in grades 6–8, and having a faith-based organization as a partner; and (3) status of students and families served by the program, such as eligibility for free or reduced price meals and living in poverty. Priority is given to programs serving low-performing schools in high-poverty areas. For details about priority points relevant to 2023-2024 grantees, contact MiLEAP's 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC consultants at [21stcclc@michigan.gov](mailto:21stcclc@michigan.gov).

## ***Grantees***

Table 1 shows an overview of grantees over the past four years. In the 2023-2024 program year, 71 grants were awarded to 23 grantees who oversaw 250 sites. Among the 250 sites, 228 operated during the school year. Grants were evenly distributed among school-based agencies (10 local school districts and two intermediate school districts) and community-based organizations (eight nonprofit community-based organizations, two universities, and one nonprofit agency). This distribution of grantees has remained stable over the past four years. As in past years, the majority of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC sites served students in the elementary grades (138) or elementary and middle school combined (24). Forty-six served middle school students only, and five served both middle and high school students. Thirty-six sites served high school students only. One site served students in grades K–12.



**Table 1. Characteristics of Grantees and Sites, 2020-2024**

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>2020-2021</i>	<i>2021-2022</i>	<i>2022-2023</i>	<i>2023-2024</i>
<b>Overall</b>				
Number of grants	62	62	65	71
Number of grantees <sup>a</sup>	24 (26)	24 (26)	24 (26)	23 (25)
Number of new grantees	0	0	0	2
Number of sites	255	250	254	250
Number of sites operating during the school year	251	250	242	228
<b>Site counts by cohort</b>				
J	25	25	21	
K	80	78	77	51
L	150	147	147	149
M			19	19
N				69
<b>Grantees' fiduciary organizations</b>				
Local school district	10	10	10	10
Intermediate school district	2	2	2	2
Nonprofit community-based organization	10	10	9	8
University	2	2	2	2
Nonprofit agency	1	1	1	1
<b>Sites by grade level(s) served <sup>b</sup></b>				
Elementary school	145	134	135	138
Elementary and middle school	12	20	30	24
Middle school	48	48	42	46
Middle and high school	7	8	6	5
High school	43	40	40	36
Elementary, middle, and high school	0	0	1	1
<sup>a</sup> Numbers in parentheses count individually the multiple subcontractors Grand Rapids Public Schools used as grantees.				
<sup>b</sup> Elementary school is defined as grades K–5, middle school as 6–8, and high school as 9–12.				

## Staff

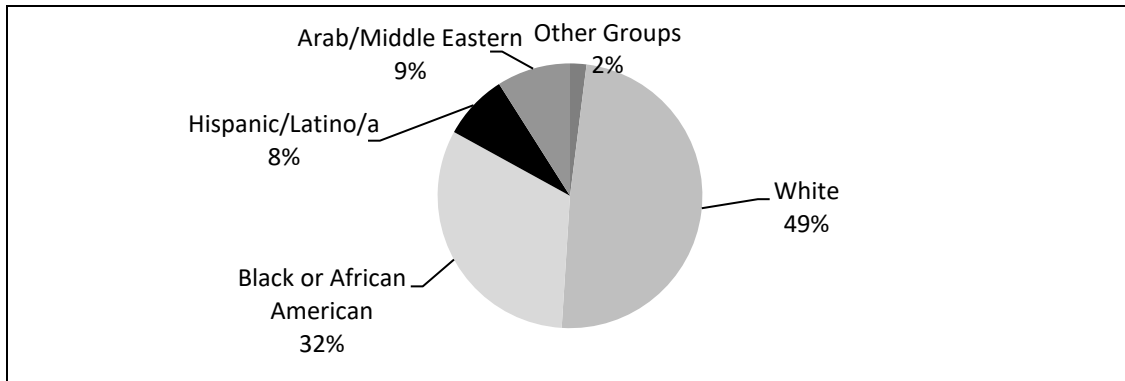
In Spring 2024, evaluators administered a survey to frontline program staff, not including project directors and supervisors. The survey covered staff demographics and program roles or identities.

## Gender and Race/Ethnicity

On the staff survey, 81% of respondents identified as female. Staff responses to questions about race and ethnicity are summarized in Figure 1. Almost half of

staff identified as White and approximately one-third identified as Black or African American.

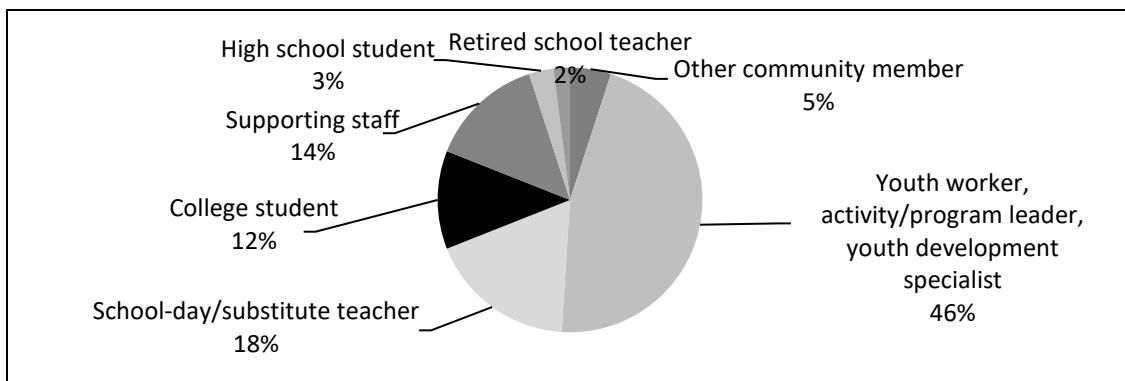
**Figure 1. Staff Race/Ethnicity**



NOTE. Staff N = 772.

## Staff Roles and Identities

According to survey results, 76% of staff members were certified teachers. The program and community roles respondents identified from the survey list are shown in Figure 2. The largest single category is youth worker, activity/program leader, or youth development specialist, at 46%. Other categories describe identities as school teacher (18%) and supporting staff (14%, librarian, counselor, paraprofessional, and others). College (12%) and high school students (3%), community members (5%), and retired teachers (2%) round out the categories.



NOTE. Staff N = 772.

# **Students**

## **Gender, Grade Level, and Family Income**

In the 2023-2024 program year, 16,565 students enrolled in the program—1,112 fewer students than in 2022-2023.

As in past years, students were about equally divided between boys (8,016, 48%) and girls (8,479, 51%). More than half (9,622, 58%) were elementary students in grades K–5. Middle school students, grades 6–8, were the smallest group (3,279, 20%); high school students, grades 9–12, were the second-largest group (3,660, 22%). Most students (76%) participated across the school year and in summer; 24% participated only in the summer, 10% only in the fall, and 12% only in the spring semester.

Thanks to an established partnership with the evaluators at Michigan State University (MSU), the Michigan Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) provided 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC student demographic, school attendance, and outcome data, decreasing the amount of data evaluators had to request from sites. Between CEPI and site submissions, data were available for almost all program participants (97%) regarding their free or reduced-price lunch status. The data showed that 85% of students received free or reduced-price meals. In other words, Michigan 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs served primarily economically disadvantaged students.

## **New vs. Returning Students**

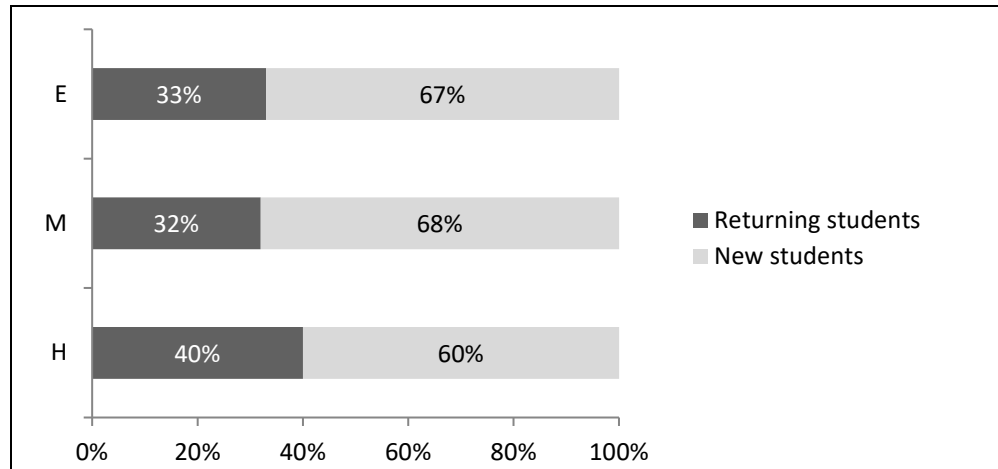
Participants could be either newly enrolled in this program year or returning from the previous year. Research shows that sustained participation in out-of-school programming over multiple years can lead to greater benefits.<sup>2</sup> However, students' ability to attend across years can be limited as they move away or progress to higher grades and different schools. Figure 3 shows the proportions of students at each grade level who were new in 2023-2024 and who were returning from the previous year. In 2023-2024, the proportion of repeating

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<sup>2</sup> Vandell, D. L. Reisner, E. R., & Pierce, K. M. (2007). *Outcomes linked to high-quality afterschool programs: Longitudinal findings from the study of promising afterschool programs*. University of California, Irvine.

students was 33% for elementary grades, 32% for middle school, and 40% for high school.

**Figure 3. New and Returning Students by Level**

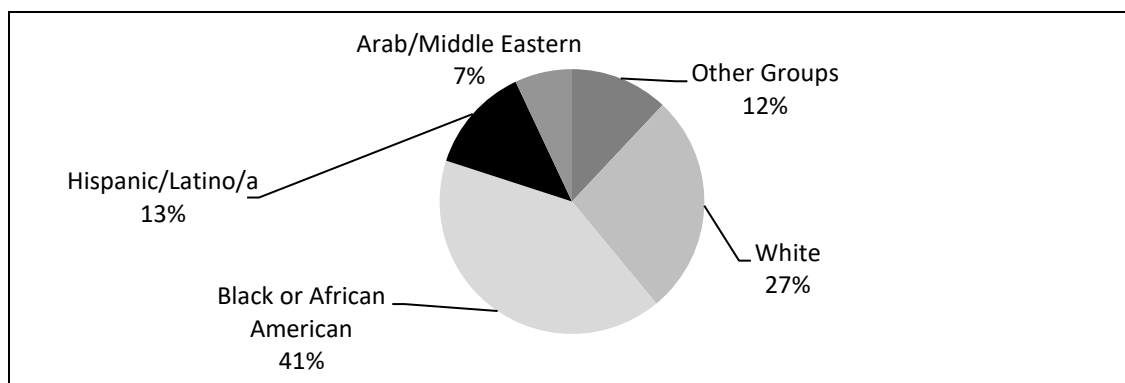


NOTE. E = Elementary school (N = 9,622); M = Middle school (N = 3,279); H = High school (N = 3,660)

## Race/Ethnicity

Figure 4 shows the distribution of participants according to race/ethnicity. The largest proportion of students, 41%, were identified as Black or African American; 27% were identified as White, 13% as Hispanic or Latino/a, and 7% as Arab or Middle Eastern. Twelve percent were identified as belonging to another racial/ethnic group, or the information was not reported. Michigan 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs served predominantly students from minoritized racial/ethnic groups, in proportions that have remained stable over the past few years.

**Figure 4. Student Race/Ethnicity**



NOTE. N = 16,565.

## **Sustaining Participation of Students with Low Academic Performance**

Students with low academic performance are likely to benefit more than higher-performing students from the academic support offered by 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs because they have more room for improvement. The additional instruction may help them catch up with their peers.

The federal reporting requirements for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs changed significantly as of the 2021–2022 program year. Since that year, grantees have been required to report on school subject grades for participants in grades 7, 8, and 10–12 and on standardized test scores for students in grades 4–8. The relevant metric for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs is the percentage of students who improve their grades or test scores from one year to the next.

For reporting purposes, the state evaluation team defines low academic performance as (1) having an average or single grade in English language arts (ELA) or math of 2.5 or below on a 4-point scale, (2) having a grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or below on a 4-point scale, or (3) scoring below the proficient level in ELA or math on the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) or the PSAT 8/9 from the College Board. Using these definitions, about 82% of the program participants whose school outcomes data were available were classified as academically low-performing students.

The evaluation team typically uses the previous year's data to determine academically at-risk status and compares those data with the current year's data to monitor growth. As in previous years, school grades were submitted by program sites or grantees. Standardized test scores were made available through a data sharing agreement between MSU and CEPI. Table 2 and Table 3 summarize how grades and test scores are used to determine academically at-risk status. Table 4 outlines how the evaluation team converts letter grades or number grades to a 4-point GPA.

**Table 2. School Subject Grade Data Used for Federal Reporting**

<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Data Source</i>	<i>Criteria for Academically At-risk Status</i>
7, 8	ELA, Math	Site or grantee reports	1. Average of ELA and math grades from last year is 2.5 or less <i>OR, if 1 is not available:</i> 2. Either ELA or math grade from last year is 2.5 or less <i>OR, if 1 and 2 are not available:</i> 3. Average of ELA and math grades from this year is 2.5 or less <i>OR, if 1, 2, and 3 are not available:</i> 4. Either ELA or math grade from this year is 2.5 or less
10, 11, 12	GPA in all subjects	Site or grantee reports	1. GPA from last year is 2.5 or less <i>OR, if 1 is not available:</i> 2. GPA from this year is 2.5 or less

**Table 3. School Standardized Test Data Used for Federal Reporting**

<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>Standardized Test</i>	<i>Data Source</i>	<i>Criteria for Academically At-risk Status</i>
4, 5, 6, 7	M-STEP ELA, Math	CEPI	Not proficient or partially proficient (proficiency level 1 or 2) this year
8	PSAT ELA, Math	CEPI	Not proficient or partially proficient (proficiency level 1 or 2) this year

**Table 4. School Subject Grade Conversion Table**

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Number Grade 0–100</i>	<i>Grade Point</i>
A	90 or above	4
A– or B+	85–89	3.5
B	80–84	3
B– or C+	75–79	2.5
C	70–74	2
C– or D+	65–69	1.5
D	60–64	1
D–	55–59	0.5
F	54 or below	0

# What Activities Did Students Engage In?

The primary purpose of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program is to provide opportunities for academic enrichment to students attending low-performing schools. To enhance the academic component of the program, grantees must also offer enrichment activities in various areas such as STEM, social-emotional learning, arts, and recreation.

The federal reporting guidelines focus on hours of participation, in categories ranging from less than 15 hours to 270 hours or more, as detailed in Table 5, along with justification for data collection and research linkage.

**Table 5. Federal Reporting Guidelines on Participation Hours**

<i>Hours</i>	<i>Justification for Data Collection</i>	<i>Equivalent Days</i>
Less than 15	Will help capture short, intensive programs like credit recovery	Less than 5
15–44	Captures students who were “not regular students” under previous guidelines	5–14
45–89	Captures range of regular students towards research-based dosage band*	15–29
90–179	Captures range of regular students at and above research-based dosage band*	30–59
180–269	Captures students who attend beyond research-based dosage band*	60–89
270 or more	Captures students who attend majority of year	More than 90

\* Research indicates that 90 or more hours of participation per year is ideal for achieving targeted student outcomes.

# Academics

## Participation in Academic Activities

All Michigan 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs were required to offer academic activities. Table 6 presents the students who attended the program for at least five hours and participated in each type of academic activity for at least five hours.

The data show that sites offered a wide variety of academic activities and that almost all students (95%) participated in at least one academic activity for more than five hours. Project-based enrichment or lessons were most prevalent among elementary and middle school students, followed by homework help. Notably, almost half of the students in the high school sites (47%) participated in credit recovery sessions, suggesting that older students need and want these services. STEM activities drew many participants, particularly among younger students.

**Table 6. Percentage of Students Who Participated in Each Type of Academic Activity**

<i>Type of Academic Activity</i>	<i>Percent of Students Who Participated</i>			
	<i>E</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>All</i>
<b>Academic (Traditional)</b>				
Homework help/tutoring①	67%	66%	58%	65%
Credit recovery ①	24%	27%	47%	43%
<b>Academic (Enrichment)</b>				
Project-based enrichment and lessons	85%	76%	40%	74%
- ELA ①	67%	52%	24%	57%
- Science ①	52%	42%	15%	43%
- Technology (computer programs, video, media) ①	26%	24%	15%	22%
- Engineering ①	34%	28%	14%	28%
- Math ①	61%	48%	18%	51%
Did not participate in any academic activities	3%	5%	8%	5%
NOTE. E = Elementary school students (N = 9,412); M = Middle school students (N = 3,158); H = High school students (N = 3,393). Students are counted as having participated in an activity type if they attended sessions for at least 5 hours. Percentages are calculated including only sites that offered the activity type for at least 5 hours.① = leading indicator				

## Student Perceptions of Academic Support

Table 7 shows students' perceptions of the academic support provided by the afterschool program and how it affected their school performance. Most students reported that their program gave them opportunities to learn school subjects in a fun way. High school students, in particular, overwhelmingly agreed that their



programs helped them academically. This positive assessment coincides with high school students' heavy utilization of credit recovery activities and suggests programs are providing essential academic enhancement opportunities.

**Table 7. Student Perceptions of Their Program's Academic Support**

<i>Program Quality Statement</i>	<i>Percent of Students Who Agreed</i>			
	<i>E</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>All</i>
The activities here help me do better at school.	71%	72%	85%	75%
I learn school subjects in fun ways at this program.	78%	75%	84%	78%
I can use the things I do here during my school day.	70%	73%	83%	74%
NOTE. E = Elementary school students (grades 4 and 5 only, N = 1,724); M = Middle school students (N = 1,334); H = High school students (N = 973).				

## ***Other Enrichment Activities***

Program sites varied in the types of activities they offered to students in addition to academic activities. Table 8 shows the types of non-academic activities offered by grade level. The data show that recreation, sports, art, and youth development, as well as field trips and special events, were popular types of activities offered by programs. Almost all sites offered youth development programming, which includes social-emotional learning, life skills training, mentoring, financial literacy, and risk prevention interventions. Studies have found that these experiences can be important mediators of positive youth outcomes, especially for students from underserved communities.<sup>3</sup> Arts programming and youth development activities were common at all grade levels. Sports activities were prevalent in elementary and middle school programs, but less so among high school sites.

Starting this year, “cooking” or “cooking with nutrition” sessions were removed from the youth development activity category and captured in the health and nutrition category. The decision was based on conversations with programs, understanding the contents being more closely aligned with health and nutrition focus rather than independent living associated with youth development. As a result, the number of offerings and participation in health and nutrition has

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<sup>3</sup> Gottfredson, D. C., Gerstenblith, S., Soulé, D. A., Womer, S., & Lu, S. (2004). Do after school programs reduce delinquency? *Prevention Science*, 5, 253–266.

increased compared to 2022-2023. Despite the small increase, health and nutrition activities remain among the least commonly offered across all grade levels. Health-related activities were relatively common in elementary and middle school sites but less common in high school sites.

**Table 8. Types of Non-Academic Activities Offered by Sites**

<i>Activity Type</i>	<i>Percent of Sites Offering Activity Type</i>			
	<i>E</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>All</i>
Recreation (social time, games, free play, etc.)	82%	83%	64%	78%
Sports	98%	98%	72%	94%
Art	98%	96%	92%	96%
Youth development (social-emotional learning, life skills, conflict resolution, resistance skills, etc.)	100%	100%	94%	99%
Health/nutrition	56%	65%	56%	59%
Field trip or special event	94%	83%	78%	89%
NOTE. E = Elementary school sites (N = 138 sites); M = Middle school sites (N = 46 sites); H = High school sites (N = 36 sites). All = 250 sites. Sites serving more than one grade level, such as K–8, were omitted from the grade-level categories but included in the All category.				

Table 9 shows the percentage of students who attended the program for at least five hours in each type of enrichment activity. High school students had the lowest participation rates in all categories. Elementary and middle school students participated more heavily in youth development, sports, and art activities. More than half of students participated in field trips or special events this year. Participation in health and nutrition activities was the lowest across all activities.

**Table 9. Percentage of Students Who Participated in Each Type of Enrichment Activity**

<i>Type of Activity</i>	<i>Percent of Students Who Participated</i>			
	<i>E</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>All</i>
Recreation (social events, games, free play, etc.)	43%	51%	25%	41%
Sports ①	73%	68%	31%	65%
Art ①	67%	54%	20%	54%
Youth development ① (social-emotional learning, life skills, conflict resolution, resistance skills, etc.)	86%	82%	62%	80%
Health/nutrition	31%	25%	19%	27%
Field trip or special event ①	58%	51%	36%	52%
NOTE. E = Elementary school students (N = 9,412); M = Middle school students (N = 3,158); H = High school students (N = 3,393). Students are counted as having participated in an activity if they attended that type of activity for at least 5 hours. Percentages are calculated including only sites that offered the activity type for at least 5 hours. ① = leading indicator.				

## ***Staff Priorities for Programming***

Staff members' priorities for the program are important because they show where staff are likely to focus their efforts. When asked to identify their top two priorities, 60% of staff members surveyed chose "Keep youth in a safe environment that allows them to relax, play, and socialize," and 43% chose "Improve the social and emotional development of youth," as shown in Table 10. More than one-third (42%) chose "Improve the academic achievement of all youth." The least commonly chosen options were "Help youth keep up with homework" and "Provide opportunities for youth to learn STEM or other academic subjects in a fun way," both at 11%. This finding shows that staff were well aware that Michigan's 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs are much more than an extended school day for homework completion. Staff members recognized that their programs were contexts for both enrichment and relaxation for students.

**Table 10. Staff Program Priorities**

<i>Program Area</i>	<i>Percent of Staff Choosing This Area as 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Priority</i>
Keep youth in a safe environment that allows them to relax, play, and socialize	60%
Improve the social and emotional development of youth	43%
Improve the academic achievement of all youth ①	42%
Enable the lowest-performing students to achieve grade-level proficiency ①	19%
Engage youth in fun leisure activities otherwise unavailable to them (e.g., arts, music, fitness, sports, etc.)	13%
Provide opportunities for youth to learn STEM or other academic subjects in a fun way①	11%
Help youth keep up with homework	11%
NOTE. Staff N = 772. ① = leading indicator.	

## ***Student Engagement in the Program***

### **Participation in Decision-Making**

To keep students involved, programs must offer them opportunities to make developmentally appropriate decisions about their activities.<sup>4</sup> Table 11 shows how

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<sup>4</sup> Akiva, T., Cortina, K. S., & Eccles, J. S. (2012). Youth experience of program involvement: Belonging and cognitive engagement in organized activities. *Applied Developmental Psychology, 34*, 208-218.

participants responded to prompts about opportunities for choice and decision-making in their program.

The majority of students across all age groups agreed that they had been asked what they thought about activities, including 96% of high school students. In general, high school students were given significantly more choice and decision-making opportunities than other age groups, as is appropriate for their developmental stage. Opportunities for decision-making, even for older students, were more common in relation to activity programming than to organizational planning or decision-making.

**Table 11. Opportunities for Youth Voice ①**

<i>Survey Item</i>	<i>Percent of Students Who Agreed or Strongly Agreed</i>			
	<i>E</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>All</i>
I get to choose my activities here.	57%	69%	92%	69%
I get to help plan activities, projects, or events here.	62%	69%	87%	70%
Adults ask what we think about activities here.	80%	85%	96%	86%
NOTE. E = Elementary school students (grades 4–5 only, N = 1,724); M = Middle school students (N = 1,334); H = High school students (N = 973). ① = leading indicator.				

## Developing Growth Mindsets

Skill building and mastery are gradual processes that occur when learners work toward goals and gain knowledge. Development of growth mindsets depends on an environment where students know that mistakes are allowed and that they are expected to try their best. Table 12 shows that most participants thought the programs created an atmosphere in which they could feel free to ask questions and develop new skills. High school students were particularly likely to perceive a growth mindset in their program.

**Table 12. Developing Growth Mindsets ①**

<i>Survey Item</i>	<i>Percent of Students Who Agreed or Strongly Agreed</i>			
	<i>E</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>All</i>
This program encourages me to be the best I can be.	86%	86%	95%	88%
At this program, it's ok to ask questions.	93%	94%	99%	95%
At this program, it's ok to make mistakes.	92%	92%	98%	93%
I get to do things I like to do here.	82%	86%	96%	87%
I learn new skills here.	83%	82%	94%	86%
NOTE. E = Elementary school students (grades 4–5 only, N = 1,724); M = Middle school students (N = 1,334); H = High school students (N = 973). ① = leading indicator.				

# How Is the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program Connected to the School Day?

To improve students' school-day performance, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs must be formally connected to school-day classes. Table 13 displays site coordinators' responses to a list of ways that afterschool programs can connect to the school day. A high proportion of the site coordinators (more than 87%) reported that their program had frequent communications with schools and paid attention to grade-level content standards. Also, 80% said the school-day curricula were used as part of the program's academic activities, and 69% had access to students' grades and standardized scores. Only 56% of site coordinators said their programs had a designated person to attend teacher staff meetings at least monthly and report back to the program.

**Table 13. School-Day Connections**

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Percent of Site Coordinators Who Agreed</i>
You or someone from your program communicated regularly with school-day staff about individual students' academic progress and needs.	91%
The objectives for your program activities were intentionally influenced by grade-level content standards (or learning objectives).	87%
Any of the school-day curricula were used as part of the program's academic activities.	80%
Your program had access to review students' grades for each marking period and standardized test scores throughout the year (not only for end-of-year reporting).	69%
Someone from your program had a specific responsibility to attend teacher staff meetings at least monthly and report back to the program.	56%
NOTE. N = 220 site coordinators.	

# What Other Factors Might Affect the Program?

The context in which 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs operate influences their chances of success. When changes occur, such as turnover among program or school administrators or program staff, programs can struggle to maintain a positive and consistent learning environment. Strategies for recruiting students and maintaining their participation also affect program effectiveness, as do the services of outside evaluators and professional developers.

## *Stability*

### **Supervisor and Staff Stability ⓘ**

**Project directors.** Six out of 23 (26%) grantees had new project directors for 2023-2024, the same number as in 2022-2023. New project directors need support to be effective in their jobs. The extent of the turnover suggests that project directors and their staff need more than ever the continued support of the state leadership team, including MiLEAP; the state evaluation team at Michigan State University; and the support services providers at Michigan Afterschool Partnership and The Forum for Youth Investment Center for Youth Program Quality.

**Site coordinators.** A high turnover rate was also observed among site coordinators: 44% did not return for the 2023-2024 program year, and 19% left during the program year.

**Site staff.** The evaluation used the project director survey to track staff retention. Project directors reported that 49% of sites had a staff retention rate of 75% or more.

### **School-Related Changes**

Changes in the host school can affect awareness of and support for the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. As Table 14 shows, site coordinators reported changes in school staffing in 2023-2024: 21% reported that the host school had a new principal and 12%

that the program moved to a new school. Ten percent of site coordinators said their district superintendent was new, 9% experienced school reorganization, and 3% reported their program faced school budget cuts.

**Table 14. School Changes That Affected Programs**

<i>School Change</i>	<i>Percent of Site Coordinators Who Reported Change</i>
School-day administration changed ①	21%
Program moved to a new school	12%
Superintendent changed or established	10%
School reorganized ①	9%
Host school was faced with budget cuts that affected the program	3%
NOTE. N = 220 site coordinators. ① = leading indicator.	

## ***Strategies for Recruitment and Sustained Participation***

Intentionality in recruiting and sustaining youth participation plays a key role in programs' ability to serve targeted populations. Afterschool programs can enrich education, provide youth with unique opportunities to develop meaningful relationships with peers and adults, and strengthen their ties to schools and the community. Michigan 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs are encouraged to intentionally recruit and retain youth with challenges associated with school attendance, academic performance, behavior, poverty, and English language fluency.

### **Enrollment Approaches**

In response to a survey question about enrollment approaches, 36% of site coordinators said their program used a "formal enrollment policy with priority given to certain types of students," 35% cited a "first come, first served" approach, and 23% had an informal policy (Table 15).

Whether or not they had a formal enrollment policy, most site coordinators reported that some categories of students were given priority in enrollment, as detailed in Table 16. The table also shows the percentages of site coordinators who said they had easy access to data on that student category. The most commonly chosen priority categories were returning students (86%) and

academically low-performing students identified by schools or by families (84%). Seventy-four percent of site coordinators said their programs prioritized students experiencing economic hardships such as low income and homelessness. English language learners (57%), students with special needs (55%), and students with behavioral issues as reported by families (53%) or schools (56%) were also given priority in enrollment. Despite the fact that afterschool participation can strengthen ties to schools, only about 53% of site coordinators reported that their programs gave enrollment priority to chronically absent students, although 71% said they had easy access to attendance data.

**Table 15. Enrollment Approaches**

<i>Enrollment Approach</i>	<i>Percent of Site Coordinators Who Reported Use of the Approach</i>
Formal policy; priority given to certain students	36%
First come, first served	35%
Informal policy	23%
No policy	6%
NOTE. N = 220 site coordinators.	

**Table 16. Enrollment Priorities**

<i>Enrollment Priority Category</i>	<i>Percent of Site Coordinators Who Reported That Priority Was Given</i>	<i>Data Access Was Easy</i>
Prior program participants	86%	91%
Academically low performing students identified by the school-day staff	84%	77%
Family request due to academic issues	84%	77%
Students experiencing homelessness	74%	61%
Free/reduced-price meal students	68%	77%
English language learners	57%	73%
Students with behavioral issues identified by the school-day staff	56%	71%
Special education students	55%	68%
Family request due to behavioral issues	53%	69%
Chronically absent students (missing 10% of school days)	53%	71%
NOTE. N = 220 site coordinators.		

## Attendance Policy

According to site coordinators, 47% of programs had a formal attendance policy; for example, participants might be required to attend a certain number of days or hours each week or to participate in a specific part of the program. As Table 17



shows, others either didn't have a formal policy (8%) or had an informal policy in which youth were simply expected to attend regularly (46%).

**Table 17. Attendance Policies**

<i>Attendance Policy</i>	<i>Percent of Site Coordinators</i>
A formal policy; based on specific attendance requirements	47%
An informal policy; youth were expected to attend regularly	46%
No policy	8%
NOTE. N = 220 site coordinators.	

## ***The Use of State and Local Evaluation and Professional Development Services***

The Michigan 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program utilizes a low-stakes evaluation model to encourage local programs to use evaluation results for continuous improvement. Almost all project directors (96%) and site coordinators (87%) reported that evaluation was important to their program decision-making. Project directors also gave positive feedback on the technical assistance and professional development services provided by The Forum for Youth Investment Center for Youth Program Quality, formerly known as the Weikart Center.

### **The Usefulness of State Evaluation Data**

The state evaluation team provides year-round support on data collection, reporting, and monitoring. Table 18 indicates how project directors and site coordinators perceived the usefulness of each kind of data. All project directors said the compliance snapshot report was useful; 100% of project directors and 95% of site coordinators said the EZReports data were useful; 100% of project directors and 91% of site coordinators said the leading indicators report was “somewhat” or “very” useful.

**Table 18 Usefulness of State Evaluation Data**

<i>Data Type</i>	<i>Percent Reporting “Somewhat Useful” or “Very Useful”</i>	
	<i>Project Directors</i>	<i>Site Coordinators</i>
Compliance Snapshot Reports	100%	NA*
EZReports data	100%	95%
Leading indicators report	100%	91%
Youth survey	100%	84%
Data tables	95%	88%
Staff survey	91%	89%
Program Quality Assessment data	91%	90%
School outcomes data	90%	92%
Teacher survey	86%	80%
Activity coding	84%	74%
NOTE: Project directors N = 22, site coordinators N = 220.		
*The Compliance Snapshot Reports were provided only to project directors.		

## **The Helpfulness of Local Evaluators**

Table 19 shows how project directors and site coordinators responded to statements about the involvement of local evaluators in their programs. The areas where the local evaluators assisted the most included working on program improvement, helping programs meet grant requirements, and visiting the sites. The least selected area for project directors was “worked with us on funding and stability.” Only 38% of site coordinators selected working on funding and stability as an area in which local evaluators were involved.

**Table 19. Involvement of Local Evaluators in Each Area**

<i>Statement: Local evaluators...</i>	<i>Percent of Project Directors</i>			<i>Percent of Site Coordinators</i>		
	<i>Some/A lot</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Some/A lot</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Worked with us on program improvement	73%	18%	9%	72%	24%	4%
Helped us meet the grant reporting requirements	68%	18%	14%	70%	27%	3%
Interpreted reports provided by MSU	68%	18%	14%	65%	31%	4%
Visited our sites	64%	23%	13%	62%	34%	4%
Collected additional feedback (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups)	64%	18%	18%	77%	17%	6%
Obtained school outcomes information to submit to MSU	55%	23%	22%	57%	36%	7%
Participated in the Program Quality Assessment process	50%	32%	18%	73%	23%	4%
Used data to create professional development plans	46%	36%	18%	59%	37%	4%
Worked with us on funding and stability	36%	41%	23%	38%	55%	7%
NOTE: Project directors N= 22; site coordinators N= 154.						

## The Usefulness of Professional Development and Technical Assistance Services

The major goals of the services of The Forum for Youth Investment Center for Youth Program Quality are to promote a culture of continuous improvement and to assist grantees with program improvement processes. Because most services were provided at the grantee level, project directors were asked to evaluate the usefulness of the center's professional development and technical assistance services across their major activities, as shown in Table 20. At least 86% of the project directors reported that the services were somewhat useful or very useful in all areas, from in-person coaching and virtual coaching to online coaching.

**Table 20. Usefulness of Professional Development and Technical Assistance Services**

<i>Service Area</i>	<i>Percent of Project Directors Who Reported "Somewhat Useful" or "Very Useful"</i>
In-person coaching	95%
Virtual coaching	94%
Online training	86%
Regional training	75%
Peer mentoring & networking	73%
NOTE. N = 22 project directors.	

In addition, project directors were asked to choose the administrative skills they would like to improve next year. As Table 21 indicates, coaching staff on instructional quality (64%) and recruiting and retaining youth (64%) were the most commonly chosen skills, followed by staff recruitment and retention (59%).

**Table 21. Administrative Skills Project Directors Want to Develop Next Year**

<i>Administrative Skill for Development</i>	<i>Percent of Project Directors</i>
Coaching staff on instructional quality	64%
Recruiting and retaining youth	64%
Staff recruitment and retention	59%
Building youth governance or a youth advisory council	50%
Social-emotional learning for managers	50%
Connections to families	46%
Creating professional development plans based on data	41%
Incorporating the Program Quality Assessment into standard organizational operations	41%
Connections to school personnel	36%
Connections to school-day curriculum and content	36%
Staff evaluations	32%
Partnerships with community, stakeholders, etc.	32%
Communication with and among staff	27%
NOTE. N= 22 project directors.	

# Did Students' School Performance Change?

Following the 2021 federal reporting guidelines, this section reports on the outcomes of students in Michigan 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs in the following academic and social-emotional categories:

- Grades: Percentage of students in grades 7, 8, and 10–12 showing GPA improvement of at least 0.5 on a 4-point scale (e.g., 2.5 to 3.0) from 2022-2023 to 2023-2024
- Standardized test scores: Percentage of students in grades 3–7 who showed improvement on the M-STEP in ELA and math; percentage of students in grade 8 who showed improvement on the PSAT in ELA and math
- Homework completion, teacher survey: Percentage of students in grades 1–8 whose teachers reported any improvement in homework completion
- Classroom behavior, teacher survey: Percentage of students in grades 1–8 whose teachers reported any improvement in student classroom behavior
- Social-emotional development, teacher survey: Percentage of students in grades 1–8 whose teachers reported any improvement in student social-emotional development
- Social-emotional development, student surveys: Percentage of students in grades 4–12 who reported that their program helped them develop social-emotional competencies

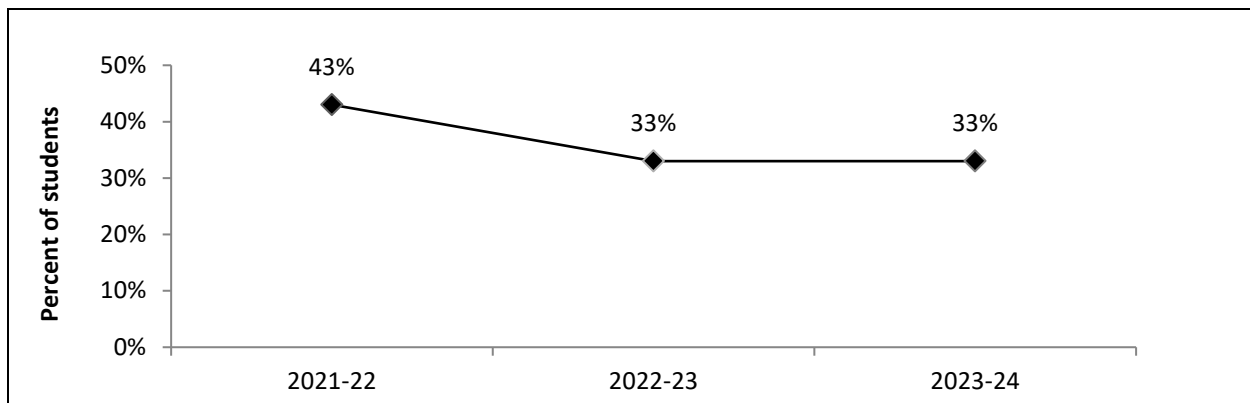
Data for this section were collected from the EZReports program reporting system, Excel files through which sites provided school grades from school records, student surveys and teacher surveys collected by 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program staff, and Michigan's Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI).

# Academic Outcome Measures

## Grades

Figure 5 shows that 33% of attendees who were identified as having room for improvement (defined as a GPA below 3.0) improved their GPA by at least one-half point in 2023-2024. A significant drop of student grades has been observed post-COVID, and the percentage of students who showed grade improvements has been steady at 33% during the past two years.

**Figure 5. Attendees With Room for Improvement Whose Grades Improved from the Previous Year**

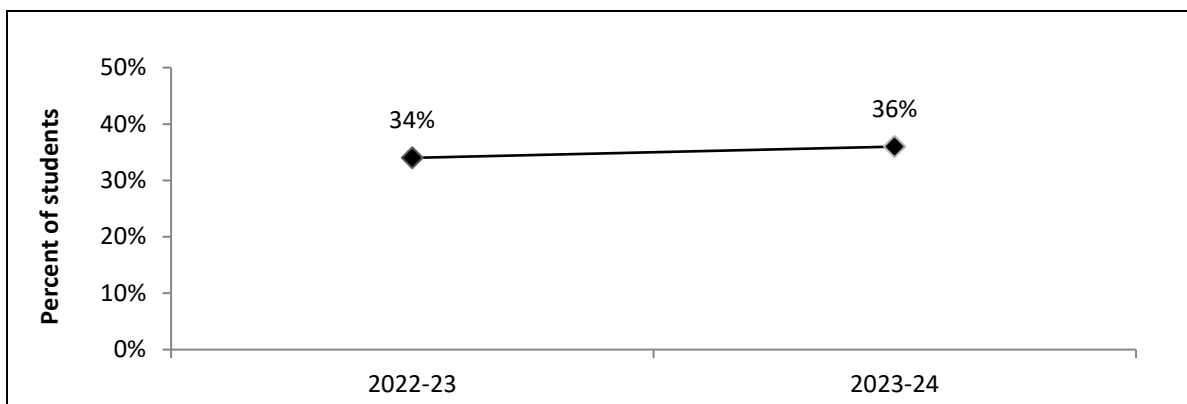


NOTE. Improvement is defined as 0.5 grade increase (on a 4-point scale) from 2021-2022 to 2023-2024. N = 1,546 students in grades 7, 8, and 10–12 for whom grades data were available and whose average GPA was below 3.0.

## Standardized Test Scores

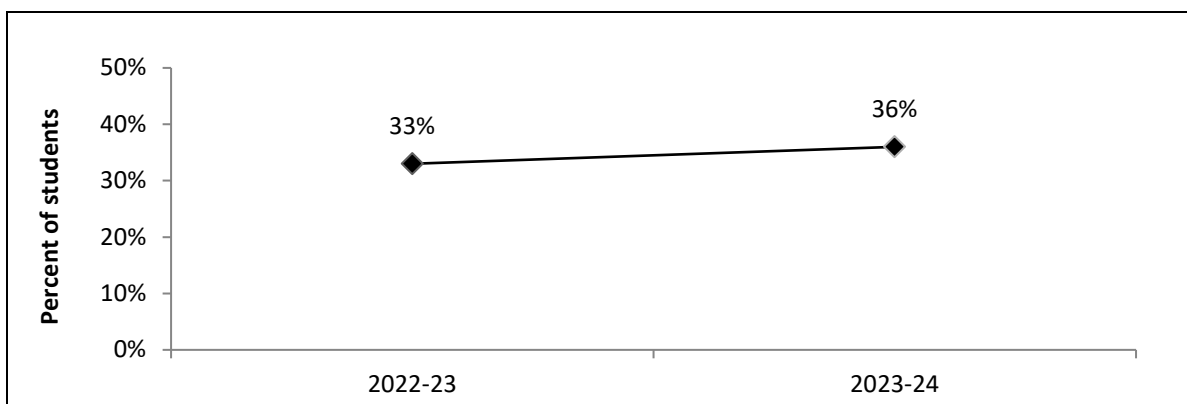
M-STEP scores were available for approximately 5,600 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC participants in grades 4-7. Just over one-third of these students showed “improvement” or “significant improvement,” according to MDE definitions, over their previous year’s scores, as shown in Figure 6 and Figure 7. Note that Michigan used the “Student Growth Percentile” to define improvement in MSTEP, which was to compare a student’s growth against another student who performed similarly in the previous year instead of the student’s own growth. On the PSAT (Figure 8 and Figure 9), administered to eighth graders, 35% showed improvement in ELA and 41% in math.

**Figure 6. Improved ELA M-STEP Scores for Students in Grades 4–7**



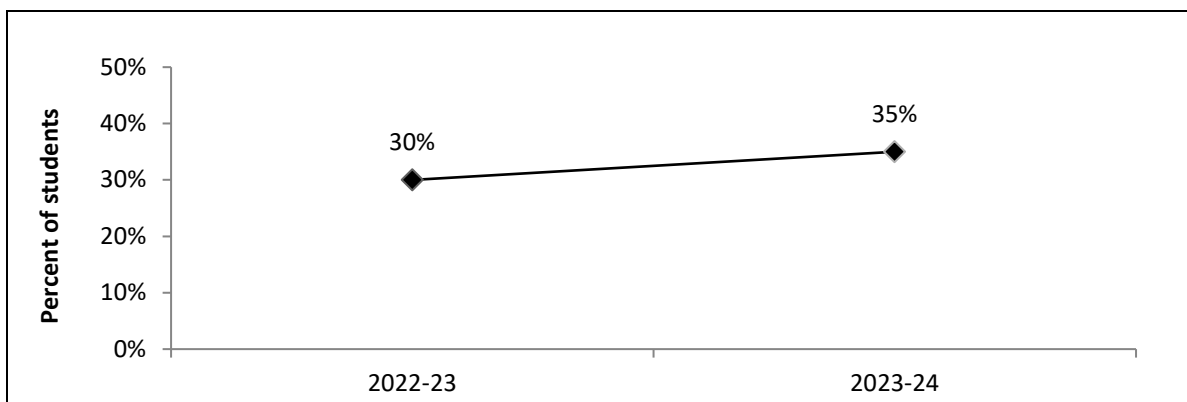
NOTE. 2023-2024 N = 5,585 students in grades 4-7 participated in ELA M-STEP.

**Figure 7. Improved Math M-STEP Scores for Students in Grades 4–7**



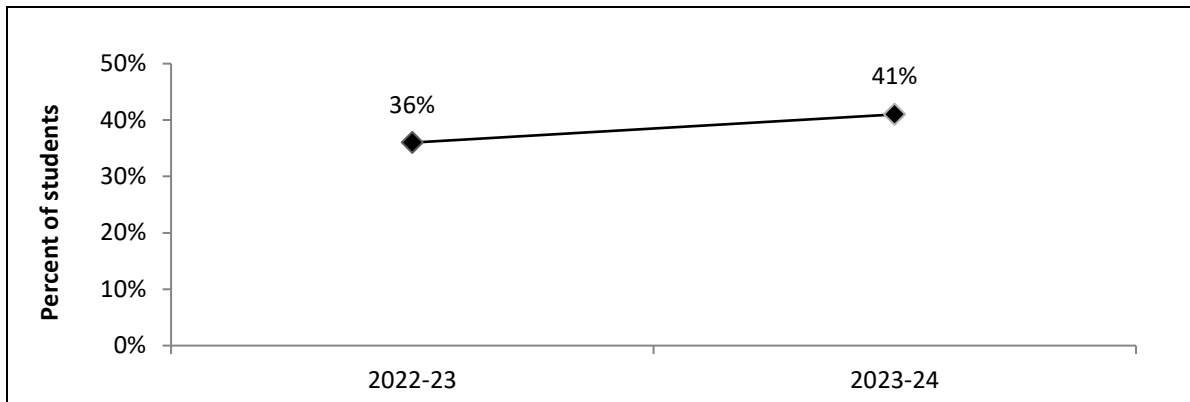
NOTE. 2023-2024 N = 5,609 students in grades 4-7 participated in Math M-STEP.

**Figure 8. Improved ELA PSAT Scores for Students in Grade 8**



NOTE. 2023-2024 N = 665 students in grade 8 participated in ELA PSAT.

**Figure 9. Improved Math of PSAT Scores for Students in Grade 8**



NOTE. 2023-2024 N = 665 students in grade 8 participated in Math PSAT.

## ***Teacher Ratings of Students***

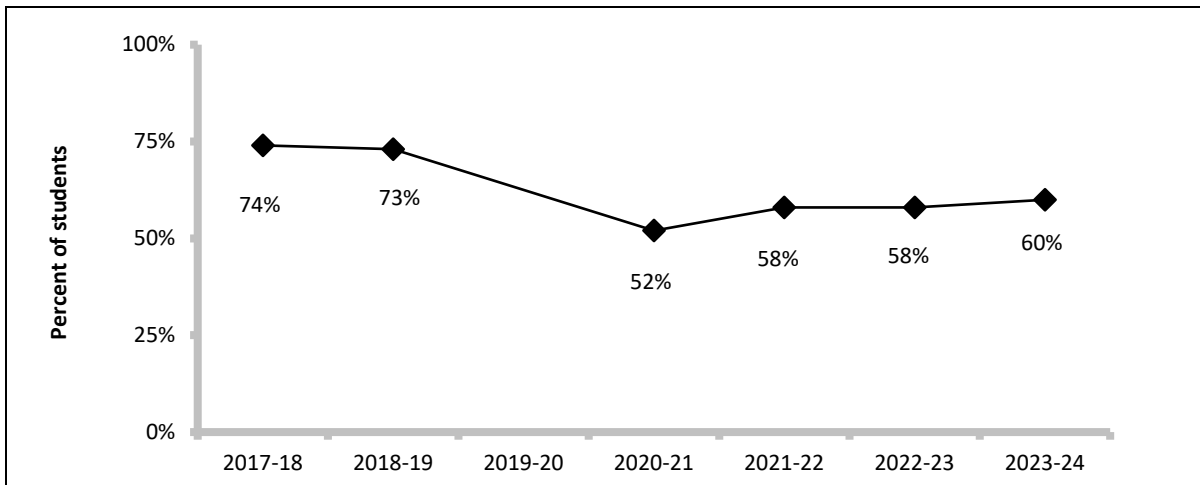
Each year teachers rate participating students on the extent to which their performance changed during the year in homework completion, classroom behavior, and social-emotional development. Teachers may rate student performance or behavior as improved, unchanged, declined, or did not need to improve.

### **Homework Completion**

The homework completion measure includes behaviors such as turning in homework on time and completing it to the teacher's satisfaction. Figure 10 shows percentages of students in grades 1–8 who were rated as having room for improvement and who demonstrated improvement in homework completion, according to teachers. Over the past seven years, the percentages of Michigan 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC participants who improved their homework completion remained stable at 73–74% before COVID-19, dropped significantly to 52% in 2020–2021, and gradually rebounded to 60% in 2023–2024.



**Figure 10. Improvement in Teacher-Reported Homework Completion, 2017-2024**

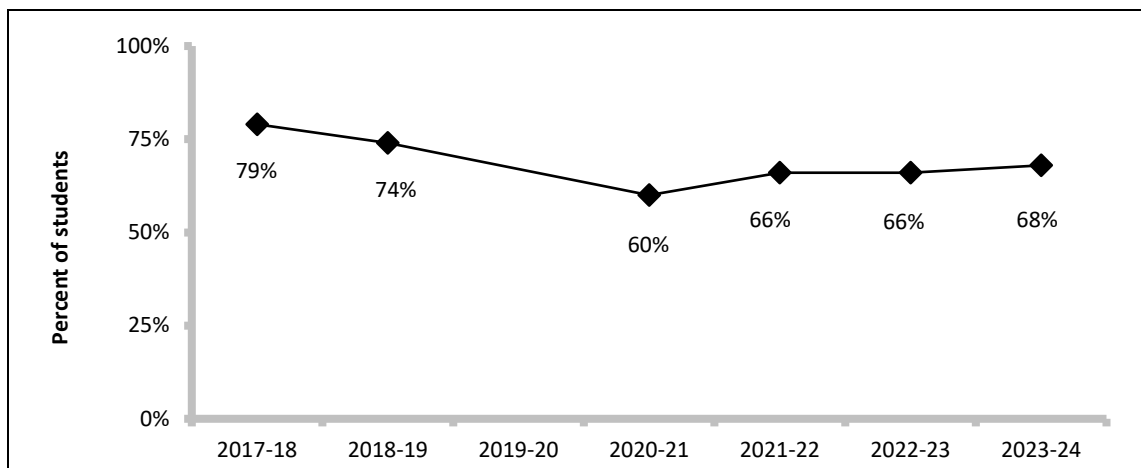


NOTE. 2023-2024 N = 4,112 students in grades 1–8 whose teachers indicated need for improvement. Data were not collected in 2019–2020.

## Classroom Behavior

The classroom behavior measure includes items such as behaving well in class and getting along with other students. The analysis includes only students in grades 1–8 whose teachers indicated they had room for improvement. Figure 11 shows that the percentages of Michigan 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC participants whose classroom behavior improved was stable at 74–79% before COVID-19, dropped significantly to 60% in 2020–2021, and rebounded to 68% in 2023–2024.

**Figure 11. Improvement in Teacher-Reported Classroom Behavior, 2017-2024**

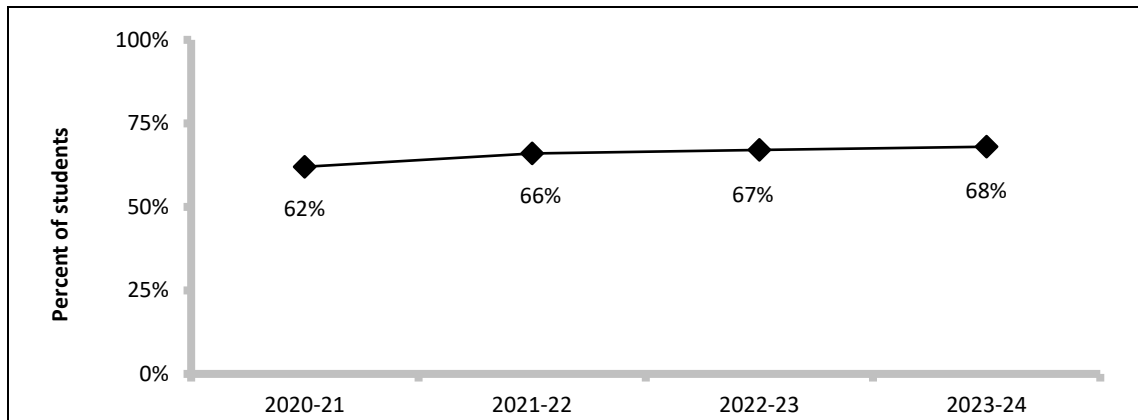


NOTE. 2023-2024 N = 4,016 students in grades 1–8 whose teachers indicated need for improvement. Data were not collected in 2019–2020.

## Social-Emotional Development

Beginning in 2020–2021, teachers were asked to rate students on their demonstrated self-regulation and persistence with challenging tasks, search for opportunities to grow, and healthy friendships. Data summarized in Figure 12 showed that the percentage of students in need of improvement who demonstrated social-emotional growth increased from 67% last year to 68% this year.

**Figure 12. Improvement in Teacher-Reported Social-Emotional Development, 2020–2024**



NOTE. 2023-2024 N = 4,272 students in grades 1–8 whose teachers indicated need for improvement.

## ***Student Perceptions of Program Impact on Social-Emotional Outcomes***

The student survey asked whether programs helped students with the social-emotional learning outcomes listed in Table 22. Overall, students reported very positive feedback around learning to try new things and be responsible for their actions, as well as most of the other skills included in the survey. The lowest-ranked skill was learning about feelings.

**Table 22. Student Perceptions of Program Impact on Social-Emotional Skills**

<i>Social-Emotional Skill</i>	<i>Percent of Students Who Agreed or Strongly Agreed</i>
This program gave me the opportunity to do something good for others.	88%
At this program, we learn how to get along with others	87%
We learn here that you don't have to like someone in order to work with them.	86%
At this program, we learn how to deal with a conflict without fighting.	84%
At this program, we learn about my feelings.	68%
NOTE. N = 4,031 students in grades 4–12.	