

21st Century Community Learning Centers State Evaluation

Mid-Year Implementation Report

July 2003 – February 2004

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Introduction

This report summarizes basic information on the implementation experiences of 21st Century Community Learning Centers grantees during the period of July, 2003, through February, 2004. It includes 13 grantees who were funded as Cohort A in February, 2003 and an additional 12 grantees who were funded as Cohort B in August, 2003. Our report of September 2003 presented more detailed information on the implementation of Cohort A; this is the first report to include data on both Cohorts A and B. The report is a brief summary of the grantees' implementation experiences through February, 2004. This information will be discussed more fully in our yearly report, due in September, 2004. Included in this report are short case summaries for each grantee provided our staff liaisons. These summaries offer assessments of particular strengths and challenges grantees have experienced during the past year.

Appendix A details all grantees and the cohorts in which their grants were funded. Because each grant can include only five sites where services are provided, several grantees administer more than one grant. Therefore, the 25 grantees administer a total of 37 grants. Programs can serve elementary, middle school, or high school students.

This report summarizes experiences across grantees from both cohorts. It must be noted, however, that because the grants were awarded in two cohorts, some grantees are farther along in the implementation process than are others.

Data Collection Procedures

In February of 2004, program directors for all grantees were asked to provide information on program implementation. Each program director completed an implementation checklist that contained questions about:

- Decision-making processes and procedures
- Involvement of stakeholders in decision making
- Student and parent recruitment
- Attendance and participation policies and procedures
- Links to the school day
- Challenges to program implementation.

Grantees who administer multiple grants completed only one checklist, resulting in responses from 25 grantee administrators.

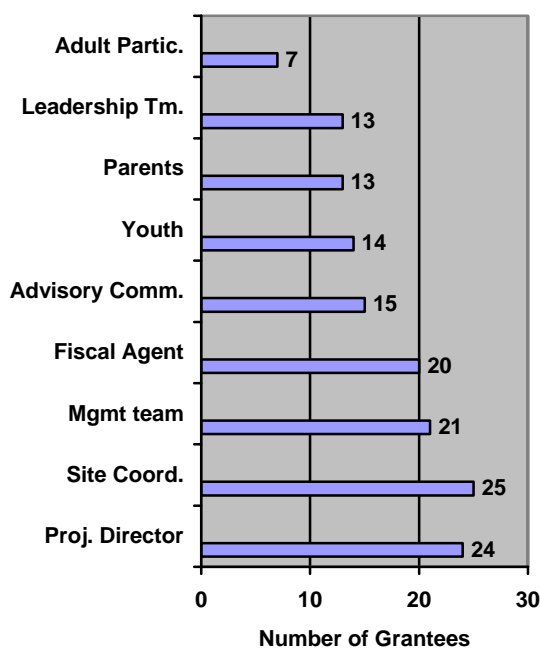
This data reflects policies and procedures that apply to the overall grantee program. Some procedures may vary from site to site within a particular grantee.

Summary of Experiences

Decision-making Processes

As shown in Figure 1, a variety of individuals and groups participate in some aspect of decision-making for the grantees' programs. All programs include the project director and site coordinators in decision making¹. Twenty-one grantees have a management team, and seventeen have an advisory committee. However, two of the seventeen who have advisory committees did not indicate that the committee participated in decision-making at any level. About half of the grantees involve youth (14) and/or parents (13) in some aspect of decision-making.

Figure 1: Who Participates in Decision Making?



Thirteen grantees indicated that some of these roles are combined. For example, some grantees utilize a combined management team and leadership team and include the director and/or site coordinators on this team. In some cases, the project director may double as the grant fiscal agent or as one of the site coordinators. Many individuals in these roles also sit on the advisory committee. Eight grantees indicated that people apart from direct 21st CCLC program administrators also participate in decision-making. These additional participants include principals, superintendents, community partners, and local site advisory councils.

Grantee directors were asked to identify who participates in decision-making about:

1. CLC Policy – Setting overall policies for the CLC program.

¹ Although only 24 grantees named the project director as a decision-maker, the other grantee considers the project director a member of the management team.

2. **CLC Management** – Participating in overall administration and fiscal management of the grant.
3. **Daily Management/operations** – Making decisions about daily operations at the grantee level.
4. **Site Management/operations** – Making decisions about daily operations at the site level.
5. **Activity Management/operations** – Making decisions about content and delivery of program activities.

Table 1 reveals that individuals and groups are involved in a variety of different ways. Although project directors and management teams are involved in all aspects of decision-making, site coordinators are more likely to be involved in daily and site management/operations and activity management. Parents and students rarely participate in policy or overall management/operations but are more likely to be involved in decisions about activity management. Advisory committees are more likely to be involved in setting overall policy or in activity management than in grantee- or site- level management. It appears that advisory committees operate at two different levels – one for the overall program and another at the site level.

Table 1: Who participates in decisions about what? (N=25)

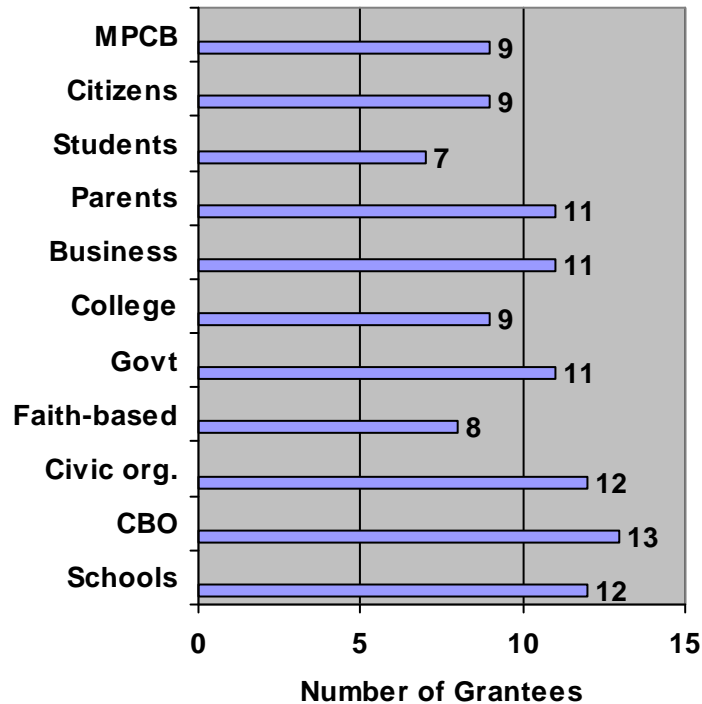
Decision maker	Types of Decision Making				
	CLC Policy	CLC Mgmt	Daily Mgmt	Site Mgmt	Activity Mgmt
Project Director	22	23	23	22	20
Site Coordinators	12	11	21	23	25
Management Team	18	20	16	16	18
Grant Fiscal Agent	17	16	8	5	5
Advisory Committee	8	5	2	3	6
Leadership Team	7	8	11	10	12
Youth Participants	1	0	2	4	11
Parents	3	1	3	5	12
Adult Participants	1	0	2	6	10
Other	4	0	0	0	0

The grantees who indicated that they have an advisory committee include a number of individuals and organizations in these groups. As shown in Figure 2, schools, community-based organizations, and civic or voluntary organizations were most frequently mentioned, followed closely by representatives of local government, business, and parents. Of these, only business or industry representatives (6 of 11) were more likely to be exclusively participants in some aspect of the program; all the other organizations were equally or more likely to serve on the Advisory Committee as their sole contribution. Just seven grantees include students on their advisory committee. Nine grantees had a representative of the local Multipurpose Collaborative Body (MPCB) on their advisory committee. The MPCBs were represented on the committee by the following organizations:

- Health-related organizations (8)
- Mental health agencies (6)

- Early childhood groups (5)
- Justice (4)
- Family Independence Agency (4)
- Other organization (1)

Figure 2: Advisory Committee Membership



Thirteen grantees indicated that their advisory committee had met at least once. On average these groups had met 2.6 times; twelve said their group is scheduled to meet on a regular basis, three indicated that it is scheduled to meet on an as-needed basis, and one said the group meets regularly and “as needed”. One grantee who reported having an advisory committee did not indicate their meeting schedule.

Participation of Stakeholders in Decision Making

The 25 grantees have included representatives from a number of community organizations in various aspects of decision making for their programs. A detailed listing of types of decisions that were made and which organizations and roles participated in these decisions is included in Table 2.

Table 2: How do community partners participate? (N=25)

Organization	Types of Involvement				
	CLC Mgmt	Daily Operations	Site Mgmt	Activity Mgmt	Activity Delivery
School District					
Superintendent or manager	14	3	5	3	1
Specialist or staff person	11	7	8	6	3
Local School					
Principal	12	10	15	8	6
Teacher	3	5	5	14	21
Other staff	6	8	11	12	15
Community-based or nonprofit organization – human service, youth development					
Executive Director	9	4	2	1	2
Other staff	5	7	8	13	17
Unit of Local Government					
Administrator	4	2	1	2	2
Program staff	0	0	1	3	10
College/university					
Administrator	3	1	1	3	1
Faculty member	1	1	0	11	9
Students	1	1	1	4	17
Voluntary or Civic Organization					
Board member	3	1	0	2	2
Paid staff	2	4	5	8	13
Volunteer	1	0	0	3	14
Faith-based Organization					
Religious Leader	3	0	0	2	4
Member	0	0	0	2	8
For-profit Organization					
Executive/manager	2	2	2	4	6
Employee	1	1	1	1	11
Other (External Evaluator)	1	1	1	1	1

- **Schools.** School district administrators more frequently participate in decisions about overall CLC management. About half of the grantees have local school principals participating in overall management (12) or management of daily operations (10); most often, they participate in site management (15) but some even assist with delivery of activities (6). Teachers and other local school staff are more likely to participate in activity management or delivery of activities.
- **Community-based organizations.** For nine grantees, executive directors of community-based or nonprofit organizations participate in overall management, but more often other

staff from these organizations are involved in activity management and delivery. Our assumption is that these organizations are partners and/or contracted providers of services.

- **Higher education.** Faculty from colleges or universities participate in overall management and operations for only one grantee; however, faculty are more likely to be involved in activity management (11) or delivery (9).
- **Other.** In addition to schools and community based organizations, grantees use personnel from a number of organizations to deliver activities. Examples are:
 - College students (17)
 - Volunteers from voluntary or civic organizations (14)
 - Paid staff from voluntary or civic organizations (13)
 - Employees of for-profit organizations (11)
 - Program staff from local government units (10)
 - Members of faith-based groups (8)

Recruitment and Participation

Recruitment. Grantees use several different sources for recruitment of program participants. Figure 3 illustrates sources for recruitment of youth. Site coordinators are responsible for recruiting youth in 24 of the 25 grantees; teachers, friends, activity leaders, and the project directors were also frequently mentioned as sources of participants. In addition, for many grantees, parents or the youth themselves make the decision to participate; however, recruitment through participants is not appropriate for all grantees. For example, one grantee noted that all referrals are provided by classroom teachers, and therefore they do not recruit through participating youth and parents. Two grantees cited community partners and one mentioned local advisory council members.

For most grantees (23), site coordinators are also responsible for parent recruitment. Eighteen grantees said the youth recruit their parents, and 14 mentioned the project manager, other parents or teachers. Figure 4 presents the sources of parent recruitment used by 10 or more grantees. As with youth recruitment, community partners and members of the local advisory committees help to recruit parents in a few instances, as do principals and case managers.

Figure 3: Who Recruits Youth

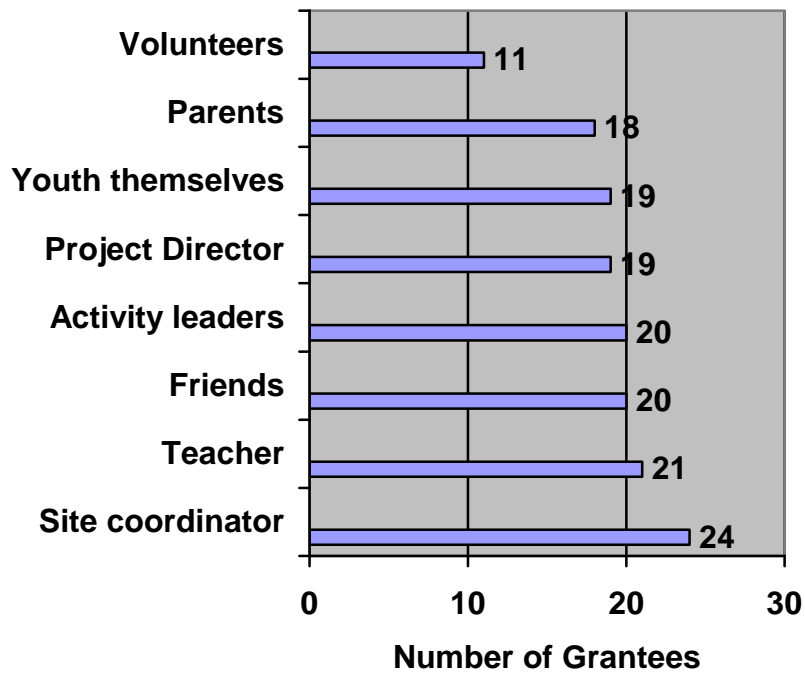
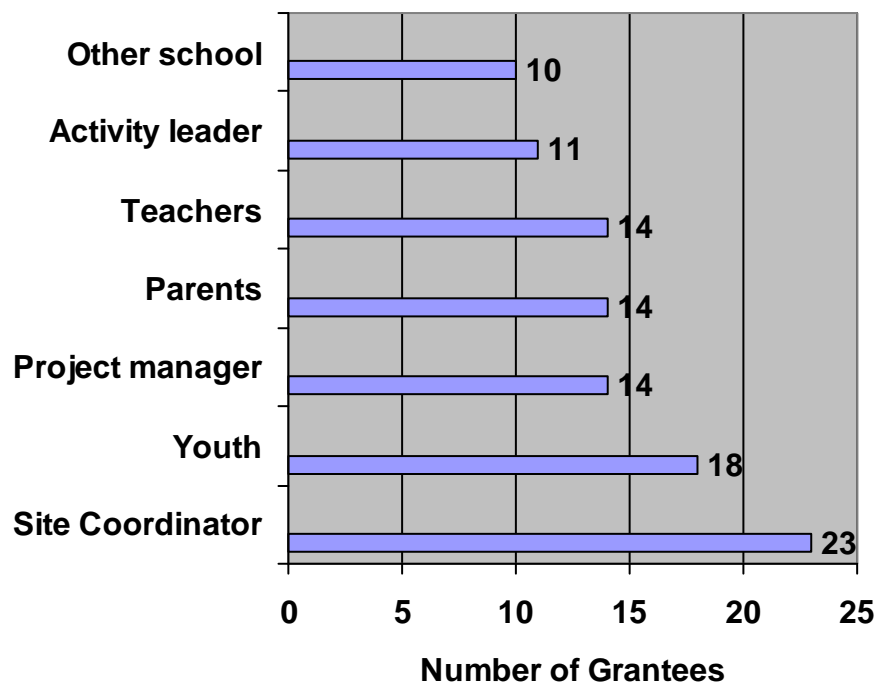


Figure 4: Who Recruits Parents



Grantees were asked to describe their most successful strategies for recruiting youth. Referrals from teachers and other school personnel were found to be successful for some grantees. Active outreach, such as going into classrooms, talking with parents directly, or recruiting during lunch hour were successful for others. Some used parent nights, open houses showcasing program activities, or flyers sent home through the school. A number of grantees mentioned that youth successfully marketed the program by word of mouth. One grantee emphasized that offering engaging activities is a key to successful recruitment.

Parent involvement. Grantees were asked to note all the ways in which parents were involved in their programs. Parents have been involved in various roles, from attending special events to participating in program evaluation. The following list indicates the types of involvement parents have and the number of grantees who checked each alternative:

- Attending family activities or field trips (20)
- Participating in evaluation of program activities (16)
- Working with staff to identify child's learning needs (15)
- Volunteering in program (13)
- Helping their child(ren) with homework (12)
- Enrolled in adult education or literacy (7)
- Enrolled in parenting education (7)
- Other involvements (6)

Grantees also involve parents in advisory committees (2), parent surveys and workshops (1), or community service programs (1). One grantee provided an open gym for adults, and another said that parents were welcome to attend all sessions.

Student Attendance

Attendance policy. Each grantee had the option to define its own attendance policies and procedures. Generally, the attendance procedures fell into one of 4 categories:

1. No formal policy but students are encouraged to attend as much as possible;
2. An informal policy with enrolled students expected to attend regularly;
3. A formal policy with enrolled students expected to attend regularly for at least part of the day (e.g., for the academic activities);
4. A formal policy with enrolled students expected to attend all activities in which they are enrolled.

Figure 5: Attendance Policy

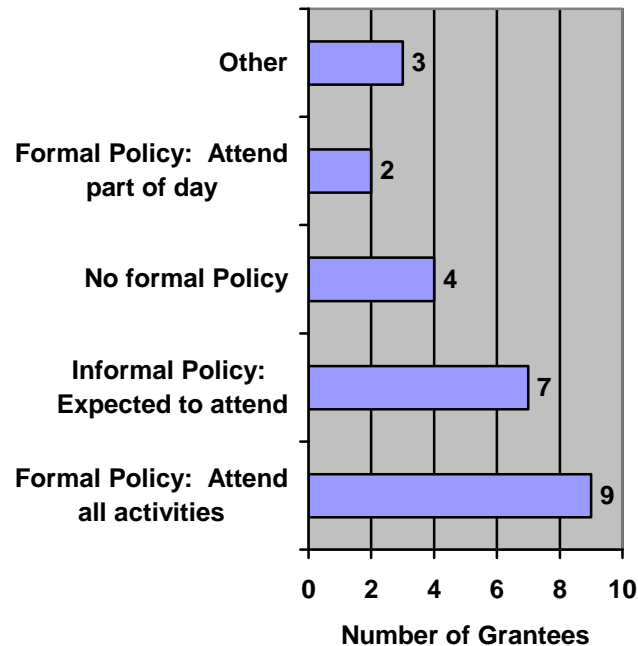
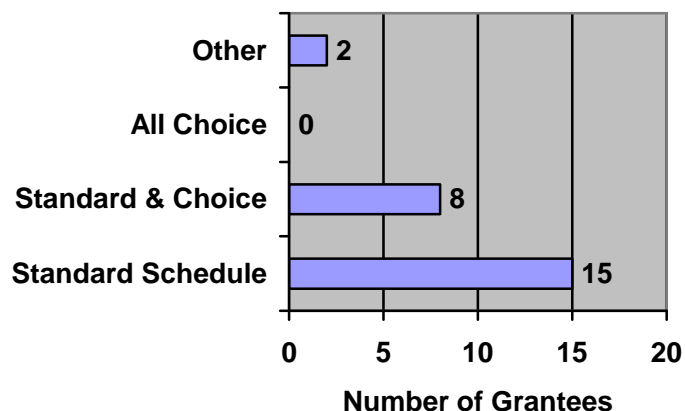


Figure 5 presents the number of grantees who adopted each policy option. The greatest number (9) have a formal policy with all students expected to attend all activities, and seven other grantees have an informal policy that encourages students to attend regularly. Two grantees use a mix of two policy options, and another allows each site to determine their own attendance policy but calls parents if the student attends school but is absent from the program. One replaces students who miss more than 8 days with someone on the wait list.

Daily attendance procedure. Grantees were also asked about their policies for participation in activities among students who attend on a particular day. They were offered three options:

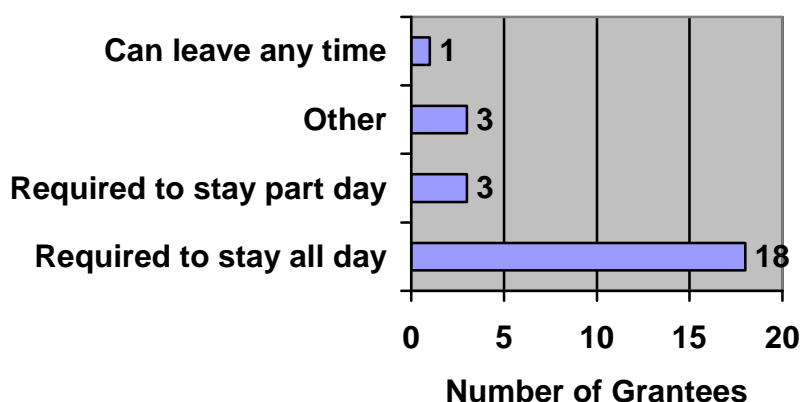
1. Students sign in for the day and can choose among the activities offered
2. Students have a standard schedule for some activities (e.g., tutoring, youth development) and can choose among some activities (e.g., sports, games)
3. Students are enrolled in a standard schedule.

Figure 6 indicates the options chosen by the grantees.

Figure 6: Attendance Procedures

A majority of grantees (15) enroll students in a standard schedule for the entire day. However, eight grantees use a standard schedule for part of the day and allow students to choose some activities. One grantee uses a standard schedule that changes weekly, depending on the student's needs. Another said that students participate in choosing activities ahead of time but then are required to participate in that schedule.

Policy for leaving program for the day. Grantees were also asked to describe their policy about when students may leave for the day. As indicated in Figure 7, 18 of the 25 grantees require or strongly encourage students to stay for all enrolled sessions; three require them to stay for part of the day, and three described some other option. The most frequent variation was to allow students to leave if a parent comes to pick them up. One grantee allowed students to leave after the academic sessions. Only one grantee allowed students to leave at any point.

Figure 7: Policy on Leaving

It is likely that the attendance policies and leave policies differ for programs that serve elementary school students and those serving middle school students. This question will be investigated more fully in the yearly report.

Links to the School Day

Grantees were asked to identify strategies currently in place to link their activities with the school day and also to describe their plans for creating links in the future. As Table 3 indicates, grantees use or plan to implement a wide variety of linking strategies.

Most are currently using informal contacts with teachers about individual students, but most also have or plan to develop formal contacts and reporting structures with individual teachers and/or with all teachers.

Grantees also make curricular linkages in several ways. For most grantees, classroom teachers participate in the program activities as staff and make informal connections. Most also either currently use or plan to develop activities to reinforce or extend the classroom curricula. To date, only eight grantees have trained their staff in school-day instructional models, but another 12 plan to do so in the future.

Finally, grantees link to the school through communication of program calendars and contacts with administrators and other school policy groups. All grantees currently link through informal contacts with school administrators and 15 also distribute information about the program to classroom teachers. About half of the grantees link more formally by serving on school committees or working to incorporate program goals into school improvement plans. However, more grantees plan to develop these linkages in the future.

Table 3: Connections to the School Day (N=25)

Connection to School Day	In place now	Plan to develop	In place and Plan to Develop
Connections Regarding Individual Students			
Informal contacts, individual teachers & students	22	0	
Formal contacts, individual teachers & students	13	7	
Formal contacts and reporting structures, all teachers	9	9	
Something else	2	1	
Curricular Connections			
Teachers participate in CLC & make informal connections	21	1	1
CLC staff are trained in instructional models used in school day classrooms	8	12	1
CLC components reinforce or extend classroom curricula	18	4	
School Connections			

CLC calendars and info distributed to teachers	15	8	
Face-to-face communication with school administrators	25	0	
CLC staff serve on school committees	13	6	
CLC goals incorporated into school goals or school improvement plans	10	10	

Implementation Challenges

Grantees were asked to describe key challenges to program implementation – both those that they have successfully met and those that remain to be addressed. Several themes emerged from the descriptions they provided.

Recruitment, retention and attendance. A number of programs encountered challenges in recruiting students or keeping them involved and attending consistently. This challenge was greater for the middle school age group. Several grantees (Starfish Family Services, Clare Galdwin RESD, University Preparatory Academy, and West Village Academy) identified parent involvement – either as participants in program activities or as supporters of the need for consistent attendance to meet program goals – as a key challenge. Flint Community Schools expressed a concern that other programs, such as Title I supplementary services, will compete with 21st CCLC for student participation. To meet this challenge, Battle Creek Public Schools has obtained approval to be a Supplemental Service Provider (personal communication).

One grantee (ACCESS) has implemented a successful strategy for maintaining consistent attendance. Each student who attends consistently for a defined period of time receives “gift certificates” that can be redeemed for school supplies or books. As the weather improves and students want to be outside more, they plan to hold some of their academic activities outdoors to encourage attendance.

Boys and Girls Club of Benton Harbor has addressed recruitment of middle school students by developing relationships with the schools and developing a parent advisory committee.

Flint Community Schools has encouraged the involvement of athletes in the academic activities by setting up “study tables” where student athletes must go to do their homework before practice.

Staffing. Several grantees found recruitment and retention of staff – teachers, activity leaders and volunteers – to be a challenge, and they expected to encounter continuing difficulty finding staff as the programs grow. Flint Community Schools is concerned that competing opportunities for teachers in the Title I program will draw them away from 21st CCLC. The School District of the City of Detroit (Detroit) said that implementing staff development will be a continuing challenge for them.

Grand Rapids Public Schools is attempting to address staff recruitment and retention by offering good training and developing good personnel policies. Starfish has attempted to make hours more attractive for staff.

Implementation of programming. A number of grantees found aspects of program implementation to be a challenge. Responses in this category included the logistics of getting started on schedule, technology glitches, space issues, and challenges in providing a range of activities and services.

Clare-Gladwin RESD and Flint Community Schools mentioned the difficulty of providing a variety of opportunities for participants. Starfish and Academy of Flint mentioned the need for health or mental health services.

Two programs had to adjust schedules to accommodate students leaving at different times because of transportation arrangements. Two programs had to adjust to unexpected school closings, and another three had difficulty finding space in the schools for programming and getting access to computers.

Links to the school day. A number of grantees described challenges in linking with the school day. These challenges came in communicating with the schools, curriculum alignment, or identifying meaningful activities to achieve academic goals. One grantee said that since schools “have a lot on their plates” communication became primarily the responsibility of the site coordinators. One grantee mentioned the need for better analysis of what areas students need help in.

Partnerships. Building partnerships with service providers and the larger community resource networks was another theme for some grantees. Two (Grand Rapids and The School District of the City of Kalamazoo) mentioned the challenge of coordinating across different service providers and service delivery models, and another two (Traverse City Area Public Schools and Detroit) mentioned building links to the community resource networks. Detroit said they also faced challenges in collaborating with colleges and universities and the community at large.

Management systems. Some grantees had challenges related to policies and procedures that had to be implemented, and a few identified the need to set up basic and fiscal management systems that did not exist before the program. The child-care licensing process was mentioned as a challenge by two programs (Ross/Hill Academy and B-H-K Child Development Board). Grand Rapids mentioned the need to develop community-wide standards for Out-of-School-Time programs.

Communities in Schools of Detroit and School District of the City of Highland Park Schools needed to set up management systems and program improvement processes. Highland Park also had difficulties with inconsistent policies from the central administration.

Data collection and reporting. Eight grantees said that some aspect of data collection or reporting requirements was a challenge for them. These challenges included learning to use the EZ Reports system, administering surveys, and meeting the increased data collection and reporting requirements.

Kalamazoo said that the amount of information needed for enrollment was problematic and that consent procedures were difficult for some parents to understand. This grantee was targeting the hardest-to-reach families who tended to have the most difficulty understanding the processes. Ross/Hill Academy said that the transition from federal to state requirements was challenging and required maintaining two data and reporting systems.

Flint Community Schools reported that using the EZ Reports system has made data collection and registration easier.

Sustainability. Several grantees said they are already addressing the need for supplementary funds or looking for funds to sustain programs beyond the grant period. One grantee said a future challenge will be to increase the perception in the [school] district that the program is beneficial to students and the district as a whole.

Appendix A
Michigan 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grantees

Grantee	Cohort A	Cohort B
Academy of Flint		X
Arab Community Center for Economic & Social Services (ACCESS)		X
B-H-K Child Development Board		X
Battle Creek Public Schools	X	X
Boys and Girls Club of Benton Harbor	X	
Bridgeport-Spaulding School District		X
Cherry Hill School of Performing Arts		X
Clare-Gladwyn RESD	X	X
Communities in Schools of Detroit		X
Eastern Michigan University-Willow Run Community Schools	X	
Flint Community Schools	X	
Grand Rapids Public Schools	X	X
International Academy of Flint	X	
Muskegon Public Schools		X
Pontiac Public Schools		X
Port Huron Area School District		X
Ross/Hill Academy		X
School District of the City of Detroit	X	X
School District of the City of Highland Park	X	
School District of the City of Kalamazoo		X
School District of the City of Saginaw	X	
Starfish Family Services	X	X
Traverse City Area Public Schools		X
University Preparatory Academy		X
West Village Academy		X