

Washington State Community Learning Center Program

Final Report to the Legislature



Randy I. Dorn
State Superintendent of
Public Instruction

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Prepared by
Debra Williams-Appleton, Program Supervisor
21st Century Community Learning Center Program

Learning and Teaching Support
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Mona Johnson, Director

Randy I. Dorn
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Ken Kanikeberg
Chief of Staff

Alan Burke, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent, K–12 Education

Martin T. Mueller
Assistant Superintendent, Student Support

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	i
I. Introduction	1
II. Process: Overview of Implementation Activities	2
A. Washington Community Learning Center Grants.....	2
B. WCLC Program Evaluation Process	4
C. Training and Professional Development.....	4
D. Public Awareness and Support for Statewide Afterschool Intermediary Organizations.....	5
III. Evaluation Findings	5
IV. Conclusion	7

Executive Summary

The Washington State Community Learning Center Program Final Report to the Legislature provides information regarding the context and rationale for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) program, an overview of the program legislation, the implementation activities to date, evaluation results, and a conclusion.

The executive summary highlights the key elements of the legislation, accomplishments to date, evaluation findings, and conclusion.

Background

In 2007, the Legislature passed Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 5841, which authorized the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to implement and administer the Washington Community Learning Centers (WCLC) program.

The legislation directed OSPI to provide Community Learning Center grants to public or private organizations that met the eligibility criteria for the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program and align the WCLC program elements and requirements with those of the 21st CCLC program. The legislation allowed for five-year grant awards and authorized WCLC programs to carry out a broad array of out-of-school activities that support and enhance academic achievement.

The legislation called for an evaluation of the program and a report to the Legislature including outcomes of grants and recommendations regarding program modification, sustainability, and possible expansion. *The Washington State Community Learning Center Program Preliminary Report to the Legislature* was submitted November 1, 2008, providing preliminary evaluation results and recommendations for future funding and expansion of the program.

In 2008, the Legislature eliminated funding for the program. This is the Final Report to the Legislature regarding implementation of the WCLC program.

Objectives of the Program

The objectives of the program were to:

1. Support the creation or expansion of community learning centers that provide students with tutoring and educational enrichment when school is not in session.
2. Provide training and professional development for community learning center program staff.
3. Increase public awareness regarding the availability and benefits of afterschool programs.
4. Support statewide afterschool intermediary organizations in their efforts to provide leadership, coordination, technical assistance, advocacy, and programmatic support to afterschool programs throughout the state.

Major Accomplishments

OSPI successfully implemented all key elements of the WCLC Program as authorized in ESSB 5841, section 5:

Washington Community Learning Center Grants–

OSPI expanded the federal 21st Century Community Learning Center Program by funding four WCLC Programs in Everett, Grand Coulee Dam, Nooksack Valley, and Seattle, providing \$1,097,000 in funding for community learning centers that provide students with tutoring and educational enrichment when school is not in session.

Professional Development–

OSPI provided a full range of professional development activities to support the implementation of WCLC Programs that provided high quality extended learning opportunities. Professional development activities included the development of an OSPI Community Learning Center Web site; ongoing training for direct service providers, program administrators, and evaluators; onsite program reviews; and additional technical assistance as needed.

Public Awareness and Engagement–

OSPI partnered with Schools Out Washington (SOWA) to promote increased public awareness regarding the availability and benefits of before-school and afterschool programs. Activities focused on the goal of engaging, supporting, and convening key constituencies, and building public goodwill with school principals across the state.

Support Statewide Afterschool Intermediary Organizations–

OSPI provided \$250,000 to SOWA to support their efforts to provide leadership, coordination, technical assistance, advocacy, and programmatic support to afterschool programs throughout the state. Activities focused on expanding the capacity of the Washington Regional Afterschool Program (WRAP) promoting quality standards and accountability; brokering and leveraging additional resources to fund before-school and afterschool programs; and promoting effective policy.

Evaluation Findings

OSPI conducted data collection and evaluation activities that parallel the federal 21st CCLC Program. In general, evaluation results demonstrated that the WCLC projects are comparable to the federal 21st CCLC projects both in terms of operation and performance. Specific findings for WCLC included the following:

1. Four programs, including sixteen centers, provided services to approximately 3,000 students annually.
2. All centers provided mathematics and reading support. Activities included academic enrichment, homework help, recreation, mentoring, tutoring, and family literacy services.
3. Students who participated regularly in the WCLC Program demonstrated improved classroom behaviors such as homework completion, participation in class, being attentive in class, increased motivation to learn, and increased academic performance.
4. A significant number of students who participated regularly improved from not proficient to proficient or above in reading or math on state assessments.

Conclusion

The WCLC Program has been fully implemented as authorized in ESSB 5841. The four major purposes were successfully addressed, and the WCLC Program made excellent progress in meeting its objectives and desired outcomes. WCLC Programs were successful in implementing quality out-of-school time programs that met the purpose of the Legislation, and supported increased behavioral and academic outcomes for youth participating in the programs. The programs were funded for five years under the authorizing legislation; however, funding was discontinued after two years.

OSPI provided a full range of professional development activities to support the implementation of WCLC Programs that provided high quality extended learning opportunities.

OSPI and SOWA were successful in partnering to promote increased public awareness regarding the availability and benefits of before-school and afterschool programs.

SOWA was successful in their efforts to provide leadership, coordination, technical assistance, advocacy, and programmatic support to afterschool programs throughout the state.

It is recommended that the program be considered for future funding, should resources become available, to provide continued support for quality out-of-school time programs for youth; to further continuous program quality improvement efforts to increase public awareness and engagement; and support statewide afterschool intermediary organizations.

I. Introduction

The Washington State Community Learning Center Program Final Report to the Legislature provides information regarding the context and rationale for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, an overview of the program legislation, the implementation activities to date, evaluation results, and conclusion.

Students come to school from a variety of different backgrounds and experiences. Students from low-income households often enter kindergarten less prepared than their peers who have had more advantages, and often lag behind in school throughout adolescence. For students who need extra support to be successful academically, what happens before and after school can be as important as what happens during the school day.

The children who could benefit the most from extended learning opportunities, however, typically have fewer opportunities to participate in high quality, affordable programs. When school-age children and teens do not have access to such programs and are left unsupervised after school, they are more likely to receive poor grades, drop out of school, and engage in more high risk behaviors than children who participate in constructive activities supervised by responsible adults.

Research suggests that regular participation in extended learning programs that provide academic and social activities has a positive impact on students' grades, academic achievement, and self-esteem, especially for children in poverty.

In 2007, the Washington Learns committee acknowledged the research on extended learning, and made recommendations for implementing extended learning opportunities in Washington State as a strategy for closing the achievement gap and personalizing education.

The 2007 Legislature passed Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 5841, authorizing the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to implement and administer the Washington Community Learning Centers (WCLC) program.

The legislation authorized OSPI to provide Community Learning Center grants to public or private organizations that met the eligibility criteria for the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program and align the WCLC program elements and requirements with those of the 21st CCLC program. The legislation allowed for five-year grant awards and authorized WCLC programs to carry out a broad array of out-of-school activities that support and enhance academic achievement.

The legislation called for an evaluation of the program and a report to the legislature including outcomes of grants and recommendations regarding program modification, sustainability, and possible expansion. The *Washington State Community Learning Center Program Preliminary Report to the Legislature* was submitted November 1, 2008, providing preliminary evaluation results and recommendations for future funding and expansion of the program.

In 2008 the Legislature eliminated funding for the program. This is the Final Report to the Legislature regarding implementation of the WCLC program.

The objectives of the program were to:

1. Support the creation or expansion of community learning centers that provide students with tutoring and educational enrichment when school is not in session.
2. Provide training and professional development for community learning center program staff.
3. Increase public awareness regarding the availability and benefits of afterschool programs.
4. Support statewide afterschool intermediary organizations in their efforts to provide leadership, coordination, technical assistance, advocacy, and programmatic support to afterschool programs throughout the state.

II. Process: Overview of Implementation Activities

A. Washington Community Learning Center Grants

OSPI developed the grant criteria for the WCLC program based on the criteria for the federal 21st CCLC. A Request for Proposals was released through the OSPI iGrants system. A conference for bidders was held, via video conferencing, at each of the nine educational service districts (ESD); many school districts used their own video conferencing capabilities to view the conference.

Eligible entities included local educational agencies, community-based or faith-based organizations, other public or private entities, or a consortium of two or more entities that proposed to serve students who primarily attended:

1. Schools eligible for schoolwide programs under Section 1114 of Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001; or
2. Schools that serve a high percentage of students from low-income families (40 percent or higher free meal participation), and the family members of students that attend the afterschool programs.

The funding period for the WCLC grants was five years (contingent on continued funding from the legislature). The selection criteria for the grants included: need for the project, quality of project design, adequacy of resources (including transportation), quality of the management plan, quality of the project evaluation, and feasibility of the budget request.

Grant Review Process

A panel of reviewers composed of educators, afterschool advocates, community members, and afterschool program directors reviewed all eligible grants and made funding recommendations. Reviewers were selected based on their knowledge of afterschool, education, and community resources. Applications were scored using a rubric developed by OSPI staff and afterschool experts. Total scores were averaged to determine the priority for funding.

Grant Awards

OSPI received 30 grant applications proposing to serve students at 137 sites. The total amount of funding requested was \$10,786,053. Based on the available funding, four grant applications, serving 16 sites, were awarded for a total of \$1,096,752. The four communities funded were Everett, Grand Coulee Dam, Nooksack Valley, and Seattle.

Transportation

As required in the legislation, all of the selected grantees included a transportation plan that addressed the needs of the students attending the afterschool programs.

Everett School District

Sites: Hawthorne Elementary School and North Middle School

Annual Funding: \$75,000

Program Description: Everett School District schools have focused on creating a strong partnership with the Snohomish Boys and Girls Club to provide an effective afterschool program. This partnership focused on:

1. Engaging students with a computer-based mathematics program that would track progress, teach basic skills, and enhance and support classroom work.
2. Building connections in the community with colleges and other local stakeholders to recruit tutors and other volunteers.
3. Developing confident students who make better choices about their personal behavior and recognize the connection between their personal choices and their future.

Grand Coulee Dam School District

Sites: Center Elementary, Grand Coulee Dam Middle School, Lake Roosevelt High School, and Nespelém School District

Annual Funding: \$268,000

Program Description: Grand Coulee Dam School District (GCDS) continued to develop their afterschool program—SHARP Kids. SHARP is an acronym for Safe, Honest, Aware, Respectful, and Present. This partnership focused on:

1. Improving mathematics achievement in middle school students.
2. Facilitating communications among home, school, and students.
3. Developing individualized support and transition plans to carry students from grade-to-grade and into a post-high school plan.
4. Providing intensive academic coaching programs.
5. Providing job shadowing, apprenticeships, service learning, and volunteer activities.

Nooksack Valley School District

Sites: Everson Elementary, Nooksack Elementary, and Nooksack Valley Middle School

Annual Funding: \$153,752

Program Description: Nooksack Valley School District's mission was to ensure the success of all students. This project, NV P.A.C.E. (Pursuing Academic and Community Excellence), provided extended day and extended year opportunities for students not at grade level. This partnership focused on:

1. Providing support in reading, writing, and most specifically, math.
2. Supporting students with English as their second language.
3. Developing partnerships for enrichment opportunities to meet needs in the community including family literacy, recreation, and mentoring activities.

Seattle School District

Sites: African American Academy, Concord Elementary, Emerson Elementary, Bailey Gatzert Elementary, Hawthorne Elementary, Denny Middle, Rainier Beach High, and Chief Sealth High

Annual Funding: \$600,000

Program Description: Working collaboratively with the schools in which they operated, Seattle Public Schools Community Learning Centers focused on:

1. Providing afterschool homework help and academic support, especially for middle school mathematics.

2. Providing family involvement activities and workshops to prepare families to assist students in successfully transitioning from elementary to middle and high school grades.
3. Providing credit retrieval and WASL preparation.
4. Providing parent trainings and workshops on a variety of topics.

B. WCLC Program Evaluation Process

OSPI conducted data collection and evaluation activities that paralleled the federal 21st CCLC program. With the desire to maintain consistency and comparability between the evaluation process for the 21st CCLC and WCLC projects and to reduce cost, the decision was made to require the same evaluation requirements for the new WCLC program. Evaluation activities for 2007–09 have been recently completed.

The statewide evaluation process in Washington consisted of two components. The first component was a local independent evaluation and the second required project data entry into the Profile and Performance Information Collection System (PPICS) system, a Web-based data collection system, developed and managed by Learning Point Associates (LPA).

PPICS information includes data about partners, operation, activities, feeder schools, attendance, and demographics of the participants. In addition, PPICS collects project achievement and behavioral outcome data and progress information toward meeting project objectives.

Outcome data includes state mandated WASL scores and information collected from teachers (via teacher survey) about achievement and behavior of participating students observed by the regular classroom teacher. The survey consists of items dealing with homework completion, attendance, and in-class behavior. Findings for 2007–09 are reported in Section III of this report.

C. Training and Professional Development

Professional development needs were identified by aggregating information from multiple sources, including focus groups with grantees, site visits, results from evaluations, and results from onsite monitoring.

Washington Community Learning Center staff received the following professional development opportunities:

- January 2008–SeaTac, Directors' Meeting
- February 2008–Pasco and Renton, *Recruitment and Retention of Middle School Customers* by Steve Amuck
- April 2008–SeaTac, Director and Evaluator Training
- June 2008–Wenatchee, *Math and Afterschool: Making the Connection*
- July 2008–Dallas, Texas, *21st CCLC Summer Conference*
- September 2008–Ellensburg and Renton, *Essentials of Staff Development* by the Center for Afterschool
- October 2008–Yakima, *Partnering for Student Success Conference*
- October 2008–Vancouver, *Bridge from School to Afterschool Conference*
- January 2009–videoconference, *Digital Learning Commons, Emergency Preparedness, and Promising Math Practices*
- February 2009–videoconference, *Best Practices in Family Literacy*

- March 2009–videoconference, *Healthy Youth Survey Results and Supplemental Education Services (SES)*
- April 2009–SeaTac, Director and Evaluator Meeting
- April–May 2009–seven regional trainings, *Creating Engaging and Challenging Learning Experiences* by Travis Smith
- May 2009–four regional trainings, *Incident Command Systems* by Tyson Vogeler
- May 2009–SeaTac, *Healthy School Summit Training*
- May 2009–videoconference, Youth Program Quality Assessment
- June 2009–Kennewick, Washington 21st CCLC Summer Institute

D. Public Awareness and Support for Statewide Afterschool Intermediary Organizations

A sole source contract was awarded to Schools Out Washington in the amount of \$250,000 for 2008 and \$250,000 for 2009. The general objectives of the contract with Schools Out Washington included:

1. Engaging, Convening, and Supporting Key Constituencies:
 - Expand the Washington Afterschool Network (WAN).
 - Assist WAN Steering Committee members to develop and implement an annual work plan.
 - Plan and implement approximately nine events to build public will with school principals across the state.
2. Establishing Quality Standards and Promoting Accountability:
 - Convene a forum to highlight exemplary programs.
 - Convene a forum on program evaluation and accountability measures.
 - Support the Bridge to Afterschool and Back Conference to provide professional development to afterschool providers.
 - Promote statewide standards for program quality assessment.
 - Develop and implement professional development activities.
3. Brokering and Leveraging Resources:
 - Plan and implement a forum on financing strategies for afterschool programs.
 - Plan and implement a forum on sustainability, grant writing, and provide technical assistance to those that attend the forum as needed.
 - Work with funders and policy makers to increase funding for afterschool efforts.
4. Promoting Effective Policy:
 - Support WAN members in remaining engaged at multiple levels to influence policy.
 - Develop fact sheets to keep stakeholders informed regarding emerging issues at both the state and national level.
 - Analyze the supply and demand study and provide a mapping of the supply and demand study results.

III. Evaluation Findings

Findings are organized and summarized with the following sections: objectives, partners, operation, activities, attendance, teacher survey, and WASL performance. Below is a description of each.

Objectives: Each project maintains three to seven objectives. These objectives focus on improving positive student behavioral choices, confidence and skills in mathematics and reading, and increased WASL performance. All projects stated that they either met a particular objective or are making progress toward meeting objectives.

Partners: The number of partner organizations that projects reported ranges from 1–26. All partners listed are active with some subcontracting services to the project. Partners include local churches, banks, schools, YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, parks and recreation, and community volunteers. Many partners contribute monetarily to the project.

Operation: There are 16 centers across the four projects. The average number of hours per week these centers were in operation during the school year was 9.4 hours. During the summer, the average was 2.3 hours per week. All schools ran afterschool programs during the regular school year. Three centers held programs before school, two offered summer school programs, and one offered a weekend program.

Activities: Mathematics and reading were offered at all 16 centers. Fifteen centers provided academic enrichment and parenting or family services. Thirteen centers offered homework help, 12 centers recreation, 8 centers mentoring, 7 centers tutoring, and 5 centers drug and violence prevention. Arts and music and health/nutrition were offered at 12 centers. Science and cultural activities/social studies were offered at nine centers.

Attendance: Across projects, there were approximately 3,000 total attendees annually. All grade levels were represented in this total with the largest representation from the elementary school level. There were 1,812 (55.4 percent) students reported as economically disadvantaged (as measured by free/reduced meals), 499 (15.2 percent) were reported as Limited English Proficient, and 290 (8.9 percent) disabled students participated. White students were the most highly represented ethnic/racial group with 1,294 (39.5 percent) students in WCLC. This was followed by African American students with 709 (21.7 percent), Hispanic/Latino students with 616 (18.8 percent), Asian/Pacific Islander students with 362 (11.0 percent), and American Indian students with 292 (8.9 percent).

Teacher Survey: Teachers provided a variety of responses to behaviors listed on the 10-item teacher survey. The survey responses indicated that 20–40 percent of students made moderate or significant improvement across items. The highest percentage of teachers reporting significant improvement of students was for changed behavior in academic performance. In addition, approximately 80 percent of students demonstrated improvements in homework completion and class participation, and 70 percent of students demonstrated improvements in student behavior as reported by classroom teachers during the regular school day.

WASL Performance: The percentage of students that passed the WASL in reading was relatively high, ranging from 55.4 percent in the 7th grade to a high of 80.8 percent in the 9th grade. In mathematics the range was a low of 29.1 percent for the 10th grade to 56.2 percent in the 3rd grade. White students had the highest pass rate in both reading and mathematics at 79.1 percent and 59.3 percent, respectively. The percentage of students that moved from not proficient to proficient or above in cross year disaggregated data was 23.45 percent for reading and 11.52 percent for math. The percentage of students passing in other demographic categories in reading and mathematics are as follows: American Indian (50.3 percent, 24.7 percent); Asian/Pacific Islander (65.5 percent, 51.7 percent); African American (48.0 percent, 22.3 percent); Hispanic/Latino (52.0 percent,

37.3 percent); Economically Disadvantaged – free/reduced meals (52.4 percent, 31.6 percent); and Limited English Proficient (28.9 percent, 24.4 percent).

IV. Conclusion

The WCLC program has been fully implemented as authorized in ESSB 5841. The four major purposes were successfully addressed, and the WCLC program made good progress in meeting its objectives and desired outcomes. WCLC programs were successful in implementing quality out-of-school time programs that met the purpose of the legislation, and supported increased behavioral and academic outcomes for youth participating in the programs. The programs were funded for five years under the authorizing legislation; however, funding was discontinued after two years.

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Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Old Capitol Building
P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200

For more information about the contents
of this document, please contact:
Debra Williams-Appleton, OSPI
E-mail: Debra.appleton@k12.wa.us
Phone: (360) 725-6049

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Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Old Capitol Building
P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200
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