

NEW YORK STATE PLAN FOR 21ST CCLC
June 2011

PROGRAM INFORMATION

States are asked to update State plans with respect to the 21st CCLC program. Please describe (1) any changes or revisions made to your State's original State plan with respect to the 21st CCLC program; (2) how such changes or revisions fall within the scope and objectives of the approved State plan and your State's 21st CCLC program; and (3) how such changes or revisions meet the statutory purposes of the 21st CCLC program.

When the New York State Education Department (NYSED) prepared its initial State Plan in 2002, a broad range of stakeholders were convened to participate in the discussions around the implementation of NYSED's administration of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program. NYSED initially established a statewide advisory committee of key stakeholders that went on to become the New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN). NYSED serves as the federally required advisory body for NYSED's 21st CCLC program and has had an active role in updating the 2002 State Plan to reflect the current administrative activities.

Changes that have occurred since the approval of the 2002 State Plan pertain to competitive priorities for program funding applicants, the process for the peer review of applications for funding, the establishment of the New York State Afterschool Network and adjustments in the provision of technical assistance and professional development for subgrantees. These changes are described below.

Section 1.6 of the 2002 State Plan indicated that the practice of having two lists of fundable programs was also eliminated: one for those that would serve SINI schools and one for those that would not. The list of SINI schools would be funded first. Two lists resulted in some very high quality proposals to serve non-SINI schools that had little chance of being funded while lower quality proposals to serve SINI schools were funded first. In 2009, NYSED established just one list of fundable programs for each geographic area. Priority points were awarded to the final average scores of fundable programs to ensure priority to schools that had been designated as Schools in Need of Improvement (SINI): six priority points to applications that would serve middle-level and high school students in SINI schools, and four priority points to applications that would serve elementary students in SINI schools. High-scoring applications without SINI priority still had a chance to be funded. As a result, nine high-scoring applications that did not serve SINI schools were funded.

Section 1.8 of the 2002 State Plan described the regional information sessions conducted for potential applicants for program funding. In 2009 to conserve staff time and travel dollars, regional information sessions were not conducted. Instead, NYSED produced a narrated PowerPoint presentation (Appendix 1) that was posted on the web site and available to any one at any time. Feedback on this resource

was quite positive. In addition, NYSED created an email address to receive and respond to questions specific to the 21st Century program and the application. The email address is still active as a technical assistance tool to grantees and others who are interested in the program.

Section 1.8 of the 2002 State Plan addressed the procedures for evaluating applications for funding. NYSED has conducted a peer review for all five funding competitions. NYSED selected reviewers through an application process that collected information about their professional and educational experience, experience in after school programming, geographic area of the state and other relevant factors. Peer reviewers were grouped in teams of three that reflect diversity in their backgrounds and constituency groups. Reviewers were informed of the proposals they would review and were required to sign a statement of “No Conflict of Interest.” Any proposal that presented a possible conflict of interest was reassigned to a different team. Reviewers were also required to sign a statement pledging confidentiality. Each proposal was then rated by a team of three peer reviewers.

The first four peer reviews involved NYSED convening the reviewers at a centralized site for a period of three to five days to complete the reviews. NYSED conducted a training session for the reviewers at the beginning. The fifth peer review conducted in 2009 was handled electronically. Reviewers were selected in the same manner as before. Preparation materials were sent to each reviewer in advance. Each reviewer had a computer password to access the applications he or she was to review. NYSED staff was available to assist the reviewers by phone and email throughout the process. Reviewers submitted their scores electronically to NYSED. NYSED staff compiled the scores and determined which applications could be funded.

Section 2.2 of the 2002 State Plan addressed technical assistance, training, evaluation and dissemination of promising practices. NYSED did not engage the National Center for Community Education to provide training as indicated in the 2002 State Plan. Until 2010 training was provided at statewide and regional events conducted by the New York 21st Century Statewide Technical Assistance Center and the New York Regional Student Support Services Network Centers, respectively, to build the capacity of 21st Century programs to improve the outcomes for participating students. The training included topics identified in the 2002 Plan: effective management, staff development, collaboration, programming, integration with the school day, evaluation, sustainability, communication and effective practices in after school programming.

The New York Regional Student Support Services Network Centers were discontinued in 2010 requiring NYSED to develop other ways to provide ongoing technical assistance and professional development to the grantees. The 21st Century Statewide Technical Assistance Center has increased its efforts to assist the grantees by providing regional professional development and making technical assistance site visits. NYSED has also conducted regional sessions. NYSED staff is available daily to provide assistance through phone calls and e-mail. In addition, New York State Afterschool Network has been a valuable resource to the 21st CCLC

programs as its regional networks continue to gain momentum and promote quality after school programs.

NYSED established a Statewide Advisory Group as required by NCLB to advise NYSED on 21st CCLC program issues. This group of after school program providers collaboratively applied for and received funding from the C. S. Mott Foundation to establish the New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN). See <http://www.nysan.org/>. NYSAN is a public-private partnership of organizations throughout the State dedicated to increasing the quality and availability of after school programs. NYSAN actively partners with NYSED in planning and implementing its out-of-school time programs. Over the past two years NYSED participated in NYSAN's RFP Task Force that worked to identify common requirements that could be consistent across all RFPs. NYSED, the NYS Office of Children and Family Services and other NYSAN member organizations also collaborated to map the availability of after school programs in local neighborhoods across the State. In this way, State agencies may be able to target higher need areas to be served by programs funded through their RFPs.

NYSAN defines "after school" broadly to include all programs that provide support for young people's intellectual, social, emotional and physical development outside the traditional school day, including programs that serve youth in kindergarten through 12th grade, take place in schools and in community-based settings, and occur both before and after school, and during weekends, holidays and summer breaks.

NYSAN facilitates connections among a broad range of state, regional and local partners representing afterschool program providers, youth, parents, public agencies, advocates, funders, evaluators, technical assistance and training providers, policymakers, businesses, researchers and community leaders.

SECTION A: GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A.1 Section 4202(c) of the ESEA requires each State to reserve not less than 95 percent of its 21st CCLC funds to make subgrants, not more than two (2) percent for state administration activities, and not more than three (3) percent for State activities (20 U.S.C. 7172(c)).

Ninety-five percent of all 21st Century funds received by NYSED are awarded to local 21st CCLC programs. NYSED consolidates funds from various sources in order to maximize the use of the two percent of federal funds for administrative costs. NYSED also uses the two percent to support 2.2 FTE professional staff assigned to the 21st CCLC program and costs associated with the peer review of applications for funding 21st CCLC programs.

NYSED uses an on-line system called CAFE for tracking budgets and expenditures of grants and contracts awarded by the Department. All grantees and contractors have unique payee identification numbers to ensure accurate accounting.

As a prime grant awardee, the NYSED complies with the requirements of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act by reporting subgrants greater than or equal to \$25,000 awarded from all Federal grants greater than or equal to \$25,000. Monthly reports will be submitted through FSRs.gov by the end of the month following the month in which NYSED awards any sub grant greater than or equal to \$25,000. If any initial sub grant is below \$25,000 but subsequent modifications result in a total of \$25,000 or greater, the sub grant will be reported as of the date the sub grant exceeds \$25,000. If any initial sub grant is \$25,000 or greater but funding is thereafter deobligated to an amount \$25,000, NYSED will continue to report that sub grant.

NYSED also tracks the need for and conduct of A-133 audits. NYSED places a hold on payments to any grantee/contractor until it complies with the A-133 audit requirement.

NYSED's Office of Audit Services conducts audits of any program that has presented significant noncompliance or risk factors for noncompliance with fiscal requirements.

NYSED takes very seriously any allegations or complaints received directly from the field or referred by other government offices concerning programmatic or fiscal aspects of 21st CCLC programs. NYSED gathers available background information, contacts the local program and conducts an audit if needed. NYSED then takes the steps necessary to resolve the issues in question.

A.2 Section 4202(c)(3) of the ESEA states that each State monitor and evaluate the programs and activities; provide capacity building, training, and technical assistance; conduct a comprehensive evaluation (directly, or through a grant or contract) of the effectiveness of programs and activities; and provide training and technical assistance to eligible entities who are applicants for or recipients of awards. (*Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix B: State Activities to Implement ESEA Programs)*)

Monitor and evaluate programs and activities

Staff conduct monitoring site visits throughout each year to programs that exhibit the highest risk factors (e.g., programs that receive large grant awards and programs that have had difficulty in implementing their programs or managing their grant funds) A standardized monitoring protocol (Appendix 2) that integrates the ten essential elements of effective after school programs is used for each visit. The elements, as identified in the New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool (available at www.nysan.org), include

- Environment and Climate
- Administration and Organization
- Relationships
- Staffing and Professional Development
- Programming and Activities.

Linkages Between the School Day and After School Programs
Youth Participation and Engagement
Parent, Family and Community Partnerships
Program Sustainability and Growth Measuring Outcomes and
Evaluation

NYSED staff also conducts telephone monitoring of programs in order to increase program oversight. A phone monitoring protocol (Appendix 3) is used to ensure consistency.

Provide capacity building, training and technical assistance

Capacity building and training activities are conducted for all grantees primarily by the NYSED Statewide 21st Century Technical Assistance Center (TAC), in collaboration with NYSED, as one- and two-day regional professional development events two times each year. Topics include integration of the State Common Core Standards in program activities, working with the program's independent evaluator, completion of the federal APR, use of the Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSA), fiscal reporting and submissions, sharing effective practices including successful family literacy initiatives, and other topics selected based on grantee surveys and the NYSED Mid-Year Report. During the 2011-12 school year NYSED will conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to be completed by school administrators, teachers, after school program staff, community-based stakeholders, parents and students that will provide up-to-date specific information on how NYSED can improve outcomes of the 21st CCLC program.

The TAC also conducts periodic three-hour technical assistance visits to local programs to provide assistance in resolving current and emerging programmatic and fiscal issues. In addition, the TAC maintains a web site (<http://www.nys21stcclc.org/>) to disseminate promising practices, regularly disseminates an electronic newsletter, responds to telephone and email requests for information and assistance, provides guidance to grantees in conducting the QSA and oversees the completion of the federal APR.

The TAC's contract with NYSED expires September 30, 2011. To avoid a break in services to the grantees, NYSED has issued a RFP for the establishment of two Resource Centers, one to serve New York City and the other to serve the Rest of State areas. The new Centers are to begin October 1, 2011 for a contract period of five years.

Conduct a comprehensive evaluation (directly, or through a grant or contract) of the effectiveness of programs and activities

NYSED awarded a competitive contract to Research Works, Inc. in 2006 to conduct a state-level evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the New York State Education Department's 21st CCLC Program. Aspects of the evaluation included improvements in participating students' academic performance and behavior and in-depth evaluations of selected 21st Century programs. Research Works, Inc. has also evaluated the effectiveness of the 21st CCLC Statewide Technical Assistance

Center (TAC) with regard to its provision of professional development events for 21st CCLC grantees; technical assistance to the Regional Student Support Services Centers to build their capacity to assist 21st CCLC program providers in effectively implementing their programs; and its administration of the APR. The evaluator has utilized both quantitative and qualitative information from multiple data sources including data submitted to the federal web-based Annual Performance Report, program site visits and telephone interviews with a variety of stakeholders.

NYSED will continue to use the evaluation results guide its compliance, monitoring and reporting efforts; technical assistance and professional development activities; and to inform the field of the value and impact of the 21st CCLC program in their communities and statewide.

In working with the APR/PPICS, the evaluator realized that it contained very little actual raw data. Most of what was entered is frequency counts of already aggregated data so that real secondary analysis of the data was not possible. This database contains no student level data; therefore conclusions about student performance based on program attendance, time in activities and types of activities attended, are not possible. All children who come for 30 days or more are considered regular attendees and each child's student outcome data (grades, test scores, etc.) is collected and added to the aggregated data set. For example, one child may only participate in one activity for 30 days while another child may participate in the full program of academic enrichment, youth development service learning, etc. daily for 30 days; both students' grades and test scores are included in the student outcome aggregated data.

The evaluator's case studies suggest that 60 hours each year is the minimum amount of time for the 21st CCLC program to have any effect on the student – i.e. dosage as it relates to academic achievement, and moving from days of attendance, to hours. Grantees are required to take attendance at their sites each day of program operation. APR data are reported on 'regular attendees' – those who attend 30 days or more in a single program year. Calendar days equal program days, but calendar days do not reflect actual time spent in activities. Counting calendar days has proven to be unfair to programs, because it results in an inability to express actual time spent (dosage) in program activities by participants. One day of participation could be 20 minutes or 6 hours. Therefore, reporting days rather than hours of attendance does not take into consideration those students who attended an all-day Saturday program for several weeks or 6-hour summer programs than ran for 20 days.

NYSED will encourage 21st CCLC programs to record attendance as usual for the APR for the 2011-2012 year, but also to record attendance whereby two hours of program intervention is equal to one program day. For example, students who participate in a weekend program of four hours for 15 days would be counted as a regular attendee. The new calculation may result in fewer regular attendees than reported on the APR, or the number may be offset because of the ability to count those attendees with higher dosage.

The evaluator suspects that part of the reason, in general, 21st CCLC programs are perceived as ineffective is due to the way that current data are being recorded and analyzed. Also, positive program outcomes may not be seen right away because programs of this type take time to become established and successful. This past year, the evaluator selected a sample of 15 programs from which to collect student-level data. NYSED is awaiting final reports.

The contract with Research Works, Inc. expires September 30, 2011. NYSED will issue a competitive RFP this summer to establish a new contract with an appropriate evaluator.

Provide training and technical assistance to eligible entities who are applicants for or recipients of awards

NYSED has conducted training and provided technical assistance to potential applicants for 21st Century funding in preparation for each of the five funding competitions conducted to date. For the first four competitions, NYSED staff conducted regional information sessions across the State. For the fifth competition conducted in 2009, NYSED provided an on-line narrated PowerPoint presentation (Appendix 1). This new approach had two primary benefits: It was less expensive to implement and it allowed NYSED to provide the same information to all potential applicants at the start of the competition and to continue its availability 24/7 throughout the proposal development period. NYSED staff also provided assistance via telephone and email.

A.3 Section 4203(a)(4) of the ESEA states that an application describes the procedures and criteria the SEA will use for reviewing applications and awarding funds to eligible entities on a competitive basis, which shall include procedures and criteria that take into consideration the likelihood that a proposed community learning center will help participating students meet local content and student academic achievement standards. (*Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix B: State Activities to Implement ESEA Programs)*)

NYSED has conducted five competitions for 21st CCLC funding. Each followed the same key steps to select high quality applications for funding:

1. NYSED disseminated a Request for Proposals that provided information on the expectations and requirements of the 21st CCLC program and instructions to complete the application. Eligible applicants included public school districts, BOCES, charter schools, private schools, nonprofit agencies, city or county government agencies, faith-based organizations, institutions of higher education, and for-profit corporations. Public notice of the competition and application process was published in the *New York State Contract Reporter*, posted on NYSED's website and sent to key stakeholders for further notice and dissemination.

2. NYSED recruited peer reviewers to complete the reviews of the applications. The first three recruitment efforts relied on a paper application process while the fourth and fifth competitions used the electronic Survey Monkey tool. The need for reviewers was publicized as broadly as possible to reach out to qualified individuals with diverse expertise, geographic location, gender, racial and ethnic backgrounds. NYSED was looking for those familiar with the operation of high quality youth programs in schools and communities – for example, teachers and principals, experts in expanded learning opportunities, college and university faculty, community educators, community service providers, practitioners from faith-based organizations and staff from foundations and charitable organizations. NYSED grouped the selected reviewers in teams of three that represented the diversity described earlier.

3. NYSED screened all proposals received on or before the due date to determine capacity to administer the program based on previous experience with similar amounts of funding at the State or federal level through government or foundation grants, proven fiduciary responsibility as demonstrated through annual audits or other relevant information as documented by the applicant on the “Capacity Determination Form” of the application.

NYSED staff then reviewed the proposals to verify that applicants would serve students who primarily attend (1) schools eligible for schoolwide programs under section 1114 of the ESEA; or (2) schools that serve a high percentage of students from low-income families – i.e., have a 40 percent free and reduced lunch rate or a 40 percent free lunch rate if in New York City.

NYSED staff also checked the Private School Consultation Form (Appendix 4) in each proposal to ensure that the applicant had consulted with the private schools in the catchment area of the program to determine their interest in having their students and teachers participate in the 21st Century program should the applicant be selected for funding.

Eligible applications were checked for priority status - at least 75 percent of the schools to be served were designated as Schools in Need of Improvement (SINI) under NCLB, Section 1116 and whether the program was to serve elementary students or middle/high school students.

4. The first four competitions featured a convening of all peer reviewers at a centralized meeting facility for a period of 3 to 5 days in order to complete the reviews. NYSED staff prepared a review guide (Appendix 5) and conducted a training session for the reviewers. Each reviewer was given a number of proposals to rate. Each proposal was reviewed and rated by three reviewers. These three individuals discussed each application to determine a final average score based on consensus.

The fifth and most recent peer review in 2009 was conducted electronically. Proposals were made available to the reviewers electronically using a password

system. Reviewers also submitted their scores to NYSED electronically. Future competitions will likely be conducted electronically as well.

The peer reviewers evaluated applications against a standardized scoring rubric (Appendix 6) organized in five areas of review: Need for the Project, Quality of Project Design, Quality of Evaluation Design, Organizational Leadership and Quality of the Management Plan and Adequacy of Resources. Reviewers also evaluated how well the programs included the three main components of all 21st CCLCS – academic enrichment, youth development and family literacy services – and to meet federal performance indicators.

In the first four competitions, lists of fundable programs were created separately for those with SINI priority and those without SINI priority. In 2009 separate lists were not created, but six priority points were added to the final average score of fundable applications that proposed to serve middle-level students or high school noncompleters who attend SINI schools; four priority points were added to the final average score of fundable applications that proposed to serve elementary students in SINI schools. This change enabled high quality proposals that did not serve SINI schools to be competitive. As a result, nine high-scoring applications that did not serve SINI schools were funded.

A.4 Section 4203(a)(5) of the ESEA states that the SEA must describe how it will ensure that awards made are of sufficient size and scope to support high-quality, effective programs that are consistent with the purpose of this part; and in amounts that are consistent with section 4204(h). (*Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix D: Assurances)*)

NYSED trains peer reviewers on what constitutes a proposal of sufficient size and scope to be of high quality by looking at factors such as provisions for program management, days and hours of operation, numbers of students served, student-to-adult ratios, and transportation costs. In addition, applicants are encouraged to propose a broad array of activities since a comprehensive approach has been linked to high-quality, effective programs. Consistent with program law, grants will not be made in amounts less than \$50,000. Many proposals include 3 to 4 program sites and serve larger numbers of children, especially those from New York City and the Big Four Cities; however, NYSED does not consider any applicant's request of more than \$900,000 and an organization that submits more than one application cannot receive more than a total of \$900,000.

To address the need for geographic diversity, funds are allocated to each of the following three areas based on its relative share of the allocation to New York State schools of Title I funds, using the current percentages:

1. New York City - 60 %
2. Big Four Cities (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Yonkers – 10%
3. Rest of the State – 30 %

New York will use the schoolwide program eligibility priority, as set forth in the program law, for public schools in each of these areas. Eligibility can also be based on a school's free and reduced lunch rate: a 40 percent free lunch rate in New York City and a combined free and reduced lunch rate of 40 percent in all other areas of the State. Lists of eligible schools are posted on the Department's web page at the time of a funding competition.

A.5 Section 4203(a)(6) of the ESEA states that the SEA must describe the steps the SEA will take to ensure that programs implement effective strategies, including providing ongoing technical assistance and training, evaluation, and dissemination of promising practices. (*Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix B: State Activities to Implement ESEA Programs)*)

Training and Technical Assistance, Dissemination of Promising Practices

NYSED provides training to its 185 grantees primarily through its 21st Century Statewide Technical Assistance Center (TAC). The TAC provides quarterly professional development events that include topics such as effective practices in after school programming, incorporating the Common Core Standards in program activities, program evaluation, family and community involvement, training of program staff and program sustainability. Professional development events are provided in a variety of formats such as in-person and virtual training, peer learning and coaching. The TAC regularly disseminates electronically a newsletter and maintains a web site that features current information on these topics (<http://www.nys21stccclc.org/>). The TAC also conducts technical assistance site visits to programs.

In March 2011 NYSED sponsored nine regional professional development sessions conducted by the Brustein & Manasevit law firm on the requirements of EDGAR for 21st Century grantees as well as fiscal staff of LEAs and other organizations (Appendix 7). The firm is under contract with NYSED and will likely be available to conduct additional sessions over the next year.

NYSED provides direct technical assistance to grantees through phone calls and an email box (emsc21stccclc@mail.nysed.gov) specifically for questions from grantees and the field related to the 21st Century program.

NYSED developed a Mid-Year Report, required of all grantees in January of each year (beginning in 2010), using Survey Monkey (Appendix 8). Grantees are asked to provide basic program information about the operation of each of their sites, attendance, etc. The Report also asks about professional development that has been offered, progress toward achieving program objectives, student involvement, family literacy activities, use of the Quality Self-Assessment Tool, the independent program evaluation, and the program's advisory committee. The Report also asks the grantee to identify both its successes and challenges in implementing the program. NYSED staff follows up with the grantees to resolve any issues.

NYSED also maintains frequent and regular communication with the State-level evaluator to follow up on any issues identified by the evaluator in its in-depth study of selected grantees and review of data submitted by grantees for the federal Annual Performance Report (APR). NYSED's State-level evaluator has developed a tip sheet (Appendix 9) for program evaluations. The evaluator has determined that local program evaluations vary greatly in quality and usefulness. At NYSED's request, the evaluator is developing a detailed evaluator's handbook to assist both evaluators and program managers.

Evaluation

NYSED evaluation requirements for all 21st CCLCs consist of the three components described below:

Independent Evaluation: Each 21st CCLC is required to engage an independent evaluator to assess progress toward achieving its objectives to provide a high-quality after school program. The cost of the independent evaluator may not exceed five percent of the total annual grant award for Round 5 grantees and eight percent of the total annual grant award for Round 4 grantees. The evaluation must be based on the factors included in the 21st Century Performance Indicators and principles of effectiveness. In order for a program to meet these principles, the program or activity must:

Be based upon an assessment of objective data regarding the need for before- and after- school programs (including during summer recess periods) and activities in the schools and communities,

Be based upon an established set of performance measures aimed at ensuring the availability of high quality academic enrichment and other developmental opportunities, and

If appropriate, be based upon scientifically-based research that provides evidence of the effectiveness of a program activity.

The results of the evaluation must be used to refine, improve, and strengthen the program; and made available to the public upon request.

Annual Performance Report (APR): Grantees are responsible for periodic entry of data into the APR, the federal web-based reporting system, <http://ppics.learningpt.org/ppics/public.asp>. The two purposes of the APR are to (1) demonstrate that substantial progress has been made toward meeting the objectives of the project as outlined in the grant application, and (2) collect data that addresses the performance indicators for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program. APR measures of participants' progress include:

Percentage whose math/English grades improved from fall to spring.

Percentage that meet or exceed the proficient level of performance on State Assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics.

Percentage whose regular classroom teacher reported (on a non-electronic survey) improvements in homework completion, class participation and behavior.

Grantees must evaluate the objectives identified in the federal APR as well as any others they have set for themselves.

Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSA): The QSA is the research-based planning and self-assessment tool developed by the New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) that is used by each program site two times each year. A Users Guide for the QSA Tool is available at the same web site as the Tool. The QSA process should include representatives of all stakeholders involved in the program. The Tool is organized consistent with the essential elements of a high quality after school program:

- Environment and Climate
- Administration and Organization
- Relationships
- Staffing and Professional Development
- Programming and Activities.
- Linkages Between the School Day and After School Programs
- Youth Participation and Engagement
- Parent, Family and Community Partnerships
- Program Sustainability and Growth Measuring Outcomes and Evaluation

Although the QSA tool is not considered to be an evaluation tool, the feedback from the QSA does contribute to the overall understanding of the outcomes of the program.

A.6 Section 4203(a)(7) of the ESEA states that the SEA must describe how program under the ESEA will be coordinated with programs under the ESEA, and other programs as appropriate. (*Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix D: Assurances)*)

New York State is a Round 2 recipient of Race to the Top funding. Among NYSED's Race to the Top efforts are the Board of Regents January 2011 adoption of the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and math, science, social studies, arts, technology and economics and Pre-Kindergarten education. Information on the Common Core State Standards can be found at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/common_core_standards/ .

The development of the Common Core Standards was part of a national effort led by the Council of Chief State School Officers and National Governors Association (NGA) to establish a single set of clear educational standards for ELA and math. Teachers, experts and parents were actively involved in this initiative. Preliminary professional development was provided in March 2011 to 21st CCLC grantees on the Common Core State Standards to prepare them for communicating with the regular school day teachers and aligning their own academic enrichment activities with the Standards. A webinar is being planned to provide additional training on this topic. NYSED will also develop curriculum models for schools' use.

NYSED also identified the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools and is assisting them in implementing one of the four school turnaround models: turnaround, restart, transformation or closure. Future 21st CCLC funding competitions will give greater priority to applicants that propose to serve students in these schools to provide them additional support.

Race to the Top initiatives and the Regents Reform Agenda that focuses on college and career readiness have resulted in increased collaboration and coordination across NYSED offices, including Title I.

A.7 Section 4204(d)(1) of the ESEA states that an SEA may require an eligible entity to match funds awarded under this part, except that such match may not exceed the amount of the grant award and may not be derived from other Federal or State funds. (Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix D: Assurances))

NYSED does not require its grantees to match any funds. It does encourage grantees to supplement or braid 21st Century funds with other funding sources to maximize the use of resources and to make efforts to sustain the program after the 21st Century grant period. Programs must be equally accessible to all students targeted for services, regardless of their ability to pay. Programs that charge fees may not prohibit any family from participating due to its financial situation. Programs that opt to charge fees must offer a sliding scale of fees and scholarships for those who cannot afford the program.

A.8 Section 4203(a)(b) states that the SEA must provide assurance that the SEA will make awards under this part only to eligible entities that propose to serve (A) students who primarily attend schools eligible for school-wide Title I programs and schools that serve a high percentage of students from low-income families; and (B) the families of students in schools eligible for school-wide Title I programs or schools that serve a high percentage of students from low-income families. (Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix D: Assurances))

As stated in statute and the RFP, grants will be awarded only to eligible applicants that propose to serve students who primarily attend:

schools eligible for schoolwide programs under Title I, Section 1114 of the No Child Left Behind Act, **or**

schools with at least 40 percent of its students eligible for free or reduced priced lunch. (New York City requires that 40 percent of a school's students be eligible for free lunch.); and the families of these students.

If a particular school does not meet the 40 percent free/reduced lunch rate, it can still be identified as a school that serves a high percentage of students from low-income families if it meets one of the following criteria:

Administrative Option – In school districts with only one building per grade span (such as one K-6 building, one 7-8 building and one 9-12 building), if at least one of the buildings is on the list, then the other buildings in the district will be considered eligible for 21st CCLC purposes.

Feeder Pattern Option - A middle or high school that is not on the list will be considered eligible if the average of the "poverty measure" of the elementary schools that feed into that school is at or above 40 percent. However, in New York City students apply to enroll in the high school of their choice. Therefore, the feeder schools cannot be used to determine the eligibility of the high school.

Review of Documentation - Any other school not on one of these lists may be determined as serving a high percentage of students from low-income families upon a State Education Department review of documentation provided by the applicant. It is highly recommended that an applicant seeking to qualify under this option contact SED for assistance prior to preparing a proposal.

Note: If two or more schools are to be served by the applicant, at least 50% of the school buildings must meet the eligibility criteria stated above.

NYSED and the peer reviewers verify that each application includes services to the families of the students being served by the 21st CCLC program. Services can include instruction in such areas as English as a second language, computer skills, resume writing, job interviews and parenting.

A.9 Section 4204 (i)(1) states that the SEA must give priority to applications (A) proposing to target services to students who attend schools that have been identified as in need of improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA; and (B) submitted jointly by eligible entities consisting of not less than one local educational agency (LEA) receiving funds under part A of title I; and community-based organization or other public or private entity. (*Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix B: State Activities to Implement ESEA Programs and Appendix D: Assurances)*)

NYSED staff reviews each application to determine whether or not it proposes to serve schools that have been designated as a School in Need of Improvement (SINI). If it does, it receives competitive priority over applications that propose to serve students who do not attend SINI schools. If the applicant proposes to serve

more than one school, at least 75 percent of the schools to be served must be SINI schools.

As stated in the most recent RFP, priority points will be awarded to applications that will serve students who attend schools in need of improvement as follows. Schools in need of improvement include SINI 1, SINI 2, Corrective Action, Planning for Restructuring and Restructuring schools.

Four (4) priority points are awarded to fundable applications (those receiving a final average score of at least 70) that propose to serve elementary students who attend schools in need of improvement.

Six (6) priority points will be awarded to fundable applications (those receiving a final average score of 70) that propose to serve middle-level students or high school noncompleters who attend SINI schools. (High school noncompleters are students who have dropped out or are at risk of not meeting the graduation requirements to earn a diploma)

NYSED staff reviews each application to verify that it has been submitted jointly by eligible entities consisting of not less than one local education agency receiving Title I, Part A funds and a community-based organization or other public or private entity

A.10 Section 4204 (i)(1) states that the SEA must give priority to applications shall provide the same priority to an application submitted by a local educational agency if the LEA demonstrates that it is unable to partner with a community-based organization in reasonable geographic proximity and of sufficient quality to meet the requirements of this part. (*Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 ((Appendix D: Assurances))*)

Any LEA that does not apply jointly with another organization would have to document to the satisfaction of NYSED that no appropriate community-based organizations were available to partner with the LEA before NYSED could determine that it is eligible to compete for funding. If eligible, the application would not be penalized. To date, NYSED has not received any such applications.

SECTION B: EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE

B.1 Section 4205(b) of the ESEA states that for a program or activity developed pursuant to this part to meet the principles of effectiveness, such program or activity shall be based upon an assessment of objective data regarding the need for before and after school programs (including during summer recess periods) and activities in the schools and communities; shall be based upon an established set of performance measures aimed at ensuring the availability of high quality academic enrichment opportunities; and shall if appropriate, be based upon scientifically based research that provides evidence that the program or activity will help students meet the State and local student academic achievement standards. (*Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix D: Assurances)*)

Applicants for funding must describe the community where the target population of students and their families live and identify the specific needs of the children to be served. Applicants are expected to provide current and specific cited data to strongly document each of those needs. Suggested data sources may include, but are not limited to, academic achievement, percentage of students eligible for free and/or reduced lunch, percentage and/or rapid growth of limited English proficient students, incidence of risky behaviors and dropout rates. Applicants must also identify and document specific needs of the children's families to be served and by providing data such as poverty rates, literacy rates and education levels in the community. The applicant is also expected to demonstrate how the program will provide services and activities that are not currently available.

Applicants must also describe how the program will comply with the U.S. Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) to ensure equitable access to and meet the needs of special populations (e.g., students with disabilities, English language learners) and how the program will disseminate information about the center (including its location) to the community in a manner that is understandable and accessible.

All applicants must design their programs to meet the federal performance indicators. NYSED provided applicants a work plan template that enabled them to clearly state the program's objectives, activities, performance indicators and measures for each. See excerpt from the template below. At the recommendation of the State-level evaluator, Research Works, Inc., NYSED re-ordered the two performance indicators. The rationale is that offering a range of high quality services will lead to educational and social benefits and positive behavioral changes. The complete template is found in Appendix 10.

Objective 1: 21st Century Community Learning Centers will offer a range of high-quality educational, developmental, and recreational services for students and their families.		
<i>Sub-Objective 1.1: Core educational services. 100% of Centers will offer high quality services in core academic areas, e.g., reading and literacy, mathematics, and science.</i>		
Program Objective 1.1-1:		
Activities to Support This Program Objective	Performance Indicator(s) of Success	How It Will Be Measured

B.2 Section 4205(b)(2) of the ESEA states that the program or activity shall undergo a periodic evaluation to assess its progress toward achieving its goal of providing high quality opportunities for academic enrichment. The results of evaluations under subparagraph (A) shall be used to refine, improve, and strengthen the program or activity, and to refine the performance measures; and made available to the public upon request, with public notice of such availability. (Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix D: Assurances))

NYSED evaluation requirements for all 21st CCLCs consist of the three components described below:

Independent Evaluation: Each 21st CCLC is required to engage an independent evaluator to assess progress toward achieving its objectives to provide a high-quality after school program. The cost of the independent evaluator may not exceed 5 percent of the total annual grant award. The evaluation must be based on the factors included in the 21st Century Performance Indicators and principles of effectiveness. In order for a program to meet these principles, the program or activity must:

Be based upon an assessment of objective data regarding the need for before- and after- school programs (including during summer recess periods) and activities in the schools and communities,

Be based upon an established set of performance measures aimed at ensuring the availability of high quality academic enrichment and other developmental opportunities, and

If appropriate, be based upon scientifically-based research that provides evidence of the effectiveness of a program activity.

The results of the evaluation must be used to refine, improve, and strengthen the program; and made available to the public upon request.

Annual Performance Report (APR): Grantees are responsible for periodic entry of data into the APR, the federal web-based reporting system <http://ppics.learningpt.org/ppics/public.asp>. The two purposes of the APR are to (1) demonstrate that substantial progress has been made toward meeting the objectives of the project as outlined in the grant application, and (2) collect data that addresses the performance indicators for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program. APR measures of participants' progress include:

Percentage whose math/English grades improved from fall to spring.

Percentage that meet or exceed the proficient level of performance on State Assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics.

Percentage whose regular classroom teacher reported (on a non-electronic survey) improvements in homework completion, class participation and behavior.

Grantees must evaluate the objectives identified in the federal APR as well as any others they have set for themselves.

Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSA): The QSA is the research-based planning and self-assessment tool developed by the New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) (www.nysan.org) that is used by each program site two times each year. The QSA process should include representatives of all stakeholders involved in the program.

The Tool is organized consistent with the essential elements of a high quality after school program:

- Environment and Climate
- Administration and Organization
- Relationships
- Staffing and Professional Development
- Programming and Activities.
- Linkages Between the School Day and After School Programs
- Youth Participation and Engagement
- Parent, Family and Community Partnerships
- Program Sustainability and Growth Measuring Outcomes and Evaluation

Although the QSA tool is not considered to be an evaluation tool, the feedback from the QSA does contribute to the overall understanding of the outcomes of the program.

B.3 Section 4203(a)(12) of the ESEA states that the State must describe the results of the State's needs and resources assessment for before and after school activities, which shall be based on the results of on-going State evaluation activities. (*Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix D: Assurances)*)

NYSED has several ways of assessing the needs and resources for before and after school activities. NYSED uses input received from grantees to determine their needs for professional development and assistance in their Mid-Year Reports, their evaluations of professional development activities and issues that are raised during the provision of technical assistance.

During the 2011-12 school year NYSED will conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to be completed by school administrators, teachers, after school program staff, community-based stakeholders, parents and students that will provide up-to-date specific information on how NYSED can improve outcomes of the 21st CCLC program.

NYSED has participated this past year in NYSAN's RFP Task Force grant initiatives that worked to identify common requirements for applicants that could be consistent across all RFPs rather than have differing or conflicting requirements. NYSED also partnered with NYSAN to map the availability of after school programs in local neighborhoods across the State. In this way, State agencies may be able to target higher need areas in their RFPs to be served by programs. NYSED will consider the recommendations of the Task Force and the results on the mapping when drafting new RFPs for after school programs..

SECTION C: ASSURANCES

C.1 Section 4203(a)(9) of the ESEA contains an assurance that funds appropriated to carry out this part will be used to supplement, and not supplant, other Federal, State, and local public funds expended to provide programs and activities authorized under this part and other similar programs. (*Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix D: Assurances)*)

NYSED complies with this assurance in several ways. The NYSED Grants Finance Unit provides on its web site extensive and easily understandable guidance on the management of state and federal grant funds. The Grants Finance Unit also reviews and approves grantees' yearly fiscal reports for appropriateness of expenditures. NYSED's Audit Services Unit monitors the A-133 audits that are required of any organization that annually receives more than \$500,000 in public funds. In addition, the federal single audit selects individual grantees for a closer examination of fiscal compliance.

NYSED also has procedures to resolve allegations of fraud, waste, abuse or mismanagement of local, state, or federal education funds (including information on vendors who receive education funds) The procedures begin with the conduct a preliminary assessment, with one of the following three results: Begin an audit or review; forward your information to a more appropriate agency or authority; or close the case.

NYSED web sites provide more information:

A-133 audits:

<http://www.oms.nysed.gov/oas/SingleAudit/>

Fraud, waste and abuse:

<http://www.oms.nysed.gov/oas/fraud/>

Grants Finance :

<http://www.oms.nysed.gov/cafe/guidance/>

Audit plan:

http://www.oms.nysed.gov/oas/Audit_Plan/2009_11AUDITPLANwarrafinal.pdf

C.2 Section 4203(a)(10) of the ESEA contains an assurance that the State educational agency will require eligible entities to describe in their applications under section 4204(b) how the transportation needs of participating students will be addressed. The SEA must clearly describe how it will meet this requirement. (*Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix D: Assurances)*)

The RFP for funding requires that the applicant describe how the transportation needs of participating students will be met. The proposal review rubric identifies and assigns points to this requirement for inclusion in the final score relative to how well the applicant will meet this need.

C.3 Section 4203(a)(11) of the ESEA states that the SEA must provide an assurance that the application was developed in consultation and coordination with appropriate State officials, including the chief State school officer, and other State agencies administering before and after school (or summer school) programs, the heads of the State health and mental health agencies or their designees, and representatives of teachers, parents, students, the business community, and community-based organizations. The SEA must clearly describe how it will meet this requirement. (*Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix D: Assurances)*)

As NYSED began to draft the revised State Plan for 2011, it provided the 2002 State Plan to the membership of the New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) for review and comment. Members' comments have been infused into the draft 2011 State Plan. The draft 2011 State was also shared with NYSAN for final consensus. NYSAN is a public-private partnership of which NYSED and the New York State Office of Children and Families is a part, of organizations throughout the state dedicated to increasing the quality and availability of after school programs. NYSED posted the draft 2011 State Plan on its Student Support Services web site at

www.p12.nysed.gov/sss to invite comments from the public. The Commissioner of Education and the Associate Deputy Commissioner for Curriculum, Instruction and Field Services have both given their approval of this Plan.

C.4 Section 4203(a)(8) of the ESEA contains an assurance that the State educational agency will make awards for programs for a period of not less than 3 years and not more than 5 years; and will require each eligible entity seeking such an award to submit a plan describing how the community learning center to be funded through the award will continue after funding under this part ends. The SEA must clearly describe how it will meet this requirement. (*Federal Register: Volume 67, Number 99 (Appendix D: Assurances)*)

NYSED's Request for Proposals for 21st CCLC funding states an award period of five years and that the funding award will remain at the same level for each year. The RFP also requires that the proposal describe the sustainability plan that will be followed in order to continue after the 21st CCLC funding ends. NYSED allows the grantee to use three percent of its annual award to support sustainability efforts. NYSED includes sustainability as one topic in its professional development for grantees and encourages grantees to take advantage of planning resources available such as those from the Finance Project. Sustainability is a component of both the site visit and telephone monitoring protocols. NYSED staff makes recommendations during these discussions with grantees.