

Overview of the New York State 21st Century Community Learning Centers State Evaluation Design

Research Works, Inc. (RWI) was awarded the contract to be the New York state evaluators of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) starting April 1st, 2012. Research Works has put in place a mixed method (using both quantitative and qualitative data) evaluation to capture both the processes and outcomes of the 21st CCLC Program. The primary purpose of the evaluation is for RWI to further identify the level of effectiveness the New York State 21st CCLC programming and its success in meeting the federal intent (objectives).

In order to be relevant to New York State Education Department's (NYSED) intended purpose; two things will be comprehensively evaluated. These are: the extent to which improved program participant academic performance and behavioral outcomes were achieved; and, the effectiveness of the two state Resource Centers in supporting program implementation and quality improvement. In addition, the evaluation will provide feedback to support NYSED's practices to ensure the best program assistance and administration to improve program quality. The theory of change for this program assumes that the improvement of program quality will yield higher academic performance and better behavioral outcomes for participating students.

To meticulously evaluate the effectiveness of each objective and sub-objective; RWI has a multi-faceted evaluation design to encompass the overall effectiveness of all components in tandem and individual components treated as siloed. RWI will work with ten grantees a year to have a more thorough look at the program locally. RWI plans to collect evaluative information from these programs to paint a clearer picture of each program and to contribute to a composite set of program specific data being collected by

RWI, the Resource Centers and NYSED. RWI in collaboration with their sub-contractors will observe those sites using the Out of School Observation instrument and use interviews of staff to gain a deeper portrait of each program. Further, RWI will work to collect academic data, if possible that can be assessed in correlation to program attendance and specific activity attendance.

The State managers of the 21st CCLC in New York have made some important changes to their management of the local program grantees through the recent NYSED call for proposals for two Resource Centers to support local programs and some required practices included in the recent Request for Proposal (RFP) for a new round of grantees (that will be Round 6 Grantees). The evaluation of the effect of these changes on program outcomes requires a ‘counterfactual’, i.e. a model of how things would operate without the proposed changes. Research Works intends to treat the grantees that are currently being funded through to June 2013 (Round 4, Round 5B and partially funded Round 5) as the pre-treatment comparison group, because they have operated without the benefit of the new Resource Center services model and without the new required program quality practices of the recently released RFP. These grantees are identified as the Round 4, Round 5 and Round 5B grantees. RWI has begun to take all possible steps to get a complete picture of the non-treatment group to compare that data with the Round 6 treatment group that will start their funding June 2013. The treatment group will be grantees active during the implementation of both of the Resource Centers: Rest of State Resource Center and New York City Resource Center. These grantees will be referred to as Round 6 grantees and at the time of this writing will not be a part of the evaluation until summer of 2013, when it is expected that the award period will begin. Finally, within the treatment group, RWI will subdivide the group dependent on dosage/treatment time with the Resource Center (RC) to look further into the ability of the RC’s to improve program quality which in turn should increase student achievement and positive student behavior. Beyond the data sources identified thus far, RWI will also do a secondary analysis on the Annual Performance Review (APR) data for both pre-treatment and treatment groups.

The New York State evaluation will also develop, implement and populate an electronic data capture system for the 21st CCLC Program in New York. The electronic system will serve as a central, searchable repository for data collected by RWI, NYSED and the Resource Centers on individual programs. Once the data repository and its web interface are developed by RWI, RWI will be able to review all data/information shared by Resource Centers, NYSED and RWI to look deeper into the data available for any further analysis. In addition, the repository will allow data aggregation, thus enhancing the rigor of the statewide evaluation.