

2021-22 Annual Report – Executive Summary

The Zone Project at the Northeast Spokane Community Center (NECCA) serves as the lead organization for a 21st Century Community Learning Center (21CCLC) program designed to increase learning opportunities in schools with a high percentage of students living in low-income families. Participating schools include two elementary sites (Logan Elementary and Lidgerwood Elementary) and two middle schools (Shaw Middle and Garry Middle). Students in these schools have fewer opportunities and supports and are likely to move more often compared to other students in the district. The 21CCLC partnership includes enhanced resources for school sites to pay for additional instructors and instructional materials to add educational programming during non-school hours. In addition, the Spokane chapter of Communities in Schools (CIS) also plays a key role in the 21CCLC partnership by staffing each site with a coordinator and developing quality programming outside the school hours.

Despite pandemic-related uncertainties and shutdowns, the expanded learning programming (ELP) offered at 21CCLC sites reached a large number of students in year 2. Recorded participation included over 700 students and 8,700 participation days as shown below:

School	Students	Total Days Attended
Garry Middle School	68	1,350
Shaw Middle School	409	5,863
Lidgerwood Elementary	200	1,494
Logan Elementary	37	n/a
Total	714	8,707

ELP staff and contracted support provided a range of activities for participating students including tutoring and dedicated homework assistance, arts and music, and sports and recreation opportunities. Middle school programming was particularly strong with an average daily attendance that exceeded 80 students in some months. Over the duration of this five-year effort, program administrators and staff have set goals to 1) improve student academic achievement, 2) better engage with parents and families, and 3) support student social-emotional learning. Based on an analysis of similar non-participating students (n=614) in neighborhood schools, we found progress in all three of these areas during Year 2.

- The number of participating students receiving a failing grade ('F) decreased by 3 percentage points (10% to 7%) compared to previous school year and relative to comparison group students
- Families with a student participating in after school activities reported a strong connection to both their local school and neighborhood compared to families that did not have a student participating (66% vs. 47%)

- Participating students were less likely to show reductions in absenteeism relative to comparison groups
- A higher percentage of participating students showed gains (Fall to Spring) in key dimensions of social-emotional learning (self-management, growth mindset, grit, social awareness, self-efficacy) – improvements were 7-13 percentage points higher than comparison group. The goal of the 21CCLC effort in Northeast Spokane centers around empowering students and engaging both students and families with a coordinated system of supports.

Despite ongoing challenges and the need to adjust to public health requirements, year 2 of the program helped firmly establish quality programming in the four 21CCLC sites. We will continue to track established measures in the program logic model, and urge program stakeholders to consider shorter-term measures that are more likely to reflect the link between programming and student improvement. These measures could include:

- **Short-term academic assessments** –formative assessments (like STAR assessment) could be adopted to track student progress on a daily or weekly basis.
- **Functional behavior assessment** –ELP staff can work together with school teachers and administrators and contribute to functional behavioral assessments (MTSS plans) that identify problem behaviors and interventions to improve or eliminate those behaviors. Progress could be tracked for identified students where ELP staff are playing a role in behavioral supports.
- **Tailor SEL programming** – rather than track SEL progress in any domain, 21CCLC sites could choose to focus school year programming on one domain and assess student improvement in that particular domain at the end of the year.

Both summer and year 3 programming show improvements in both student participation, staff coordination and program management. In addition, a new student activity tracking attendance portal was implemented by the school district and will ensure participation records are consistent and complete. With this new system and other tools in place, we can provide fuller set of information and feedback to stakeholders with the goal of supporting program improvement in the years ahead.

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