



New York
21st Century Community Learning Centers
SOARING BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

**Statewide Comprehensive
Final Evaluation Report
Round 7, Contract Years 1 - 5
(7/1/17 – 6/30/22)**



Prepared for
The New York State Education Department
Office of Student Support Services



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MI's scope of work for the five year evaluation of Round 7 of New York State's 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Initiative centered on six major deliverables:

- Evaluation of NYSED's achievement of Statewide objectives
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Technical Assistance Resource Centers (RCs)
- Exploration of activities at selected local 21st CCLC programs
- Review and assessment of local program-level annual evaluation reports
- Guidance on transition to a state-level data collection and reporting system
- Technical assistance support and networking among local program evaluators

This study was based on multiple sources of qualitative and quantitative data which informed our insights into the program's successes and challenges, and strategies to meet those challenges. During this contract period, limitations on the availability and quality of program-provided quantitative data, as well as major circumstantial upheavals unique to Round 7, prevented a meaningful assessment of program outcomes and impacts. Nevertheless, the study provided valuable insights into program characteristics and conditions that can affect student outcomes. This report presents these insights in the context of an inferred model for the Theory of Change (ToC) for how New York's 21st CCLC program is believed to lead to the desired long-term goals (see [Appendix B](#)).

The following outline presents findings and recommendations organized around the components of this ToC, which include inputs in the form of activities conducted by NYSED, the Resource Centers (RCs), and the State Evaluator; interim outputs in the form of activities conducted by sub-grantees; and outcomes in the form of local program activities and their impacts on students and families. Also included are "Conditions for Success" that are presumed to be necessary for each cause and effect relationship to succeed. In this executive summary:

Conditions for Success are represented in sub-headings in bold-italics;

- Recommendations are highlighted with arrows and blue text.

Summary of Findings

NYSED's Leadership & Governance

[Communicate Vision & Goals](#)

NYSED vision and goals must be aligned with research-based characteristics of effective programs, and with federal expectations.

NYSED's policies were derived directly from the need to meet requirements of the U.S. Department of Education, and from well-established authorities with input from qualified experts.

NYSED vision and goals must be communicated consistently and effectively.

State communications were thorough and effective, broadcast frequently to all stakeholders through multiple channels, focused on a wide range of formal goals and less formal visions. Communications did, however, occasionally become confusing because of changes in procedures or expectations arising from changing circumstances and/or in response to stakeholder feedback.

Effective Project Management

NYSED must provide clear guidance on compliance with grant regulations and expectations.

NYSED's project management included not only clarification about expectations, but also support and guidance to help stakeholders meet those expectations. This support was strongly reinforced by the RCs, as well as by the State Evaluator. NYSED's project management demonstrated an appropriate level of flexibility in response to unexpected circumstances, most notably the COVID-19 pandemic.

Monitoring Sub-grantees

NYSED's policies for local program implementation must be well aligned with the needs of sub-grantees' clients, and with sub-grantees' and their partners' resources.

Risk Assessments conducted by the State were primarily designed in direct alignment with Federal and State requirements. The relative weights of each indicator were largely intuitive, but this subjectivity was minimized because risk assessment scores were only one determinant of the need for corrective action. The main challenge of this process was distinguishing between potentially constructive vs. problematic program modifications.

- Pursue modification of the Risk Assessment procedures to recognize certain kinds of program modifications as positive developments.

Collaborate with Other Offices and Agencies

Other offices and agencies must perceive the 21st CCLC program as having sufficient value and priority to be willing to commit the resources that the program needs.

Obtaining resources or clearances from other NYSED offices could be time consuming but was generally productive. In some cases, however, leveraging compliance from regional agencies within NYS could be problematic.

- Where necessary, additional leverage might be achieved through a united front with other NYSED offices and the State Evaluator—and if necessary, withholding State funds.

State Oversight of Professional Development (PD), Technical Assistance (TA), Monitoring & Coaching

Contract with RCs to Conduct Monitoring, Coaching, PD & TA

Proposal readers must be sufficiently focused, and have sufficient training, to accurately interpret whether applicants can meet selection criteria.

Qualified applicants must propose services that they are ready and able to implement within their proposed budgets.

Success of the selection process was evidenced by the overall quality of the RC staff and their support services, as discussed below.

State Management of Monitoring, Training and Technical Assistance

RC staff's qualifications must be well aligned with NYSED's policies for monitoring and professional development.

NYSED must have sufficient access and opportunity to obtain accurate understanding of RCs' compliance.

Standardization of the Site Monitoring Visit (SMV) process was strengthened through State oversight, involving a demonstration SMV attended by all State contractors, and additional observations of SMVs by State Office staff. The new RC contractor was brought up to speed through shadowing visits conducted by experienced RC staff.

- Formalize training of State Office staff to observe RC staff monitoring visits by developing a structured "Observing the Monitors" protocol.

Managing professional development offerings was achieved by establishing priorities for topic focus, informed by State priorities along with RC assessments of sub-grantees' needs.

RCs Provide PD, TA, Monitoring & Coaching

RCs Conduct Training and Technical Assistance

RCs must provide PD and TA that is well aligned with sub-grantees' needs and resources.

MI's structured observations, participant surveys, and annual Program Director surveys revealed RCs' supports to be of high quality, and improving over the 5-year funding round.

- Consider concentrating more on the highest priority topics (based on program's as well as NYSED's priorities) vs. offering a larger variety of options.

RCs and NYSED must establish, monitor and enforce expectations for session participation.

Attendance was consistently monitored but did not seem to be used to identify patterns at the program level.

- Review attendance across sessions to identify programs with low attendance patterns and possible correspondence with programming challenges.

RCs Conduct Monitoring and Provide Coaching

Federal and State policies and expectations must be well aligned with the needs of sub-grantees' clients, and with sub-grantees' and their partners' resources.

Programs designs were aligned with policy, but client needs are unpredictable and can challenge program resources.

- Create RFP guidelines that balance cost savings against technical quality.

RCs must have sufficient access and opportunity to obtain accurate understanding of sub-grantees' compliance with policies in areas that they are monitoring.

The depth and breadth of the SMV process provided a feasible and efficient approach for centralized monitoring of program management over numerous programs. Its primary challenges included the need to distribute visits over multiple years, difficulty addressing evaluation-related compliance, and the need to prioritize compliance over quality.

- Include compliance indicators to ensure monitoring of data quality.
- Use AER reviews and TA from the State Evaluator to support review of evaluation compliance and reinforce program quality.

RCs must have sufficient bandwidth and training to provide coaching as necessary to help bring programs into compliance.

RCs provided extensive TA supports, but understaffing at the NYC RC may have limited their ability to provide all the needed support. By the end of Round 7 however, while fully staffed, it became apparent that the original RoS RC had fallen behind on follow-through to their SMVs.

- Above recommendations regarding leveraging other agencies' contractual compliance, and training the monitors, can also help with these challenges.

Partnership & Engagement

NYSED Requires Community Partnerships

Sub-grantees must have a clear vision of how such partnerships can support their programs.

Sub-grantees must have access to potential partners within their community with the appropriate skills and focus, and who have the availability and inclination to provide support.

Locally funded programs utilized numerous opportunities to take advantage of resources from community partners. Initially, one visible challenge was forming meaningful connections to priorities and curricula of the school day, although that connection seemed to improve at least for some programs in later years.

- Strategies that some programs have recommended included maintaining communications with day staff about curricula and student needs, and involving day staff and 21st CCLC staff in each others' activities.

Sub-grantees Conduct Community Outreach

Outreach must be targeted to partners with the time and interest to provide support.

Outreach [must be designed to strengthen] buy-in, engagement and support.

Partnerships were sometimes difficult to establish, and existing partners often lacked active involvement in implementation. Some partnerships were greatly strengthened, however, by the trust built during the pandemic.

NYSED Engages Contractors and Stakeholders as Partners

[State] Contractor meetings must be of sufficient frequency and duration for partners to develop a framework for follow-up needed to meet agreed-upon goals.

Even with virtually continuous communications, both structured and as-needed, among the State Program Office, Resource Centers and State Evaluation Team, it was often challenging to keep everyone one step ahead.

- RC staff recommended that MI sit in on their meetings with NYSED, and that minutes of all meetings be posted on a shared site online.
- Focus on major topics during quarterly meetings and assign working groups to follow up on details and recommend solutions.

Program-level partners must have sufficient access to information about Statewide strategic improvement efforts, and channels through which they can provide input and share ideas.

Numerous bi-directional communication channels were established by NYSED. However, inconsistencies in attendance at conferences or Evaluation Network meetings, and in sharing of information with other staff, may have hampered communications to some extent.

- Provide State messaging about the importance of Local Evaluators participation in Evaluation Network meetings, conferences, and workshops.
- Include SMV compliance indicators for training around State expectations.

RCs Provide Networking Opportunities for Sub-Grantees

Opportunities to network must be sufficiently frequent, accessible, well-attended, and of sufficient duration, for sub-grantees to form mutually beneficial connections.

Networking activities must resonate with participants' needs and interests.

Sub-grantees had already begun forming a strong community of practice by Year 2, as exemplified by Program Leader Roundtables and workshops conducted by Program Directors, which received very positive feedback. However, the shift to virtual communications slowed the progress of these efforts.

- Re-institute opportunities for sub-grantees to form a community of practice.

Data Systems & Evaluation

Sub-Grantees are Required to Contract with a Local Evaluator

Sub-grantees and their proposal readers must be able to identify evaluators who have the skills to conduct meaningful evaluation, and negotiate an evaluation contract that is in compliance. Readers reviewing sub-grantee applications must consider this need.

Sub-grantees must have sufficient appreciation of the importance of evaluation to be willing to adequately prioritize their evaluation contract.

Indirect evidence of this condition for success was obtained from the quality of local evaluations. Evaluators offered consistently relevant and practical recommendations and were responsive to changing circumstances; but quality of evaluation designs varied widely.

Most sub-grantees took the evaluation process very seriously, but some under-emphasized the AER writing process, or assigned extremely low evaluation budgets, demonstrating that this was not always the case.

- MI's previous recommendation to include more rigorous qualifications for Local Evaluators and their contracts in the Round 8 RFP was adopted.

State Evaluator Facilitates a Learning Community for Local Evaluators

Sub-grantees and candidate evaluators must understand the value of, and share a philosophy of, participatory evaluation.

Participants in the Evaluation Network showed appreciation of the value, as well as recognition of the challenges, of participatory evaluation. However, many evaluators did not participate.

- Local Evaluators' recommendations for achieving participatory evaluation included a focus on partnerships, sharing accessible data and planning collaboratively, an Evaluation Guide aligned to implementation requirements, better communication around the importance of evaluation, and flexibility around stakeholders' changing needs.
- As mentioned above, consider stronger emphasis on the importance of participation among evaluators.

Local Evaluators Provide Recommendations for Program Improvement

Local Evaluators must provide actionable, data-based recommendations that align with sub-grantee capacities and program goals.

Local Evaluators were very strong in this regard.

- If the program manager prefers more general recommendations that leave it to program staff to determine specifics, the Local Evaluator should still contribute to discussions about more specific strategies.

[NYSED Solicits to Contract With a State Data Management & Reporting System Vendor](#)

Required components should support the needs of both State and local system users.

Outlines of required components in the RFP must be sufficiently specific to adequately define what is required.

NYSED obtained a powerful system that has supported many of its needs, but it was designed to be used for any state 21st CCLC program, and has required numerous customizations. The vendor has been accommodating but the scope of possible customizations is limited.

- NYSED should continue to collaborate with all stakeholders and MI to identify and prioritize further customizations from the vendor.
- In the event that a new competition is ever needed, lessons learned from the current experience should be carefully examined when writing the new RFP.

Applicants must propose a system that they can implement within their proposed budget.

EZReports® has provided the functions that the proposal indicated, and the vendor has been able to provide a substantial number of important customizations.

[A Statewide Data Management and Reporting System is Established](#)

Local program staff and/or evaluators have sufficient understanding about data management and the State data management system to ensure data quality.

Data inaccuracies and gaps in the first year of use underscored gaps in training, contractual expectations and/or bandwidth among program staff and evaluators.

- Staff turnover and new sub-grantees will clearly necessitate continued training.
- Local Data Managers that are now required should support quality assurance.
- Responsibilities of RCs' and programs' Data Specialists/Managers should be clearly defined.
- MI will continue to support recommendations for customizations.

The vendor provides sufficient training and technical assistance to all system users.

The vendor has provided extensive training and support through multiple channels, but because of the system's complexity, these supports alone have not been sufficient.

Staff and evaluators at all levels should have full access to all data and reports needed to assess program implementation and outcomes.

EZReports® has helped reduce gaps in data access at both the local and State levels, although programs still need to go to their districts to obtain student data for assessing local objectives.

- The State Coordinator should continue to leverage cooperation from schools and district to provide required data.

RCs Provide Turnkey Training and TA on Use of the Data System

Responsibility for providing this service must be sufficiently encompassed by RCs' contracts.

RC contracts provide for broad responsibilities to support sub-grantees, although the NYC RoS was understaffed throughout Round 7.

- Under MI's recommendation, NYSED required a dedicated Data Specialist for each Resource Center to oversee data management.
- Use experienced, local mentors to supplement training of new users.

RCs Provide Guidance to Institutionalize Use of the QSA

Responsibility for providing this service must be sufficiently encompassed by RCs' contracts.

This responsibility was clearly indicated in the Resource Centers' Round 7 contracts

RCs must have sufficient bandwidth to support additional TA on using the QSA.

The RCs were expected to support sub-grantees' needs as they arise—although the NYC Center was (and remains) understaffed.

NYSED Solicits to Contract With a Statewide Evaluator

MI was contracted for the Round 7 evaluation. While we always reflect on our own work, we would not presume to use this document to report on our self-assessment.

Creating High Quality Local Programs

Sub-grantees Implement Improvements

Identified improvements must be responsive to current needs for program implementation, and to participants' needs, interests and context.

Recommendations from local evaluations were relevant to programs' status and responsive to participants' needs. Exploratory Site Visits provided anecdotal examples of improvements in the areas of linkages to the school day, supporting student participation, meeting students' needs, and describing unofficial but important program improvements. Adoption of the AER Templates and EZReports also led to improvements in completeness of assessing objectives, following up on prior year outcomes, and use of disaggregated data for planning.

Evaluations and planned improvements are flexible and responsive to contextual changes.

Flexibility was dramatically demonstrated in programs' response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- AER Templates should provide more explicit room for programs to report on adaptations to unanticipated circumstances, and unofficial outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

A. Project Overview

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) awarded Measurement Incorporated (MI) a five-year contract to conduct the external evaluation of Round 7 of the New York State 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) initiative. This initiative, which focuses primarily on children who attend high poverty and low-performing schools, provides expanded learning opportunities for academic enrichment, youth development, and family literacy to help students meet state academic standards.

MI's scope of work under the contract included the following six deliverables:

- Deliverable 1: Evaluation of NYSED's achievement of objectives related to statewide improvements in participating students' academic performance and behavior
- Deliverable 2: Evaluation of the effectiveness of the 21st CCLC Technical Assistance Resource Centers (RCs)
- Deliverable 3: Exploration of activities at selected local 21st CCLC programs
- Deliverable 4: Review and assessment of the quality and completeness of local program-level annual evaluation reports
- Deliverable 5: Provide guidance to NYSED on transition to a state-level data collection and reporting system
- Deliverable 6: Provide support to local program evaluators

B. Methodology

The comprehensive five-year evaluation of the NYS 21st CCLC program was informed by multiple sources of data. Quantitative data were obtained through public records of school and district demographics; program level organizational and activity records; data on individual student demographics, activity participation, and behavioral and academic performance; conference and workshop participation records; surveys of Program Directors, program staff and Local Evaluators; and status of program objectives and performance indicators from Annual Evaluation Reports.

Qualitative data were obtained through structured and unstructured individual and focus group interviews of State Program Office staff, regional Resource Center staff and Local Evaluators; structured and semi-structured observations of statewide and regional conferences, workshops, and program activities; participation in regional and state level planning meetings; comments on surveys of Program Directors, program staff and Local Evaluators; narrative from program level Annual Evaluation Reports; document reviews; and ongoing communications with all stakeholders.

Our insights into the program's successes and challenges, and strategies to meet those challenges are derived from our work that was anchored around fulfilling our six contractually required deliverables. This work was implemented using a participatory evaluation approach

that involved close collaboration with thought leaders, managers, and service providers at the primary stakeholder groups, including the State 21st CCLC office at NYSED (the “State Office”), the two regional Technical Assistance Resource Centers (RCs), and local program staff and Local Evaluators, as well as insights obtained from stakeholders from other states. Insights were also derived from our work in providing formative feedback to support systems and processes related to usability design and communication strategies, as well as management and use of data to support systems and processes at all levels of the program.

To ensure the validity of quantitative data, we negotiated with the vendor to provide for validation rules in the Statewide data management system, and implemented rigorous quality control procedures to ensure accuracy. Development of data collection instruments utilized content grids reflecting constructs associated with the 21st CCLC program, and grounded in scientifically-based research on what constitutes effective extended learning opportunity (ELO) programming.

To ensure the integrity of qualitative data, we made every effort to cultivate trust by protecting confidentiality, and continually emphasizing that the purpose of the evaluation was to support benefits for students, rather than to cast judgment on program providers.

We strive to remain constantly aware of the ever-present possibility of bias—our own as well as that of program stakeholders. We seek objectivity and value by triangulating among numerous forms and sources of information, and leaning on the insights of program stakeholders when interpreting our findings.

The ultimate goals of this work included:

- providing formative feedback to help strengthen program services that were designed to improve academic, social-emotional and behavioral outcomes of at-risk youth; and
- seeking summative understanding of the program’s success in that goal at the State level.

When reviewing these findings, it should be noted that the use of program-provided quantitative data for the evaluation was severely limited due to problems with the availability and quality of these data. These limitations resulted primarily from two concerns: prior to the implementation of the EZReports® system in Year 4, inconsistencies in data management systems raised questions about the reliability of local programs’ data documentation. In addition, beginning in spring 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had major impacts on data availability and quality as a result of the cancellation of testing and disruptions to data management procedures throughout the State. Because of the upheavals in the education system and in the social fabric in general, even if reliable data were available, it would have required a much larger scale study to disentangle the relevance of findings about students’ attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance to the 21st CCLC program from the impacts of the pandemic. As a result, the originally planned impact study could not be conducted. Instead, the Round 7 evaluation was conducted as an outcomes study, for which evidence of impacts were only available through qualitative assessments and, in some cases, anecdotal evidence. For this reason, although qualitative evidence still provides valuable insights into program

characteristics and conditions that affect student outcomes, quantitative evidence about observed outcomes presented here cannot be assumed to have been the *result* of the program.

C. Focus of This Report

This report presents a comprehensive review of what Measurement Incorporated has learned about the NYS 21st CCLC out-of-school-time (OST) program over the course of the five-year contract.

The remainder of this report presents the insights gained from this study in the context of an inferred model for the Theory of Change (ToC) for how New York’s 21st CCLC program is believed to lead to the desired long-term goals. This model, which is explained in the next section, incorporates the intended roles of evaluation—at both the State and local levels—as well as direct program activity. Details of how various components of the statewide evaluation were used to inform different aspects of program development at the local, regional, and state levels are shown in a separate ToC model that MI developed for the State Evaluation in [Appendix A](#).

D. Inferred Theory of Change for State 21st CCLC Program

A Theory of Change (ToC) model provides a description or visualization of how and why a program, intervention or initiative is believed to result in a desired change, specifying “what a program or change initiative does (its activities or interventions) and how these lead to desired goals.” The emphasis on *how* the interventions are believed to lead to desired goals is essential, and includes a specification of the “conditions...that must be in place (and how these [relate] to one another causally) for the goals to occur.”¹ These latter components are what distinguish a Theory of Change from a Logic Model.

A ToC model would normally be developed collaboratively by the primary stakeholders involved in a program, in collaboration with their evaluator, for the purpose of helping to “define and prioritize strategies to achieve results” for strategic planning and evaluation.² For the purpose of this report, however, we have developed a proposed ToC model that we inferred from our knowledge of the 21st CCLC program, which we will use as a framework for discussing our findings about the program.

This inferred model can also be useful as a starting point for a more fully developed model, to help support strategic planning and evaluation for Round 8. By considering our findings in the context of this model, we hope to communicate how well it reflects what actually happened. To the extent that the proposed model (and associated “conditions for success”) reflect what was *intended* by program developers, it can help contextualize our findings in terms of how well the program worked.

¹ <https://www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change/>

² <https://www.aecf.org/resources/theory-of-change>

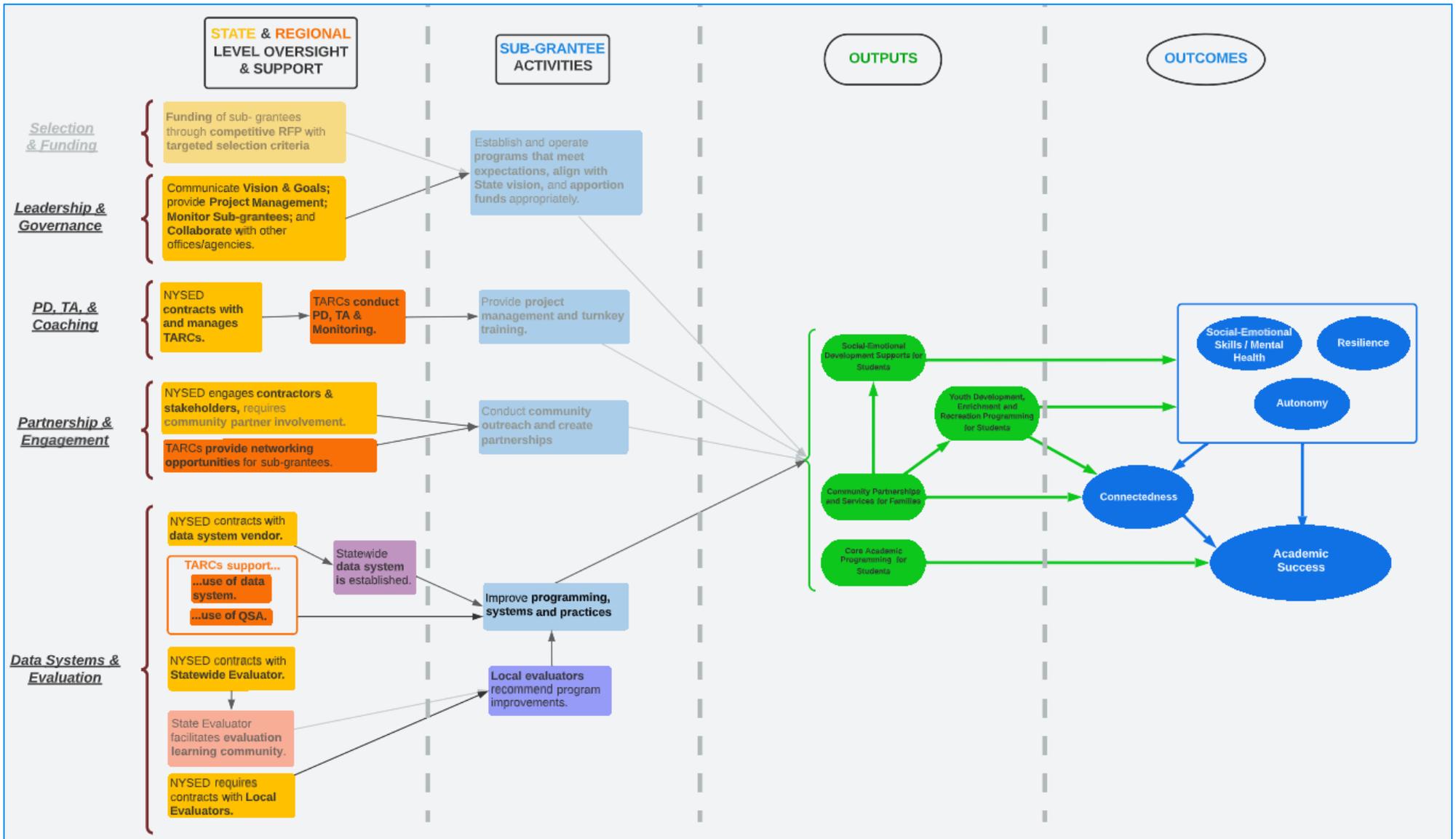
A bird's eye overview of this inferred ToC model is shown graphically in Figure 1 below. The model includes the following components:

- Major categories of State- and region-wide oversight and support (first column in Figure 1);
- Specific types of State- and region-wide oversight and support: Inputs from State and regional actors (NYSED, RCs, EZReports®) designed to provide the guidance and supports necessary for local programs to conceptualize, establish and maintain a quality program (second column);
- Activities of sub-grantees that the State- and region-wide inputs were intended to support (third column); and
- Intended outputs, in the form of specific program activities (fourth column); all of which are presumed to contribute to:
- Intended ultimate impacts on students, including academic, behavioral, and social-emotional, as defined by federal and state funding agencies (fifth column).
- Direction of causality is represented by arrows connecting inputs and outputs/outcomes.

It is important to note that the ToC model we have developed is comprehensive, and includes components that were not part of the focus of the Statewide evaluation contract. As such, some of them are not addressed in this report. These components are represented as light grey activity boxes and arrows in the graphic in Figure 1 on the next page.

Screenshots of each component of the model, which include more detailed breakdowns of each input, are provided at the beginning of each report section that addresses those components. These detailed charts also show "Conditions for Success," which represent assumptions about conditions that would need to be in place for the desired impacts to be realized. Conditions for Success are represented in these screenshots by notes associated with each cause-effect arrow.

Figure 1. Birdseye View of Theory of Change Model



The following excerpt from the detailed Theory of Change model is provided to help clarify these points. The overview chart and all detailed components are also provided in [Appendix B](#).

Figure 2. Detailed Excerpt from Theory of Change Model



As shown in the above example, it is expected that NYSED’s communication of vision and goals (the *input*) would help sub-grantees to establish programs that are consistent with both the State and Federal vision and goals (the *output*); but that this would only happen if the State and Federal goals are aligned, and communicated effectively (the *conditions*).³ Findings from the Statewide evaluation pertinent to each component of this Theory of Change are presented in bullet points under the component to which they apply.

³ Note: In this example, inputs and conditions needed to achieve “high quality” programs are shown in other components of the ToC model.

FINDINGS

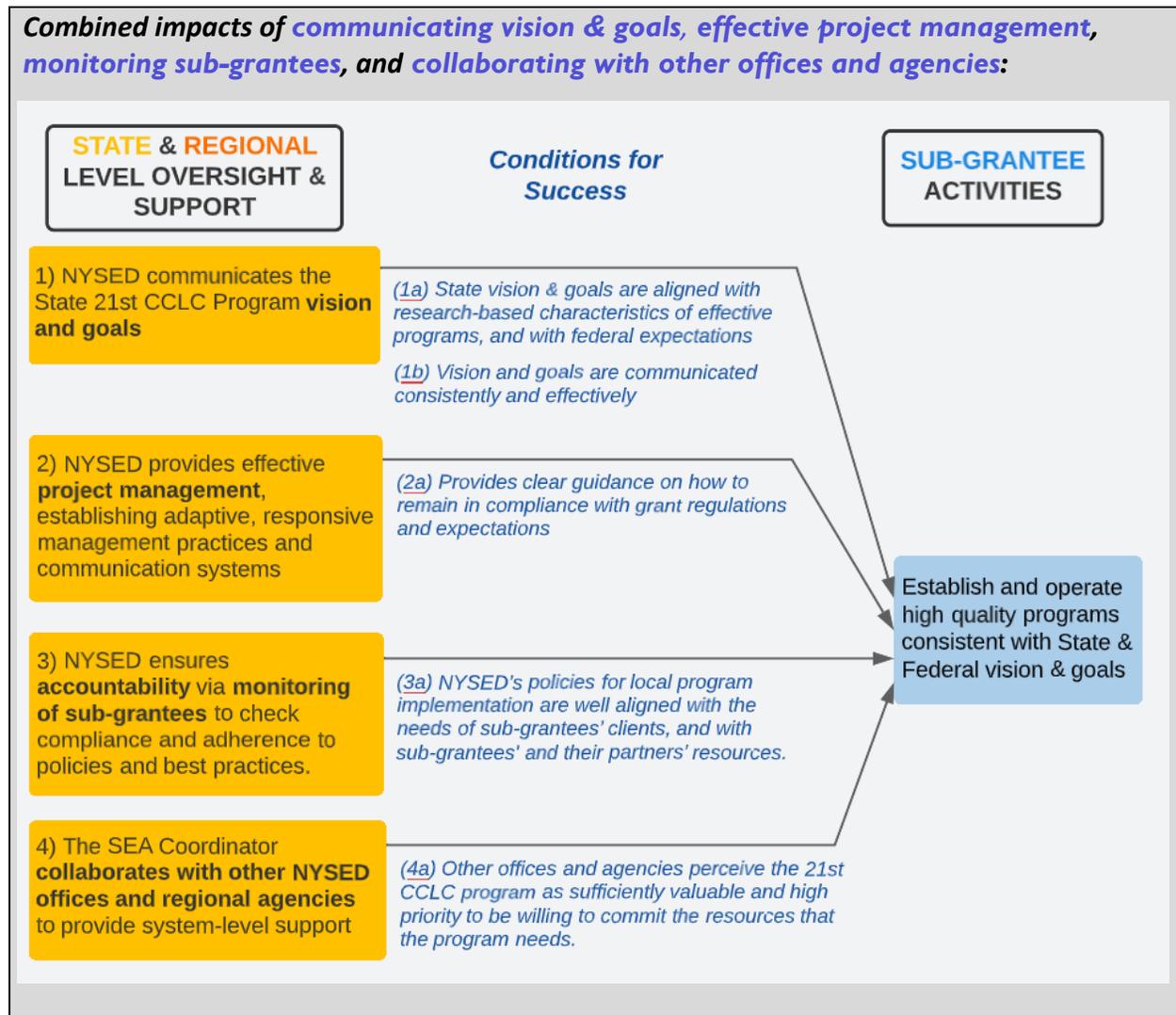
This section of the report is organized by the major components of the proposed Theory of Change model presented above, excluding the components that our contract did not address. Headings and sub-headings within this section reflect the model components as follows:

- Categories of State- and region-wide oversight and support (Sections A. through F.)
- Specific aspects of State- and region-wide oversight and support (Sub-sections with Sections A. through E.)
- Activities of sub-grantees (Sub-sections with Section F.)
- Conditions for Success (bold-italics headings within each subsection)

Note that, because the model includes several levels of interim outcomes, the outcomes represented in one section often appear later in the report as an input for another section. For example, “Establish and operate programs consistent with State vision & goals” (the outcome for State Leadership and Governance in Section A.) is also shown as the input in Section F.3.

In the following discussions of findings, where available, evidence is brought to bear that directly addresses the conditions implied by the cause-effect relationships in the model. In other cases however, where direct evidence of conditions is not available, existence of the conditions is inferred by evidence of the extent to which the presumed impacts were observed. Nevertheless, because the study could not be designed as an impact study (as discussed under *Methodology*, above), evidence of outcomes, and of conditions for success, can only be interpreted as being consistent with the Inferred model, not direct evidence of the accuracy of the model.

A. Leadership & Governance



Ultimate leadership of New York State’s 21st CCLC program is provided by the program’s State Coordinator, operating within NYSED’s Student Support Services division. In addition to staff within the State Coordinator’s office, she is supported through contracts with two Technical Assistance Resource Centers—which including one with responsibility for all of New York City, and the second, “Rest of State” Center covering all other districts in the State.

1. NYSED Communicates Vision & Goals

The State Coordinator and her staff communicate the program’s vision and goals frequently and through multiple channels. These communications are further amplified by the State-level contractors, including the two Resource Centers and the State Evaluator, who contribute to and are kept abreast of these goals through regular communications with the State Coordinator.

Condition for Success (1a): Vision and goals are aligned with research-based characteristics of effective programs, and with federal expectations.

- NYSED’s policies and expectations for the 21st CCLC programs were derived directly from the need to meet the expectations of the U.S. Department of Education.
- NYSED’s program requirements and expectations described in the solicitation for sub-grantees, also communicated throughout the five-year funding round, were derived from or encapsulate well-established sources and authorities with extensive input from highly qualified experts in appropriate fields.

Condition for Success (1b): Vision and goals are communicated consistently and effectively.

- The State Coordinator and her staff broadcast very frequent communications to the field through a wide variety of channels, providing reminders, clarifications, and as necessary, modifications to the State’s goals, requirements and visions. These messages were conveyed to all levels of NYS 21st CCLC stakeholders through channels including:
 - formal policy documents and monitoring instruments;
 - officially endorsed memoranda to the field;
 - presentations at Statewide conferences and symposia;
 - promotion of workshop and webinar content emphasizing State goals, and presentations and Q&A sessions at these sessions;
 - agenda items during quarterly contractor meetings, and during monthly meetings with Resource Centers;
 - distribution of Program Activity Timelines;
 - collaborating with the Resource Centers and/or the Statewide Evaluator to convey messages to specific audiences;
 - forwarding of “NYSED Weekly” announcements, often accompanied by highlights emphasizing announcements that were most apropos to Resource Centers, the Statewide Evaluator, or other 21st CCLC stakeholders; and
 - office hours provided by the State Coordinator at Statewide conferences.
- Topics addressed through these communications focused on orientation to, and emphasis on, formal requirements such as program procedures (Advisory Boards, Evaluability Assessments, School Age Child Care registrations, etc.), LEAs’ obligations for data sharing, sub-grantees’ requirements for data, Annual Performance Reports (APRs), and use of EZReports®; policies for Extended Learning Time (ELT) programs, clarifications about the Risk Assessment process, and procedures for budget and program modifications, among many.
- Additional communications also focused on less formally established visions, such as encouragement of the creation of communities of practice and participatory evaluation (discussed further below under *Partnership & Engagement*). Perhaps most significantly during Round 7, the State Coordinator took a strong leadership role in providing guidance for all players through the challenges of the pandemic, acknowledging the

challenges, the need for flexibility, and the importance of collaborating and sharing resources during the “new normal.”

- In spite of these very regular and varied communications, there were a few cases each year where local program staff or evaluators expressed confusion or lack of awareness of certain messaging. In some cases, such situations may have arisen due to staff turnover, because some programs did not send representatives to attend required conferences and symposia, or because they had not established sufficient processes for their representatives to convey important messages to the rest of the staff. These obstacles to communication are discussed in more detail, along with recommended strategies to minimize them, in the sections addressing program management (Section A.2.), participation in State workshops (Section B.2.), and turnkey training (Sections B.2. and C.), respectively.
- There were other times when communications may have become confusing because of changes in procedures or expectations that arose from changing circumstances (especially during the pandemic), or in response to discussions among State contractors and/or feedback from the field. The State’s strategies to address circumstances such as these are discussed further as part of the discussion of State project management in Section A.2., below.

2. NYSED Provides Effective Project Management

Effective project management requires adaptive, responsive management practices and communication systems. As discussed in the previous section, the quality and thoroughness of NYSED’s communications around program requirements and expectations were unassailable, and management practices were highly responsive to changing circumstances as well as to suggestions from State contractors, sub-grantees and Local Evaluators.

Condition for Success (2a): Provides clear guidance on how to remain in compliance with grant regulations and expectations.

- Good management includes not only making regulations and expectations clear, but also providing support to help programs, and State contractors, find ways to meet those expectations. The State’s guidance for sub-contractors was provided through the communication channels discussed above. In addition, the State Office developed systems for monitoring local program implementation (discussed below). NYSED also oversaw the creation of procedures through which its contractors could provide more granular monitoring and direct support to local programs, while contractors in turn received guidance from the State.
- More direct support to sub-grantees and Local Evaluators was provided by the Resource Centers and the State Evaluator, respectively. Specifically, sub-grantees’ Project Management Teams were supported through the Site Monitoring Visit (SMV) process, and through regional and statewide professional development workshops and conferences. Additional, *ad hoc* technical assistance was also provided in response to requests from program staff, and to needs observed by the RC staff themselves. Support to Local Evaluators was provided by the State Evaluator through technical assistance

and feedback on findings from Annual Evaluation Report reviews, as well as through collaborative problem solving supported by the Evaluation Network.

Specifics of these processes are discussed under *Monitoring of Sub-grantees* (Section A.3.) and *State Management of SMVs* and of *Resource Centers' Professional Development* (Sections B.2. and B.3.) [both conducted by NYSED]; *Professional Development, Technical Assistance, Monitoring & Coaching* (Section C.) [conducted by the RCs]; and *Data Systems & Evaluation* (Section E.), below.

Findings Spotlight:

NYSED's Judicious Flexibility in Project Management.

NYSED was responsive and flexible in its management of the project, while maintaining core expectations to the extent reasonable given the context. Even during the most extreme disruption to the State's education system in recent memory, NYSED provided—or, when necessary, advocated for—temporary waivers or loosening of normal requirements necessitated by the pandemic, while still maintaining clear expectations.

For example, in acknowledging the fact that school closures would severely limit the kinds of activities that programs could conduct, programs were still advised to find ways to provide programming in support of their stated objectives, wherever possible. Within very flexible parameters, they were also required to submit temporary Program Modification Requests to ensure that sub-grantees remained playful in their approach. During the COVID crisis, the realization emerged from program staff interviews that many families were less concerned about academics, than about services providing for truly essential needs—as basic as food insecurity—and focusing on children's social-emotional response to trauma. In response to these families' priorities, during the peak of the pandemic, programming expectations were made even more flexible.

During the pandemic, it was the rare program that was able to continue to meet its target number of students. Even during the second year of the pandemic, there was broad agreement that meeting the original targets was an unrealistic expectation. However, because meeting these targets was a contractual requirement over which the State Coordinator had no direct control, she encouraged program staff to document obstacles to meeting enrollment targets to provide her with leverage for making a case to her supervisors that participation waivers were still needed. The Department ultimately allowed for temporary loosening of participation requirements without loss of funding during both the first and second years of the pandemic.

3. NYSED Ensures Accountability by Monitoring Sub-Grantees

The first level of managing local program implementation is achieved through direct monitoring by the State 21st CCLC Office. This oversight is provided primarily through standardized state-level review systems, including the Risk Assessment and Program Modification processes, as well as required Mid-Year Reports on program implementation status, all of which help bring positive achievements as well as red flags to the surface.

Condition for Success (3a): NYSED's policies for local program implementation are well aligned with the needs of sub-grantees' clients, and with sub-grantees' and their partners' resources.

- The Risk Assessment process was designed around Federal and State requirements, such as participation rates, reporting and SACC registration requirements, timeliness of budget submissions, and results of external fiscal audits. It also incorporates assumed risk factors, such as personnel turnover rates, consistency of attendance at State conferences and workshops, size of awards, and fiscal health demonstrated by indicators such as the number of modifications being needed before budget approval, and the number of budget amendments during the year. Additional risk factors were derived from other monitoring procedures, including the required Program Modification Requests, and program implementation and fiscal findings from the SMV process.
- It is notable that the indicators for these risk assessments and their relative weights were, to a substantial extent, identified intuitively and informed by the State Coordinator's management experience. As a result, there is an unavoidable degree of subjectivity in these assessments. However, this subjectivity was explicitly recognized in the fact that Risk Assessment scores did not result in automatic corrective actions, only in an increased priority for other, more direct monitoring procedures (discussed further below), which are far more reliant on perspectives and feedback from the local program staff.

Findings Spotlight:

Limitations of Program Modifications and Risk Assessment Procedures

Distinguishing Constructive vs. Problematic Program Modifications

One complication of these procedures was the fact that the connection between program modification requests leading to higher Risk Assessment scores was interpreted by sub-grantees and their evaluators as meaning that program modifications should be avoided. Rather, in some circumstances, the recognition of the need for a modification might represent a positive adaptation to changing circumstances beyond the sub-grantee's control, or even a strengthening of original program plans. For example, there were often cases where the State Evaluator determined that some of a program's performance indicators (PIs) were not effective for measuring objectives, and recommended that the PIs be modified. MI argued that these kinds of modification requests, which could help strengthen the program, were being discouraged by the Risk Assessment process. The State Coordinator agreed that this was an unintended consequence and is currently seeking feedback from her staff and sub-contractors to modify the Risk Assessment process accordingly.

- **Recommendation:** The State Coordinator should continue to pursue the possibility of modifying the Program Modification and Risk Assessment procedures to recognize certain kinds of modifications as positive developments. This exploration is likely to encounter some grey areas that are perceived differently by different stakeholders, so it is important to involve a range of different stakeholders in the discussions.

4. The State Coordinator Collaborates with Other NYSED Offices and Regional Agencies to Provide System-Level Support

Success of the 21st CCLC program at the state level is dependent in part on the resources from and collaboration with multiple other public agencies and offices. Within NYSED, for example, the program must adhere to regulations and policies promulgated by the Counsel's Office, and Offices of the Chief Privacy Officer and the Chief Information Security Officer, Information Technology, and the Office of Information and Reporting Services (OIRS), among others, in order to obtain approval of contracts, permission to access and share sensitive data, receive data and obtain support in validating it, *etc.*

The program also depends on the cooperation of regional agencies within NYS, particularly individual school districts and the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE), for providing student data and other records that the program is federally required to collect.

MI supports NYSED's interactions with these other offices and agencies, but as the primary representative of the 21st CCLC program in NYS, the State Coordinator has the ultimate responsibility for communicating with other NYSED offices to ensure that program procedures meet their requirements; and with regional agencies in order to negotiate their support in extracting and organizing records.

Condition for Success (4a): Other offices and agencies perceive the 21st CCLC program as sufficiently valuable and high priority to be willing to commit the resources that the program needs.

- While other NYSED offices recognize that their roles include coordinating amongst themselves as needed to support various funded programs, the numerous purposes which they must attend to often necessitate that they prioritize their work. While they have been willing to commit the necessary resources, their priorities do not always align with those of the program.

Findings Spotlight:

Leveraging other Agencies to Comply with State Requirements

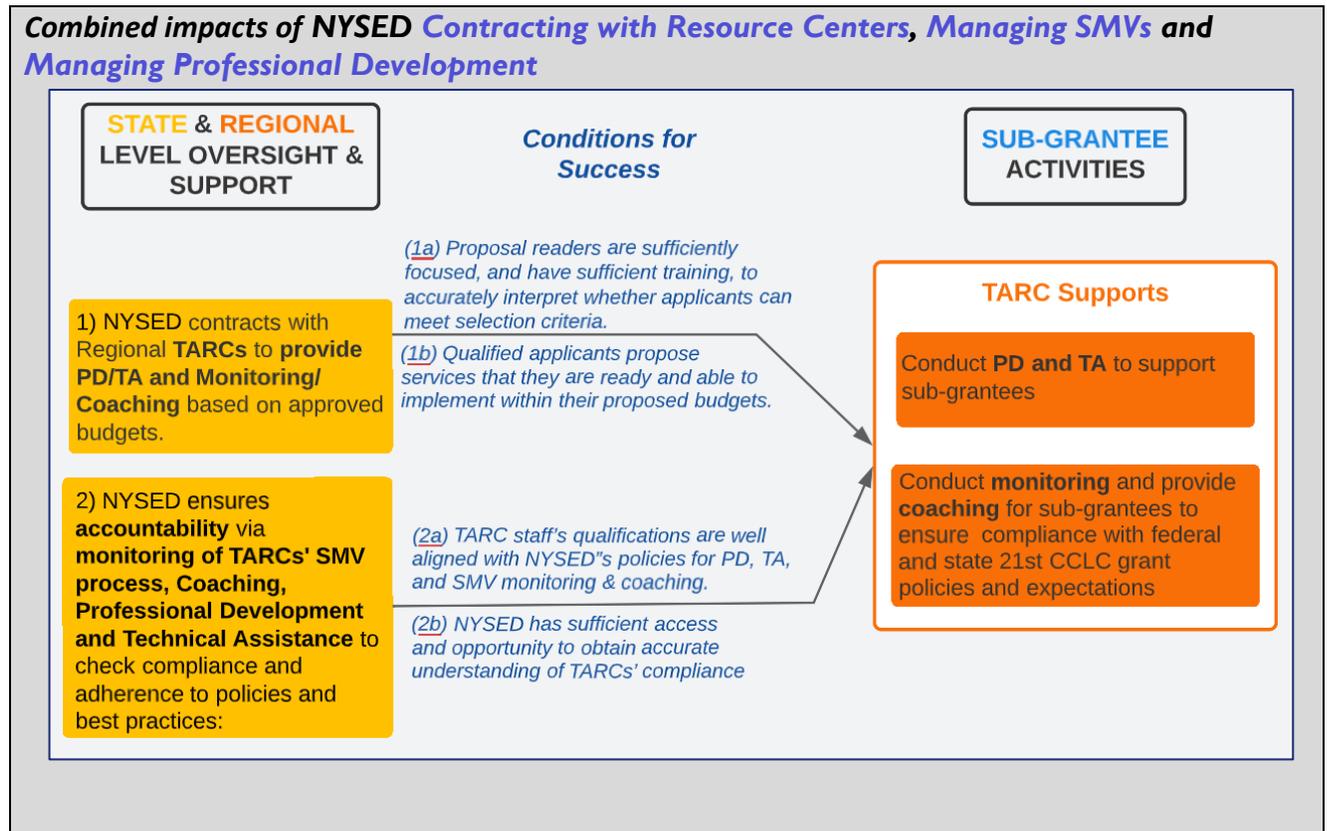
It is understood that regional agencies such as school districts also must contend with competing priorities, but they do have obligations associated with the funding they receive through 21st CCLC grants. Due to caution about privacy and security for sensitive student data, however, some have been uncooperative about providing required data even when State and Federal regulations would allow it. In other cases, the 21st CCLC program has on occasion been confronted with the additional challenge that some districts or schools may not value the program.

In these cases, the State Coordinator has had to reach out to agency heads in order to emphasize that they are obligated under contract to share certain kinds of data. More often than not, the State Coordinator has been effective at leveraging the needed data by spelling out the relevant regulations, and the obligations that the District has taken on by accepting program funding.

The Coordinator has not always been successful in these efforts, however. For example, throughout most of Round 7, due to competition for resources from the Office of Community Schools (OCS) at the NYCDOE, staffing at the NYC Resource Center fell short of the minimum of three full time equivalents that the RFP required. Near the beginning of Round 7, after the previous Director left, this center was staffed with only one full time Lead Program Manager who was temporarily filling in as interim RC Director. A new Director and a second Program Manager were hired later; but even then, and throughout her tenure, the Lead Program Manager was also committed to additional work assigned by OCS that was outside of the 21st CCLC program.

- **Recommendation:** While the State Coordinator was often effective in obtaining required data from recalcitrant districts, she was less successful in leveraging the required resources for the NYC Resource Center—a problem that still persists into Round 8. Although obstacles such as a hiring freeze in NYC may be difficult to surmount, obtaining additional leverage by presenting a united front with other NYSED offices as well as the State Evaluator—and if necessary, withholding State funds—might be productive.

B. State Oversight of Professional Development, Technical Assistance, Monitoring & Coaching



1. NYSED Contracts with Regional RCs to conduct Site Monitoring and Coaching, Professional Development, and Technical Assistance for Sub-Grantees

Contracts to obtain Technical Assistance Resource Centers for the New York City and Rest of State regions were designed to provide technical assistance, resources, and professional development activities, as well as compliance monitoring, for the sub-grantees within their respective regions, among other responsibilities. These activities are intended to help all sub-grantees attain the ten essential indicators of high quality out of school time (OST) programs as identified in NYSAN's Program Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) Tool, and to attain full compliance with all NYSED regulations and goals for the State's 21st CCLC program.

Condition for Success (1a): Proposal readers are sufficiently focused, and have sufficient training, to accurately interpret whether applicants can meet selection criteria.

Condition for Success (1b): Qualified applicants propose services that they are ready and able to implement within their proposed budgets.

- The State's selection process successfully resulted in two regional Resource Centers staffed by appropriately trained and experienced individuals. However, the NYC Center was never fully staffed according to the requirements of the RFP, as discussed in Section A.4. above.

- The success of the RFP process was further evidenced by the quality of the RC staff and their support services; however, the process also encountered challenges, as discussed below.

2. State Management of Site Monitoring and Coaching, Professional Development, and Technical Assistance

The State Coordinator oversees the work of the Resource Centers to ensure the quality and consistency of their monitoring and training activities. She provides this oversight directly, as well as with support from other State Office staff and from the State Evaluator.

Condition for Success (2a): RC staff's qualifications are well aligned with NYSED's policies for monitoring and professional development.

Condition for Success (2b): NYSED has sufficient access and opportunity to obtain accurate understanding of RCs' compliance.

Site Monitoring Visits

- To establish consistency in the SMV process among the various RC staff at the two Resource Centers, the State Coordinator participated in several monitoring visits early in the funding cycle. Among these was one visit for which the local program staff agreed to host all State level contractors—including State Office staff, staff from both Resource Centers, and members of the State Evaluation Team—in order to provide common ground for establishing procedural norms.
- Follow up debriefing sessions with all State contractors were conducted to crystalize understandings and modify procedures, where necessary, to make the process more effective (for example, by developing new templates that programs could use for some of the required documentation of compliance).

Findings Spotlight:

Successes and Limitations of Managing the Site Monitoring Process

The initiatives to standardize and strengthen the SMV process through State oversight proved an effective means of communicating expectations for how the SMV should be conducted, and spawned several improvements. After the contractor for the Rest of State RC was replaced near the beginning of the fifth program year, to help the new contractor get up to speed on the SMV process, the State Coordinator arranged for them to shadow the monitoring visits conducted by the NYC Center.

The most notable limitation of these oversight efforts was that, being a highly labor intensive process, it was not possible to conduct multiple site monitoring visits with full participation of all State contractors. Instead, other monitoring visits were conducted with individual staff from the State Office in attendance. It is unclear, however, whether they were able to do so often enough to obtain a representative sample of how site monitoring was conducted by the RCs under varying circumstances.

Recommendations:

- While the State Office staff's time may be too limited to conduct or observe as many monitoring visits as they would like, they might consider the following strategy to achieve greater impacts for standardizing the SMV process through the observations they are able to conduct.
- To further standardize this process of "monitoring the monitors," the State Coordinator can conduct more formal turnkey training to orient her staff to her preferred process for observing Resource Centers' monitoring. Just as the SMV process is standardized and its desired impacts reinforced through the SMV Checklist and programs' resulting Action Plans, this turnkey training can be standardized and reinforced by developing a structured "Observing the Monitors" protocol. This process might then be followed by asking State Office observer-trainees to provide reflection on how to address any areas where they did not fully comply with desired turnkey training procedures.

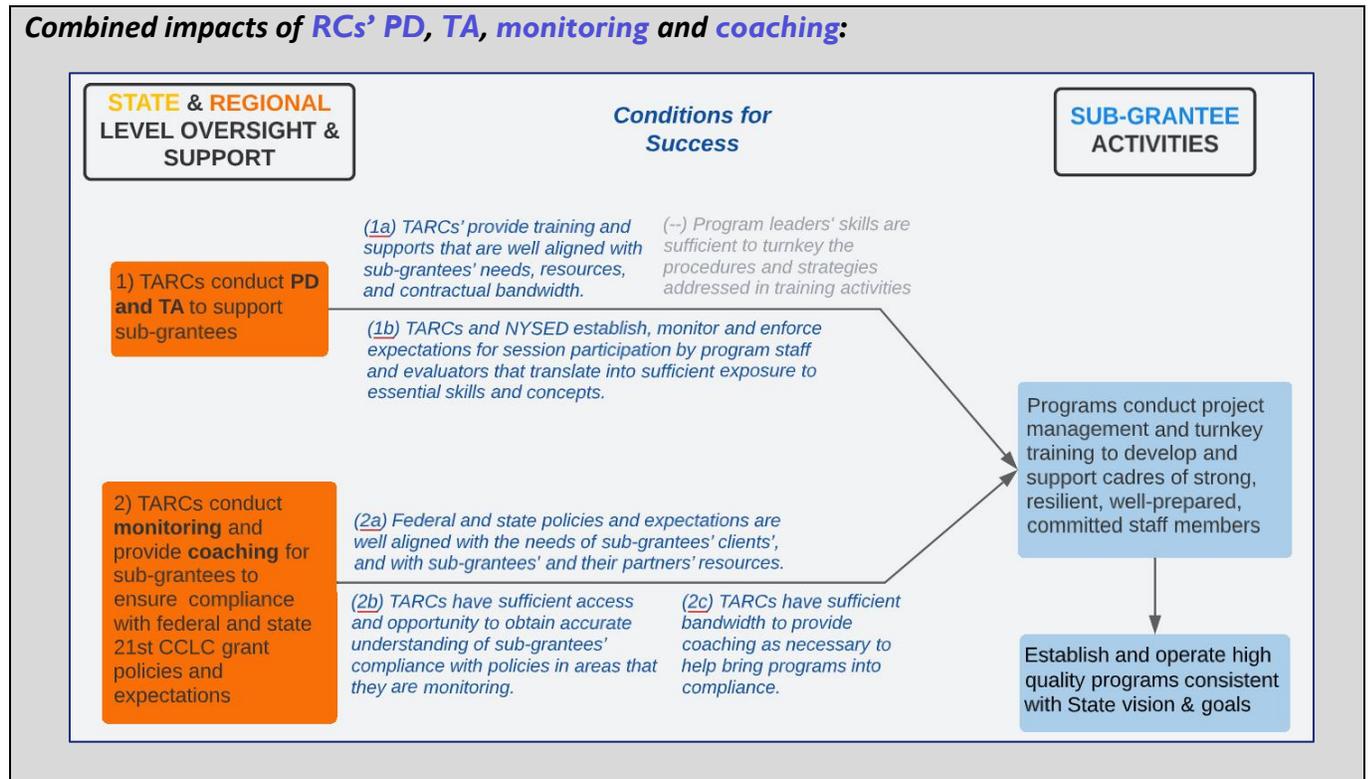
Findings Spotlight:

Successes in Managing Professional Development Offerings

The State Coordinator established clear priorities each year for program updates that needed to be conveyed at presentations and conferences, and for skills needed by all programs (such as use of the data management system or administering surveys required for APRs) to be developed through required workshops. In addition, the Resource Centers used both formal and informal channels to identify topics on which program staff felt the greatest need of support, and these priorities were also considered in development of mandatory or optional professional development offerings.

The State Evaluator was also enlisted to assess the relevance, as well as value and effectiveness, of each session, based on our own perceptions as well as those of participants, and to provide feedback and recommendations for improvement, where applicable. It is not clear whether specific findings from these observations and surveys directly benefitted the Resource Centers' success in organizing or facilitating high quality workshops, but there was a clear increase in the proportion of high quality workshops over time.

C. RCs Provide Professional Development, Technical Assistance, Monitoring & Coaching



Resource Centers' obligations to support sub-grantees were laid out in their contracts. They include providing ongoing technical assistance related to implementing and improving programs, research-based professional development based on sub-grantees' needs, and conducting monitoring site visits of sub-grantee programs. The large majority of Program Directors from both regions responding to the surveys found their Resource Centers to be highly supportive overall.

1. RCs Conduct PD and TA to Support Sub-grantees

Condition for Success (1a): RCs provide training and supports that are well aligned with sub-grantees' needs, resources, and contractual bandwidth.

- As determined by structured observations and participant surveys, MI found professional development activities throughout Round 7 to be of consistently very high quality, with only a few exceptions of workshops conducted by guest presenters. Program Directors were also very satisfied with the Resource Centers' trainings, as evidenced by MI's annual Program Director surveys.
- Program Directors were also satisfied with the technical assistance they received on request from the Resource Centers.
- There were, however, some workshop sessions that were not as well rated for their relevance to program staff's needs. In several cases, sessions were very sparsely attended, which might be interpreted as participants "voting with their feet."

- It is notable that low participation rates were less frequent in the latter years of Round 7. This shift might have resulted from a combination of sessions being offered virtually since spring 2020, eliminating the need for travel to conferences; and fewer sessions to choose from.⁴ Equally important, the smaller number of offerings of virtual sessions coincided with a more focused selection of higher priority topics.

Recommendation:

- In order to obtain more representative summary data, continue to work with the State Evaluator to explore strategies to improve session survey response rates to facilitate more representative feedback about the value of PD sessions to programs Statewide.

⁴ Since sessions went virtual in spring 2020, the RCs typically offered four webinars each fall and four in the spring; in contrast, the last in-person Statewide conference before the pandemic, in November 2019, included 23 workshops and roundtables, with five to six sessions per time slot.

Findings Spotlight:

Managing Professional Development Offerings

Among topics that were included among lists of workshops from which program staff could select their own preferences, or that were only offered by one of the two Resource Centers, there were some that seemed important enough to State priorities that MI felt that they should have been mandatory. Among these were the following:

- *EZReports® 101/EZReports® 201* [fall 2021]—All programs were required to attend at least one of these sessions, but staff who came on during Year 5 may have never received more advanced training.
- *Trauma Informed Care* [fall 2020 and January 2021], and *Social-Emotional Learning* [May 2019 and December 2020]—The nearly universal traumatic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic seemed to us to warrant that all OST activities be conducted through the lens of trauma informed care and an elevated focus on social-emotional learning.
- *An Introduction to Results Frameworks and Logic Models* [fall 2019]—All programs were required to submit an updated logic model annually beginning in Year 2. However, it became apparent from MI’s AER reviews that substantial numbers of programs were not experienced developing these models, much less using them to inform program improvement.
- *Using the QSA* [spring 2018 and fall 2019], and *Implementing the QSA in a Virtual World* [December 2020]—This tool was a required part of program implementation; but because it was intended as an internal process that did not need to be reported out, there was no empirical way for the State to determine how effectively it was being used.

In addition to the above sessions, there were several topics that were offered early in Round 7 that were later recognized as addressing important needs for many programs, which might have been repeated in later years as required sessions. Among these were the following:

- *Planning Enrichment Programs* (creating bridges between day school and OST) [spring 2018]
- *Recruiting and Retaining Qualified Staff* [spring 2018]. An important companion to this topic would be professional development on using the new program implementation guide and evaluation guide, both currently under development (by the Resource Centers and by the State Evaluator, respectively) to support on-boarding new staff.
- *How to Turnkey Professional Development to Your Staff* [spring 2018]—This skill is critical to program success since session attendance was only required for one representative from each program.

Recommendations:

- There is an inherent trade-off between providing a wider variety of optional training sessions and making more sessions required. Given the above considerations, the State Coordinator and the RCs may want to reconsider the balance between them.
- In planning future training activities, even if the program returns to in-person conferences, NYSED and the Resource Centers might continue to concentrate their efforts more on the most important topics than on offering a wide variety of options.
- Review participants' past ratings of session relevance, to see if they align with expectations based on needs assessments and Resource Centers' direct experiences interacting with program staff. Relevance ratings for lower priority session topics can provide insight into the types of topics to pursue in the future.
- For program-specific needs that are identified externally (by the State Office, the Resource Centers and/or the State Evaluator), consider whether there should be circumstances when particular programs are required—or at least strongly advised—to attend certain sessions.

Condition for Success (1b): RCs and NYSED establish, monitor and enforce expectations for session participation by program staff and evaluators that translate into sufficient exposure to essential skills and concepts.

Findings Spotlight:

Managing Attendance at Professional Development Offerings

Program representation at conferences and workshops was always documented through attendance records. In most cases, the proportion of programs represented at each required session (or series of sessions) was high; but it is not known whether these records were used for identifying individual programs that may have had low overall attendance rates across sessions—information which could provide insights about programs which were struggling in certain areas or professed lack of awareness of important program and policy updates.

Recommendations:

Among the questions that might prove useful to explore from session attendance records are the following:

- Considering attendance across sessions, are there particular programs that are less likely than others to be represented? If so, what might explain the lower attendance from these programs?
- Are the programs that have been identified as having compliance issues, high risk assessment scores, or other red flags the same ones that are less likely to attend?
- Do SMV findings indicate whether programs that miss workshops or conferences are aware of policy guidance that was communicated at missed sessions?
- Are program staff attending workshop or webinar sessions that address the specific areas that their programs have been struggling with? If not, why not? If so, does their participation seem to help them better address those expectations?
- If programs are attending targeted sessions but still struggling, what is lacking? Do participants provide sufficient, timely and well-design turnkey training to their staff? Is the timing of training (State-provided and/or turnkey) aligned with the emergence of particular needs so that participants can put the training into practice? Is the amount of training exposure sufficient, or do staff need more follow-up?

1. RCs Conduct Monitoring and Provide Coaching for Sub-grantees

The Resource Centers' provide very targeted guidance and coaching in support of the Site Monitoring Visit process, individualized to the goals and the needs of each individual program.

- The SMV tool provides very explicit details, not only for defining what the compliance indicators are, but indicating and referencing required and/or suggested forms of documentation that programs may use to demonstrate the extent to which each compliance indicator was met.

- The highly detailed site monitoring process strongly supports this effort. This process involves a day-long meeting between RC staff, program staff, and the Local Evaluator, where participants review the program’s status and documentation relevant to each compliance indicator, and RC staff provide guidance on next steps that the program should take on any indicators with which they are not in full compliance. The program’s required action plan for taking these next steps is then reviewed by the Resource Center staff, who follow-up on the program’s status as necessary.
- MI assessed and supported the site monitoring process through detailed reviews and input on the SMV checklist and report, observations of several SMV meetings, and formal and informal interviews of RC staff. Monitoring visits were found to be very thorough, and were approached with a tone that clearly conveyed that the process was not intended as an audit, but an effort to support the program.
- In their ratings of the Site Monitoring Visit process, even though it is focused on compliance and can impact Risk Assessment scores, most survey respondents nevertheless found the process to be collaborative and supportive.
- While supporting instrumentation was clear and explicit, Among the challenges with the SMV process, we did observe some differences in how strictly various Resource Center staff interpreted the criteria for meeting compliance. (Recommendations for how State oversight might help strengthen the SMV process were discussed in Section B.2. above.)

Condition for Success (2a): Federal and State policies and expectations are well aligned with the needs of sub-grantees’ clients, and with sub-grantees’ and their partners’ resources.

- Generally speaking, in order to be approved, grant applications must be designed to serve clients who have needs that are aligned with Federal and State expectations. But student needs are varied and complex, and a well designed program should serve the whole student. In addition, use of program funds is not restricted only to high needs or low income students, and applicants often use the grant opportunity to support entire student populations. However, some activities are not appropriate both for struggling and for already successful students. Based on MI’s AER reviews, it appeared that appropriate services were not always targeted to appropriate sub-populations, or program objectives and performance indicators did not reflect such distinctions.
- Sub-grantees were required to propose services that could be conducted within available resources as outlined in the RFP. However, due to factors such as the pressures of the competitive grant process, changes in conditions once the program starts, and inaccurate estimates of program costs in the original design, some programs involve more services than the proposed budget, and resources of potential partners, can realistically support.

Recommendations:

- To help ensure better-defined objectives and indicators, we had recommended that for the Round 8 proposals, NYSED make a greater effort to ensure that proposal readers include individuals with stronger evaluation backgrounds.
- Inherent to the competitive grant process is a tendency to encourage applicants to propose robust programs under small budgets. To some extent, it might be possible to

mitigate this effect by coaching proposal readers to assess true cost effectiveness by balancing cost savings against technical quality. Ideally, it might be possible to achieve this goal by building it into proposal scoring guidelines.

Condition for Success (2b): RCs have sufficient access and opportunity to obtain accurate understanding of sub-grantees' compliance with policies in areas that they are monitoring.

Each Site Monitoring Visit involved a very deep and thorough review of the program's level of compliance on each of several score indicators covering compliance in each of seven areas aligned State guidelines. The checklist was used to reinforce programs' understanding of compliance expectations, and to act as a guideline for the types of recommended and required forms and documentation to be used to support program management. When a program was scheduled for a visit, the RC alerted them to collect samples of this documentation to serve as evidence of their compliance for each indicator, which RC staff reviewed prior to the actual visit.

Documentation preparation and previewing was followed by a full day visit (replaced during the pandemic by an extended teleconferencing meeting), during which the Resource Center reviewer, program staff, and (in some cases) the Local Evaluator gathered to go over each indicator and associated documents, and answer any questions that may arise from either party. Throughout this process, the RC staff would identify any areas where the program was not in full compliance, and discuss with the Program Director what needed to be done to bring them into compliance. Where possible, during the site visit the entire review team would also visit a few program activities.

Finally, the Resource Center would prepare a report on its findings about compliance, which would be delivered both to the State Office and to the Program Director. In response, the program was required to submit an action plan for approval, through which any gaps in compliance would be addressed.

- This detailed process of documentation provided a great deal of information about each program. While time consuming, it was a far more efficient process than what would have been necessary for RC staff to learn this much about a program through observation alone.
- The process did have its disadvantages:
 - Paper documentation can never fully reflect what actually takes place on the ground.
 - Each Resource Center was only able to conduct monitoring for a limited number of programs per year; as a result, although the visits were prioritized based on other information, some programs were in operation for three full years before they were visited.
 - It was not possible for the group to visit more than a handful of activities during a visit, and the activity observations were brief and often not representative, especially for larger programs with multiple sites.

- Activity observations generally focused on what was happening at the site and during the time of the visit, and in at least some cases, it was left up to the Program Director to decide which activities to observe.
- The review process focused almost entirely on compliance, while assessment of program quality relied mostly on local evaluators.
- Resource Center staff found it difficult to adequately address the compliance indicators from the Evaluation section of the SMV, as discussed in the Findings Spotlight, below.
- Nevertheless, given the number of programs and the resources available to the RCs, the SMV process as designed provided a feasible strategy for obtaining information about program management.

Findings Spotlight:

Challenges Reviewing Program Evaluation During the SMV Process

The SMV checklist and reporting tool has always included a focus on local programs' compliance with expectations for outcome measurement and evaluation. Because the Resource Center staff who conduct the SMV reviews are not trained in evaluation, however, the focus on evaluation during the monitoring process has typically been limited.

- During the spring 2022 monitoring visits, MI worked with the Resource Centers to pilot test an approach designed to strengthen this aspect of monitoring. The new strategy entailed a shift in the focus of MI's AER reviews. In place of reviewing random samples of AERs as we had in the past, we reviewed the AERs for all programs that had a scheduled monitoring visit during the 2021-2022 program year, and we focused more tightly on our assessments of the status of the Evaluation Plan as described in each report. The intention was that a tighter focus, presented in less technical language, would be more useful to the Resource Centers during the monitoring visits.
- However, the SMVs, including the evaluation section, focus on processes, while the AERs were intended for reporting on evaluation findings and outcomes as well as processes. As such, the AERs were not specifically designed to address the SMV compliance indicators. As a result, this strategy for addressing evaluation during monitoring visits did not prove very effective. In general, it was agreed that except for limited, non-technical issues, it was not realistic for the Resource Centers to address the evaluation compliance indicators during monitoring visits. For two programs where substantial concerns were raised about the evaluation process, MI met with the Local Evaluator directly or sat in on the monitoring visit.

Recommendations:

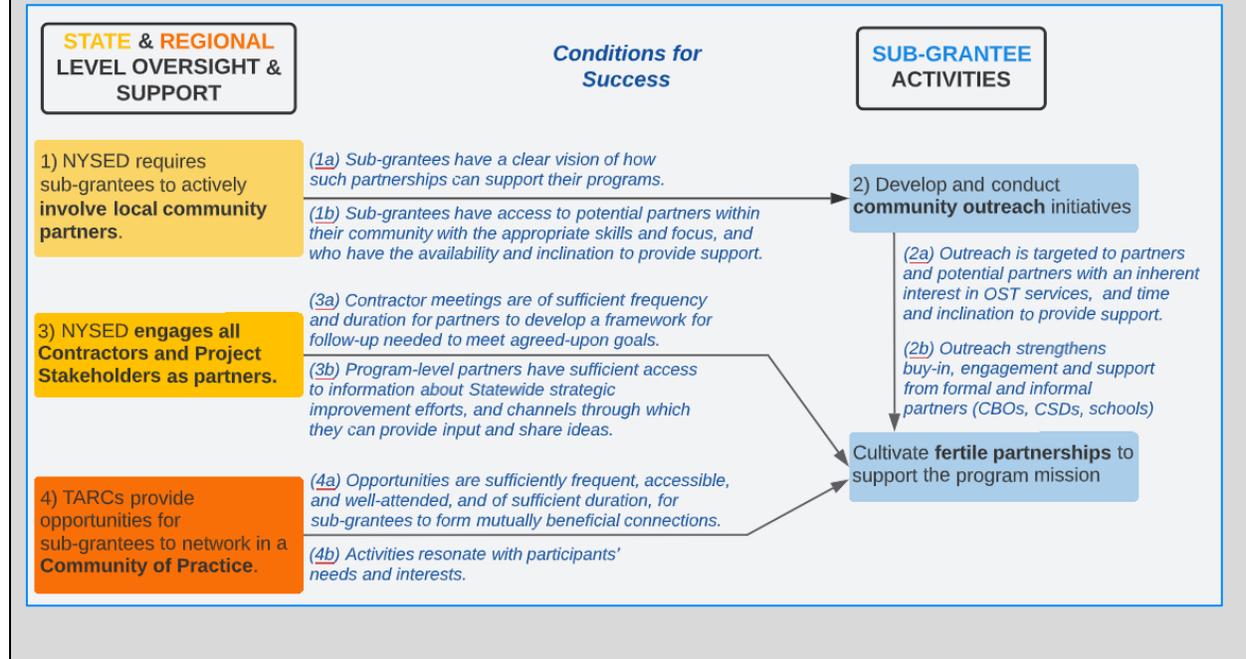
- As discussed in our proposal for the Round 8 state evaluation contract, we recommend that any future modifications of the SMV Checklist include a compliance indicator ensuring that data quality is explicitly monitored by program management and Local Evaluators, including the new Data Specialists.
- In addition, rather than reviewing a random sample of AERs each year, we have proposed that the AER reviews be prioritized according to red flags identified in Year 1, as derived from a preliminary review of each program's Goals and Objectives table. Prioritization of reviews can also be informed by findings from State leadership and the RCs, so that AER reviews can be aligned with scheduled monitoring visits as necessary. Finally, the AER and AER Review Templates might be restructured so that they are better aligned with the indicators in the SMV checklist. With these strategies, the AER reviews might largely obviate the need for most of the evaluation section of the SMV.
- The exception is that AERs, which are written by the Local Evaluator, tend not to address the last few compliance indicators listed in the SMV checklist under "Program's Responsibility." However, these compliance indicators relate to non-technical activities related to the QSA process, communications, and sustainability, and should not be problematic for Resource Center staff to review during the SMV.

Condition for Success (2c): RCs have sufficient bandwidth and training to provide coaching as necessary to help bring programs into compliance.

- In part because it was understaffed, the NYC Resource Center was not always able to stay on top of required turnaround times for deliverables such as SMV reports.
- The RoS Resource Center was fully staffed, including a second, full time contracted Program Manager located in central New York State who supported monitoring and coaching visits to programs in the central and western regions. Nevertheless, this RoS Resource Center had difficulty conducting the required number of annual SMVs across a highly geographically dispersed region, and was behind in getting reports to the State Office. NYSED did eventually receive a large number of these reports before the contract ended, but many were inaccurate: some had their Action Plans approved, even though the plans did not offer proof of compliance, as required. Some programs were told that they were in full compliance when their SMV review and submitted Action Plan indicated that they were not.

D. Partnership & Engagement

Combined impacts of **required community partnerships, sub-grantee community outreach, state-level engagement of stakeholders, RC-provided networking opportunities, and Sub-grantees' Community Outreach Initiatives.**



In order to increase levels of community collaboration in planning, implementing and sustaining 21st CCLC programs, the Round 8 RFP, and State and federally mandated program objectives, required all applicants to form partnerships between at least one local education agency (LEA), and at least one community-based organization (CBO), local government agency or institute of higher education (IHE). Further developing partnerships at all levels, NYSED continually worked to involve all contractors and project stakeholders as partners in information sharing, planning and strategic improvement efforts; while under the State Coordinator, the Resource Centers strategized to encourage sub-grantees to participate in a community of practice across programs by providing networking opportunities during conferences and online webinars. These combined efforts were designed to create a tightly woven fabric where all threads of the State 21st CCLC program supported each other.

1. NYSED Requires Involvement of Community Partners in Local Programs

Condition for Success (1a): Sub-grantees have a clear vision of how such partnerships can support their programs.

Condition for Success (1b): Sub-grantees have access to potential partners within their community with the appropriate skills and focus, and who have the availability and inclination to provide support.

Findings Spotlight:

Strengthening Connection to the School Day

MI's reviews of a stratified random sample of Year 1 AERs told a mixed story about the extent to which program activities were aligned with the goals and curricula of students' day schools; however, exploratory site visits that MI conducted later during Round 7 indicated that for the programs we visited, vision of the value of these connections, and their strategies to strengthen them, were improving.

Year 1 AER reviews revealed that alignment with the school day often needed to be strengthened, or was lacking altogether. In total, less than half of reviewed programs reported that school administration "actively participated"⁵ in program implementation decisions, and only a third of school day teachers "actively participated."

It is common for programs to encounter unanticipated obstacles once program implementation begins. In response to the Year 1 findings, in addition to alerting State leadership and the Resource Centers, MI explored successful strategies for improving linkages to the school day during program staff interviews, and shared these strategies during statewide conferences and evaluation networking meetings. We also collaborated with NYSED and the Resource Centers on continuous improvement of the Site Monitoring Visit tool⁶, which the RCs use to monitor program compliance. Collaborative review of the tool included a focus on the section on "Establish[ing] Strong Links to the School Day"

Partly as a result of these efforts, as well as the lessons learned from the pandemic, MI's interviews with Year 5 program staff and evaluators indicated that the programs we visited that year had substantially strengthened their coordination with the school day, and recognized it as an important strategy for helping to address students' learning gaps.

⁵ For this analysis, we defined "actively engaging" with various stakeholders as "acting together," "deciding together," or, at least, "consulting". These levels of participation were conceptualized and defined by Community Toolbox (<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/analyze/where-to-start/participatory-approaches/mai>).

⁶ While the SMV tool continues to undergo ongoing improvements, discussion of the SMV process throughout this report focuses on the December 2020 version, which is provided in Appendix C.

Recommendations:

As discussed in our July 2022 report on Year 5 Exploratory Site Visits, as well as previous conference presentations, strategies for strengthening connections to the school day that programs have found to be effective included the following:

- Nurture school and district support for OST and strong, collaborative relationships through consistent communication;
- Collaborating with day school teachers, and including both 21st CCLC and day school staff in both day and OST activities;
- Aligning academic activities with school-day curricula, and state and local standards; and
- Identifying needs of participating students *vis a vis* expectations of their school-day curriculum.

2. Sub-grantees Conduct Community Outreach Initiatives

Condition for Success (2a): Sub-grantees outreach is targeted to partners and potential partners with an inherent interest in OST services, and time and inclination to provide support.

Condition for Success (2b): Sub-grantees outreach strengthens buy-in, engagement and support from formal and informal partners (CBOs, CSDs, schools).

- During the first year of Round 7 program funding, MI's review of a representative sample of Annual Evaluation Reports found that fewer than one-fourth of programs reported that they actively involved their partnering CBOs in optimizing program implementation. Involvement of day school administrations and teachers, as discussed above, was better, but still lacking.
- In conversations with program staff and Local Evaluators over the years, MI learned that for some programs, obstacles to creating partnerships included school or district administrators who were not supportive of the program (as discussed above), and difficulty identifying CBOs with congruent missions and interests.
- By Year 5 however, based on the random sample of programs selected for exploratory site visits, a number of programs had made substantial progress in cultivating fertile partnerships. At least some of this progress resulted from the close, trusting connections that were formed through the shared adversity of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to substantially improved connections with the day schools, as discussed in Section D.1. above, programs reported that improved communications with parents helped facilitate their taking on more active roles, while CBO partnerships were used to support activities such as delivering family wellness packages and food, a home-visit graduation drive, and intensified social services.

3. NYSED Engages Contractors and Project Stakeholders as Partners

It was an intention of the State Program Office to position and treat stakeholders at both the program *and* state levels—sub-grantees, Local Evaluators, partnering vendors, and State contractors—as active collaborators in the statewide program implementation effort. To that end, the State Office sought their contributions and perspectives in policy formation throughout the contract period. The State Coordinator and her staff worked to cultivate this collaboration by convening open Q&A sessions or “office hours” after presentations at conferences; sitting in on evaluation networking sessions and discussing participants’ perspectives about policy; enlisting the Resource Centers and the State Evaluator to summarize and report on questions and concerns that arose during various workshops and evaluation networking sessions; convening regular program meetings with State level contractors; and convening workgroups among the State contractors to follow-up on development of policy guidance.

Condition for Success (3a): Contractor meetings are of sufficient frequency and duration for partners to develop a framework for follow-up needed to meet agreed-upon goals.

- Informal, *ad hoc* conversations among the State Coordinator and her staff, RC staff, and the State Evaluation Team occurred on an almost daily basis, enabling all players to resolve questions and address needs as they arose.
- The quarterly contractor meetings served as a critical opportunity to ensure that all players were on the same page about the long view of state-level implementation. They also provided an opportunity for MI to present interim evaluation findings so the team could discuss their implications and strategize how to address them.
- Due to the extreme complexity of the NYS 21st CCLC program, however, it was often difficult to fully address all necessary topics, and some agenda items occasionally had to be left on the table.
- RC staff also met with the State Coordinator and her staff on a monthly basis during all months other than those with scheduled quarterly contractor meetings. This more extended meeting schedule afforded the State Office and RCs even greater ability to stay up to date. Since MI staff did not participate in these meetings, however, it left a gap in communications, which in turn made it more difficult to address the full agendas during quarterly meetings.

Recommendations:

- MI agrees with the recommendation from the Resource Centers for Round 8 that the State Evaluator at least listen in on monthly meetings between NYSED and the Resource Centers, and that notes from all meetings among NYSED, the RCs and MI be posted on a shared online site to keep track of previous decisions. It will be necessary, however, to examine the extent to which this expanded meeting schedule would fit within our contractual capacity. If MI is unable to attend all NYSED-RC meetings, we can review meeting minutes to keep up with developments.

- During quarterly meetings, instead of trying to make decisions at a granular level, major topics can be addressed at a higher conceptual level, and then working groups can be assigned to follow up with the more granular work. These groups can then present recommendations to NYSED and the full group to obtain consensus and ensure that final decisions are made with full approval.

Condition for Success (3b): Program-level partners have sufficient access to information about Statewide strategic improvement efforts, and channels through which they can provide input and share ideas.

- As noted in Section A.1. above, the State Program Office was extremely diligent about communications to make sure that stakeholders at all levels were kept up to date. The only weak link in these communications may have been at the local program level, if any Program Directors were inconsistent about conveying information to their staff. However, there were no clear indications that this was a significant problem.
- In addition, NYSED had established ample and varied channels through which communication could flow in the other direction, from local program staff and their evaluators back to NYSED and its contractors. These channels, also discussed in Section A.1. above, included conference general sessions and office hours at conferences, Q&A sessions at conferences and workshops, and opportunities to respond to workshop and conference surveys and the Program Director survey.
- Program staff and Local Evaluators were also able to convey feedback through the Resource Centers (via monitoring and technical assistance visits) and the State Evaluator (via Evaluation Network meetings and listening sessions).
- On the evaluation end, among the myriad examples of collaboration from Local Evaluators were the sharing of fidelity checklist and logic model templates; obtaining agreement to move the EZReports® rollover date back to allow sub-grantees opportunity to make corrections to prior year data; and advocating for clarification about policy changes during the pandemic.

Recommendations:

- NYSED might consider providing messaging about the importance of Local Evaluators participation in Evaluation Network meetings, conferences, and workshops.
- Ensure that SMV compliance indicators include a focus on internal training around State expectations.

4. RCs Provide Networking Opportunities for Sub-Grantees

In addition to incorporating opportunities for questions and discussion in all training sessions, The RCs explicitly facilitated the inherent relationship development opportunities available through conferences (especially when they were conducted in person). This included unstructured “networking breaks” and socials, and for at least one of the earlier conferences, providing space at the back of the agenda for participants to record contact information for “new colleagues.” More concretely, the Resource Centers encouraged their colleagues from the funded programs to take an active role in facilitating professional development and collaboration. Among the products of these efforts were a Program Leaders’ Roundtable that

convened during back-to-back Conferences, led by a Rest of State Program Manager; a powerful and very well-received “Poverty Simulator” role playing event that was organized by a team of sub-grantees at two conferences; as well as numerous intensive institutes, workshops and webinars facilitated by various funded program staff, their partners and their evaluators, as early as the spring of Year 1.

Condition for Success (4a): Opportunities are sufficiently frequent, accessible, well-attended, and of sufficient duration, for sub-grantees to form mutually beneficial connections.

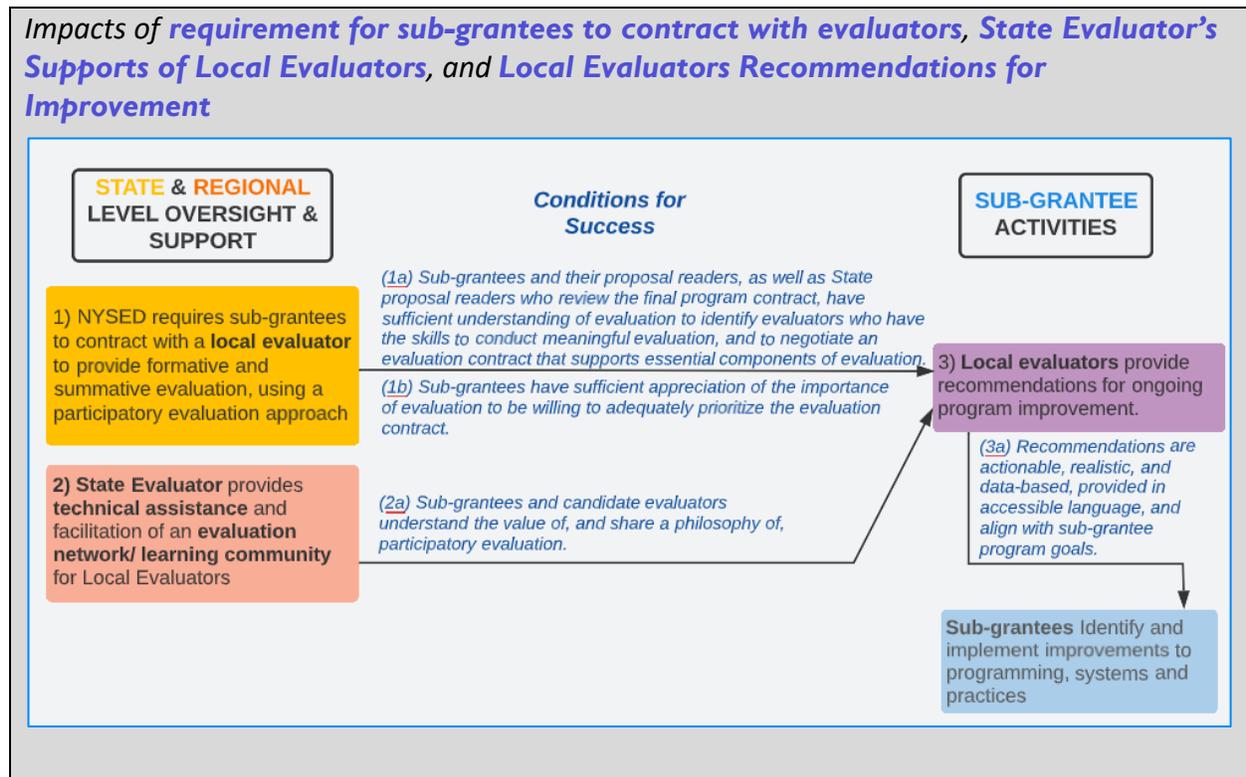
Condition for Success (4b): Structured and unstructured activities resonate with participants’ needs and interests.

- The Program Leader roundtables and Poverty Simulators were both very well-received by the large majority of participants, who found it to be a valuable, eye-opening experience.
- The Program Leader Roundtables, which NYSED, Resource Center and MI staff were asked not to attend, provided Directors with valuable opportunities to share experiences and ideas about management and leadership strategies. This venue freed participants to address topics such as challenges of leadership that they may not have felt comfortable exploring with others in attendance.
- The creation of a community of practice exemplified by the collaborative nature of the Program Leader Roundtables and the Poverty Simulators demonstrated the formation of mutually beneficial connections.
- The positive feedback about these events, as well as many of the workshops and webinars led by program staff and partners, confirmed that many of these activities resonated with participants’ needs.

Recommendation:

- Re-institute opportunities for local program leaders and staff to form a community of practice.

E. Data Systems & Evaluation



1. NYSED Requires Sub-Grantees to Contract with a Local Evaluator to Implement a Comprehensive Evaluation Plan

The RFP for sub-grantees required that all programs contract with an independent evaluator who would be responsible for implementing the proposed program level evaluation plan, aligned with the NYS 21st CCLC Evaluation Manual. This evaluation was required to help ensure the availability of high-quality academic enrichment opportunities to help students meet State and local academic standards, and to collect data to assess student success. The evaluation design was also required to ensure that students and families have meaningful involvement in the evaluation.

Condition for Success (1a): Sub-grantees and their proposal readers have sufficient understanding of evaluation to identify evaluators who have the skills to conduct meaningful evaluation, and to negotiate an evaluation contract that supports essential components of evaluation. State proposal readers who review the final program contract must also consider this need.

Although MI did not have an opportunity to directly assess the evaluation-related knowledge and experience either of State proposal readers, or of sub-grantees and their proposal readers for the evaluation contract, there was evidence from our reviews of Annual Evaluation Reports of a wide range in how successful the local evaluation process was.

- Evaluators were consistently very effective at making sense of the data and providing relevant, practical recommendations on which programs were usually able to follow through.

- Just as program leaders had to be flexible in re-defining their program goals and services during the pandemic, many evaluators were highly resourceful in identifying alternative measures to assess objectives when originally-planned measures (such as standardized tests, staff or client surveys) were not available. However, instead of identifying proxy measures, several evaluators simply reported that their objectives were not measurable.
- A few evaluators had less formal training, and less familiarity with common evaluation strategies such as identifying appropriate and reliable measurement tools, and using logic models to support ongoing program improvement.
- Approved evaluation plans, as described in the AERs, ranged substantially both in terms of thoroughness and rigor. Among the observed variations, programs differed most notably in the extent to which their evaluation plans included the following:
 - Objectives that addressed all of the major components of program design (this variation was most notable in regard to formative objectives);
 - Performance indicators that, collectively, fully addressed each objective;
 - The use of performance indicators that adhered to all five criteria for “SMART” goals⁷, and alignment of assessment tools with performance indicators;
 - A focus on observing and assessing program management and implementation (observational assessments of point of service program activities, in contrast, were highly consistent);

Condition for Success (1b): Sub-grantees have sufficient appreciation of the importance of evaluation to be willing to adequately prioritize their evaluation contract.

The RFP for funded programs specified requirements of the evaluation contract, and through the original Evaluation Manual, outlined the specific requirements of the Annual Evaluation Reports, with a stated plan to provide a template specifying the format and content of these required reports. During the prior funding round (Round 6), however, Local Evaluators were ultimately only required to follow a less structured AER “guide.”

- MI used this guide for the first year AERs during Round 7; however, our review of these reports revealed that a substantial number of them did not adequately address all required components. In response, with NYSED’s sanction, MI created more prescriptive AER templates for the remaining years. In response, several program leaders expressed concern that these templates required a greater investment in writing the reports than was reflected in their contracts. It remains MI’s position that this situation indicates the negotiation (and ultimate acceptance by proposal readers who reviewed sub-grantee applications) of evaluation contracts that did not fully support all State-required components of the evaluation.

⁷ As defined in the AER Templates, the criteria were Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

- While the RFP established a cap of eight percent of the operating budget that could be spent on the evaluation sub-contract, there was no minimum evaluation contract; only a requirement that an independent evaluator be retained to fulfill the requirements specified in the 2013 Evaluation Manual. Some of the approved grant applications proposed very small evaluation budgets that seemed unlikely to be sufficient to support required evaluation activities. In the most extreme cases, some approved projects included evaluation contracts as low as two percent of the total operating budget.

Recommendation:

- MI had recommended a more explicit and rigorous set of qualifications for Local Evaluators, and criteria for local evaluations, to be included in the Round 8 RFP for sub-grantees. This recommendation was adopted for the RFP.

2. State Evaluator provides technical assistance and facilitation of an evaluation network/ learning community for Local Evaluators

Condition for Success (2a): Sub-grantees and candidate evaluators understand the value of, and share a philosophy of, participatory evaluation.

Although representative data were not obtained, insights into perceived benefits of participatory evaluation, as well as challenges to achieving it, were provided during one of the earliest Evaluation Networking meetings during Year 1.

- Several evaluators expressed their belief in this approach, stating that they perceived their role as critical friends rather than monitors, and that they recognized its value, especially for formative evaluation and to support linkages to the school day.
- Participants described a number of significant challenges to establishing true participatory evaluation. Among these were the following:
 - Some grant writers did not initially recognize its value, and/or did not build in enough resources to support the time needed at the beginning to establish relationships and develop instruments. Small evaluation budgets exacerbated this problem.
 - Buy-in from school administration was more difficult to achieve when the CBO was the grant holder.
 - It is difficult to get multiple stakeholders to complete the QSA survey, participate in Advisory Board meetings, and generally maintain communication.
- Consensus about the value of participatory evaluation was ambiguous, as many evaluators did not participate in Evaluation Network meetings or respond to surveys.

Recommendations:

- Many participants at the 2018 Evaluation Network meeting, as well as at the June 2022 Final Insights Forum with evaluators, actively contributed ideas for how to achieve participatory evaluation, including efforts to form linkages to the school day. Some of these included the following:
 - Share the QSA with stakeholders and conduct focus groups around the items;

- Make data presentations accessible so that stakeholders recognize trends and can engage in conversations about improvement strategies;
 - Plan advisory meetings around the principal’s schedule;
 - Partner with specific school staff who can refer students with particular needs, and can contribute ideas for relevant program activities;
 - Bring a team of key stakeholders to conduct site visits, and then debrief, on important issues, to collectively identify and address issues in real time. (Feedback from the Year 5 Exploratory Site Visits further emphasized that enlisting various stakeholders and partners to help address critical needs during the pandemic also helped strengthen trust and collaboration.)
 - Cultivating trusting, effective working relationships is essential, and requires being flexible in unplanned ways. Provided services cannot always align only to the formal evaluation plan, especially in response to events such as the pandemic.
 - A revamped Evaluation Guide, with better alignment to program implementation requirements, can help program staff better understand the evaluator’s role, and understand that the intent is not punitive.
- At this same meeting, the State Coordinator suggested that there should be more communication with programs about the benefits of evaluators and how they can help programs. Such communication always remains a priority for the State Evaluator, and we will continue to tap the experience and perspectives of Local Evaluators to inform how best to approach this effort.

3. Local evaluators provide recommendations for ongoing program improvement.

Condition for Success (3a): Local Evaluators provide actionable, data-based recommendations that align with sub-grantee capacities and program goals.

- From MI’s annual reviews of selected AERs, conclusions and recommendations were among the strongest components of these reports. We found that:
 - Recommendations emerged directly from the evaluation findings.
 - Reports identified clear aspects of the program that staff could focus on improving in the following year.
 - Many (though not all) reports distilled recommendations into concrete, specific and actionable suggestions. In other cases, reports featured more general recommendations, framed as gaps or areas of need that invite program staff to reflect and explore opportunities for change.

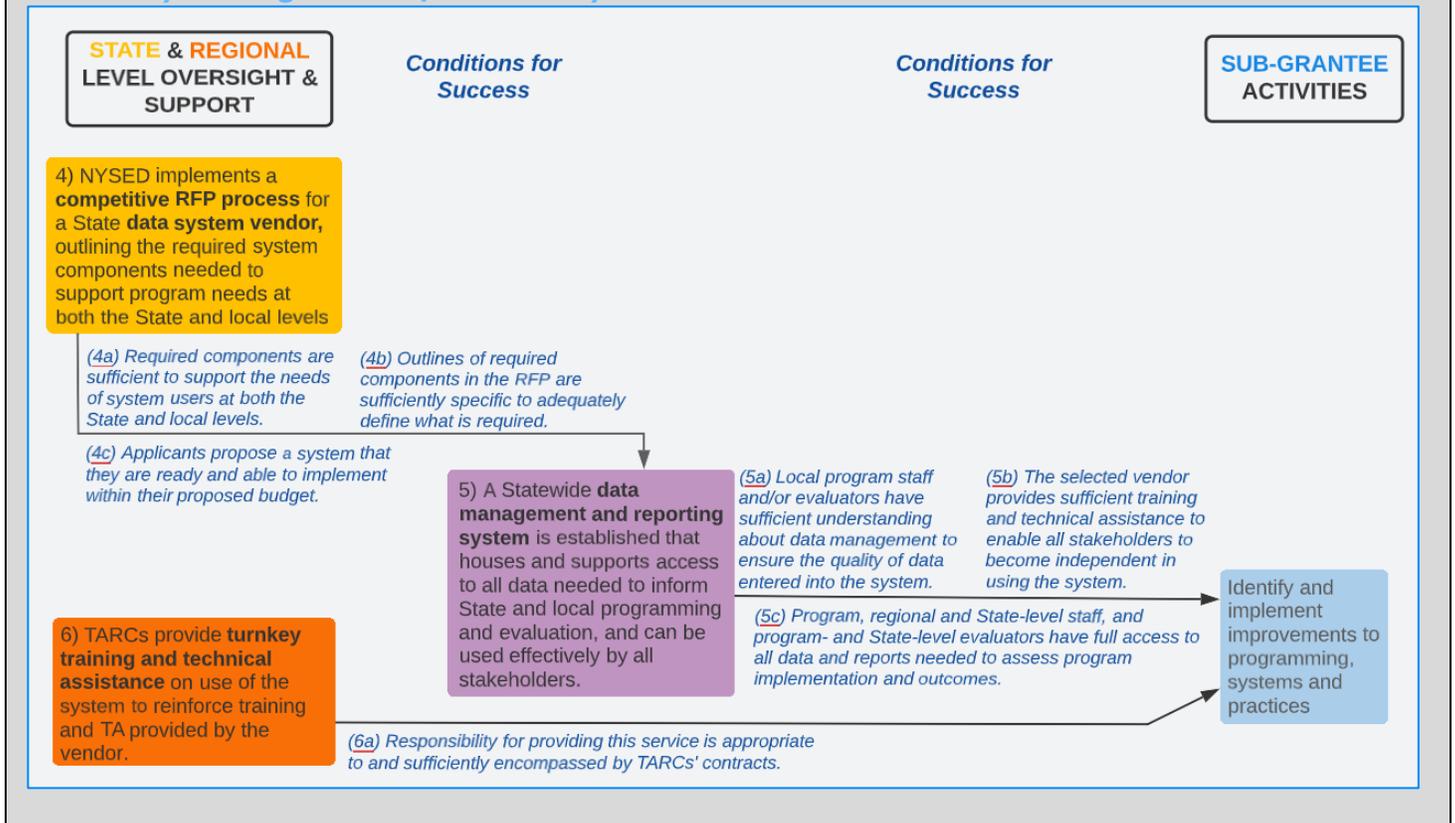
Recommendation:

- Stylistic differences between concrete, actionable recommendations and general recommendations inviting reflection might derive from differences in the nature of the evaluation contract, the relationship between the evaluator and program manager,

and/or the context of the recommendation. As such, the less concrete approach to making recommendations is not incorrect, but should be accompanied by contributions from the evaluator (*e.g.* during Advisory Board meetings) to discussions about more specific strategies.

E. Data Systems & Evaluation (continued)

Combined impacts of *competitive RFP for Data System vendor, establishment of Statewide system, and RC turnkey training on use of the Data System:*



4. NYSED Implements Competitive RFP Process for a State Data Management and Reporting System Vendor

The competitive grant process that ultimately resulted in the adoption of the EZReports® system provided by Thomas Kelly Software Associates (TKSA) was primarily intended to support NYSED’s needs for reporting on State level goals and objectives, and to support local programs in fulfilling their federal requirements for completing APRs. However, since all programs were required to adopt this new system in place of whatever data management systems they had been previously using, this change also had unavoidable implications for data use at the local level. It remains essential therefore that the system also provides adequate support to sub-grantees’ needs.

Condition for Success (4a): Required components are sufficient to support the needs of system users at both the State and local levels.

- Although use of EZReports® requires a steep initial learning curve, it has proven to be a powerful system that meets most of the State’s needs, as well as automating almost all of the data summaries needed for APRs.
- However, there are some needs—even at the State level—on which EZReports® has fallen short, in part because it was developed as a generic system designed to support 21st CCLC programs across multiple states, not to specifically address the sometimes

unique program and data requirements in NYS. Among the latter needs—some of which have been met through system customizations, while others have yet to be resolved—are the following:

- EZReports® has several built in data validation rules which provide substantial savings in user effort. But other validation rules have required, or still require, customizations. For example, as of the end of Round 7, the system only validated the format of students’ State ID codes, but was not able to ensure that all NYC students have a valid 9-digit local ID code, while all Rest of State students have a valid 10-digit State ID code.
- Data cleaning strategies can meet the need for additional data validation, but limits on data reporting functions (even within the “Custom Reports” function) can make it very time consuming to create a report that contains all of the data points needed.
- Because of limitations in the Custom Reports function, additional modifications are sometimes needed in order to generate specific reports that were not originally supported. (This includes, for example, tracking student attendance hours by month, or reporting activity schedule and attendance hours by State-defined “focus categories” in addition to federally required reporting categories.)
- Until federal reporting requirements were modified to report participation in hours, NYS was unique in defining the federally required category of “Regular” participants by hours rather than days.
- The system is not designed to capture scheduling and participation statistics for drop-in services, which provide resources that are important for some programs. The vendor has provided a work-around, but programs find it cumbersome and inefficient—a situation that is likely to lead to increased data entry errors.
- Customizing NYSED-provided student level data so that it can only be accessed by State-level users, in order to comply with State data privacy regulations.

Recommendation:

- NYSED should continue to collaborate with the Resource Centers, program staff and Local Evaluators, and MI to identify and prioritize customizations that can help further improve the system’s value for all users.

Condition for Success (4b): Outlines of required components in the RFP are sufficiently specific to adequately define what is required.

- The extreme complexity of the type of data system that can support all State and local data needs made it extremely difficult to anticipate, and precisely define, all required system characteristics in the RFP. As a result, the NYS 21st CCLC program obtained a broad and powerful system, but even after two full years of use and a total of over 900 hours of customizations, the system continues to require multiple additional customizations to fully align it with State needs.

Recommendation:

- To date, it appears that TKSA has been sufficiently flexible and accommodating to help optimize this system for all program needs in NYS. In the event that a new competition is ever needed for a data system vendor, whether for future rounds of the 21st CCLC or for other funded programs, lessons learned from the current experience should be carefully examined when writing the new RFP.

Condition for Success (4c): Applicants propose a system that they are ready and able to implement within their proposed budget.

- With the exception of some ambiguities in language (such as the types and extent of data validations that would be provided), EZReports[®] provided the functions that the proposal indicated. Fortunately, the vendor has been able to provide a substantial number of customizations to better align the system with State needs. Since the vendor has limited the number of additional customizations to 100 hours per year, however, NYSED sometimes needs to make some difficult choices about prioritizing which customizations are most important. In some cases, this situation has necessitated prioritizing the State's data use needs over those of local programs.

5. A Statewide Data Management and Reporting System is Established

Condition for Success (5a): Local program staff and/or evaluators have sufficient understanding about data management and the State data management system to ensure the quality of data entered into the system.

- When MI began preparing State and program data for merging in support of assessing Statewide objectives, the extent of inconsistencies, inaccuracies and gaps that MI found in the program data in EZReports[®] clearly underscored the fact that program staff and Local Evaluators either lacked the training in data management, familiarity with EZReports[®], and/or the contractual expectations or bandwidth to ensure data quality. In many cases, Program Directors explicitly relied on their evaluators for support using EZReports[®] beyond routine data entry; and while the vast majority of evaluators had experience with data management, many of them felt that they did not receive sufficient training on use of the system. It is unclear how often a lack of clear contractual expectations for Local Evaluators may have exacerbated the problem.

Recommendations:

- For Round 8, both introductory and more in-depth training will continue to be required on an ongoing basis. Although there are now many experienced EZReports[®] users, it was clear that there would be awards to new sub-grantees, as well as positions that needed to be filled at the NYC RC and the State Program Office, as well as staff from the recently replaced Rest of State RC, who had had minimal if any prior exposure to the system. In addition, while some system functions become fairly routine, others are seasonally specific, dependent on local programs' specific objectives and evaluation needs; or need to be adapted to changes in GPRA regulations or NYSED policies, or to new system modifications. Furthermore, staff turnover can, unfortunately, be expected to be an ongoing phenomenon.

- To help support use of the Statewide data management system and data validation, in addition to the Data Specialists recommended for the RCs, MI recommended that each local program also include a part time Data Manager, to ensure that all programs have someone on staff who can learn and use the EZReports® system and provide data quality assurance.
- NYSED agreed to incorporate these roles into the RFPs for Round 8 Resource Centers and sub-grantees, but responsibilities were only outlined. To ensure that these staff are successful will require that these roles be more clearly defined. These responsibilities should be established in consultation with Resource Centers and Program Directors to ensure that they are defined within the bounds of the new positions.
- MI has also proposed to help support data quality control by continuing to provide guidance and recommendations on EZReports® customizations for developing grantee summary reports and dynamic user-defined reports.

Condition for Success (5b): The selected vendor provides sufficient training and technical assistance to enable all stakeholders to become independent in using the system.

- TKSA has provided consistent trainings on use of the system, including sessions targeted specifically for new or more experienced users, as well as sessions focused on specific uses, such as implementing the teacher surveys that are required for APR reporting.
- In addition, TKSA’s Account Manager provides monthly “general discussions” to allow State level users to submit system usage questions for clarification, which have proven to be very useful. One downside however is that the Account Manager is not able to respond to more technical questions about the system structure, particularly any that might require a system modification; but it is not always possible to know in advance whether a particular issue falls into this category.
- EZReports® also contains an extensive library of training videos, articles and FAQs accessible to all users. The keyword-based search system for this library sometimes makes it difficult to find specific answers, but any questions that it does not answer (or for which a user cannot find an answer) can be submitted through a web-based support ticket, to which TKSA support staff always respond very promptly.
- In spite of these strong supports, because of the system’s steep learning curve and the large number of users, it was perhaps inevitable that more extensive and targeted training would be needed. Ideally, this kind of technology training would be provided to small groups participants, each of whom would have their own monitor, be able to implement the techniques as they were being demonstrated, and ask questions as needed. Unfortunately, TKSA did not have the bandwidth to train hundreds of users this way, relying instead on demonstrating the system through videoconferencing. To reinforce this training, it became necessary for the Resource Centers to provide additional turnkey training and technical assistance, as discussed below.

Condition for Success (5c): Program, regional and State-level staff, and program- and State-level evaluators have full access to all data and reports needed to assess program implementation and outcomes.

- In some ways, the adoption of EZReports® helped reduce gaps in data access. In the past, access to student data has been limited, and at times severely restricted. Language in the sub-grantee RFP requiring establishment of parental consent for sharing student data with the independent evaluator may have been more conservative than required by state and federal laws, which allow sharing of student data for research purposes as long as data security and confidentiality are maintained. Especially prior to the roll-out of EZReports® during Year 4, this contractual requirement led several programs to withhold some student information from their evaluator and from the Statewide Evaluator in cases where parental consent was not obtained. Such gaps in data access were greatly reduced, however, when EZReports® was adopted, placing greater control over data access in the State’s hands.
- The State Coordinator was also able to negotiate an agreement with OIRS to allow confidential, student level student records to be downloaded directly to EZReports®, upon demonstrating that TKSA was able to meet data security and privacy requirements. This agreement is providing State users with ready access to State-held demographic, academic, and behavioral data for program participants, where access to such data originally required reliance on, or the need to quality control, large volumes of often poorly validated data from individual programs. This access will greatly streamline the processes for completing APRs, and for preparing data for analyses of State objectives.
- Unfortunately, because State privacy laws prohibit sharing such data with third parties, Program Directors and their evaluators will not be able to access this source of data for other purposes such as assessing local program objectives and performance indicators. Instead, they will have to continue obtaining such data from their partnering schools or districts. This distinction in access has caused some confusion, and frustration, among local program staff and evaluators—although it has not made their data collection requirements any more difficult than they were prior to the adoption of EZReports.

Recommendation:

- As previously discussed, the State Coordinator can help facilitate local programs’ collection of necessary data by continuing to leverage cooperation from other regional agencies.

6. RCs Provide Turnkey Training and Technical Assistance on Use of the Data System

Several Resource Center staff became adept at using various EZReports® functions, including commonly used functions, as well as focusing on specific functions (such as those used to administer the teacher surveys) as the need arose. These staff then facilitated their own Statewide turnkey workshops, and provided TA as needed in response to requests from program staff.

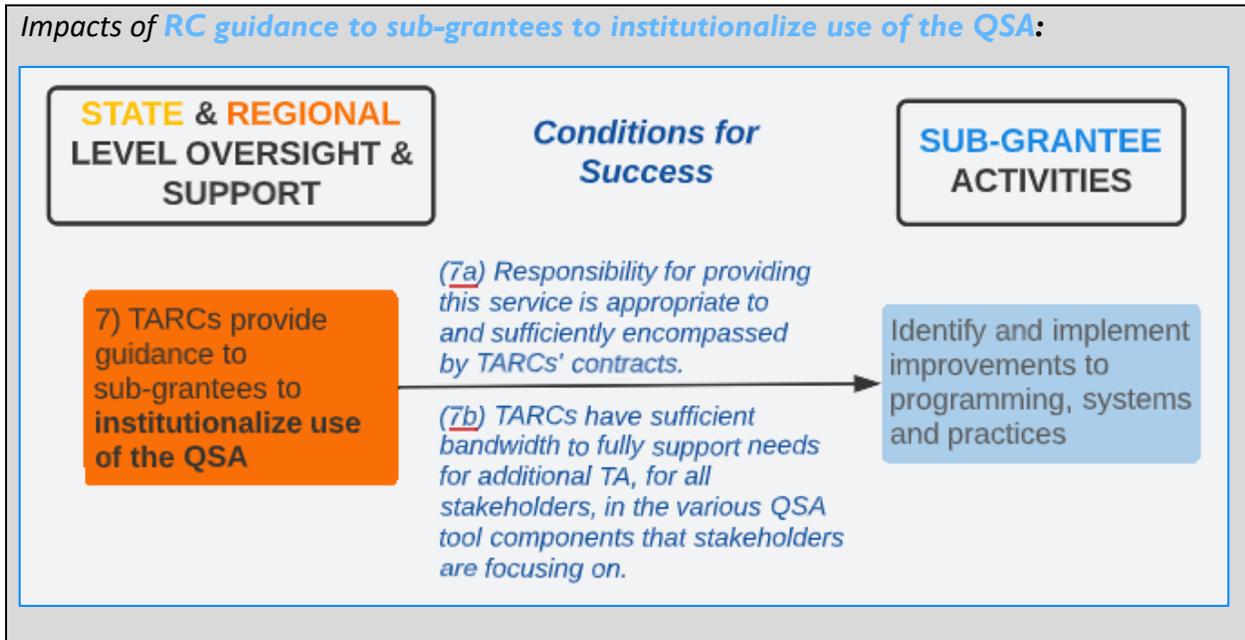
Condition for Success (6a): Responsibility for providing this service is appropriate to and sufficiently encompassed by RCs' contracts.

- Providing training and technical assistance are among the Resource Centers' primary contractual responsibilities, which required them to support sub-grantees as needed. Areas of support included those identified through periodic needs assessments, as well as *ad hoc* needs that were brought to the Centers by program staff. While learning the EZReports® system and providing associated training and technical assistance required substantial time investments, this time was balanced by the fact that the EZReports® system relieved most of the effort needed for RCs to support individual programs to complete data entry into the 21APR system. In addition, because Site Monitoring Visits were, as a result of the pandemic, conducted virtually during the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years, eliminating the need to travel also provided RCs with substantial time savings.
- Although providing support on use of the data system was appropriate to the RCs' roles, the NYC Center did operate under time pressure throughout Round 8 because of the fact that it was understaffed, and because one staff member who was supposed to be full time was required by OCS to commit time to other tasks outside of the 21st CCLC program, as discussed in Sections A.4. and B.1. above.

Recommendations:

- MI had recommended the requirement of a dedicated Data Specialist for each Resource Center, with responsibilities to include oversight of the State data management system. This recommendation was adopted by NYSED.
- Training of new users—at the local, regional or State levels—can also be supplemented by pairing them with more experienced mentors.

7. RCs Provide Guidance to Sub-Grantees to Institutionalize Use of the QSA



Although the QSA's developer, the New York State Network for Youth Success⁸, explicitly states that the tool is intended to support internal program management planning, not as an evaluation tool, its use is a State requirement for 21st CCLC programs, and it is considered essential to the continuous improvement process. As such, the Resource Centers are tasked with helping sub-grantees to use the tool effectively by making it an integral part of the program management process, and ensuring that it is used collaboratively by all stakeholders.

Condition for Success (7a): Responsibility for providing this service is appropriate to and sufficiently encompassed by RCs' contracts.

- This responsibility was clearly indicated in the Resource Centers' Round 7 contracts, which state that they must "provide a variety of technical assistance, resources and professional development activities for the grantees to help them attain the 10 essential indicators of high quality after school programs ... as identified in the Program Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) Tool."

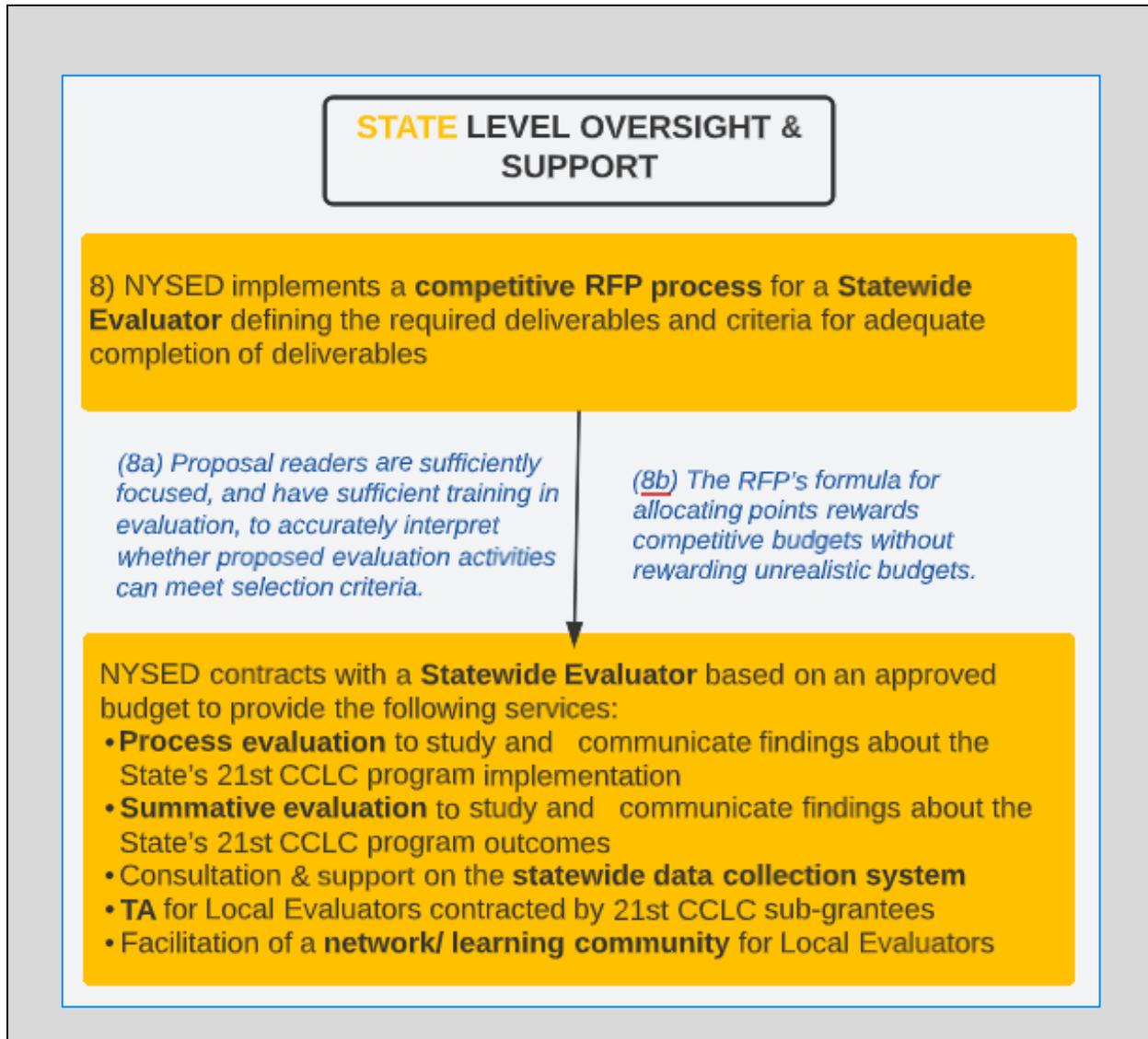
Condition for Success (7b): RCs have sufficient bandwidth to fully support needs for additional TA, for all stakeholders, in the various QSA tool components that stakeholders are focusing on.

- As previously noted, the Resource Centers were broadly expected to support sub-grantees' needs as they arise. Although the bandwidth of the NYC Center was (and

⁸ Formerly the New York State Afterschool Network

remains) limited due to understaffing, this situation does not appear to have created problems with their ability to provide support in this area.

8. NYSED Implements Competitive RFP Process for Statewide Evaluator



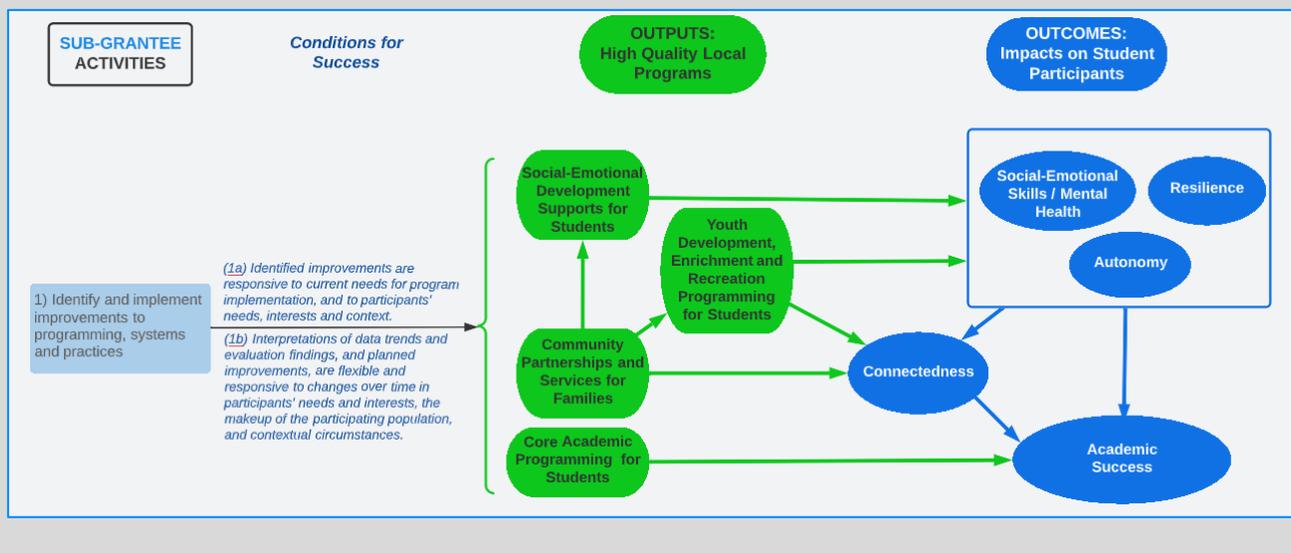
Measurement Incorporated was contracted by NYSED to conduct the statewide evaluation of the 21st CCLC program during the Round 7 funding cycle. The primary purposes of this evaluation focused on the areas listed below, which reference the specific deliverables from the RFP (as outlined in the introduction to this report) relevant to each area of focus.

- **Summative evaluation** to study and communicate findings about program outcomes related to statewide goals and objectives (Deliverable 1);
- **Process evaluation** to study and communicate findings about the NYS 21st CCLC program implementation at the local, regional and State levels (Deliverables 2, 3 4);
- **Consultation & support** on the statewide data collection system (Deliverable 5);

- **Technical assistance for Local Evaluators** contracted by 21CCLC sub-grantees (Deliverable 6)
- **Facilitation of a learning community** for Local Evaluators (Deliverable 6)

F. Creating High Quality Local Programs

Impacts of *Implementing Improvements to Create High Quality Local Programs*:



The ultimate assumption of the 21st CCLC program's inferred Theory of Change, as articulated in the model on page 6, is that establishing programs that meet all the intended characteristics will translate into high quality, mutually reinforcing services for student and family clients. In summary, the intended characteristics include:

- consistency with Federal and State vision & goals,
- adherence to compliance standards and quality expectations,
- apportionment of funds to appropriate expenditures,
- provision of project management and turnkey training,
- creation of fertile partnerships, and
- implementation of ongoing program improvements.

It is further expected that such programs would in turn help strengthen students' social-emotional skills and mental health, resilience, autonomy and connectedness; and that all of this would contribute—both directly (through academic programming) and indirectly (through strengthening of necessary pre-conditions)—to improved academic success.

Although our contracted evaluation responsibilities did not provide us with the opportunity to assess most sub-grantee activities, we did obtain insights—particularly through annual AER reviews and Exploratory Site Visits—into the nature of their plans for program improvements.

1. Sub-grantees Implement Improvements to Programming, Systems and Practices

Condition for Success (1a): Identified improvements are responsive to current needs for program implementation, and to participants' needs, interests and context.

- As previously discussed, even in the face of some variation in the rigor of evaluation methods at some local programs, findings and recommendations that were reported in each of the reviewed Annual Evaluation Reports were consistently insightful and relevant to the program's status in a given year.
- At least insofar as participants' needs and interests were assessed (as described in these reports), the recommendations were generally responsive to them.
- AER reviews provided MI with only limited opportunity to assess a program's follow-up to recommendations. Although the AER Templates required local evaluators to discuss the status of prior year recommendations, since we reviewed different programs each year, we were unable to assess follow-up to specific recommendations provided in the reports that we reviewed.
- While this approach to AER reviews limited our access to representative information about long-term follow-up to recommendations, we did observe examples of how such follow-up occurred through Exploratory Site Visits, some of which have been discussed elsewhere in this reports. Among these, for example, were:
 - Strengthening of connections to the school day, including sharing information between school-day and after-school staff to identify students' SEL needs;
 - Strategies to support student attendance and retention;
 - Improved programming around student needs;
 - More complete assessment of program level objectives and performance indicators, especially since the implementation of required AER templates beginning in Year 2—although the completeness of reporting on social-emotional and community involvement objectives lagged behind other objectives;
 - Following up on reporting on prior year outcomes in cases when the data were not initially available;
 - Improvements in the use of disaggregated data for program planning, especially since the adoption of the EZReports® system; and
 - Providing evidence in AERs of program improvements that did not align with specific reporting requirements.

Condition for Success (1b): Interpretations of data trends and evaluation findings, and planned improvements, are flexible and responsive to changes over time in participants' needs and interests, the makeup of the participating population, and contextual circumstances.

As previously discussed, the most dramatic examples of how programs' flexibility in responding to changing circumstances were related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Programs recognized that students and families needed more wrap-around support to help them through all of the trauma and challenges of the pandemic. In response, most if not all programs shifted their focus both in programming and in related professional development towards critical needs and SEL.
- In response to systemwide lack of data or access to data resulting from the pandemic, many programs used proxy measures, where possible, to assess program and student outcomes. The Year 4 AER Template also provided evaluators with explicit opportunities for reporting on how the pandemic disrupted programming as well evaluation activities.
- Because of the shift in focus, and the shift to using proxy measures, some program outcomes as reported by program administrators and staff were not reflected in the programs' performance indicators. In several cases, these outcomes were reported as part of the narrative sections of the AERs.
- Some programs considered adding methods for measuring affective impacts such as academic attitudes, behaviors, and social-emotional skills—for example by adding items to stakeholder surveys related to trauma and burnout. However, the requirement to submit program modification requests for such changes in objectives, and the lack of explicit structure in the AER Template for reporting unofficial outcomes, likely put a damper on the extent to which programs took such initiatives.

Recommendation:

- Future AER Templates should provide more explicit room for programs to report on unofficial outcomes and to explain programmatic gains that do not fit neatly into results categories for official Performance Indicators.

SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

One of the largest in the country, New York State's 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative is a highly complex program under normal circumstances. However, its implementation under the Round 7 funding stream involved challenges of literally historical proportions. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in early spring of 2020 created major upheavals through the remainder of Year 3 and all of Year 4, as well as very substantial fall-out through the end of the round. As a result, because of the timing of the funding stream, NYS experienced only two full years of normal programming, with hardly any chance to mature before the ground shifted.

As one local evaluator observed, this need to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic was “like a GPS trying to re-route”—except that in this case, the corrections were responding to life and death conditions. These changes inarguably created the kinds of extraordinary circumstances under which program objectives, normally fixed by contract, can—indeed had to be—adjusted. Even as conditions began to normalize, at least to some extent, during Year 5, no one knew ahead of time whether or when that would happen. The planning process that would normally precede a new program year had to be re-invented from scratch.

Given these extraordinary circumstances, it goes without saying that the Theory of Change used to structure this report—which was created from inference in the first place, cannot be assumed to be completely accurate in representing the reality of the initiative that occurred. Nevertheless, this inferred ToC remains useful, we hope, in helping to visualize the complexity of the many facets which can influence the effectiveness of this program.

It is in that context that we present the following summary about the strengths and roadblocks experienced during Round 7 of the NYS 21st CCLC initiative.

NYSED's leadership and governance of this program were among its greatest strengths. Communication of goals and expectations was clear, timely, and consistently reinforced through multiple layers of redundancy. Responsiveness to these expectations was verified by a tiered system of oversight that, rather than being implemented hierarchically, was strongly reinforced by a proactively created spirit of collaboration and partnership. Indeed, this partnership reached all the way to local Program Directors, who had already begun to form a strong community of practice by Year 2. Aside from the challenges of the pandemic, perhaps the greatest challenge was that two of the three scaffolds of this oversight system—the State Program Office and the Resource Centers—were short-staffed throughout the entire round. Unfortunately, the Program Leaders' partnership may have been disrupted when all program activities became virtual, but it may have germinated sufficiently to re-sprout during Round 8.

The two regional **Resource Centers** also provided very strong support to sub-grantees. Their professional development activities were directly responsive to State priorities as well as explicitly identified needs of local program staff, and the great majority were professionally run with ample opportunity for participant engagement. The infrequent examples of less effective workshops were observed almost entirely near the beginning of the five-year period, and seemed to improve over time, even in spite of the pandemic. Even the site monitoring process, something which could easily be perceived as an audit, was perceived as supportive by most program staff, clearly attesting to the interpersonal skills of the Resource Center staff. The biggest, nearly universal challenge was that there never seemed to be enough time to do

justice to all of the information and skills that needed to be conveyed for this this multi-faceted program.

Local program evaluations were characterized by consistently relevant, practical recommendations, of which Program Directors were appreciative. Many Local Evaluators were also very resourceful in identifying proxy measures to keep tabs on their objectives when originally planned data sources became unavailable. There was some variation in the depth of training among some evaluators, however, as well as in the extent to which Program Directors prioritized the evaluation process. It remains to be seen to what extent the modifications to the State RFP for Round 8 sub-grantees, discussed above, help to improve this situation.

The new **data management and reporting system** represented probably the greatest structural change during Round 7. Despite a difficult start, the system proved valuable for standardizing data management, improving data quality, and streamlining the APR process Statewide. This complex and powerful system remains challenging due to its steep learning curve, especially for new users, however; and it still contains limitations in some data organization and reporting functions that, unless modifications can be implemented, continue to require work-arounds to meet programs' local needs.

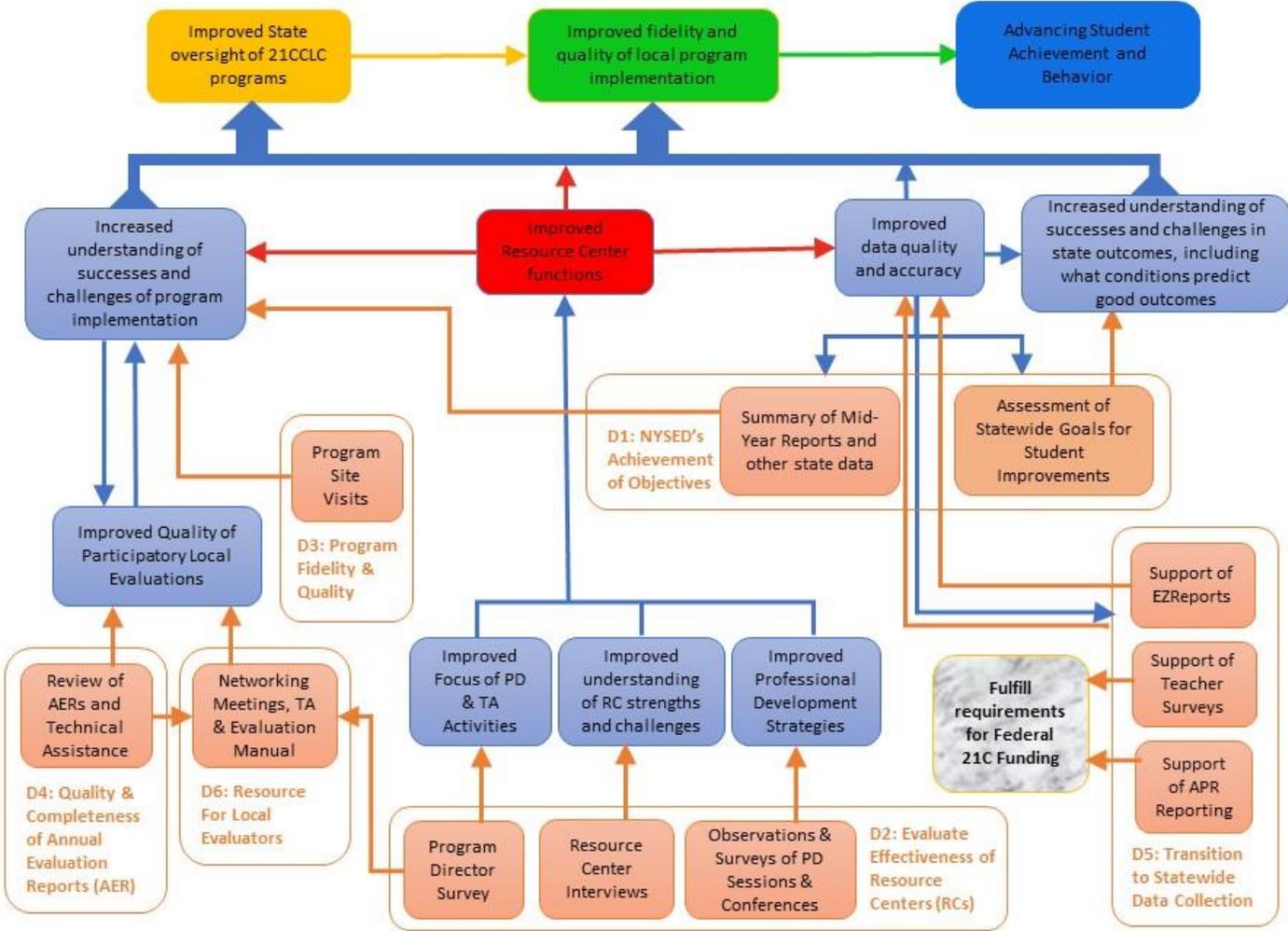
Ultimately, the COVID-19 pandemic required all stakeholders to pivot towards a greatly modified mission, and they met these challenges head on. Just as State leadership and the Resource Centers adapted their approach to managing and monitoring the program, this shift among program staff and Local Evaluators was a sign of strength and adaptability. Under these circumstances, however, the expectation of the original Theory of Change—that quality programming would lead to improved academic success—clearly would not be expected to apply, at least not in the short term.

Moving forward, we strongly believe that the insights obtained from the past five years—even from responding to a global pandemic—will continue to strengthen New York State's 21st CCLC program. To leverage these insights, the active, multi-layered collaboration established during this round has proven to be one of the program's greatest assets, and should continue to be nurtured. It is through the cross-pollination of ideas that these partnerships nurture that this initiative will find the most fertile soil.



APPENDICES

Appendix A: Theory of Change for the Round 7 State Evaluation

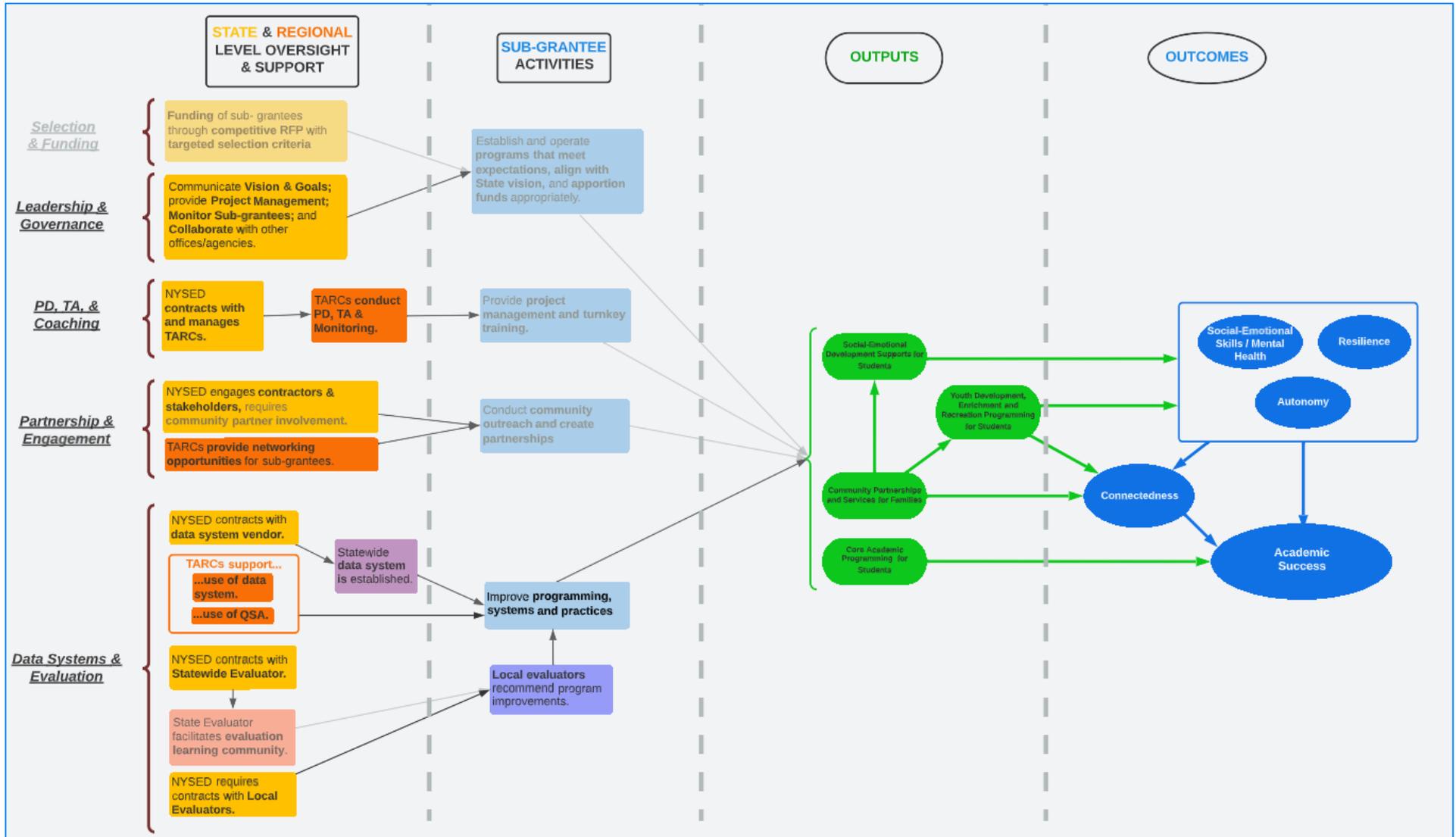


LEGEND:

- Rose → MI Activities/Deliverables;
- Lt Blue → Impacts of Activities
- Red → Impacts on Resource Center Activities
- Gold → Impacts on NYSED Oversight
- Green → Impacts on Local Program Activities
- Dk Blue → Impacts on Student Outcomes

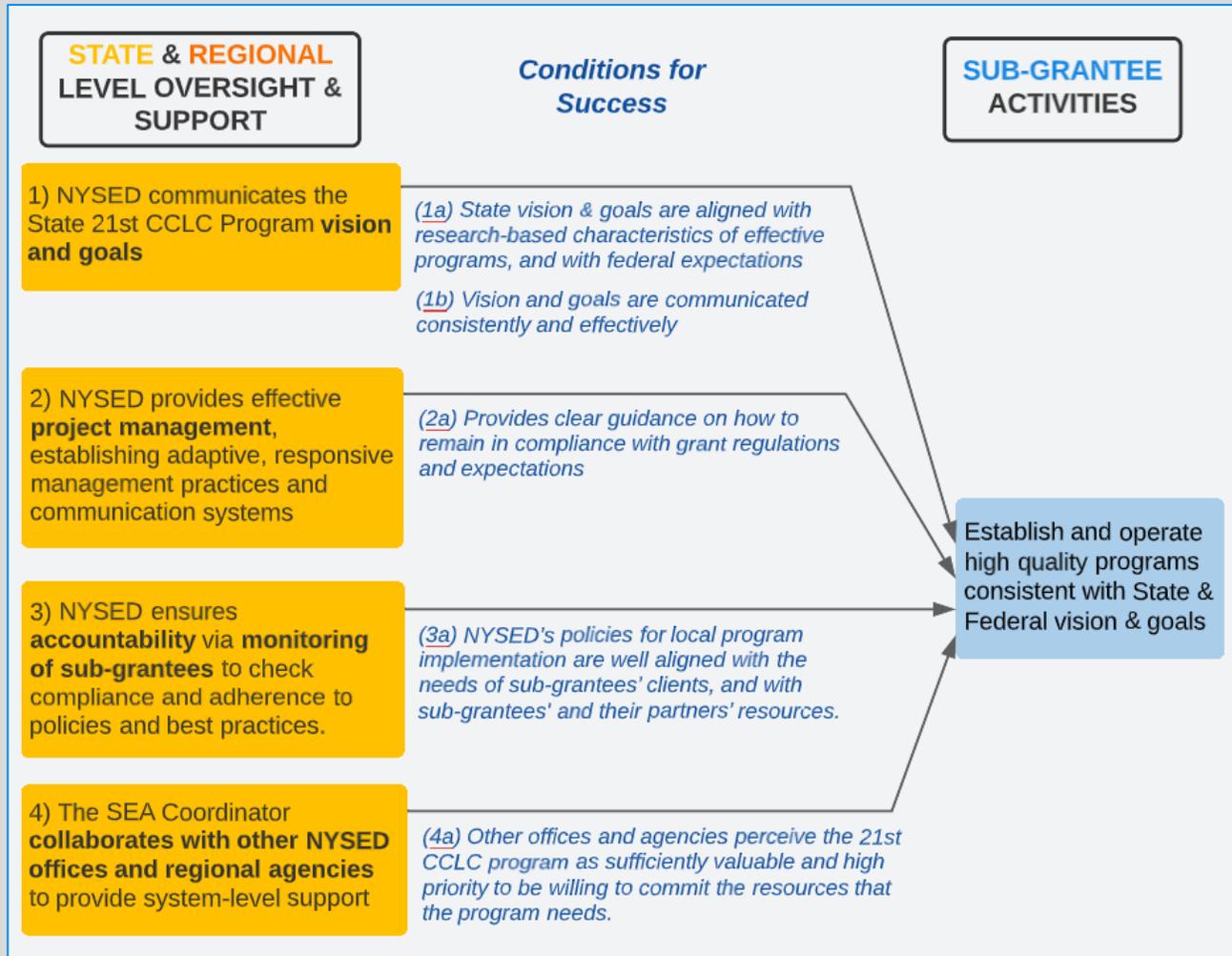
Appendix B: Detailed Theory of Change Model with Birdseye View

Birdseye View



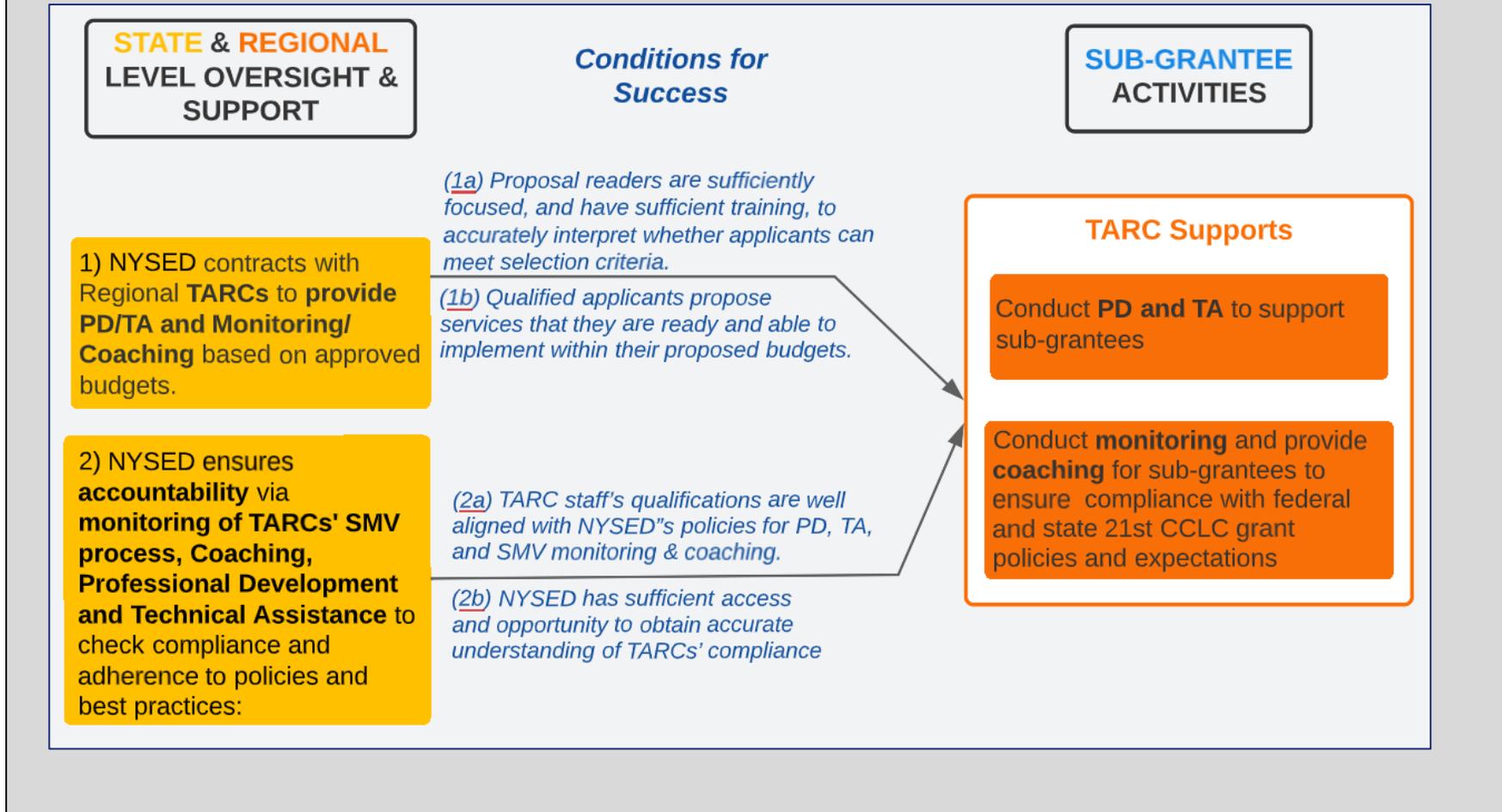
Leadership & Governance

Combined impacts of communicating vision & goals, effective project management, monitoring sub-grantees, and collaborating with other offices and agencies:



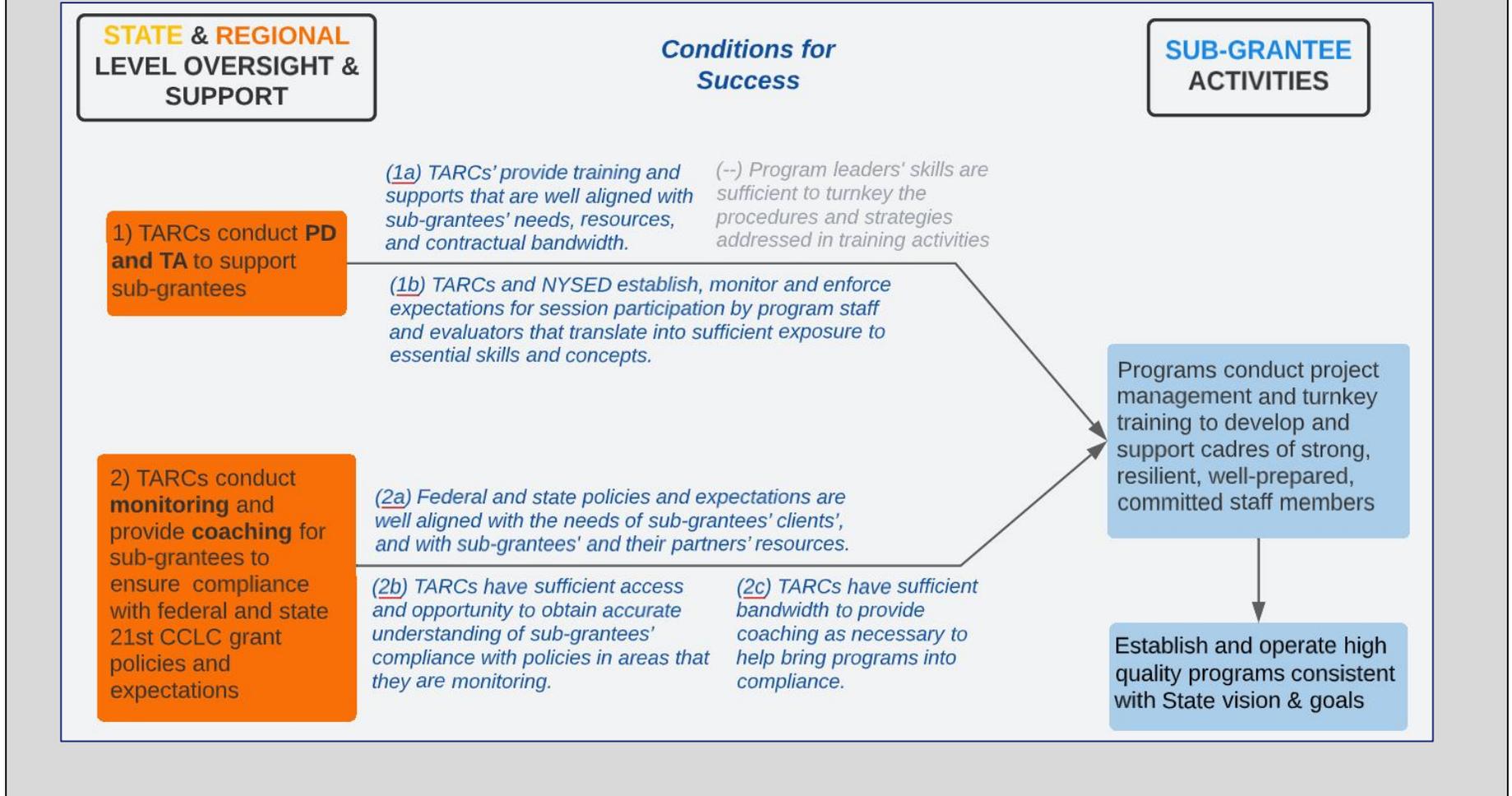
State Oversight of Professional Development, Technical Assistance, Monitoring & Coaching

Combined impacts of NYSED Contracting with Resource Centers, Managing SMVs and Managing Professional Development



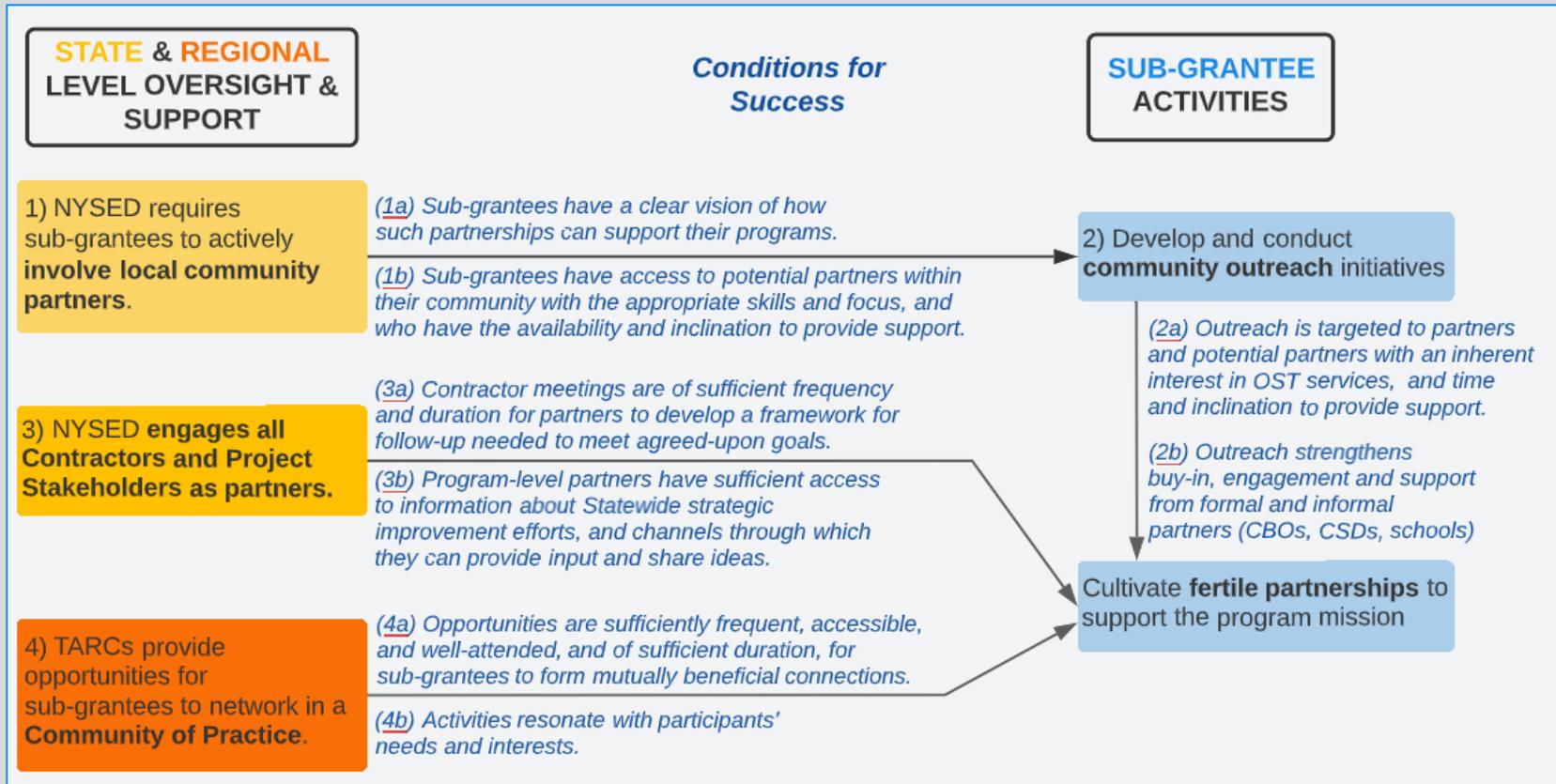
RCs Provide Professional Development, Technical Assistance, Monitoring & Coaching

Combined impacts of RCs' PD, TA, monitoring and coaching:



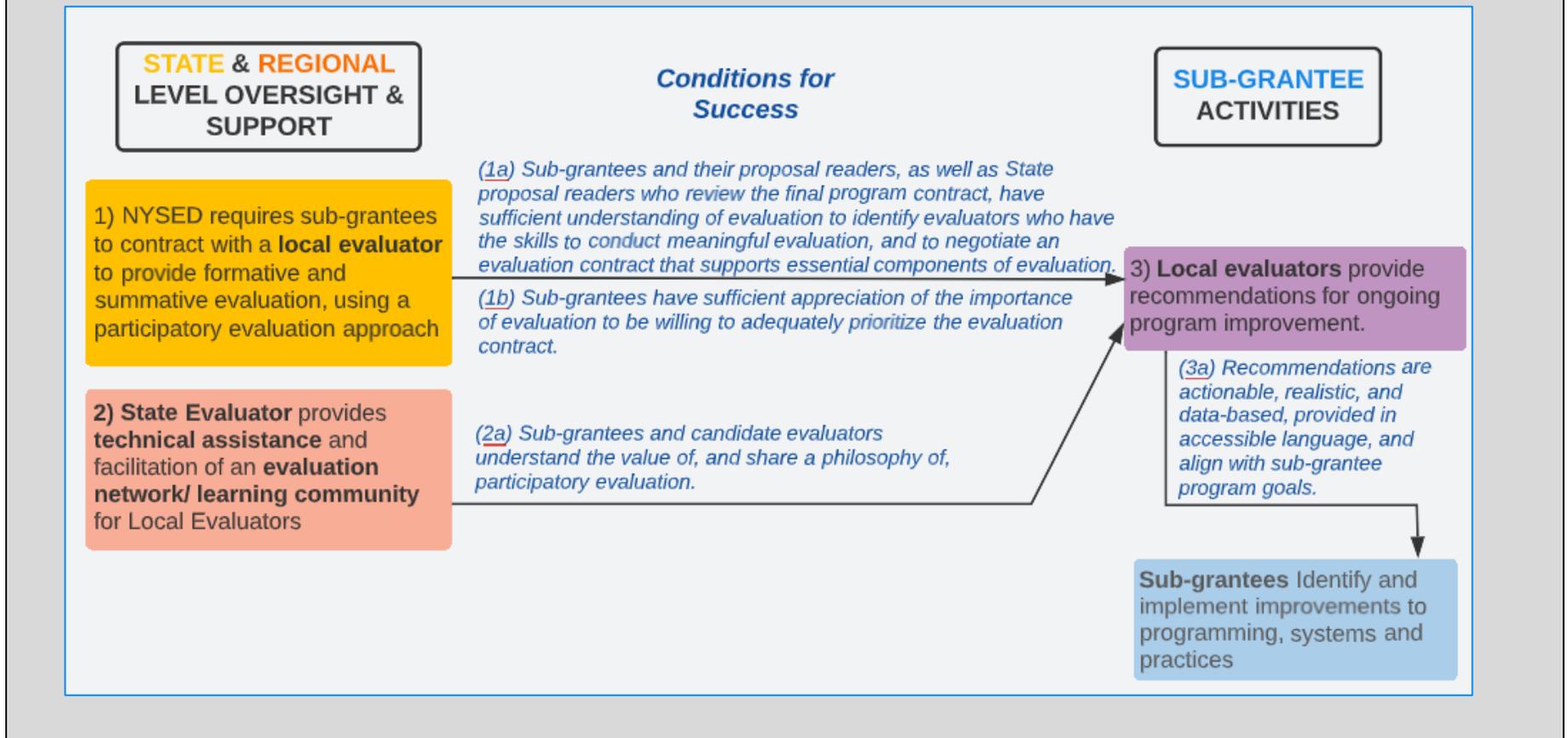
Partnership & Engagement

Combined impacts of *required community partnerships, sub-grantee community outreach, state-level engagement of stakeholders, RC-provided networking opportunities, and Sub-grantees' Community Outreach Initiatives.*



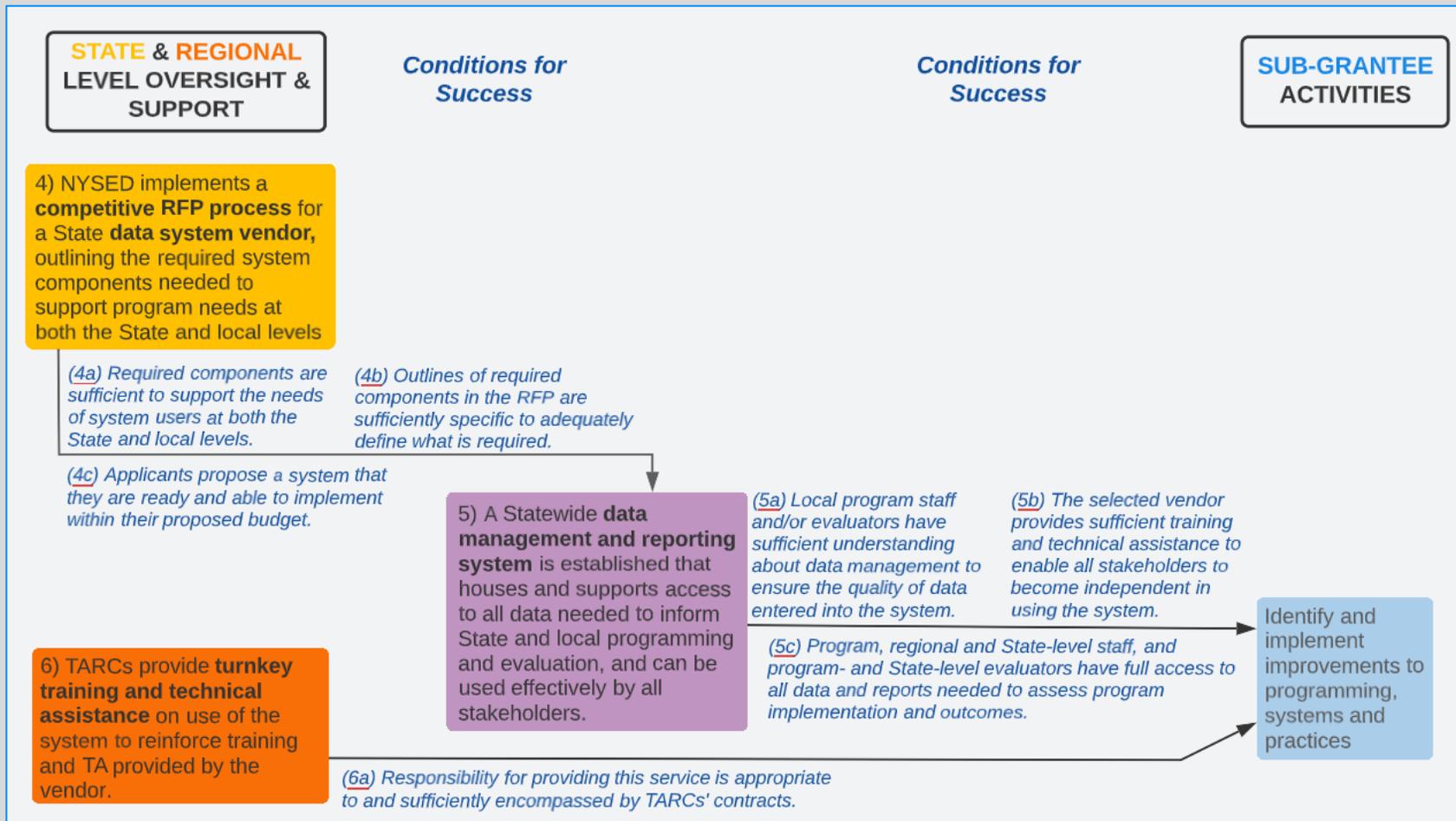
Data Systems & Evaluation

Impacts of requirement for sub-grantees to contract with evaluators, State Evaluator's Supports of Local Evaluators, and Local Evaluators Recommendations for Improvement



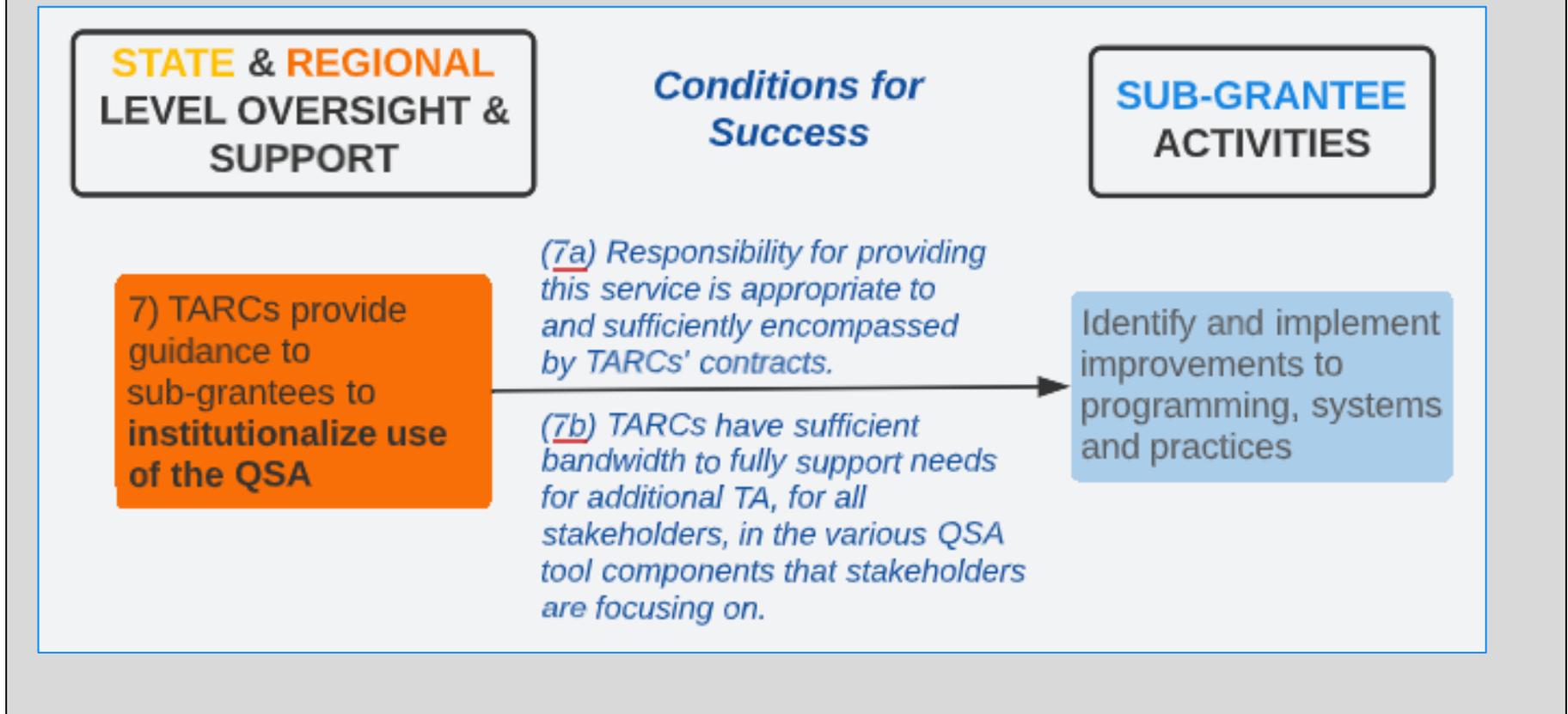
Data Systems & Evaluation (continued)

Combined impacts of *competitive RFP for Data System vendor, establishment of Statewide system, and RC turnkey training on use of the Data System:*



RC's Guidance to Institutionalize Use of the QSA

Impacts of RC guidance to sub-grantees to institutionalize use of the QSA:



NYSED Implements RFP Process for Statewide Evaluator

STATE LEVEL OVERSIGHT & SUPPORT

8) NYSED implements a **competitive RFP process** for a **Statewide Evaluator** defining the required deliverables and criteria for adequate completion of deliverables

(8a) Proposal readers are sufficiently focused, and have sufficient training in evaluation, to accurately interpret whether proposed evaluation activities can meet selection criteria.

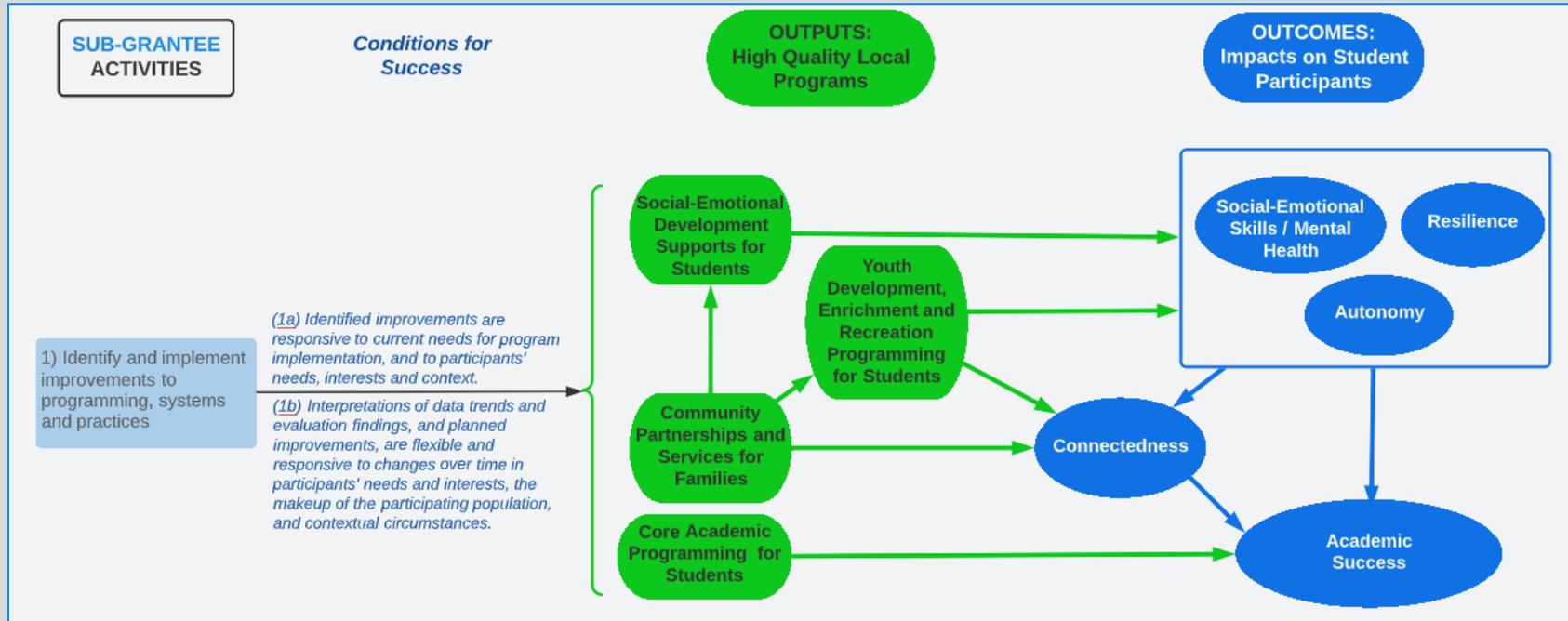
(8b) The RFP's formula for allocating points rewards competitive budgets without rewarding unrealistic budgets.

NYSED contracts with a **Statewide Evaluator** based on an approved budget to provide the following services:

- **Process evaluation** to study and communicate findings about the State's 21st CCLC program implementation
- **Summative evaluation** to study and communicate findings about the State's 21st CCLC program outcomes
- Consultation & support on the **statewide data collection system**
- **TA** for Local Evaluators contracted by 21st CCLC sub-grantees
- Facilitation of a **network/ learning community** for Local Evaluators

Creating High Quality Local Programs

Impacts of *Implementing Improvements to Create High Quality Local Programs*:



Appendix C: December 2020 Site Monitoring Visit Report

Virtual Site Monitoring Visit Report

Program Name:

Project Number:

Address:

Visit Date: / /

Reviewer(s):

City/State/Zip:

Site(s) Visited:

Date Submitted
to Sub-grantee: / /

Attendees (Name/Role):

Program Director/Manager:

Director Email:

Phone: () -

Recommendations to Strengthen Practice

Areas that are compliant but need some improvement

Promising Practices

Successful practices observed in this after-school program



Using the Site Monitoring Visit Report

The Site Monitoring Visit (SMV) Report has been developed to help ensure comprehensive and consistent monitoring of 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) in New York State. While this document is intended for use by program reviewers, it is also recommended for use by sub-grantees to (1) guide program implementation, and (2) assist in preparing for a smooth monitoring visit.

Structure & Definitions

- ❶ The '**Indicators of Success**' column outlines the indicator to be evaluated.
 - All Indicators are coded by the lettered Sections (**A-H**) within the Monitoring Tool, and then by ascending numerical order (**1-10**) within that Section.
- ❷ The '**Supporting Documents**' column lists evidence that may be used to support successful implementation of the applicable indicator.
 - Each Indicator is associated with two to five criteria represented under Supporting Documents; these criteria are coded in ascending alphabetical order **[(a)-(e)]**. E.g., **H-2(d)** references Section **H**, Indicator **H-2**, criterion **(d)**.
 - **Required Documentation Key:**
 - * Required documentation for **all** programs
 - ** Required documentation for **district** programs
 - *** Required documentation for programs requiring **School-Age Child Care Registration**
 - (A) Required documentation for **all** sites must be provided to reviewer(s)
- ❸ The '**Compliance**' column is segmented into three rating options – Full, Partial, and Not. Presence/absence of the required criteria listed in the Supporting Documents column determines the rating of compliance for each Indicator.
 - **Guidance for selecting a Compliance Rating:**
 - Full** If all the required criteria are checked, that will equate to a rating of *FULL* compliance for that indicator. If none of the supporting documents are required – i.e., designated by an asterisk – at least one of the choices must be checked in order to be in Full compliance. For programs operating multiple sites, certain supporting documentation may be required for ALL sites in order to receive a Full compliance rating.
 - Partial** If at least one, but not all, of the required criteria are checked, that will equate to a rating of *PARTIAL* compliance for that indicator; this is the case even when all other non-required criteria – e.g., additional supporting evidence of an indicator – are checked. A rating of Partial compliance will also be assigned to programs that do not possess critical required documentation for each operating site (Reviewers will inform programs which critical documents need to be presented for each site during pre-visit communications).
 - Not** If none of the required criteria are checked, that will equate to a rating of *NOT* in compliance for that indicator; this is the case even when any other non-required criteria – e.g., additional supporting evidence of an indicator – are checked.
 - **Definitions & Implications of Indicator Compliance Ratings**
 - Compliant** Meets state and federal guidelines for this Indicator.
 - Partially Compliant** Partially meets state and federal guidelines. Programs receiving this rating must follow the reviewer's recommendations and/or develop an action plan for achieving Full Compliance in this area.
 - Non-Compliant** Does not meet state and federal guidelines. Programs receiving this rating must follow the reviewer's recommendations and develop an action plan for improving compliance in this area.

Site Monitoring Visit Procedure:

1 Pre-Visit:

- **Document Review & Document Preparation (off-site).** Prior to the visit, sub-grantees will be asked by the Technical Assistance Resource Centers (TARCs) or NYSED to send several documents in advance; other documents will need to be made available on site. NYSED recommends that sub-grantees become familiar with the Site Monitoring Visit (SMV) Report template and work to prepare for the visit, in advance. Programs should develop a system to organize all of the required information indicated in the tool. That way, whenever the program is notified that it has been selected to receive a visit, all of the required items have already been gathered and are readily accessible during the review process. If sub-grantee does not have specific documentation to substantiate an indicator at the time of visit, they have **one week** from the day of visit to submit it to the TARC.
- **Schedule & Agenda.** The TARC's will explain the purpose and process of the site visit. The Program Manager will select which site(s) will be visited and coordinate schedules with the program staff and reviewers to draft an agenda for the day of the visit.
- **Participation of Key Partners/Personnel.** NYSED recommends that the program director, site coordinator(s), fiscal staff and local evaluator be available (in-person or via conference call) at points during the visit to contribute to the thorough review of all components of the program.

2 Day of Visit:

- **Meeting & Document Review Session (on site).** On the day of the visit, members of the review team (TARC and/or NYSED program office staff) will meet with program leaders to review all required documents in the SMV Report. This meeting also provides an opportunity for program leaders/key staff to ask questions, seek clarification on documents or procedures, and inquire about technical assistance offerings.
- **Program Walk-through.** After this meeting, the program staff and reviewers will visit program site(s) to observe in-session programming and to interact with leaders, staff, students, family members, and/or other program stakeholders. During these walk-throughs, reviewers will refer to the SMV report and review the relevant criteria listed for each of the indicators. Reviewers may utilize multiple methods to gather information during a walk-through; these may include impartial observation, informal interview, focus group discussion (e.g., with multiple students, parents, staff), and artifact review.
- **On-Site Support.** Program reviewers may respond to requests from program personnel for immediate feedback and/or technical assistance to help address a critical need. However, the primary purpose of the visit is to conduct a thorough review of the program. The RC support team can marshal resources and schedule follow-up technical assistance services to target program needs/ areas for improvement identified during the site monitoring visit walk-through and based on a comprehensive review of the SMV Report findings.

3 Post-Visit:

- **Final SMV Report.** Following the visit, the RC reviewer will submit the completed Site Monitoring Visit Report to NYSED for review and approval. Once that has been completed, the SMV Report will be sent to the program within 30 days of the visit. Reports will identify areas of full and partial compliance and non-compliance. Reports will also provide a summary of actions to be taken by a given date, additional recommendations to strengthen practice, and acknowledgment of promising practices.
- **Action Plan.** If areas of non-compliance or partial compliance are identified, programs are expected to submit an Action Plan to the TARC within 30 days of receiving the report; this Action Plan must include a timeline for implementation, and it must identify the specific actions that the program will take to ensure compliance in the areas of greatest need. A member of the TARC support team will follow up with the program on a as-needed basis, to check progress implementing the action plan, and to offer support and resources. The objective is for the program to achieve full compliance expectations within six months of the date the report is received as per the Action Plan. Once the indicators of success have been substantiated by the sub-grantee and verified by the TARC, the TARC will send a letter confirming full compliance.

A: Environment and Climate

Indicators of Success		Supporting Documents <i>* indicates required criteria</i>	Compliance		
			FULL	PARTIAL	NOT
A-1	Effective Supervision of participants is provided by an approved adult at all times.	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Written Supervision Policy and Procedures* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Reviewer observation of staff's supervision practices* <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A-2	Security is provided effectively and continuously throughout program hours.	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Written Security Policy and Procedures <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Reviewer observation of security practices*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A-3	Safety Plan & Procedures Approved safety plans ¹ and emergency procedures for all sites have been communicated to staff, family, and participants <i>i.e., procedures for emergency situations, closings, dismissals, etc.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Approved, up-to-date, Safety Plan(s)* (A) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Evidence that safety info has been shared with parents and students within 30 days of program start up annually* (A) (e.g., agendas, assembly dates, sign-in sheets, signed verification forms, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Evidence that program staff attended annual training which included a review of safety procedures (e.g., training agenda, dates, sign-in sheets, etc.) * (A) <i>Identify at least one of the following training event options:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Before Sept.15 th annually as part of district/school staff training <input type="checkbox"/> Separate training for 21 st CLCC staff within 30 days of program start up annually <input type="checkbox"/> (d) 21 st CCLC handbook(s) that outline safety procedures* (A) <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A-4	Safety Supplies are accessible, including first aid kits, fire extinguishers, fire alarms, and safety procedures; all fire exits are posted, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Safety Supply Inventory records* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Reviewer observation of the accessibility of safety supplies , and visibility of alarms/exits, etc.*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹ SACC programs need to have safety plans approved by OCFS/DOH and district-run programs' safety plans need to be approved by district

<p>A-5</p>	<p>Safety Drills are conducted at all sites as required, including evacuations, shelter-in-place, and lockdowns.</p>	<p>School year programming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> (a) Shelter-in-place records* (A) <i>SACC programs: Twice yearly</i> <i>District or CBO high school programs: Once a year</i> <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Evacuation Drills records* (A) <i>SACC programs: Monthly [OCFS LDSS-4439 form]</i> <i>District or CBO high school programs: Twice yearly (fall & spring)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Lockdown records** (A) <i>SACC programs: None required, but NYSED recommended</i> <i>District or CBO high school programs: Twice yearly (fall & spring)</i> 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>Summer programming (if applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Evacuation Drill(s) records* (A) <i>SACC programs: Monthly</i> <i>District or CBO high school programs: Twice during summer</i> <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Lockdown Drill(s) records** (A) <i>SACC programs: None required, but NYSED recommended</i> <i>District or CBO high school programs: Once during the summer</i> 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>A-6</p>	<p>Travel & Transition Procedures are in place to ensure safety and ease during arrival, dismissal, field trips and transitions. <i>These procedures specifically include:</i> (✓) <i>participant sign-in/sign-out,</i> (✓) <i>notification of changes in routine, and</i> (✓) <i>locating missing participants.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> (a) Written, up-to-date Travel/Logistics Procedures* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Reviewer observation of at least one of the following: participant arrivals, transitions between activities, and/or departures* <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Sign-in and Sign-out sheets² <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other: 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>A-7</p>	<p>Student Health Information Systems are in place for staff to be prepared to address individual student's health needs that may require immediate attention. Participants' files are updated and shared with staff on a need-to-know basis, and in full compliance with HIPAA³ and FERPA⁴ regulations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> (a) Enrollment forms (including health section) * <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Health Documentation (<i>if applicable</i>)⁵ <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Emergency Care Plans and Medication Administration Record (<i>if applicable</i>) ** <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Participant/Enrollee Database <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Evidence of at least one staff trained (by an RN, MD, DO, PA or NP) for participants who have orders for Epinephrine Auto Injector and/or Glucagon⁶ (<i>if applicable</i>) ** <input type="checkbox"/> (f) Other: 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>

² Sign in and Sign out procedures may differ across sites based on age-level groups/programs. Sign out is only required if leaving the program early.

³ Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/schoolhealth/schoolhealthservices/#HIPAA>

⁴ Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/schoolhealth/schoolhealthservices/#FERPA> and <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources>.

⁵ Health Documentation may include healthcare provider's orders, parental consent regarding medication, or Medication Administration Record

⁶ Education law permits schools to train unlicensed persons to administer both medications to students who have orders for such. A school nurse can train the staff.

<p>A-8</p>	<p>Supportive Environment A stimulating, engaging, and welcoming environment is provided for all participants.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Reviewer observation of engagement and support provided to participants*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>A-9</p>	<p>Culture of Respect A culture of support, inclusion, and mutual respect is provided; one which embraces dignity for all participants, fosters a sense of belonging, and promotes physical and emotional safety.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Written policy/procedure for reporting harassment, bullying and discrimination*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Code(s) of Conduct*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (c) Reviewer observation of respectful interactions*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Section A Comments

Section A Comments

B: Program Administration/Organization

Indicators of Success		Supporting Documents <i>* indicates required criteria</i>	Compliance		
			FULL	PARTIAL	NOT
B-1 Recruitment Program is recruiting and serving the specific population of students and their families as identified in the approved grant application.	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Up-to-date Recruitment plan <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Evidence of recruitment efforts (e.g., meeting notes, correspondence records, distribution of promotional materials, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Student selection protocol <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B-2 Program/Activity Schedule(s) for all sites are current, accurate and include room assignments and assigned staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Program/Activity schedule(s)* (A) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B-3 Activity Attendance Procedures are in place for taking daily attendance of individual students for each activity. ⁷	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Activity attendance sign-in sheets* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B-4 Certificates & Licenses All applicable required documents are maintained for program site(s).	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Insurance certificate* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Certificate of Occupancy^{8, 9*} <input type="checkbox"/> (c) SACC Registration(s)*** Exp: (A) <input type="checkbox"/> (d) CPR and AED Certification ^{10 **} (A) <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B-5 Staff to Student Ratio Program maintains updated rosters for each activity and follows appropriate staff-to-school age participant ratios, as per OCFS' School-Age Child Care (SACC) ¹¹ regulation, when applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Enrollment rosters for each scheduled activity* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Reviewer observation of staff-student ratios maintained during each activity *** <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B-6 Staff Guidance & Expectations Program's internal policies, procedures and professional expectations are communicated to all program staff. <i>E.g., staff orientation, training, etc.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Employee handbook* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Meeting agendas with attendance records documenting the communication of expectations for employees * (A) <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Signed acknowledgment page <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

⁷ Attendance procedures may differ across sites based on age-level groups/programs.

⁸ New York City's Certificate of Occupancy (CO) regulations: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/buildings/homeowner/certificate-of-occupancy.page>

⁹ Information about Fire Safety and Certificates of Occupancy, issued by NYSED's Office of Facilities Planning:

http://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/articles/B08_certificate_of_occupancy_referen.html and

http://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/FireSafety/fire_safety_report_homepage.html

¹⁰ Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Automated External Defibrillator; School districts are required by Ed Law Article 19 to have at least one person certified in CPR/AED use, along with an AED at all school sponsored functions in a school building. A district-led SACC program with an OCFS waiver will need to comply with all laws schools are required to follow.

¹¹ New York State Child Day Care Regulations, issued by the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS):

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/regulations/>

<p>B-7</p>	<p>Staff Schedule(s) Current staffing schedule shows days and hours of employment for all program staff along with their title/role in the program.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Staff schedule(s)* (A)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>B-8</p>	<p>Personnel files are maintained for all staff, including documentation for required fingerprinting of staff.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Up-to-date Personnel files, résumés and work-related reports*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Fingerprinting documentation*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (c) Volunteers' files* (<i>if applicable</i>)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Section B Comments

C: Fiscal Administration/Organization (based on the Federal Uniform Guidance¹²)

Indicators of Success		Supporting Documents <i>* indicates required criteria</i>			Compliance		
					FULL	PARTIAL	NOT
C-1	Cooperative Budget Management Program administration and the fiscal department of the lead agency work together to prepare the budget and monitor spend-down. (2 CFR §200.308)	<input type="checkbox"/> (a)	Meeting agenda(s), with date(s), specifying a planned, cooperative budget discussion between program leaders and fiscal managers*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/> (b)	Meeting notes reflecting this cooperative budget discussion [see C-1(a)] *				
		<input type="checkbox"/> (c)	Other:				
C-2	Financial Management system is in place for identifying and tracking costs that are allocated specifically to the 21 st CCLC program. <i>Fiscal records are readily available, complete, and up to date. Note: If the annual award amount is \$750,000 or more, a Single Audit must be completed for the year. (2 CFR §200.302)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a)	On time submission of financial forms: <input type="checkbox"/> FS-10* <input type="checkbox"/> FS-10-F* <input type="checkbox"/> FS-10A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/> (b)	FS-25* <i>Date(s)/Frequency submitted:</i>				
		<input type="checkbox"/> (c)	Accounting System printouts*				
		<input type="checkbox"/> (d)	Single Audit record (A-133) * (if applicable)				
		<input type="checkbox"/> (e)	Other:				
C-3	Resource Allocation Plan Program administration coordinates 21 st CCLC funding with other federal, State, and local programs to effectively utilize public resources. <i>These federal programs include, but are not limited to: Title 1, US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Health and Human Services (HHS), Department of Justice (DOJ), etc. (2 CFR §200.302)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a)	Resource allocation plans/activities verified by reviewers verbally with fiscal and program leader(s)*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/> (b)	Other:				
C-4	Personnel Time and Effort tracking system is in place. <i>I.e., time sheets, payroll records, and Personnel Activity Reports (PARs) are available, complete, and up to date in accordance with federal regulations. (2 CFR §200.430)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a)	Time Sheets*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/> (b)	Payroll records*				
		<input type="checkbox"/> (c)	Personnel Activity Reports (PARs)*				
		<input type="checkbox"/> (d)	Other:				
C-5	Fund Allocation Safeguard (Supplement, not Supplant)	<input type="checkbox"/> (a)	Written, up-to-date Safeguard Policy documenting appropriate allocation of funds by funding source*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

¹² Based on the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), 3rd Edition.

¹³ Federal regulations refer to the established accounting practices of the non-federal entity, NYSED.

	<p>system is in place to ensure that existing funds for a project and its activities <u>are not</u> displaced by federal 21st CCLC funds and reallocated for other organizational expenses. <i>Federal law prohibits recipients of federal funds from replacing/supplanting state, local, or agency funds with federal funds. (2 CFR §200.302)</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Other:</p>	
<p>C-6</p>	<p>Internal Control System is in place to provide reasonable assurance of the effectiveness and efficiency of operations, reliability of reporting for internal and external use, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. <i>(2 CFR §200.61)</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Written, up-to-date Internal Control Policy and Procedures documenting program’s operating, reporting, and compliance procedures* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>C-7</p>	<p>Fraud Detection & Prevention system is in place to detect, prevent, and mitigate fraud. <i>(2 CFR §200.302)</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Written, up-to-date Fraud Detection & Prevention Policy and Procedures* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Protocol to report fraud* <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>C-8</p>	<p>Equipment Inventory Control system is in place. <i>Equipment (including computers) is properly tagged and recorded; a disposal process is in place. (2 CFR §200.313)</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Written, up-to-date Equipment Inventory Control Policy and Procedures* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Equipment/Inventory tracking record* <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Other</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>C-9</p>	<p>Procurement/Purchasing Policy is established to guide micro-purchases, small purchases, sealed bids, competitive bids, and non-competitive or “sole source” bids. <i>(2 CFR §200.320)</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Written, up-to-date Purchasing Policy and Procedures* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>C-10</p>	<p>Record Retention Policy is established. <i>Note: New York State requires record retention for seven years, which supersedes the current federal requirement. (2 CFR §200.334)</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Written, up-to-date Record Retention Policy and Procedures* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>C-11</p>	<p>Work-Related Employee Travel A travel policy for employees is established. <i>(2 CFR §200.475)</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Written, up-to-date Employee Travel Policy and Procedures* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Section C Comments

Section C Comments

D: Staffing and Professional Development

Indicators of Success		Supporting Documents <i>* indicates required criteria</i>	Compliance		
			FULL	PARTIAL	NOT
D-1	Experience of Personnel Activity leaders/instructional staff have appropriate work experience in content specific areas that they are facilitating.	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Explanation of hiring process and required experience for staff * <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Reviewer observation of staff demonstrating practices which adhere to general expectations/ programs' goals and objectives * <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D-2	Regional & Statewide Conference Attendance Director and/or program staff attend required fall and spring state conferences.	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Conference attendance records for <u>BOTH</u> fall & spring* <input type="checkbox"/> Fall Conference attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Spring Conference attendance <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Other: <i>(e.g. national conference)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D-3	Assessment & Support of Staff An internal method for assessing and supporting staff with the implementation of high-quality program activities and consistent use of evidence-based Out of School Time (OST) best practices is in place and occurs at least twice a program year. <i>Providing adequate support, guidance and coaching to staff includes the use of targeted performance feedback.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Program Activity Implementation Review (PAIR) form or similar ¹⁴ <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Completed PAIRs or similar* <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D-4	Collaborative Planning Time Program has designated collaborative planning time for all program staff which includes lead agency and partners to plan program activities that correspond to the needs of the participants and ensure that the entire program operates as one.	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Meeting attendance records indicating the presence of representatives from both program and partners * <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Meeting agendas, and/or meeting notes/minutes evidencing the collaboration between program and partners * <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D-5	Professional Development of Personnel Targeted professional development for all program staff takes place that focuses on strengthening their use of effective instructional practices, their provision of enrichment opportunities, and engages them in the achievement of the program's student outcome goals.	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) PD event attendance records* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) PD agendas (with learning objectives) * <input type="checkbox"/> (c) PD schedules <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other: <i>(e.g. TARC PD, district/school/program PD)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹⁴ <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sssd/documents/Program%20Activity%20Implementation%20Review%2005.14.19.pdf>

Section D Comments

E: Programming & Activities

Indicators of Success		Supporting Documents <i>* indicates required criteria</i>	Compliance		
			FULL	PARTIAL	NOT
E-1	<p>Support for Students of Special Populations</p> <p>Provides reasonable accommodations including special materials, equipment, and specially designed instruction as necessary for all participants¹⁵ during the program and at special events.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Accommodation plans (as needed/ required) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Individual Education Plan/Program (IEP) ¹⁶ <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Equipment Inventory includes Special Equipment/facilities to support students with special needs [Related to C-8] <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Reviewer observation of the provision of support for students of special populations <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Other: (e.g. Behavioral intervention plans, Home Language Questionnaires, 504 plans)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E-2	<p>Academic Enrichment and Additional Services</p> <p>Program activities include both academic enrichment and a broad array of additional services that support both academic and social emotional development through active learning designs not typically offered during the regular school day.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Lesson plans reflect <u>all</u> the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Objective(s)* <input type="checkbox"/> Alignment with NYS Learning Standards ^{17*} <input type="checkbox"/> Reflect SEDL guidelines/benchmarks ^{18*} <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Programming, as seen through observations, schedules, and lesson plans, reflects all of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Enrichment experiences to help students deepen their understanding of the academic subject and broaden their skills* <input type="checkbox"/> Active Learning designs to help students practice and apply a holistic set of skills* E.g. (mark all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Experiential Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Hands-on Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Project-based Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Service Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Other eligible activities: ¹⁹ <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Reviewer observation of staff's delivery/implementation of activities demonstrate strong adherence/fidelity to the lesson plans*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹⁵ According to US ED's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), programs must ensure equitable access to meet the needs of special populations (e.g. students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and socio-economic status).

¹⁶ Instructional and supportive information from the IEP, relative to program activities, may be shared on a "need to know" basis with parental consent.

¹⁷ New York State Next Generation Learning Standards: <http://www.nysed.gov/next-generation-learning-standards>.

¹⁸ New York State Social Emotional Development & Learning (SEDL) Guidelines : <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/documents/SEDLguidelines.pdf>. SEDL guidelines were included in the applicant's proposal; however, new Social Emotional Learning benchmarks and resources are now available for programs: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/sel>.

¹⁹ The complete list of Eligible Activities is described in the ESSA, Title IV Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant Application, p. 16.

<p>E-3</p>	<p>Adherence to Program’s Grant Proposal Programming aligns with the <i>Template for Goals and Objectives</i> as it appears in proposal and/or NYSED-approved program modifications.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Documentation that programming is aligned with Template for Goals & Objectives submitted with Grant Proposal and reflecting any approved modifications (<i>if applicable</i>) * (e.g., fidelity of implementation checklist²⁰)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Reviewer observation of program’s adherence to specified plans/ designs*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (c) Approved Program Modifications forms *(<i>if applicable</i>)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>E-4</p>	<p>Culturally Responsive Education (CRE)²¹ Program activities (✓) help students and families build awareness and sensitivity to issues affecting human relations, and (✓) actively teach respect for diversity. <i>CRE includes but is not limited to the acknowledgement of differences in race, religion, ethnicity, language, mental or physical ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or sex.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Program & activity lesson plans demonstrate adherence to principles and evidence-based practices that support CRE</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Reviewer observation of staff’s delivery of evidence-based practices that support CRE</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (c) Family outreach materials reflecting CRE principles and content</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (d) Event agendas/plans offered to families and community members reflecting CRE principles and content</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (e) Event sign-in sheets</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (f) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Section E Comments

²⁰ A number of programs partner with their local evaluators to create and complete a **checklist or inventory** to help them review **fidelity of implementation** – i.e., how well the program services, as delivered, adhere to the program services, as originally described in the grant application and any other approved modifications. Other programs may assess fidelity of implementation as part of their QSA process, studying a representative sample of Program Activity Implementation Reviews (PAIRs) from staff, etc.
 A sample checklist: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/documents/LGFidelityChecklistredacted.pdf>

²¹ Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework: <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/crs/culturally-responsive-sustaining-education-framework.pdf>

Section E Comments

F: Establishes Strong Links to the School Day

Indicators of Success		Supporting Documents <i>* indicates required criteria</i>	Compliance		
			FULL	PARTIAL	NOT
F-1	<p>Communication regarding alignment with school day programming Activities are aligned with the regular school day content and are coordinated with program and school day staff.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Presence & activity report of the Educational Liaison (i.e., an individual who serves in the role of supporting the link between the school day and the program)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) School day curriculum map, scope and sequence</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (c) Other:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F-2	<p>Communication regarding students' progress Program personnel communicate regularly with school-day staff to remain informed of the academic and behavioral progress of students.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Correspondence records demonstrating communication between program and school-day staff including school-day leaders*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Meeting records, e.g.: agendas, minutes, notes, etc.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (c) Other:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F-3	<p>Communication regarding data Program maintains on-going communication with school administration, helping to ensure a mutually supportive relationship, in order to access all relevant data required for Annual Performance Report (APR) and program evaluation (e.g., test scores, grades, attendance, Office Discipline Referrals, and etc.). <i>Note: Some programs may need to apply for the required APR data to be released through an Institutional Review Board (IRB).</i></p>	<p>Rest of State:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Meeting records documenting the communication/ contact between program and school-day leaders regarding data</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval <i>(if necessary) *</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (c) Other:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<p>New York City:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Not Applicable</p>			

Section F Comments

Section F Comments

G: Participation, Engagement & Partnerships

Indicators of Success		Supporting Documents <i>* indicates required criteria</i>			Compliance		
					FULL	PARTIAL	NOT
Engaging & Communicating with Students							
G-1	<p>Gathering Student Participants' Input about Program Offerings²² Regularly elicits input from participants at all sites to determine programming that matches students' needs and interests.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Reviewer observation of program efforts to solicit input and choice from student participants <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Student Interest Surveys developed & administered to gather input about program offerings (A) <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Focus group protocols & notes documenting discussions with participants to be used to inform program design/activity offerings <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
G-2	<p>Communication of Participation Expectations to Students Expectations, responsibilities, and rules for program participation have been communicated clearly to students in all pertinent languages.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Student Participation Guidelines* <input type="checkbox"/> Guidelines have been published and distributed/ made available* <input type="checkbox"/> Guidelines are translated in all pertinent languages (<i>if applicable</i>)* <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Record of student orientation process/ verbal discussion with participants explaining the program expectations <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Student Code of Conduct signed acknowledgement page [related to A-9(b)] <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Engaging & Communicating with Families							
G-3	<p>Gathering Family Members' Input about Program Offerings Regularly elicits input from families to inform program decision-making and planning at all sites.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Meeting attendance records indicating the presence of families at input-gathering meetings <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Meeting agendas/minutes evidencing the gathering of input from families <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Parent/Guardian surveys are developed and administered to gather input about program design/activity offerings* <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
G-4	<p>Communication of Participation Expectations to Families Expectations, responsibilities, rules for program participation, and opportunities for family involvement,</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Parent/Family Participation guidelines* <input type="checkbox"/> Guidelines have been published and distributed/ made available* <input type="checkbox"/> Guidelines are translated in all pertinent languages (<i>if applicable</i>) *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

²² Indicator G-1 is focused on engaging participants in the *design and selection of program activities* – i.e., student choice. This can be differentiated from Indicator H-4 which focuses on the collection of feedback from participants regarding their *satisfaction with the quality of program service delivery and their perceptions of program impact*.

	<p>have been communicated clearly to students' families in all pertinent languages.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Parent Communication documents (e.g. informational flyers, announcements, etc.) * <input type="checkbox"/> Communication docs have been published and distributed/ made available* <input type="checkbox"/> Communications are translated in all pertinent languages (<i>if applicable</i>) * <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Meeting records evidencing family orientation process/ verbal discussion with family members explaining the program expectations <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Sign-in sheets from the meetings [Related to G-4(c)] <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Other:</p>	
Advisory Board			
<p>G-5</p>	<p>Membership & Attendance Advisory Board²³ includes a wide array of stakeholders which may include superintendents, school principals, parents, students, program partners, other community members, elected local officials, evaluator, et al. Members regularly attend meetings and actively participate in proceedings.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Advisory Board - Member Roster(s)* (A) Required: <input type="checkbox"/> School administration* <input type="checkbox"/> Representation from all program partners* <input type="checkbox"/> Parents* <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluator(s)* <input type="checkbox"/> Age-appropriate students (middle/high school) * <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Advisory Board attendance records, including names of all attendees with title/roles* (A)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>G-6</p>	<p>Meeting Schedule Advisory Board meetings are scheduled in advance and take place at least <i>four times</i> per year.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Advisory Board Meeting schedule* (A) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Advisory Board Meeting agendas* (A) <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Advisory Board Meeting minutes* (A) <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
Support & Learning Opportunities for Adults			
<p>G-7</p>	<p>Support Services & Learning Needs Inventory An annual check-in with adults has been implemented at all sites to help program staff understand & identify families' needs, capacity, and interest in educational programming and support service information.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Check-in process is administered to adult family members of participants* [e.g., this could take the form of an inventory, survey, individual interviews, focus group] (A) <i>Date last administered:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Summary of inventory results/findings* (A) <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Action plan or evidence of improvement activities informed by the inventory <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>

²³ If sub-grantees use other platforms to discuss 21st CCLC programming (e.g. Community School Team/School Leadership Team, etc.) they must show evidence of attendance and/or supporting documentations, such as agenda and meeting minutes that are specific to 21C, as well as attendance representation from 21C partners, 21C evaluator, 21C parents, etc.

<p>G-8</p>	<p>Adult Learning Opportunities Program offers families of participants programming to support adult literacy, parenting skills, English as a Second Language, résumé building, financial literacy, etc.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Schedule of family literacy initiatives that reflect Needs Inventory findings* [Related to G-7(b)]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Attendance/sign-in sheets from family literacy/adult education events*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (c) Lesson plans for adult education programs/events</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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Section G Comments

H: Measuring Outcomes, Evaluation and Program Sustainability

Indicators of Success		Supporting Documents <i>* indicates required criteria</i>		Compliance				
				FULL	PARTIAL	NOT		
Local Evaluator's Responsibility								
H-1	<p>Evaluation Reports & Visits All required elements of local evaluation, as per the Evaluation Manual, have been met.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Annual Evaluation Report (due Sept. 30) * <i>Date last submitted:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> (b) Interim Evaluation Report (recommended Feb/March) * <i>Date last submitted to program:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> (c) Evidence of two site visits per site* <i>(e.g., observation summary notes; dated memo outlining the protocol used, activities observed, persons interviewed, etc.)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Fall Site Visit Evidence <input type="checkbox"/> Spring Site Visit Evidence	<input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joint Responsibility - Local Evaluator AND Program Administration								
H-2	<p>Evaluability is established, and Program Fidelity is maintained, through active collaboration between program manager and evaluator. Program Fidelity refers to how well the program, as implemented, adheres to the program's plan described in the NYSED-approved grant application and program modifications (if applicable). <i>Note: Program Fidelity is also evident in E3(a)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Evaluability Checklist (Year 1 only) * <i>Date submitted:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> (b) Up-to-date/annually reviewed Program Logic Model ²⁴ (Years 2-5) *			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H-3	<p>Ongoing communication with local program evaluator(s) is maintained, in addition to attendance and participation in the Advisory Council. <i>[Related to G-5]</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Verification of APR data entry submitted on time*	<input type="checkbox"/> (b) Correspondence records*	<input type="checkbox"/> (c) Other:		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H-4	<p>Students' satisfaction and perception of program impact is formally assessed at least once annually for all participants at each program site.* <i>Note: Instruments and items related to soliciting student choice in programming are evidence of Indicator G-1</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> (a) Surveys and/or other sources of feedback, (interviews, focus groups, rap sessions, etc.), as appropriate for the population, have been administered to all student participants with items assessing <u>both</u> of the following:	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfaction with services provided* <i>(Satisfaction indicators focus on the quality of the implementation of the program as experienced by participants – offerings, delivery, interactions with the staff, the space, etc.)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Perceived impact of the program* <i>(Impact indicators focus on participants' perceptions of their own change as a result of the program – in attitudes, behavior, confidence, self-efficacy, problem solving, schoolwork, etc.)</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

²⁴ Requirements for the co-creation of a program Logic Model at the end of Year 1, and subsequent annual review of this document, are specified on Page 17 in New York State's 21st CCLC Evaluation Manual: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/21stCCLC/NYSEvaluationManual.pdf>

<p>H-5</p>	<p>Data Driven Program Improvement Formative & Summative Evaluation findings are used to inform continuous program improvement.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) AERs Years 1-5 include actionable recommendations linked to key implementation and impact evaluation findings*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Action Plans and/or evidence of improvement activities informed by evaluation findings & recommendations* (e.g., notes, minutes, correspondence)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (c) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Program's Responsibility regarding Evaluation</p>			
<p>H-6</p>	<p>Program Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) is completed at <i>least two times</i> each year and is used to promote ongoing program improvement.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Completed QSAs*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Dates of QSA Administration*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (c) Meeting(s) to discuss QSA results* (Advisory or other) (e.g., notes, minutes, correspondence)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (d) Action Plans and/or evidence of improvement activities informed by QSA results/ findings* (e.g., notes, minutes, correspondence)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (e) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>H-7</p>	<p>Communication of Evaluation Findings Families and community stakeholders at all sites are actively informed about program evaluation. <i>Evaluation findings and/or other collected data are made available to the general public, using at least one of the specified communication methods</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Program/district website communicates Evaluation report and/or summaries</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Evidence of evaluation report and/or summaries distributed/presented via another program communication mechanism (e.g., electronic distribution of brochures, use of other media platforms, stakeholder meeting agendas)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>H-8</p>	<p>Sustainability Plan A preliminary plan for sustainability is in place or has a long-term plan for sustaining the afterschool program, including multi-year funding plan with diversified sources of funding.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) Written, <i>current Sustainability Plan*</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) Agreements/MOUs/Contracts</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (c) Additional funding efforts</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (d) Other:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Section H Comments

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