



New York

21st Century Community Learning Centers

SOARING BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

Maximizing the Education Liaison Role in 21st CCLC Programs

September 2022

Introduction

The Education Liaison role is a new requirement for all New York State 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) funded programs. This guide provides ideas and resources to maximize the Ed Liaison role in your program.

Per the Round 8 Request for Proposals (RFP):

"...all programs are required to have a program staff member designated as the education liaison, who is responsible for facilitating the linkage between the school day and out-of-school time programming."

The Round 8 RFP Questions and Answers provided further guidance on this role, which states the Education Liaison:

- Would act as the main conduit between the program and the school to ensure ongoing alignment with the school's curriculum and regularly communicate with the principal to ensure that both the program's and the school's objectives are being met.
- Is expected to work with school personnel to identify potential program participants and communicate specific students' needs back to the program so the program can better serve those students and their families.
- Could be a member of your staff that has other duties within the grant (*including the Program Director or Site Coordinator*).
- May be a school staff member or may be from a partner organization.
- May fill this role across several program sites.



What does the Education Liaison do?

Here are some ways the Education Liaison can add value to the 21st CCLC program.

- **Align the program to the school day:** The Education Liaison can meet regularly with teachers and administrators to support 21st CCLC activity/theme alignment to school lessons and units by grade level.
- **Design and/or lead professional development:** The Education Liaison should be equipped to provide workshops, coaching, modeling, and other types of professional development to program staff (teachers and community partners). Ideally, they bring deep knowledge of instructional practices and youth development, and can adapt PD offerings to 21st CCLC goals and promising practices.
- **Review activity plans:** The Education Liaison can collect, review, and provide feedback on activity and lesson plans, as well as identify effective curricula, ensuring alignment to learning and SEL standards as well as the program's specific goals as described in their 21st CCLC proposal.
- **Observe activities and provide feedback:** The Education Liaison can develop a schedule, in partnership with the Site Coordinator, to rotate through activities and conduct observations, providing feedback on instructional practice and activity design.
- **Review and analyze data:** The Education Liaison can support data analysis, identifying trends in student successes and needs to inform the program design and implementation.
- **Contribute to program self-assessment:** The Education Liaison can work with the Program Director, Site Coordinator, and other stakeholders to complete the Network for Youth Success Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) Tool, and may have unique insights particularly related to Element 5, Programming & Activities, and Element 6, Establishes Strong Links to the School Day.
- **Support the Site Monitoring Visit:** The Education Liaison can help the Program Director prepare documentation prior to the visit and contribute to the program walk-through to share relevant observations regarding alignment with school initiatives and partners.

Research Findings on Maximizing this Role

A similar position to the Education Liaison role has been required by the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development prior to this new 21st CCLC requirement, which provides an opportunity for learning from NYC's promising practices. Research conducted by an external evaluator, Policy Studies Associates (PSA), presents several insights that might inform how to maximize this role.

1. The Education Liaison role should be fully integrated into the program plan, including a detailed work plan, objectives, and accountability structure.
2. The Education Liaison role will naturally take shape based on the Program Director, and it's important to consider how to ensure the Education Liaison has a complementary and not duplicative skillset to the Program Director.
3. Unsurprisingly, the type of professional development the Education Liaison provides is closely tied to their knowledge and qualifications; selecting an Education Liaison who is knowledgeable in areas identified as student, school, and/or community needs helps to align the training and coaching available with areas for growth.
4. There is some evidence that suggests the Education Liaison role may have a stronger positive impact if they work with a single program and do not have other operational responsibilities, but needs and circumstances sites should be considered on an individual basis.



Tools and Resources

The materials linked below are designed to support hiring and onboarding your Education Liaison, as well as to aid them in their work to support linkages between school and the 21st CCLC program. Please note these materials do not indicate any endorsement or requirements; they are meant to be useful tools for your reference.

[10 Tips for Aligning the Learning Day](#), National AfterSchool Association

[Advancing Student Success: Aligning In-School and After-School Learning](#), WestEd

[Instructional Resources](#), NY Learns

[Quality Self-Assessment Tool: Establishes Strong Links to the School Day](#), Network for Youth Success

[Partnering with Schools to Reopen and Meet Student Needs](#), Afterschool Alliance

[Education Specialist Spotlight](#), NYC Department of Youth and Community Development

[School Community Partnerships Guidebook](#), Network for Youth Success

[Assessing Alignment Efforts](#), You for Youth

