



New York State Department of Education
21st Century Community Learning Center
Program, Round 8

Annual Evaluation Report
2023-24



Introduction

Measurement Incorporated (MI) was awarded a 5-year contract from NYSED to conduct an external evaluation of the state's 21st CCLC initiative. The purposes of the evaluation are to assess the implementation and outcomes of the program and to guide NYSED's efforts to direct and improve its administration of the program; aid local grantees; and improve program quality and outcomes for participating students. Specifically, the evaluation has six objectives:

- Evaluate NYSED's achievement of statewide objectives related to statewide improvements in participating students' academic performance and behavior.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the 21st CCLC Technical Assistance Resource Centers.
- Evaluate the performance of 21st CCLC programs.
- Support and review the quality of local evaluation and continuous improvement efforts.
- Provide guidance to NYSED on accessing and managing required data for GPRA reporting.
- Provide support and engagement opportunities for local evaluators.

This report provides a summary of activities performed by MI to address the six objectives during year two of Round 8 (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024), as well as a summary of MI's participation at the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) 2024 Summer Symposium that was held in San Francisco. The report includes links to key deliverables that were submitted to NYSED throughout the year.

Objective 1. Evaluate NYSED’s achievement of statewide objectives related to statewide improvements in participating students’ academic performance and behavior

In year two of the evaluation, MI executed “Phase II” of the SEL Pilot study. This phase of the study was designed to expand upon Phase I by including local programs’ use of social-emotional development strategies as perceived by Program Directors and Activity Providers, and quality of staff relationships and support as perceived by participating students at grades 4 and above.

To conduct the second phase of the study, all sub-grantees received a description of the [study plan](#) in early April 2024, and were invited to participate on a voluntary basis. Seven subgrantees volunteered to participate: Boys and Girls Club of Rochester; CAMBA; Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation; Fresh Youth Initiatives, Inc.; Just for Kids; Niagara Charter School; and North Syracuse CSD (“Rising Rox Stars”).

Program Directors from the seven sub-grantees were asked to coordinate data collection activities at their program site(s) that included administration of the following surveys.

- [Program Director Survey](#) to be completed by the Program Director.
- [Activity Provider Survey](#) to be completed by all Activity Providers. MI provided a [letter](#) to be distributed to Activity Providers.
- Student surveys, which included separate versions for grades 4 and 5 in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#), and for grades 6-12 in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#). Program Directors were provided with an online link and/or paper surveys (per request of each Program Director), along with survey administration [instructions](#) for proctors. Program Directors were also provided with a Parent Opt-out form in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#), and instructed to give parents of all potential student participants an opportunity to request that their child be excluded (through passive consent) from the study. Each Director then received a personalized [cover letter](#) reminding them to exclude any students whose parents opted them out of the study.

The surveys were administered in May 2024. To maximize response rates, several survey reminders were sent to non-respondents, preceding and following the response deadline. Surveys were completed by all seven Program Directors, 101 Activity Providers, and 418 students representing all seven sites. The [final report](#) was submitted in October 2024.



Objective 2. Evaluate the Effectiveness of the 21st CCLC Technical Assistance Resource Centers

MI was contracted to evaluate the effectiveness of the two 21st CCLC Technical Assistance Resource Centers (TARCs), one located in New York City (NYC) that serves all 21st CCLCs in the City's five boroughs, and one located in Binghamton to serve all 21st CCLCs outside of New York City, in the Rest of State (RoS). This section provides a summary of related evaluation activities including (1) conference observations and survey feedback, (2) Program Staff Survey, and (3) TARC staff interviews.

Conference Observations and Survey Feedback


Fall (2023) NYC Regional Conference: Data collection for the Fall NYC Regional Conference that was held in November 2023 included workshop observations and surveys of workshop participants and an overall post conference survey. Findings on participant workshop and post-conference [surveys](#) and on [workshop observations](#) were shared in December 2023.

Spring Statewide Conference: Data collection for the April 2024 Statewide Conference that was held in Troy, NY, included individual workshop surveys administered by the Network for Youth Success, a Post-Conference Survey conducted by MI, and observations conducted by two MI members. Summaries of results from the post-conference [surveys](#), individual workshop [surveys](#), and of the workshop [observations](#), were shared with NYSED in June 2024.

Fall (2024) Regional Conferences: Data collection for the Fall conferences held in Binghamton on September 13, 2024 and in Manhattan on October 1, 2024 included a Fall Participant Feedback Form for each workshop and an overall post-conference survey, all of which were administered by MI. A summary of feedback across all workshops and for each workshop was [shared](#) with the NYSED and RoS TARC staff and with NYSED and NYC TARC staff [here](#). The post-conference survey results for RoS were also shared and can be found [here](#). The post-conference survey results for NYC are in progress.

Program Staff Survey

The annual end of year [Staff Survey](#), exploring sub-grantee staff's perceptions of various forms of program support, was sent to all Program Directors, Data Managers, Site Coordinators and Education Liaisons on the Resource Centers' contact lists in June 2024. A total of 195 Staff Survey responses, representing 106 out of 152 local grants, completed the survey and included responses from self-identified Program Directors



representing 65 grants. Survey results were summarized in a [report](#) that was submitted in August 2024.

TARC Staff Interviews

MI solicited feedback on the support, successes, and challenges of operating the resource centers from the perspectives of TARC staff members. The following data collection activities were conducted in June and July.

- A focus group was conducted with three members of the RoS RC on June 20, 2024 using a [focus group protocol](#).
- A follow-up interview was conducted with one member of the RoS on July 18, 2024.
- Separate interviews were conducted with two members of the NYC RC, one on June 27 and one on July 3, 2024.
- An online survey that directly aligns with the focus group protocol was completed by 4 members of the NYC RC in June, 2024.

Feedback from all sources was summarized in a report that was submitted in August, 2024. Due to the highly confidential nature of feedback, the report is not available for public consumption.



Objective 3. Evaluate the Performance of 21st CCLC Programs

On an annual basis, MI conducts site visits to ten sub-grantee programs to assess implementation fidelity and quality, identify program strengths, and areas in need of additional support or guidance from the State. Additionally, the site visits are used to explore target areas identified by MI and NYSED; this contract year included a study of the use of family engagement strategies, advisory board meetings, and a closer look at programs' capacities and culture around the use of data and evaluation. This latter inquiry area included a focus on the Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) process, the Program Activity Implementation Review (PAIR) and other self-study activities, as well as the utilization and leveraging of local evaluation.

Local evaluators were apprised of the spring Case Study at the Network Meeting in February 2024. MI shared the purpose, topics, and the potential request to participate in an interview if their client program was selected. Dr. Imbimbo sent selection notifications and invitations to the ten selected programs in the spring. Key criteria for selecting candidate programs included representativeness (regional, size/number of site operating, community context, etc.), status of site monitoring (programs with recently completed or planned SMVs were excluded), and logistical feasibility of visiting (operating schedule, location).

The site visits were conducted between March and June, 2024. Program Directors, Site Coordinators and Local Evaluators were invited to participate in interviews with MI team member, Dr. Jody Imbimbo. The [Year 2 Study Overview](#) and final [list of participating programs](#) is posted in the state's Sharepoint folder.

Program leaders and evaluators who participated in the study were reportedly open and happy to share their experiences. Interesting findings and new questions surfaced during the process. An [Executive Summary Brief](#) has been prepared for the NYSED team and TARC teams to review. The full report will be released following the second fall regional conference.




Objective 4. Support and Review the Quality of Local Evaluation and Continuous Improvement Efforts

MI was contracted to support the quality and consistency of local programming and evaluation throughout the state. In year two, MI collaborated with NYSED and TARC members to strengthen continuous improvement mechanisms for monitoring evaluation reports and program monitoring site visits. This section provides a summary of these areas of support that included the Annual Evaluation Report and Site Monitoring Visits.

Annual Evaluation Report (AER)

MI provided leadership support and designed communications to clarify and strengthen the policies and guidance related to the AER.

- Throughout the year, approximately 13 different Year 1 Annual Evaluation Reports (AERs) were reviewed to study completeness and clarity of the information vis-a-vis NYSED's grant fidelity and compliance policies and expectations (SMV Section H, the Local Evaluation Framework & Timeline). Observations from these reviews were discussed in consultation sessions with Resource Center teams as part of pre-SMV preparation or debriefing and formulating Action Plan missives. Meta-summaries from these reviews and consultation sessions were compiled into a running list of observations outlining how evaluators use the AER to capture their activities and collect their insights and recommendations. Analysts also examined the degree to which state and regional level reviewers use the AERs as valuable intel sources, whether or not they serve as artifacts that support their review of subgrantee programs. A collection of correspondences related to high level AER analysis is located in the [TA for Reviewers folder](#) on the Sharepoint site. A [short need sensing survey](#) was sent to state and regional level reviewers in early June to help guide the ongoing design of support tools and presentations. An AER Walkthrough for Reviewers learning and development session is being prepared for next quarter.
- Communication was sent to the Evaluator Network in late August 2024, reminding them about the due date and reinforcing the value and function of the report. [This email](#) was shared with the state and RC teams to promote consistent messaging and encourage the use of additional language to frame the purpose and use of the AER.

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- NYSED sent a [reminder email](#) to Program Directors and Evaluators featuring language from this communication and further refined by the MI team on 9/26.

Site Monitoring Visit (SMV) Processes & Practices

MI continued its participation in and co-facilitation of the SMV Norming Workgroup. The group shifted its focus to concentrate on the project of updating the SMV Tool and the Action Plan Agreement (APA) ahead of the first regional conference.

- MI contributed input to changes on Section H, Evaluation. Meetings were held bi-weekly at the start of the period, then increasing to a weekly frequency in the sprint to finalize on 9/10/24.
- MI used input from TARC team members and SED to redesign the post-SMV Action Plan into the [Action Plan Agreement](#) – a more structured tool with accountability protocol to drive program teams’ commitment to improvement plan development and achievement of compliance within 6 months.



Objective 5. Provide guidance to NYSED on Accessing Required Data for APR Reporting

MI was contracted to provide guidance and assistance to NYSED staff on APR data management and collection using NYSED's contracted statewide data collection and reporting system, EZReports. This section provides a summary of related evaluation activities including support for (a) quality control of EZReports data, (b) GPA score reporting, and (c) Teacher Survey.


Quality Control of EZReports Data

EZReports data are critical for meeting contractual obligations for reporting on State outcomes, as well as for submission of program- and state-level Annual Performance Reports. To help ensure the accuracy of these records, MI has provided ongoing guidance and support to the NYSED and Resource Center Data Specialists on strategies for conducting ongoing reviews of local programs' maintenance of student records in the system, as discussed in previous quarterly reports.

The second essential component of the quality assurance (QA) process involved confirming the accuracy of student ID codes to ensure that the official records obtained from NYSED's Student Information Repository System (SIRS) represent the correct students. From the ID codes for each of the over 60,000 participants, QA was accomplished by comparing the associated names and other identifying information in program records against the information from the SIRS database. Errors that required direct human verification, such as determining whether name mismatches may be due only to spelling variations, were examined for a random sample of cases, and the results extrapolated to the population. Results were discussed with the State Coordinator to decide whether mismatched and suspected mismatches should be corrected, ignored, or deleted from the database.

The effectiveness of the above procedures was demonstrated this year by the fact that the proportions of mismatched records were lower than they had been during Round 7, with only one percent of cases resulting in no match in SIRS, and only an additional 0.05% identified as mismatched.¹ Because of these lower rates, it was agreed that mismatches and suspected mismatches would be deleted from the SIRS database

¹ "Mismatch" was defined as records for which all four key identifiers (name, DOB, district code and grade level) differed between EZReports and SIRS. Larger numbers of cases were mismatched on only some of these fields, but random sampling showed that most of these did appear to represent the same student.



before uploading to EZReports. In addition, individual programs that had a substantially higher proportion of problem data, including inconsistencies in specific data points for cases that were otherwise confirmed to reflect the correct student, were brought to the attention of the State Coordinator and Resource Centers. Discussions with NYSED about QA findings for the 2022-2023 data, and decisions about next steps were completed by March 1,² after which NYSED turned to uploading the cleaned records into EZReports. The final upload from EZReports into program level APRs was completed ahead of the federal deadline.

GPA Score Reporting


In support of NYSED's fulfillment of GPRA Measure #2 (gains in GPA scores), MI carefully reviewed the GPA Calculators, grading scales, and GPA guidelines that were used last year to determine whether any modifications were needed. Several changes were needed for the training and guidelines, which were [updated](#) for 2024. Among these changes was a transition from MI's FTP site to NYSED's SharePoint site as the vehicle for sub-grantees to securely upload completed calculators. MI supported the NYSED Data Specialist to establish this new process, including assistance with testing the upload process and reviewing the upload instructions. MI conducted training for all programs serving students in the targeted grades (7, 8 and 10-12) on 6/18/2024; a [recording](#) of the training video was made available to all local program staff.

MI, the NYSED Data Specialist, and the respective local program staff also discussed the possible need to address unique grading scales that were used this year by two sub-grantees that were not previously represented. However, it was determined that the students from these two programs (Hempstead UFSD and West Hempstead UFSD) did not meet the State's criteria for GPA reporting for other reasons; as such, it was agreed that development of new calculators was not currently needed.

Teacher Survey

As a result of past collaboration and support from MI on administering the annual Teacher Survey, NYSED and the Resource Centers have since taken on the majority of this work independently, although we still provide guidance and technical assistance as needed. MI also recently initiated conversations with the current and incoming SEA Coordinators about how this survey content and/or process might be modified to make the results more meaningful beyond compliance with GPRA requirements. At the June monthly meeting, all parties also agreed that all previously established "small *p*" decisions for GPRA compliance should be re-visited. Both of these conversations are

² The full summary of findings is currently being completed and expected to be available by early April.



currently underway. MI is in the process of analyzing and summarizing the spring 2024 teacher survey.

Objective 6. Provide Support & Engagement Opportunities for Local Evaluators

MI was contracted to be a resource to local program evaluators and programs to support continuous improvement efforts. In year two, MI collaborated with NYSED and TARC members to develop tools and guides to enhance stakeholders' engagement with evaluation services and facilitate data and information management. This section provides a summary of support including (1) conference engagements, (2) individualized meetings and technical assistance, and (3) the Virtual Networking Meeting.

Conference Engagements

In partnership with the Resource Centers, MI co-created and promoted a joint session at the Spring Statewide Conference (4/19/24) to bring together evaluators and program personnel, titled, "Stories of Collaboration and Success."

- MI developed [preparation materials](#) including planning outlines, recruitment communications and scaffolds for presenters, guidance for organizers.
- MI attended the session, participating in table discussions and observing presentations and facilitation.
- MI gathered the attendance count, survey data, and observation notes into a [Summary Brief](#) which was distributed to state partners.
- MI convened a [Debriefing Meeting on 5/15/24](#) attended by collaborating partners from the TARCs and Change Impact. SED team members attended, as well, to listen, learn and offer input.

Additionally, MI organized and hosted events for Evaluators. Information about the conference and [invitations to these events](#) was sent out to the Network in multiple email correspondences.

- Approximately 35 people attended the Thursday evening social hangout on 4/18/24. Guests included representatives from SED, the TARCs and evaluators from both NYC and RoS regions.
- Approximately 45 evaluators attended the [Friday Morning Meeting](#), where members discussed in small groups and workshoped recommendations to improve the PSA Out of School Time (OST) Observation Instrument.

- A [summary report](#) of highlights and improvement recommendations was produced.

For the two fall regional conferences, MI organized and facilitated engagements for evaluators, program leaders, and activity leaders. Information about the conferences and invitations to these events was sent out to the evaluators in the Network in targeted emails from MI and broadcasts from NYSED and the TARC.


- Rest of State Conference, Binghamton, NY on 9/13/24. Approximately 20 people attended the Friday “Huddle.” Attendees included evaluators, program directors, data managers, and activity leaders. Representatives from the SED and TARC teams were also present.
- New York City Conference on 10/1/24. Preparations have been made to host a Partners Meeting for evaluators and program leaders, and an evaluators’ lunchtime huddle.
- [Meeting Materials](#) include a handout, a reference document featuring findings from the Year 2 Mid-Year Report, and a powerpoint presentation deck. A summary report of highlights and improvement recommendations from both regional meetings will be produced following the NYC conference.

Individualized Meetings & Technical Assistance

MI facilitated, or co-facilitated with TARC and NYSED partners, seven, separate 1-on-1 or small group TA meetings with stakeholders regarding local evaluation, upon request. These TA sessions followed a patterned protocol as follows:

1. MI received a request for assistance in clarifying an issue related to evaluation either directly from the local evaluator, or referred by the TARC.
2. MI scheduled a zoom meeting to occur within the proceeding 5-8 days, then assembled a team of 1 or 2 members to attend, and reviewed any background materials in preparation (AERs, communication from TARCs and NYSED).
3. MI facilitated 45-60 minute zoom conferences with the individual evaluator or evaluation firm, the program leader(s) and their evaluator, and/or the TARC specialists with any combination of program leaders and evaluators.
4. MI provided resources, recommended actions, and then delivered a progress update to the TARCs or NYSED, as needed, to integrate information across the state’s support team.

In addition, the team supported individual evaluators through short correspondences in response to requests for information or technical questions. A sample of records from



these TA sessions and correspondence will be assembled for the summary in the Year 2 S-AER.

Virtual Network Meeting

On February 28th, MI convened a 90-minute zoom meeting for members of the local evaluator's network. All contacts on the Evaluators Network distribution list MI maintains (N=81) were invited. Members were polled to identify a date and time that worked best for most. The MI team developed content and discussion activities aligned with key inquiry areas and objectives for continuous learning – each of which have arisen in past dialogues with NYSED, TARC team partners, and network members, themselves.

The full meeting summary notes, as well as the presentation materials, are available on the state's Sharepoint folder, [HERE](#).

Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) 2024 Summer Symposium

MI submitted an application to co-facilitate a workshop with TARC staff at the Nita M. Lowey 21st CCLC Symposium in San Francisco. The [application](#), titled “Using Cross-Functional Collaboration to Address Large-State Complexities and Maximize Impact” was submitted in April 2024, followed by an [addendum](#) to the application requested by the review committee. The application was accepted and the [workshop](#) was held on August 1, 2024 by the Rest of State TARC Director and Data Specialist, and one of MI's Co-Project Leads for the Statewide evaluation. The incoming SEA Coordinator and the Director and Data Specialist from the NYC TARC were also in attendance.