

## Guidance for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Local Evaluations FY15

All approved grantees will be required to formalize their evaluation plans within the first year of program. Technical assistance will be provided by EED to guide grantees through the planning process, which will start in the fall of 2014. Since applicants will have to make plans to include evaluation costs in their budgets, the following guidance has been provided.

### 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Local Evaluations

Effective local evaluation is important for program performance and continuous improvement. Working closely with a local evaluator leads to locally appropriate solutions, staff buy-in, and greater likelihood that improvements will be implemented. Because Alaska's 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grantees vary widely, local evaluation is also key to making the case for the statewide program as a whole. To ensure local evaluations are consistently rigorous and provide comparable information, EED requires the following of new grantees:

1. **Use of a formal assessment tool and site observation tool.** These tools may be the ones used for the statewide evaluation or another format based on documentation from a recognized authoritative source, for example the Harvard Family Research Project and the Center for Evaluation and Education Policy. *Whatever the source, the tools must be adapted to measure the Alaska Key Quality Indicators, attached, or the evaluation must explain why particular Alaska Indicators are not relevant to the program.*
2. **Use of a local evaluator who is not a direct employee of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program** (unless an outside evaluator is impractical because of location). This improves objectivity and brings in a fresh perspective. School district evaluation personnel may be suitable. Evaluators experienced with out-of-school-time programming are preferred.
3. **A common outline for local evaluation reports.** This is to make it easy to compare evaluation results and from one time period to the next and to facilitate analysis of Alaska programs as a whole by EED. (Outline follows).

### Local Evaluation Outline

All but the largest programs should be able to present the information in Sections 1 – 3 (below) in 20 pages or less. Please use tables and bullet points wherever possible to minimize narrative length. Evaluators are free to add additional sections or appendices to address a particular issue or site. These should be labeled to assist readers of the evaluation report.

Please organize the information in local evaluation reports according to the following outline:

#### SECTION 1 – BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 1a - **For the local evaluator: name, contact information, and brief description of credentials**

## **1b - Year of the grant cycle(s) being evaluated**

### **1c - Program Description**

- List of site locations and brief description of target population
- Activities provided, how often, and extent to which this matches what was proposed in the original grant agreement
- Participation #s and % regular attendees by site

### **1d - Program Rationale**

The program rationale (or “theory of change”) is a statement of why the program design is the right approach to accomplish the program goals. State-directed technical assistance and workshops will assist programs to articulate their rationales. Once developed, the program rationale will stay the same in each evaluation report unless the program fundamentally changes.

The program rationale should include:

- A Logic model that shows the relationships between the primary program components.
- A list of specific program goals and the performance indicator(s) (i.e., measurable objectives) used to track each goal

## **SECTION 2 – EVALUATION METHOD**

### **2a – Evaluation Questions**

Include a statement of the questions the evaluation is designed to answer. At minimum, the evaluation questions should include:

- Is the program delivering the services and content it said it would deliver?
- Is it accomplishing what it said it would accomplish in terms of program impact?
- What are the program’s strengths and weaknesses?
- How can the program improve?

### **2b – Types and Sources of Evaluation Data**

Provide at least three types of data:

1. Performance data about participants. Typically, this data is drawn from school information systems covering grades, standardized tests, graduation rates, attendance, etc. Much of it is already collected in PPICS.
2. Survey data from, at minimum, federally required teacher surveys. This “teacher-report” data is also collected in PPICS. Additional data may include information from surveys or

interviews with program staff, key partners, students, parents, or other stakeholders, as well as anecdotal information.

3. Observation data recorded using a structured observation tool during one or more visits to the school site(s). (In cases where geographic or financial barriers to site visits are severe, alternatives may be found in consultation with EED.)

### **SECTION 3 – EVALUATION FINDINGS**

#### **3a - Data Presentation**

Organize and present data to help answer the evaluation questions identified in Section 2. Describe briefly how the data was analyzed.

#### **3b – Conclusions and Recommendations**

Show how the data is relevant to the program goals listed in Section 1 and to the Alaska Key Quality Indicators (attached). Discuss how well the program is performing and what, if anything, needs to change. (For example, the discussion may be presented in the form of program “strengths,” “challenges,” “recommendations,” and/or “key factors for success.”)

### **SECTION 4 – USING THE EVALUATION**

*This section of the evaluation report must be provided by the **Program Director**.*

#### **4a – Program Planning**

Please give a brief description of the process by which evaluation results will be shared and used to achieve continuous improvement. I.e., how will the evaluation be incorporated into your program planning process? Will you meet with your staff to discuss? Will the evaluator be involved? Will you distribute the report to anyone? Etc.

#### **4b – Reflection**

In the June “Preliminary APRs,” directors reflect on what they have learned over the past year and how they plan to respond. In this section of the evaluation report, please update your Preliminary APR reflection in light of your local evaluation findings. Has anything in the evaluation changed the way you see your program or your plans for the upcoming year? If not, simply say “No change since Preliminary APR.”

### **SECTION 5 – OPTIONAL APPENDICES**

Appendices might include site observation records, site activity schedules, examples of outreach activities, testimonials, or other documents that are directly relevant to program success. This type of information need only be included if it helps the reader to understand the program strategy, activities and/or impacts.

## **Alaska Key Quality Indicators for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Programs**

### **PROGRAM DESIGN**

1. Program has a clear mission and goals.
2. Activities address academic, physical, and social-emotional needs of students within the context of program mission and goals.
3. Program fosters meaningful connections to the broader curriculum and to local communities.
4. Program promotes positive youth development through experiential activities and constructive staff/student interactions.

### **PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

5. Staff understands program goals and has appropriate tools to accomplish them.
6. Program management and staff communicate effectively at all levels:
  - a. each other
  - b. students
  - c. other school staff
  - d. parents
  - e. partners
  - f. community

### **STAFFING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

7. Program actively recruits quality staff in a way that, to the extent possible, ensures consistent staffing over time, including site-coordinator succession.
8. Staff receives structured orientation and training and has access to professional development.

### **PARTNERSHIPS AND RELATIONSHIPS**

9. Program actively recruits partners who are motivated and equipped to participate.
10. Partners understand program goals and culture.
11. School-district officials consider the program goals a high priority.
12. Program encourages family involvement.

### **CENTER OPERATIONS**

13. Program activities have a clear structure and purpose.
14. Program pursues an active attendance strategy.
15. Physical environment is safe and conducive to learning.

### **PROGRAM SELF-ASSESSMENT**

16. Local evaluations are rigorous and performed consistently
17. Program staff uses assessment results for continuous improvement