



Annual Evaluation of the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District 21st CCLC After School Programs

FY13 AWARD AT ANNE WIEN ELEMENTARY, JOY ELEMENTARY AND
NORDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

FY14 AWARD AT DENALI AND HUNTER ELEMENTARY

SCHOOLS FY15 AWARD AT NORTH POLE ELEMENTARY,

TICASUK BROWN
ELEMENTARY, AND LATHROP HIGH SCHOOL

BARBARA SUNDBERG, SENIOR CONSULTANT
CR Research and Evaluation * CompassRoseAK@gmail.com
557 Grandview Ct. * Fairbanks, AK 99709 * (907) 460-2504



Acknowledgements

CR Research and Evaluation would like to acknowledge the assistance of Julie Wild-Curry, Director of After School Programs (ASP) at the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District and Jeanine Smith, Program Secretary, for their assistance in providing information for this report. Thanks to Lathrop ASP site coordinator Courtney Havrilek for providing the number of high school students earning credit through *Success Skills* and Second Chance credit recovery classes. Dr. Ellis Ott provided data from the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District's PowerSchool student information system and AIMSweb database. We also thank the site coordinators, teachers, and staff who participated in interviews and site visits at the eight schools where grant-funded After School Programs operated in the 2015-16 school year.

This report follows the Guidance for 21st ACLC Local Evaluations provided by the State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development 21st Century ACLC statewide office.

Executive Summary

This report presents the annual evaluation of the grant-funded After School Programs in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District for the 2015-16 school year. Key findings from the evaluation are:

- Eight schools offered grant-funded After School Programs in the district.
 - **FY13 Grant Award: Anne Wien Elementary, Joy, and Nordale Elementary Schools.** These schools are funded by a 5-year grant that began in FY13 and just completed Year 4. In addition to the academic assistance component inherent in all of the After School Programs, these programs schedule students into physical fitness activities at least two times per week. A variety of engaging hands-on activities are also offered including STEAM-based activities that are increasingly being incorporated as program staff are trained in the use of new resources and technologies;
 - **FY14 Grant Award: Denali and Hunter Elementary Schools.** These schools are funded by a 5-yr grant that began in FY14. The schools just completed their third year of operation. The programs offer academic assistance and have an intentional STEAM focus, where Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math are incorporated into some of the enrichment classes offered each quarter. The schools incorporate physical fitness classes and hands-on enrichment activities such as sewing, knitting, cooking, dance, arts and crafts, and many others into the after school schedules;
 - **FY15 Grant Award: North Pole Elementary, Ticasuk Brown Elementary, and Lathrop High School.** These schools are funded by a 5-year grant that began in FY15 and just completed their second year. The schools offer programs that provide academic assistance and enrichment activities, some with a STEAM focus. Also offered are activities such as music, physical activities, arts and crafts, games, cooking and baking, beading, and more. A greater variety of STEAM activities are being offered as a result of staff training in the use of different strategies and technologies.
- Across all three programs, 881 students were served in 2015-16, 73% of whom were ‘regular attendees’, meaning they were enrolled in the program for 30 days or more (642 students);
- Evidence exists that the longer students are enrolled in the After School Program, the greater the academic gains as shown on AIMSweb formative assessments that compared outcomes for students enrolled for 30+ days, 60+ days, and 90+ days, and teacher-reported increases in homework completion and academic performance at some schools (however, this correlation did not hold true for quarterly grades in Reading, Writing, and Math);
- All programs offer snacks as part of the transition from the regular school day to the ASP. Elementary schools also offer students a short recess break, reflecting an understanding of the benefits of nutrition and physical activity to learning;
- Programs at the seven grant funded elementary schools are well established and well attended. The program at Lathrop High School will implement a plan this coming school year that is designed to increase student and staff involvement in *Lathrop After the Bell* and offer additional STEAM-focused activities. This is an exciting opportunity for Lathrop and we look forward to future developments at that location;

Evaluation of the FNSBSD ACLC After School Programs in the 2015-16 School Year iii
CR Research and Evaluation

- The ASP benefits from strong leadership from the Director who is committed to providing the best after school programs possible, and is always looking for ways to meet the needs of students and staff. Professional development offered throughout the school year for the site

coordinators and other ASP staff reflects the Director's commitment to excellence and dedication to program implementation and outcomes;

- Overall program results show the program is meeting nearly all of the *academic achievement–related* goals:
 - 49% of elementary students increased their performance on the AIMSweb Reading assessment (R-CBM) and 47% increased their math performance (M-CAP). The goal was to have at least 40% of ASP students show an increase on the assessments;
 - 43% of ASP students improved their quarter grade in Reading, 36% improved their quarter grade in Writing, and 44% in Math. While these results reflect an improvement for nearly half of the ASP regular attendees, the goal of having 50% increase their grades from Quarter 1 to Quarter 4 was not reached;
 - At the high school level, 44% of ASP students at Lathrop increased their overall GPA compared to the prior year, 60% of students who had signed up to receive credit through *Success Skills* did so, and 100% of the students who enrolled in Second Chance credit recovery completed their required English 9 or English 10 class and earned credit. These three outcomes exceeded stated performance objectives;
 - Teacher survey results indicate 73% of students improved in the area of *completing homework* and showed an overall improvement in *academic performance*, exceeding the goal of having 50% show improvement.
- Several ASP goals support *social-emotional growth and student engagement*. The program met and largely exceeded these goals:
 - 69% of students across the eight ASPs who had below average attendance the prior year, increased their school attendance in 2015-16. The goal was to have 50% increase their school attendance;
 - Teachers reported improvements for their ASP students in the areas of *participating in class* (67% improved), *behaving well in class* (50% improved), and *persevering through challenges* (66% improved). The goal was to have at least 50% of students show improvement in these areas.
- The programs largely met and exceeded *parent involvement* goals as measured by a brief parent survey. Results show that overall
 - 69% of parents say they are *more comfortable in their child's school*, 43% say they *attend more school events*, 64% say they *feel more involved in their child's education* and 60% *feel more informed about their child's progress in school*;
- Students expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their After School Programs on end of year written surveys:
 - While 65% of all ASP students say they *like school*, that percent increased to 82% when asked if they *like being part of the After School Program*;
 - 79% of students say they are *able to get their homework done almost always or most of the time* in the ASP;
 - 82% say they *like the choices of classes and activities offered in the ASP*;
 - 80% say they *feel safe at the ASP almost always or most of the time*;

Evaluation of the FNSBSD ACLC After School Programs in the 2015-16 School Year iv
CR Research and Evaluation

- 83% say the *ASP has helped them do better in school*;
- 79% say the *ASP has helped them get along better with others*.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended these findings be shared with the school administrators, staff, and the school communities, and that the results be used to help with planning for addressing identified areas of need;
- In the area of having ASP students improve their classroom grades from Quarter 1 to Quarter 4, it is recommended the Program Director and site coordinators discuss the option of looking at student progress after each quarterly grading period, and more closely monitor mid-term progress reports to assist in identifying specific areas of academic need for individual students;
- AIMSweb scores from Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 were part of the evaluation for the first time this year, and program participants exceeded the goal to have 40% of students show growth on the Reading and Math formative assessments. Using formative assessment scores from the mid-year (Winter) assessment is another way student academic progress can be monitored during the school year;
- It is recommended that the homework help/tutoring sessions continue to be offered in small group settings, where staff can better individualize instruction and form meaningful and trusting relationships with students;
- Continue to provide a variety of enrichment activities (including those with a STEAM focus) with student and staff input that fosters ownership and engagement;
- Continue ongoing communication with regular school day staff and with school principals to align school plans with After School Program goals to support students in the best ways possible;
- Continue to offer professional development to site coordinators and other ASP staff so that new technologies and resources can be used competently within the programs, and strategies can be shared in areas such as behavior management and effective teaching strategies;
- Ensure a process is in place for providing new staff with ways to understand and support the overall mission of the ASP so they are well equipped to implement the program goals;
- Continue to use the strengths of community partners that are shown to be important components to the ASPs in the opportunities they offer to ASP students;
- Continue to provide opportunities for parent involvement through regular communication and collaborative Family Nights. The positive school attendance results seen in the evaluation are due in part to the regular, positive outreach to the parents of ASP students, and these connections remain important for achieving program goals.

The ASPs in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District are meeting or exceeding nearly all of the goals and objectives as specified in the grants. The programs benefit from proactive leadership and the involvement of many dedicated staff members including classroom teachers. A growing emphasis on the use of technology is providing students with new and engaging learning opportunities. Academic assistance and social-emotional support through relationship building and enrichment are essential features of the program. With continued effective leadership, staff professional development, an abundance of resources and materials including new technologies, and positive behavior management strategies, these programs will continue to be successful environments for students.