Washington 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Brief on the 2022–23 Student and Teacher Surveys

Katherine Gross, Lauren Stargel, and Samantha Sniegowski

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Contents

Introduction

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) are out-of-school-time programs, many of which occur on school campuses. With the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on 21st CCLC programs, the evaluation team from the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) administered a brief survey in spring 2023 to students who participated in programming, as well as to the school-day teachers of elementary student participants, to learn about (a) the experiences and feelings of students and (b) teacher perceptions of student engagement in learning in the classroom.

In this report, we describe the results of the student and teacher surveys, from which the evaluation team hoped to gain insights into the following questions:

1. What do students think of their own academic identity and self-esteem?

2. What were the experiences of students attending 21st CCLC programming in the 2022–23 program year, including how they think the program has helped them?

3. How did students' interests change after participating in afterschool programming?

4. To what extent did student learning engagement in the classroom change during the 2022–23 program year?

This report begins with a summary of findings for each evaluation question, followed by a more in-depth discussion of data and analyses of student and teacher responses to the survey items. Please note that the information provided in this report is descriptive in nature and is not intended to infer causation of student academic outcomes. For a more in-depth correlational analysis of survey results with other relevant data points, please refer to the *2022–23 Washington 21st CCLC Statewide Evaluation Report*.

Summary of Findings

In spring 2023, 892 students (705 students in Grades 6–8 and 187 students in Grades 9–12) responded to a student survey, and school-day teachers completed 2,008 surveys about their students in Grades K–5.

Student Academic Identity and Self-Esteem

- Nearly three quarters of the student respondents (at least 74%) indicated that getting good grades was one of their main goals and that it was important to them to learn as much as they could.
- More than two thirds of the student respondents (at least 67%) either mostly or completely agreed with statements indicating strong self-esteem, such as feelings of pride and self-satisfaction, a belief in their ability to achieve success, and a recognition of their positive qualities.

Student Program Experiences

- A majority of the student respondents (58%) indicated that they really look forward to attending their afterschool programming.
- More than half of the student respondents (52%) felt that their afterschool program helped them to make new friends, and nearly one third (at least 27%) felt that their afterschool program helped them to find out what they enjoyed doing and find out what they were good at doing.
- More than half of the student respondents (at least 54%) felt that their afterschool program provided opportunities for them to try new things, work hard to get better at something, or do things that they don't get to do anywhere else.
- A vast majority of the respondents (approximately 80%) reported that there was an adult at their afterschool program who they enjoyed being around and who helped them when they encountered a problem.
- A majority of the student respondents (approximately 60%) reported that kids in their afterschool program supported and helped one another, were friendly with each other, and listened to their teachers.

Changes in Students' Interests

- Half of the student respondents (50%) reported feeling more interested in art than when they began participation, and nearly half (46%) reported feeling more interested in sports.
- More than one third of the student respondents (38%) reported feeling less interested in politics and government, and more than a fourth felt less interested in drama (29%) and in history (27%) than before they started.

> **Changes in Student Learning Engagement in the Classroom**
>
> - According to school-day teachers, about half of all students (at least 52%) made improvements in their learning engagement, whereas roughly 20% of students saw no change in engagement.

Surveys and Sample

In this section, we provide information related to the administration process and sample for the student and teacher surveys.

Student Survey

As part of the evaluation efforts each year, AIR typically administers a student survey called the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs (YMEB) survey in mid to late spring. Through the survey administration process, AIR collects information in an online format at the student level—including personally identifiable information such as student school identification numbers—to connect survey responses with other data points to answer specific evaluation questions.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in collaboration with the Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI), the evaluation team decided not to administer a student survey during spring 2020 and instead opted to administer alternative surveys during spring 2021 and spring 2022. The varied program learning environments during the pandemic and overwhelmed staff made it very difficult to collect information from students in the same format as in the past, which was based on in-person programming. Also, to better understand youth experiences in programming as they related to the pandemic, we revisited our evaluation questions and the associated measures.

The 2022–23 school year, however, was characterized by program operations that were similar to those of the pre-COVID-19–pandemic era, with the majority of programming happening in in-person settings. Therefore, AIR and OSPI decided to revisit the administration of the YMEB survey, working collaboratively to identify the important questions we hoped to answer with data collected on a student survey and updating the measure to reflect those goals.

We finalized the updated student survey (see Appendix A) in winter 2023, and the administration window was April 18–June 15, 2023. Prior to administering the survey, project

directors received parent passive-consent forms to send to parents and guardians, giving them the opportunity to opt out their child from the survey if they wished.

The evaluation team developed the updated survey for students in Grades 6–12 to complete; however, we did set up the administration process so that programs could survey students as young as in Grade 4 if they wished (the prior YMEB survey was administered to students in Grades 4–12). Our analyses of the items on the YMEB survey have indicated that the measure is more appropriate for students in Grade 6 and above; therefore, we limited our analyses to students in Grades 6–12, resulting in a sample of 892 students (705 students in Grades 6–8 and 187 students in Grades 9–12). Exhibit 1 presents student demographic information illustrating the population of students responding to the survey.

Exhibit 1. The majority of survey respondents were middle school students, and most identified as male. The majority of respondents identified as either White or Hispanic.
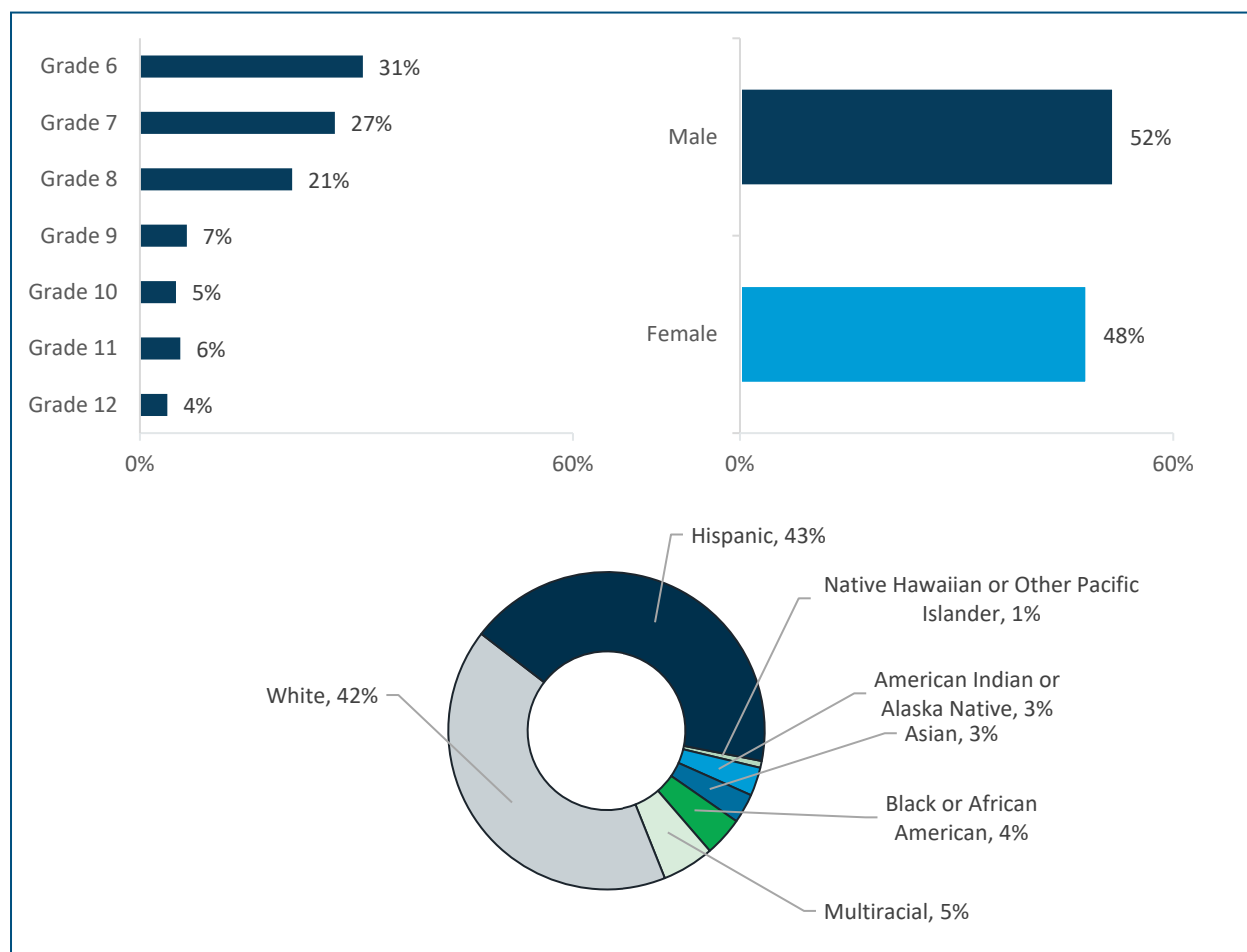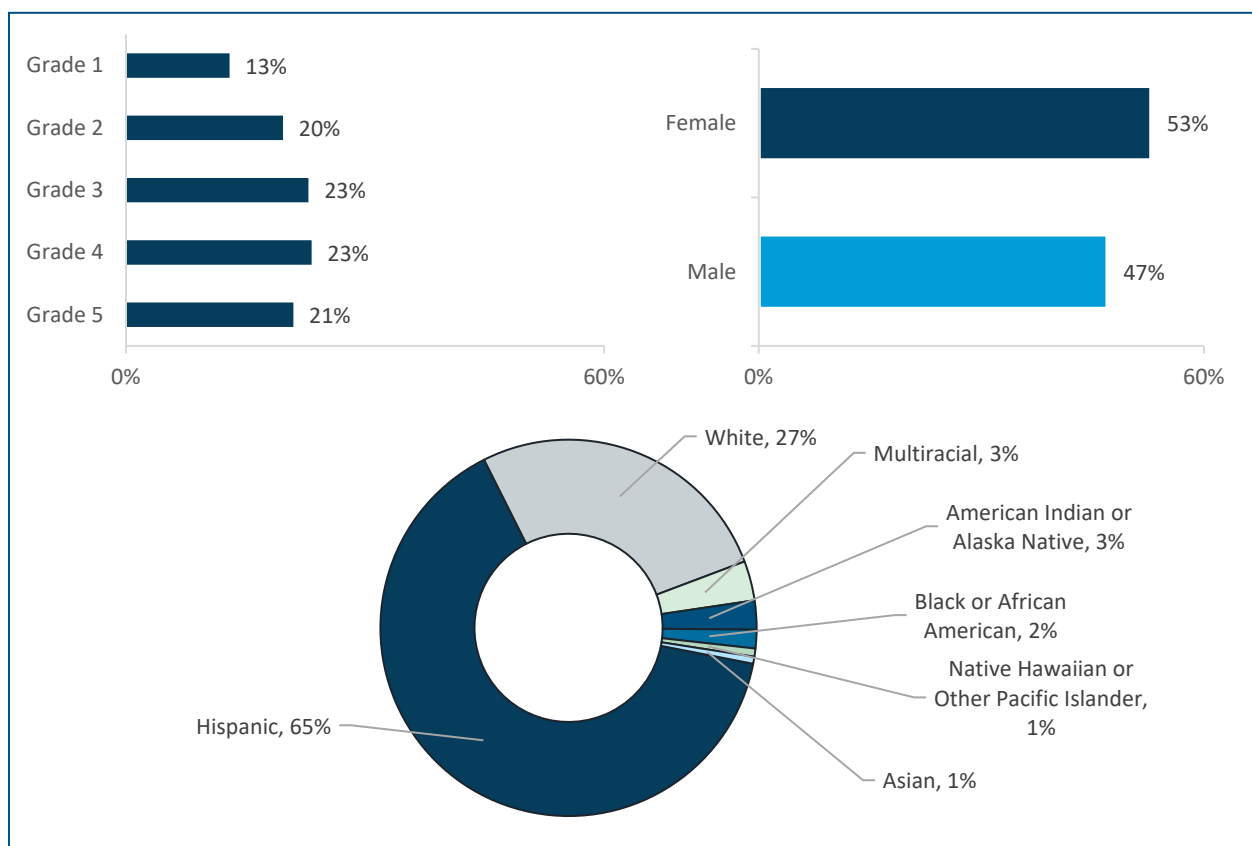

Note. Data from data portal, student survey, and state data warehouse. *N* = 767–892 students.

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Teacher Survey

We asked school-day teachers to report their perceptions of the learning engagement of students in Grades K–5 who participated in 21st CCLC programming, indicating whether a student's behavior improved, declined, did not change, or did not need to improve (see Appendix B for a copy of the teacher survey). The evaluation team administered the teacher surveys in the online data portal through which program staff submit other data about their program, such as operations, staffing, activities, and student and parent attendance. Program staff identified school-day teachers associated with students who were eligible for the survey (students in Grades K–5 who had at least 1 day of program attendance). We invited teachers to the online data portal and, once signed in, presented them with a list of students about whom we asked them to complete a teacher survey, resulting in 2,008 completed surveys. Exhibit 2 highlights demographic information about the domain of students for whom teachers submitted a survey.

Exhibit 2. The majority of students for whom teachers completed a survey were in Grades 3–5 and identified as female and Hispanic.

Note. Data from data portal, teacher survey, and state data warehouse. *N* = 1,630–2,008 student-level teacher responses.

Limitations

Potential limitations of both the teacher and student surveys include the subjectivity of responses and the potential for social desirability bias in self-reported data. For the teacher survey in particular, additional limitations include minimal exposure to students and the burden of another data collection effort on an already long list of things the teacher must do. Thus, readers should interpret all survey results with caution.

Answers to the Evaluation Questions

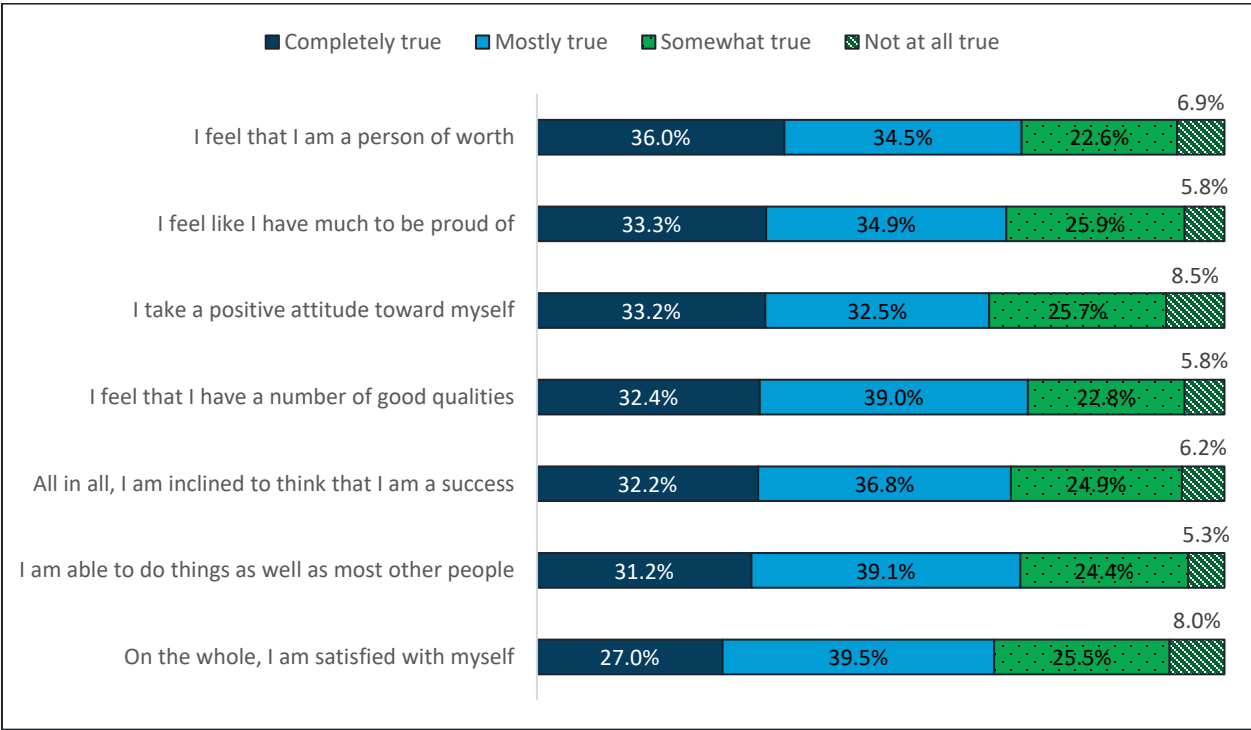## Evaluation Question 1: What do students think of their own academic identity and self-esteem?

Through the survey, we asked students to think about how they might describe themselves—for example, whether they take pride in doing their best work at school or if they feel that they are a person of worth. Overall, students reported feeling positively about their academic identity and self-esteem across a range of indicators, with more than 50% of students agreeing that all statements were mostly or completely true about themselves (Exhibits 3 and 4).

Exhibit 3. Regarding academic identity, close to half of students indicated that getting good grades was one of their main goals and that it was important to them to learn as much as they could.
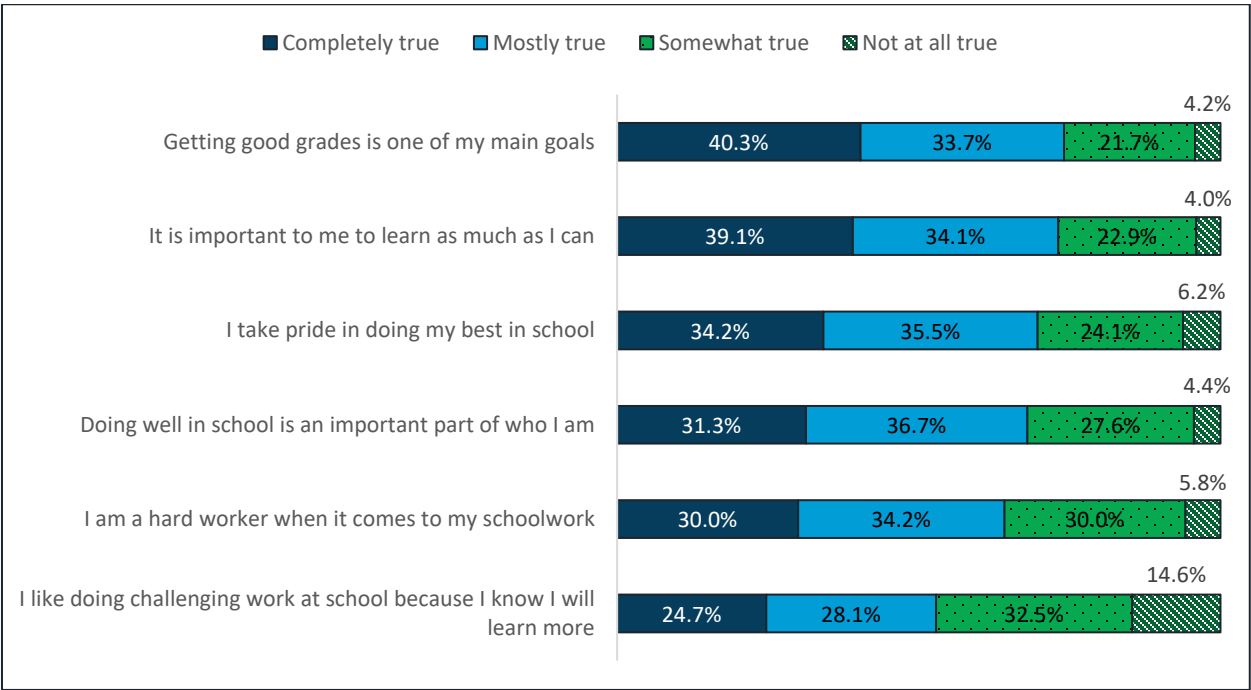
Note. Data from student survey and state data warehouse. For this set of items, *N* = 876–884 students.

Exhibit 4. Regarding self-esteem, a majority of students mostly or completely agreed that they are people of worth with high self-regard and much to be proud of, but nearly one third of students indicated that these statements were somewhat true or not at all true.


	Completely true	Mostly true	Somewhat true	Not at all true
I feel that I am a person of worth	36.0%	34.5%	22.6%	6.9%
I feel like I have much to be proud of	33.3%	34.9%	25.9%	5.8%
I take a positive attitude toward myself	33.2%	32.5%	25.7%	8.5%
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	32.4%	39.0%	22.8%	5.8%
All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a success	32.2%	36.8%	24.9%	6.2%
I am able to do things as well as most other people	31.2%	39.1%	24.4%	5.3%
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	27.0%	39.5%	25.5%	8.0%

Note. Data from student survey and state data warehouse. For this set of items, *N* ranges from 870 to 880 students.

Evaluation Question 2: What were the experiences of students attending 21st CCLC programming in the 2022–23 program year, including how they think the program has helped them?

In this section, we provide details on students' program experiences, including their relationships with adults and other peers in their program, as well as their perceptions of how attending programming has helped them. Overall, many respondents reported positive experiences in their afterschool program, with 57% of students indicating that they really look forward to attending their program. However, 40% of students reported that they only sort of looked forward to attending programming, and 3% reported attending without any desire to be there (Exhibit 5).
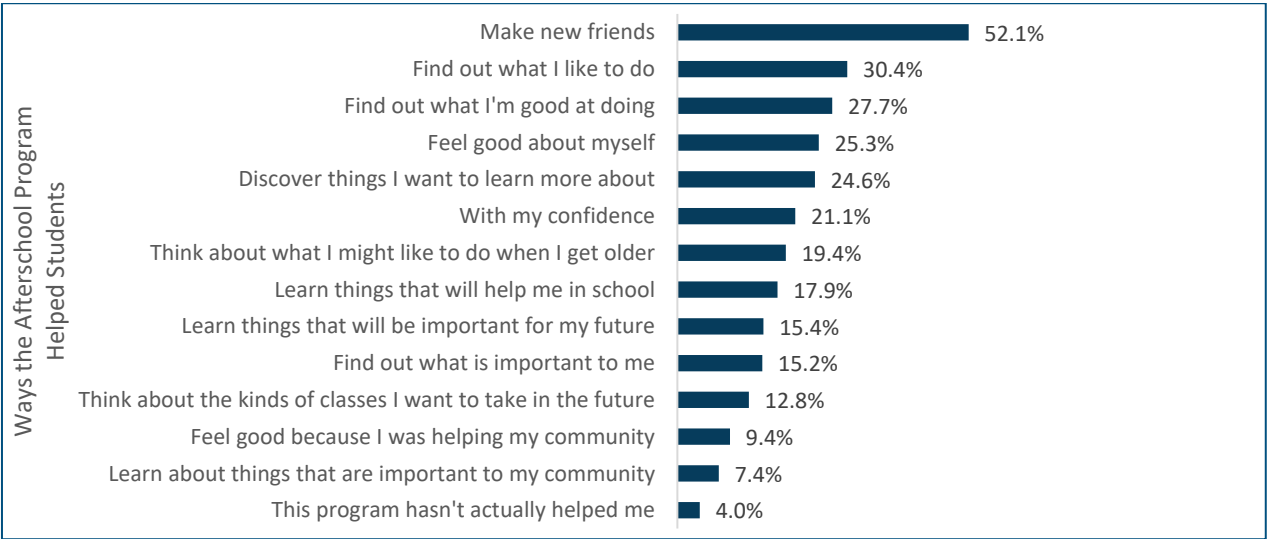
Exhibit 5. Most respondents *really* looked forward to coming to their afterschool programming, whereas more than one third only somewhat looked forward to attending.

Not at all, I don't want to be here, 2.8%
I sort of look forward to it, 39.5%
I really look forward to it, 57.6%
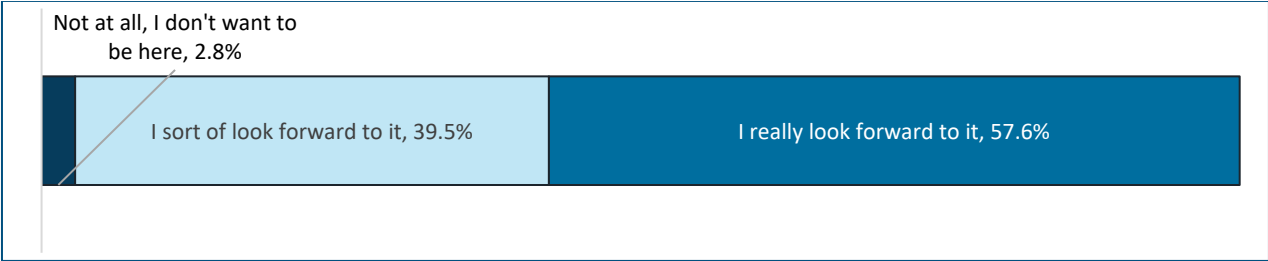
Note. Data from student survey. *N* = 885 students.

The survey asked students to select up to three areas in which they felt that their afterschool program had helped them specifically (Exhibit 6). Approximately half of the respondents believed that their program helped them make new friends (52%), and nearly one third of the respondents believed that their program helped them find out what they liked to do (30%), and find out what they were good at doing (28%). Students' perception that their program supports a positive sense of self is notable in light of the sizable minority of students who reported low self-esteem (see Exhibit 4). The areas in which the least number of students felt that their program helped them were (a) learning about things important to their community (7%) and (b) feeling good because they were helping their community (9%).

Exhibit 6. Half of respondents thought that their afterschool program helped them make new friends, and nearly one third of respondents thought that their program helped find out what they liked to do and find out what they were good at doing.

Ways the Afterschool Program Helped Students

Make new friends	52.1%
Find out what I like to do	30.4%
Find out what I'm good at doing	27.7%
Feel good about myself	25.3%
Discover things I want to learn more about	24.6%
With my confidence	21.1%
Think about what I might like to do when I get older	19.4%
Learn things that will help me in school	17.9%
Learn things that will be important for my future	15.4%
Find out what is important to me	15.2%
Think about the kinds of classes I want to take in the future	12.8%
Feel good because I was helping my community	9.4%
Learn about things that are important to my community	7.4%
This program hasn't actually helped me	4.0%

Note. Data from student survey. *N* = 892 students. Students could select up to three response options, so the response options are not mutually exclusive.

Students also reported on whether their afterschool program provided them with certain experiences, such as trying new things or setting goals for themselves. Most commonly, students reported that they definitely had the opportunity to (a) try new things (61%), (b) do things that they don't get to do anywhere else (56%), or (c) work to get better at something (55%; Exhibit 7).
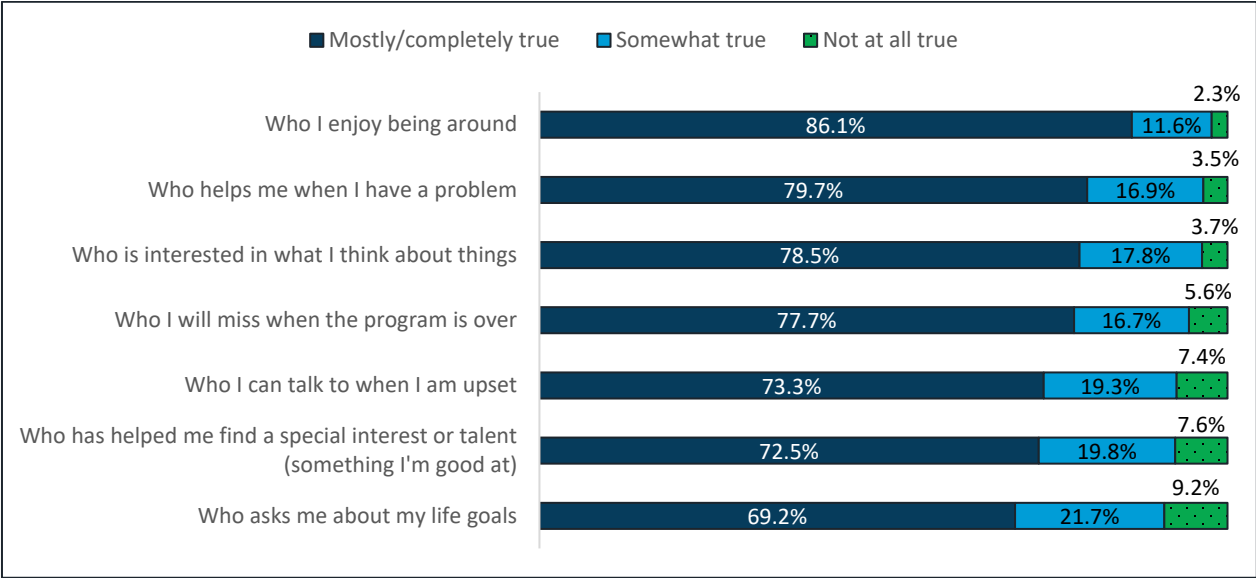
Exhibit 7. More than half of the respondents felt that their afterschool program definitely provided experiences through which they were able to (a) try new things, (b) do things they don't get to do anywhere else, or (c) work hard to get better at something.
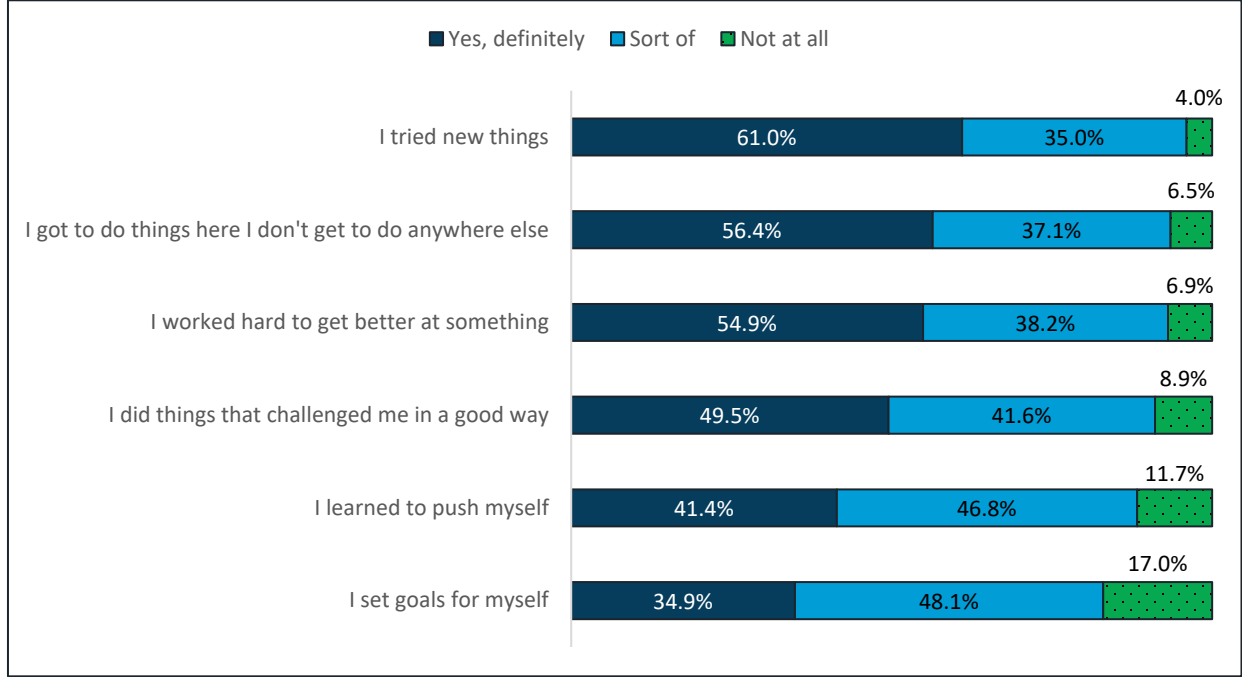
Note. Data from student survey. For this set of items, *N* ranges from 867 to 881 students.

Next, the survey asked students how they felt about the adults in their afterschool program, such as whether there was an adult who they could talk to when they were upset or who asks them about their life and goals, as well as about their experiences with other kids attending programming, including whether kids teased or bullied each other or treated each other with respect. Across all indicators, the majority of respondents (more than 50%) reported positive experiences with an adult in their program (Exhibit 8) and with their peers (Exhibit 9). However, a sizable minority of respondents indicated a possible lack of connection with adult program staff and negative peer-to-peer experiences within their program. For example, 31% of respondents expressed that it was either not at all true or somewhat true that there was an adult in their program who showed interest in their life goals. Similarly, 45% of respondents responded that kids in their program did engage either in bullying or in teasing to some degree.

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Exhibit 8. Over 85% of respondents reported that their afterschool program had a supportive adult with whom they connected and enjoyed spending time, although a sizable minority (14% or more) indicated limited connections with adult program staff.

Legend: ■ Mostly/completely true ■ Somewhat true ■ Not at all true

Item	Mostly/completely true	Somewhat true	Not at all true
Who I enjoy being around	86.1%	11.6%	2.3%
Who helps me when I have a problem	79.7%	16.9%	3.5%
Who is interested in what I think about things	78.5%	17.8%	3.7%
Who I will miss when the program is over	77.7%	16.7%	5.6%
Who I can talk to when I am upset	73.3%	19.3%	7.4%
Who has helped me find a special interest or talent (something I'm good at)	72.5%	19.8%	7.6%
Who asks me about my life goals	69.2%	21.7%	9.2%

Note. Data from student survey. For this set of items, *N* ranges from 863 to 870 students.

Exhibit 9. A majority of respondents (more than 50%) reported friendly and respectful experiences with their peers, whereas more than one third indicated negative peer-to-peer experiences, such as teasing or bullying (47%).

Legend: ■ Mostly/completely true ■ Somewhat true ■ Not at all true

Item	Mostly/completely true	Somewhat true	Not at all true
Kids here are friendly with each other	62.7%	32.3%	5.1%
Kids here treat each other with respect	60.6%	33.3%	6.1%
Kids here listen to what the teachers tell them to do	59.8%	32.9%	7.3%
Kids here support and help one another	59.2%	34.1%	6.7%
Kids here don't tease or bully others	53.3%	36.8%	9.9%
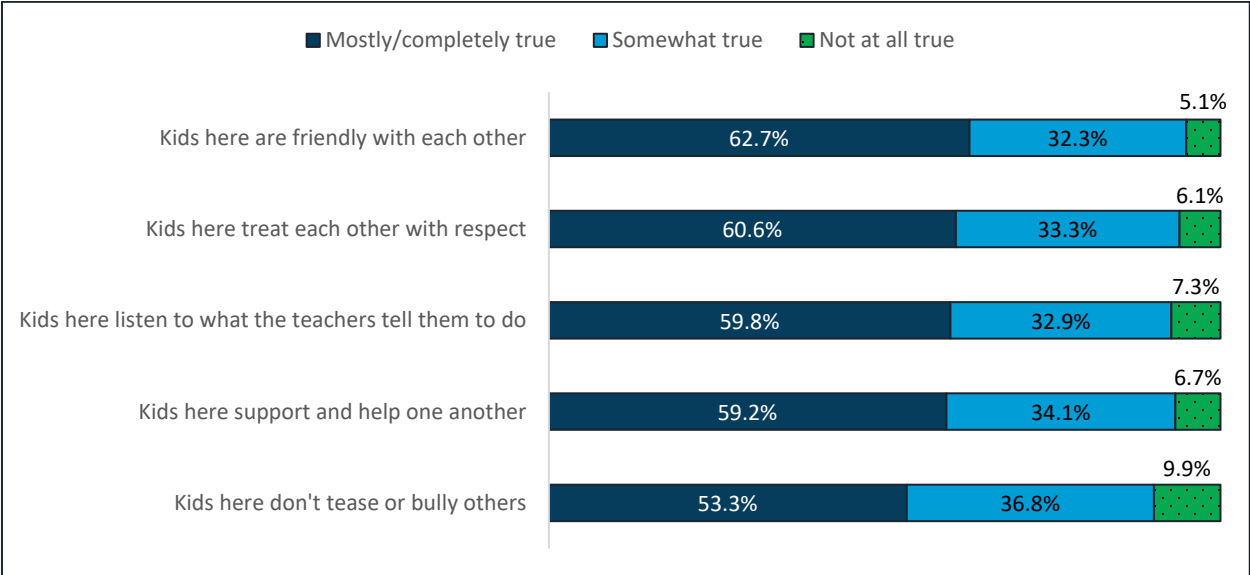
Note. Data from student survey. For this set of items, *N* ranges from 865 to 871 students.

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Evaluation Question 3: How did students' interests change after participating in afterschool programming?

We explored how interested students felt in a range of topics compared to before starting 21st CCLC programming. Half of respondents reported feeling more interested in art than when they began participation (50%), and nearly half reported feeling more interested in sports (46%). Half or more of students felt similarly about reading (57%), science (57%), writing (55%), history (53%), and other countries and cultures (51%) relative to how they felt prior to attending their program. More than one third of students (38%) reported feeling less interested in politics and government than before they started. In addition, more than a fourth of students felt less interested in drama (29%) and history (27%; Exhibit 10).

Exhibit 10. Half of students reported feeling more interested in art, and nearly half reported feeling more interested in sports after participating in afterschool programming. More than one third of students reported decreased interest in politics and government.

Topic	More interested	About the same	Less Interested
Art	50.1%	38.6%	11.2%
Sports	46.0%	40.4%	13.6%
Music	41.7%	47.4%	10.9%
Computers/technology	39.7%	48.2%	12.1%
Other countries/cultures	30.6%	50.5%	18.9%
Issues in my community	28.9%	47.9%	23.1%
Drama	23.0%	48.2%	28.7%
Science	22.9%	56.8%	20.2%
Writing	22.7%	54.7%	22.5%
History	20.1%	53.0%	27.0%
Reading	19.7%	57.0%	23.3%
Politics/government	12.8%	48.9%	38.2%
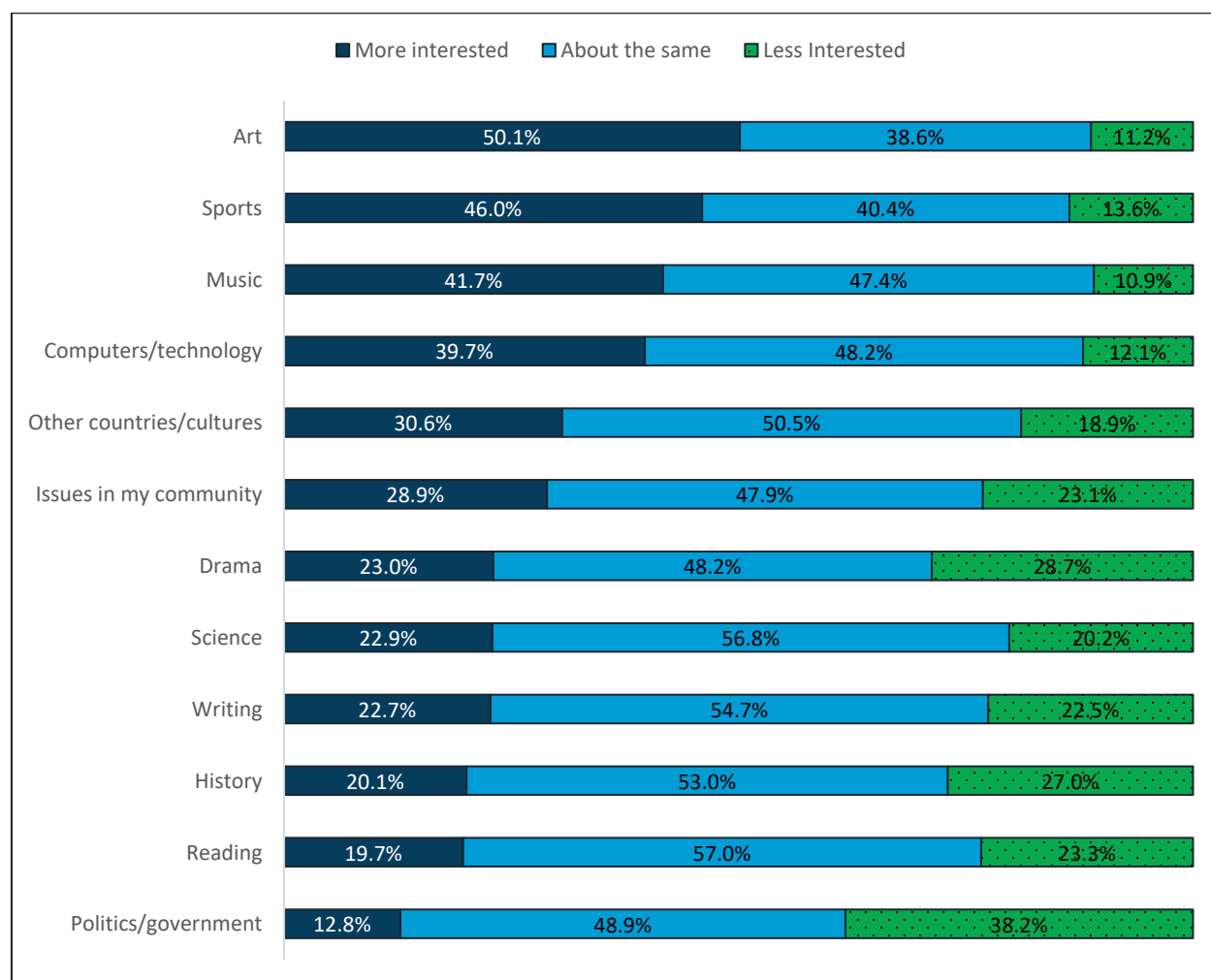
Note. Data from student survey. For this set of items, *N* ranges from 842 to 855 students.

Evaluation Question 4: To what extent did student learning engagement in the classroom change during the 2022–23 program year?

Overall, teachers reported that they saw improvement for half or more of their students in their participation in learning activities, focus during group discussions or activities, focus on the task at hand, and motivation to learn (Exhibit 11).

Exhibit 11. Half or more of respondents reported improvements in their students' learning engagement, whereas approximately 20% reported no change in engagement.
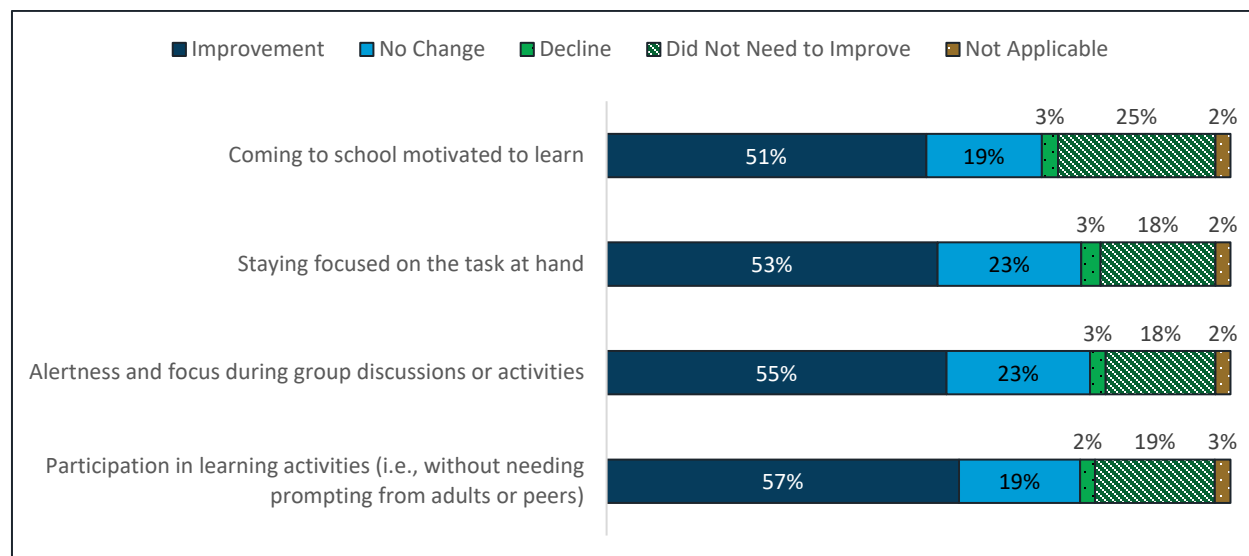
Note. Data from teacher survey. *N* = 2,008 students.

Conclusion

Through a brief online survey, students in Grades 6–12 shared their feelings and experiences during the 2022–23 program year. During this past program year, operations were largely aligned with those of the pre-COVID-19–pandemic era, with the majority of programming happening in in-person settings. Therefore, many survey items focused on the social interactions and dynamics that occur during 21st CCLC programming. Based on students' responses, one can infer that the return to in-person programming has enabled them to develop meaningful connections with both their peers and adult program staff.

It is encouraging to see that, in many ways, students' actual experiences in programming were positive: A majority of students reported that they really looked forward to attending programming, where they had the opportunity make new friends, discover new interests, challenge themselves, and develop a positive sense of self. Students also reported heightened interest in such topics as art and sports after attending 21st CCLC programming. The survey

data suggest that middle and high school students who participated in 21st CCLC programming not only made social and emotional gains but also identified new academic and extracurricular pathways to pursue.

Teachers also shared their perceptions on the learning engagement of K–5 students who participated in 21st CCLC programming, and they reported substantial levels of improvement in students' self-directed participation in learning activities, task focus, and motivation to learn. These findings suggest that elementary school students who participated in 21st CCLC programming developed skills and behaviors that support active learning.

Looking forward to next steps, it would be valuable to review the results of these two surveys with OSPI and other 21st CCLC stakeholders to gain input on key findings and then determine whether additional data collection is warranted. One such finding that may inform continuous program improvement efforts is the sizable minority of respondents with unfavorable program experiences and perceptions. OSPI may consider facilitating qualitative focus groups, for example, to learn more about this subset of participants and their specific needs with respect to program climate and structure. Through further data collection and discussion, it may be possible to gain additional valuable information about the emotions and experiences of students in ever-evolving 21st CCLC programming.

Appendix A. Student Survey

Washington 21st Century Community Learning Centers Youth Survey

The purpose of this survey is to find out more about the afterschool activities provided in this program and how students like you feel about these activities. We care what you think about these types of activities, and your answers will help make afterschool programs better for students in Washington. We need your honest feedback. The questions on the survey ask about what you experienced in afterschool activities offered at this program this school year—activities you went to in person before school, after school, or on weekends and activities you may have attended online. The term afterschool used in this survey refers to all these types of activities.

This is not a test. There are no wrong answers. Please choose the answer that best describes your experience attending afterschool activities at your school. It should take you about 15 minutes to answer all the questions on this survey.

This survey is voluntary. You may choose to take the survey or not. Your parent(s)/guardian(s) know you may be taking this survey. You can skip items or stop at any time. This survey does not have your name on it, so everything you write is confidential, which means that no one (not your parents, teachers, school staff, or other students) will be allowed to know how you answer these questions.

You can skip questions you don't want to answer, and you can stop taking the survey if you don't want to finish it. Take your time and read each question carefully, then check the answer that is most true for you.

I have read and understood the above.

1. How much do you look forward to coming to this afterschool program?

a. Not at all. I don't want to be here.	◉
b. I *sort of* look forward to it.	◉
c. I *really* look forward to it.	◉

2. **Young people might describe themselves in many ways. We have listed some things youth might say or think about themselves. How true is each statement for you? Choose the answer that is most true for you for each statement.**

	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Mostly true	Completely true
Academic identity				
a. Doing well in school is an important part of who I am.	○	○	○	○
b. Getting good grades is one of my main goals.	○	○	○	○
c. I take pride in doing my best in school.	○	○	○	○
d. I am a hard worker when it comes to my schoolwork.	○	○	○	○
e. It is important to me to learn as much as I can.	○	○	○	○
f. I like doing challenging work at school because I know I will learn more.	○	○	○	○
Self-esteem				
a. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	○	○	○	○
b. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	○	○	○	○
c. I am able to do things as well as most other people.	○	○	○	○
d. I feel that I am a person of worth.	○	○	○	○
e. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	○	○	○	○
f. I feel like I have much to be proud of.	○	○	○	○
g. All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a success.	○	○	○	○

3. **How has this program helped you specifically? Pick up to THREE areas where you think the program has helped you the most.**

This program has helped me . . .	Pick three
a. Feel good about myself	○
b. With my confidence	○
c. Make new friends	○
d. Find out what is important to me	○
e. Find out what I'm good at doing	○
f. Find out what I like to do	○
g. Discover things I want to learn more about	○
h. Learn things that will help me in school	○

This program has helped me . . .	Pick three
i. Learn things that will be important for my future	⦿
j. Think about the kinds of classes I want to take in the future	⦿
k. Think about what I might like to do when I get older	⦿
l. Learn about things that are important to my community	⦿
m. Feel good because I was helping my community	⦿
n. This program hasn't actually helped me	⦿

4.   Please indicate if you have had the following experiences in this afterschool program.

In this afterschool program . . .	Not at all	Sort of	Yes, definitely
a. I tried new things	⦿	⦿	⦿
b. I got to do things here I don't get to do anywhere else	⦿	⦿	⦿
c. I set goals for myself	⦿	⦿	⦿
d. I learned to push myself	⦿	⦿	⦿
e. I did things that challenged me in a good way.	⦿	⦿	⦿
f. I worked hard to get better at something	⦿	⦿	⦿

5.   Thinking about the adults in this program, how true are these statements for you? In this program, there is an adult here . . .

	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Mostly true	Completely true
a. Who is interested in what I think about things	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿
b. Who I can talk to when I am upset	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿
c. Who helps me when I have a problem	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿
d. Who I enjoy being around	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿
e. Who has helped me find a special interest or talent (something I'm good at)	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿
f. Who asks me about my life and goals	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿
g. Who I will miss when the program is over	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿

6. **At this program, how do kids get along? Indicate how true each statement is based on your own experience in this program.**

	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Mostly true	Completely true
a. Kids here are friendly with each other.	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
b. Kids here treat each other with respect.	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
c. Kids here listen to what the teachers tell them to do.	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
d. Kids here don't tease or bully others.	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
e. Kids here support and help one another.	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙

7. **Thinking about how you feel today compared to the beginning of the program, how interested are you in the following topics?**

	Less interested	About the same	More interested
a. Science	⊙	⊙	⊙
b. Computers/technology	⊙	⊙	⊙
c. Reading	⊙	⊙	⊙
d. Music	⊙	⊙	⊙
e. Art	⊙	⊙	⊙
f. Politics/government	⊙	⊙	⊙
g. History	⊙	⊙	⊙
h. Other countries/cultures	⊙	⊙	⊙
i. Writing	⊙	⊙	⊙
j. Drama	⊙	⊙	⊙
k. Sports	⊙	⊙	⊙
l. Issues in my community	⊙	⊙	⊙

Washington 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Appendix B. Teacher Survey

*This survey is designed to collect information about changes in a particular student's behavior during the school year. Please select only one response for each of the questions asked in the table below. Please note that survey response options are divided into two primary groups: (1) **Did Not Need to Improve**, which suggests that the student had already obtained an acceptable level of functioning and no improvement was needed during the course of the school year; and (2) **Acceptable Level of Functioning Not Demonstrated Early in School Year— Improvement Warranted**, which suggests that the student was not functioning at a desirable level of performance on the behavior being described. If the student warranted improvement on a given behavior, please indicate the extent to which the student did or did not improve on that behavior during the course of the school year by indicating if they **demonstrated Improvement, No Change**, or **Decline**. If you believe the behavior described in a given question is not applicable to the student for whom you are completing the survey, please select **Not Applicable**.*

Name of student: _____

Grade/school: _____

To what extent has your student changed their behavior in terms of	Did not need to improve	Improvement	No change	Decline	Not applicable
Coming to school motivated to learn.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staying focused on the task at hand.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Alertness and focus during group discussions or activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Participation in learning activities (i.e., without needing prompting from adults or peers).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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AIR® Headquarters
1400 Crystal Drive, 10th Floor
Arlington, VA 22202-3289
+1.202.403.5000 | **AIR.ORG**

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