



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In its second year of implementation, the 2020-21 Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO) Safety Initiative continued with its primary objective of providing a safe, healthy working environment for all after-school employees, students, and visitors on 50 high-need campuses. In 2020-21, the ELO Safety Initiative addressed two challenges from 2019-20 that included 1) building the capacity of the After-School Safety Coordinator [now called Site Coordinator (SC)], and 2) disseminating pertinent information to SCs, after-school district staff members, parent-pay vendors, and partners. In 2020-21, \$585,000 in Title IV, Part A funds supported the ELO Safety Initiative that included supplemental pay for 50 SCs (one per campus).¹

On March 13, 2020, in alignment with federal recommendations, the Governor of Texas issued a disaster proclamation certifying that the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, posed an imminent threat of disaster for all counties in the state of Texas. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Dallas Independent School District (ISD) transitioned students to at-home learning on March 23 following spring break (March 16 – 20) until the end of the 2019-20 school year. In 2020-21, Dallas ISD delayed the start of the 2020-21 school year until September 8, 2020 and implemented at-home learning districtwide for the first four weeks. On October 22, 2020, the district announced that campuses would provide in-person and virtual learning throughout the rest of the school year, and parents could choose whether their children participated in in-person or virtual instruction. The district also continued to implement the Center for Disease Control (CDC), as well as state and local COVID safety protocols. The ELO department provided both in-person and virtual programing in 2020-21.

PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the evaluation was to summarize the context and process information about the ELO safety program for the 2020-21 school year.² The evaluator also analyzed the program goals defined in the 2020-21 ELO Title IV, Part A Workscope. The evaluator used program documents, interviews, attendance data, and survey data to evaluate the program. The ELO program continued to be impacted by COVID-19; changes are described in the relevant sections of the report.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS/OUTCOMES

How was the ELO Safety Initiative implemented during the 2020-21 school year?

In 2020-21 the ELO department implemented the Safety Initiative with three modifications from 2019-20. First, the ELO department hired a part-time After-School Safety Specialist to support all campuses with after-school programs. Second, ELO central staff members developed safety training modules housed on the ELO After-School Safety website for all SCs, after-school district staff members, parent-pay vendors, and partners. The website served as a hub for District safety resources, training modules, feedback, updates, and overall general information about after-school safety. Third, to avoid the confusion about the safety and site coordinator roles experienced in the 2019-20 school year, the After-School Site Coordinator and After-School Safety Coordinator positions were streamlined into one position.

A total of 63 SCs were hired in 2020-21, of these, only 50 remained for the entire school year. Forty-eight of the 63 were funded through the ELO budget and the remaining 15 were paid for through Accelerating Campus Excellence (ACE) campus budgets.³ As in 2019-20, finding individuals who could commit to working extended hours was a problem, even though campuses were allowed flexibility by splitting the role between two or more people. A total of 12 campuses had multiple site coordinators.

Some campuses attempted to fill the SC role using teacher assistants (TAs); however, this was problematic from a budget perspective. TAs in the SC role received compensation at the overtime (time and a half) rate, which greatly impacted the number of safety coordinators the ELO department was able to afford. Even so, two campuses hired TAs as a last resort because the number of program participants exceeded the 1:10 teacher/student ratio requirement.⁴ ELO staff members wanted to be able to hire TAs as SCs because of their availability and willingness to work the extended hours. However, these issues were not resolved during discussions with the Dallas ISD Compensation Department; thus, ELO leadership could not hire additional TAs for the 2020-21 school year.

¹ The funding amounts were provided by Special Revenue Funds Management on 02/28/ 21. This is a decrease from last year (\$1,099,633) because some components of the 2019-20 workscope were removed in 2020-21.

² Portions of this report have been adapted from Garcia-Rincón (2020).

³ ELO central staff members were responsible for training SCs from ACE campuses.

⁴ Elementary schools with TAs included Chapel Hill and Ronald E. McNair.

Aside from TAs and teachers, several other types of campus staff members filled the SC role in 2020-21. SCs included 35 teachers, five counselors, four librarians/media specialists, two TAs, two instructional coaches, one Professional Learning Community Facilitator, and one office manager. Seven of the after-school SCs also served as daytime SCs, meaning that they were already trained for the SC role.

Of the 50 after-school campuses, a total of 32 were served by site coordinators, 15 had vacancies because a professional staff member was not willing to serve as the site coordinator, and three reported not needing a site coordinator.

SCs supported campus staff members, students, and visitors during after-school hours (Monday through Friday from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.) for the 2020-21 school year. They had two major roles. First, they managed the after-school programs implemented by several program providers by overseeing the teachers who were on site or working directly with providers when there were no on-site teachers.⁵ Second, they ensured the safety of all program participants (staff members and students) by:

- developing an after-school safety plan and procedures specific to their campus,
- providing access to facilities within the building,
- ensuring the code of conduct was carried out in accordance with Dallas ISD policy,
- monitoring external guests and visitors,
- serving as the cardiopulmonary resuscitation- (CPR)-certified designee,
- administering first-aid,
- conducting monthly emergency drills,
- tracking student health concerns,
- serving as point of contact for vendor-led programs, and
- serving as the point of contact for crisis events in the community.

To document this work, SCs submitted a monthly checklist of their emergency drills, program walk-throughs, and safety plans. The ELO department Title IV workscope included several safety-related goals based on these job responsibilities. The first two goals were that 100 percent of campuses would have an accessible list of student health concerns by November 2020 and that SCs would develop a safety plan and procedures for their campus by February 2021. According to data provided by ELO central staff members, 100 percent of campuses had student health concern lists by the November deadline and 100 percent

developed a safety plan and procedures by February 2021.⁶ Thus, both goals were met.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, vendors and visitors were not allowed on the campuses during the 2020-21 school year. This restriction included individuals who were to conduct the Dallas ISD Safety Assessments at campuses. Because the assessments could not be conducted, the workscope goal that 85 percent of campus sites would pass the Dallas ISD Safety Assessment by May 2021 was unable to be examined. Instead, all SCs submitted monthly checklists that included safety requirements.

What professional development was provided to Site Coordinators and after-school teachers in 2020-21?

Site Coordinators

The ELO Safety Initiative supported specialized, mandatory professional development (PD) for SCs. The initiative provided two PD sessions (Onboarding and CPR/First Aid/Blood Pathogen) and online refresher modules.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020-21, the ELO department first provided SCs with on-demand virtual training about COVID-19, child abuse, and trauma informed care (the latter two provided by the Dallas Advocacy Center).

Virtual onboarding training occurred in August 2020 and September 2020. The training covered safety and the roles and responsibilities of the SCs. The major safety topics discussed included fire drill protocols, environmental health, general health services, emergency management, and student services. Other topics included student registration; student attendance; programs, schedules, and lesson plans; working with vendors, volunteers, and parents; and check-out procedures for parents.

In addition to onboarding training, SCs attended in-person CPR and Blood Pathogen certification courses (valid for two years). Staff members in the Dallas ISD Risk Management, ELO, and Health Services Departments provided the trainings which were required to be completed by December 2020 for fall hires.

ELO central staff members provided the evaluator PD attendance data for the year.⁷ Of the 63 SCs, 100 percent attended the mandatory COVID-19 and Onboarding training and 94 percent attended CPR/First Aid and Blood Pathogen training.

⁵ In-person after-school program providers included Boys and Girls Club, the City of Dallas, Dallas After-School Achievers, and the Young Men's Christian Association. Additionally, one program provided virtual activities.

⁶ Data provided on 05/10/21.

⁷ Data provided on 05/10/21.

After-school Teachers

The ELO Safety Initiative also provided two PD opportunities (one about COVID-19 and the other about academic enrichment) and online refresher modules for after-school teachers in 2020-21. The training was required to be completed by March 31, 2021.⁸ Data provided by ELO central staff members showed that of the 95 after-school teachers, 75 (79%) from the 50 campuses completed the COVID-19 training.⁹

Fifty-four of the 95 after-school teachers were Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) teachers. Of the 54 STEM teachers, 36 (67%) attended the National Mathematics and Science Initiative (NMSI) virtual training session on March 27, 2021 and 34 (63%) attended the second NMSI virtual training session on April 17, 2021. These percentages did not meet the Title IV workscope goal that 75 percent of after-school teachers would participate in two PD sessions by March 31, 2021.¹⁰

The ELO Title IV workscope included a goal that 70 percent of teachers would find training helpful. However, the ELO department decided not to give the PD-related surveys in an effort to reduce demands on teachers during testing time. Thus, this goal could not be examined.

What were the results of the ELO Safety Initiative survey?

The evaluator created a six-item survey in collaboration with ELO central staff members and administered it in April 2021 to all 50 designated SCs using the Qualtrics survey platform.¹¹ The purpose of the survey was to collect feedback regarding the experiences of the ELO After-school SCs for the 2020-21 school year.

A total of 37 SCs responded to the survey (74%). In general, the majority of the SCs responded favorably to questions about the implementation of the ELO program and their role as the after-school SC in 2020-21 (Table 1). Most strongly agreed or agreed that the PD provided by the ELO department effectively supported them in their role as a SC (92%). Although positive overall, the lowest percentage of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that adequate staff were provided to maintain a 10:1 student to teacher ratio in all after-school classrooms (81%).

Table 1: 2020-21 After-School Site Coordinator Survey Favorable Responses

Question	Strongly Agree/Agree	
	n	%
After-school Site Coordinators received the necessary training and resources to implement fire and emergency drills in 2020-21.	31	83.8
Adequate staff was provided to maintain a 10:1 student to teacher ratio in all after-school classrooms.	30	81.1
I believe that monthly meetings supported me in my role as a Site Coordinator in 2020-21.	32	86.5
The ELO Department has provided all the necessary supports to help me meet all my duties and responsibilities as a Site Coordinator effectively.	32	86.5
The Site Coordinator professional development provided by the ELO department effectively supported me in my role as a Site Coordinator in 2020-21.	34	91.9

Source: Spring 2021 Site Coordinator Survey.

Note: A total of 37 respondents completed the survey.

SCs were able to recommend changes to improve the implementation of the ELO SC role in 2021-22. Thirty-one respondents (84% of survey respondents) made recommendations. Eight respondents recommended changes pertaining to training, including starting training earlier in the year and providing more hands-on demonstrations of emergency drills. Eight respondents provided feedback around daily duties. Specifically, respondents reported having too much paperwork (e.g., daily checklists) and that the attendance system was tedious and might be better implemented separately by each program on a campus. Last, seven respondents gave feedback around communication; it needed to be consistent, infrequent but with detail, adhere to the calendar, inform SCs of changes, and allow for interaction between SCs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Improve recruitment efforts to fill vacant After-School Safety Coordinator positions. Of the 50 after-school campuses, 15 had vacancies because a professional staff member was not willing to serve as the site coordinator. The ELO staff members should work to ensure all after-school campuses have a Site Coordinator to ensure the safety of students and staff members at after-school programs.

⁸ In addition to the training they received, teachers were also informed about the after-school safety standards and expectations by their SCs.

⁹ Data provided on 05/10/21.

¹⁰ Data provided on 05/10/21.

¹¹ Email addresses for survey respondents were provided by ELO staff members.

Use participant feedback to improve the implementation of the ELO After-School Site Coordinator role in 2021-22. The most common recommendations for improvement were in the areas of training ($n=8$), daily duties ($n=8$), and communication ($n=7$). ELO department staff members should work to address these concerns in 2021-22.

REFERENCE

Garcia-Rincón, R. (2020). 2019-20 Evaluation of Extended Learning Opportunities Initiatives. Dallas, TX. Dallas Independent School District.

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