# FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

# NITA M. LOWEY 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS PROGRAM

# KEANSBURG AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM (KAP)

**YEAR 1: 2024-2025** 

# **KEANSBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Keansburg, New Jersey

October, 2025



Prepared By:

MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

ASSOCIATES, INC.

Newtown, PA

#### FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

# NITA M. LOWEY 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS PROGRAM

#### **KEANSBURG AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM (KAP)**

**YEAR 1: 2024-2025** 

#### KEANSBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT

Keansburg, New Jersey

OCTOBER, 2025

Prepared By:
MANAGEMENT AND
EVALUATION ASSOCIATES, INC.
Newtown, PA

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The staff of Management and Evaluation Associates, Inc. (M and E) would like to acknowledge the program director and site coordinator, Mr. Mike Rosenberg, who provided support for this evaluation. We would also like to acknowledge the cooperation and participation of the Caruso site coordinator, Ms. Deanna Lopez, and as well as the staff, students, and parents in the Joseph C. Caruso Elementary and the School Joseph R. Bolger Middle School for their contributions and participation.

Mary Beth Slivka President

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Section	Page
INTRODUCTION	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
Final Assessment of Program Goals and Objectives	5
Goal #1	5
Goal #2	
Goal #3	
Limitations of the Study	
Final Conclusions	
Final Recommendations	9
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	10
Program Implementation	
1. Program Administration	
2. Recruitment, Enrollment, and Retention Activities	
3. Programs, Services, and Activities	
4. Partners and Collaborating Organizations	
5. Coordination with External Agencies and Programs	13
6. Advisory Boards	
7. Staffing and Professional Development Activities	13
EVALUATION MONITORING OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION	· 1Δ
Status of Recommendations Offered by M and E in 2024-25 Interim Repo	
Summary of Stakeholder Interview Feedback	
8. Linkage between the After-School and Regular School Day Program	
9. Student Attendance and Social and Disciplinary Behaviors	
10. Feedback from Program Participants and Stakeholders	
11. Communication with Regular Classroom Teachers	
12. Availability of Materials and Supplies	
13. Parent Involvement/Participation	
14. Program Accomplishments	
15. Program Strengths	
16. Concerns, Shortcomings, Challenges and Obstacles to Success	
17. Suggestions for Program Improvement	
18. Plans for the 2025 Summer Program	
19. Plan for Program Sustainability	
Summary of Student Performance Data	20
APPENDICES	
A. Conceptual Framework for the Evaluation	25
B. Survey Results – Fall 2024	

#### Introduction

This is the final report of the evaluation of the first year of implementation under the current funding cycle of Keansburg 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) After-School Program (KAP).

As part of the overall evaluation effort, staff from the program evaluator, Management and Evaluation Associates, Inc. (M and E), conducted a planning session during the Fall 2024 with the program director to address program implementation issues and to confirm the scope of the evaluation activities for the year. M and E's initial monitoring visit was conducted on January 30, 2025, and the second visit was conducted on May 13, 2025. As part of the monitoring effort, interviews were conducted with the program director, the site coordinators, and selected staff and students. During the first half of the program year, surveys were administered to teachers, students, and parents, the results of which were reported in M and E's *Interim Report*, which was submitted to the program director on April 8, 2025 and is incorporated in its entirety into this Final Report.

## **Executive Summary**

#### Final Assessment of Program Goals and Objectives

The following sections describe M and E's final assessment of the achievement of the program's goals and objectives for the 2024-25 program year.

Goal #1: To provide high-quality educational and enrichment programs that will enable students to improve their academic achievement and promote positive behavior and appropriate social interaction with peers and adults.

- Objective 1.1: The grantee will establish and maintain partnerships and collaborative relationships with schools, families, youth, and the community to enhance students' access to a variety of learning opportunities.
- Objective 1.2: The grantee will adopt intentional strategies and research-based practices designed to support student skill building and mastery, both academically and from a youth development perspective.
- Objective 1.3: The grantee will adopt practices to support the orientation, training, and development of afterschool staff in the adoption and use of intentional strategies and research-based practices to ensure program quality.
- Objective 1.4: Students regularly participating in the program will be positively impacted in terms of performance on state assessments in language arts and mathematics.
- Objective 1.5: Students regularly participating in the program will demonstrate improved school-day attendance, decreased disciplinary actions or other adverse behaviors, improved social-emotional functioning, and the development of 21st century skills.

#### **Assessment:**

Objective 1.1 - There is clear evidence of the attainment of this objective. During the 2024-25 program year, the KAP program established partnerships and collaboration agreements with eleven different community organizations and coordinated its programming with four external agencies and programs. In addition, the program director met periodically with the Program

Advisory Board, the program's partners and collaborators, and the Student Advisory Board to solicit input and feedback about program activities for the purpose of planning and program improvement. Feedback and recommendations which emanated from those meetings were carefully considered, as the program was intentional in ensuring that all ideas were explored, and students felt heard and represented. Collaborators shared what they had to offer and then the program director and site coordinators incorporated their feedback into the program, whenever possible and practical. (see paragraphs 4-6; p. 13)

Objective 1.2 - There is clear evidence of the attainment of this objective. During the 2024-25 program year, the KAP program provided six academic programs; ten cultural, recreation, and youth development activities; eight health, nutritional, and physical activities; two character education programs, and sixteen parent involvement activities. There is also clear evidence from stakeholder interviews and surveys that these activities were well-organized and well-led, well-staffed and well-supplied, well-received, well-coordinated with the regular school day program, and demonstrated a positive impact on students' educations and well-being. (see paragraphs 3, 8, 11, and 12 on pp. 11, 15, 17, and 18); see also selected relevant survey items in Figures 1, 4, 5 on pp. 25-26)

Objective 1.3 - There is clear evidence of the attainment of this objective. During the 2024-25 program year, KAP administrators and staff were provided with several opportunities for their continuing professional development from several different sources, including the NJDOE, NJSACC, the school district, and the KAP program. There is also positive feedback from the program staff attesting to the relevance and usefulness of the professional development sessions. (see paragraph 7 on p. 13 and the relevant survey items in Figure 4 on p. 26)

Objective 1.4 - There is evidence that a majority of students in the KAP Program have demonstrated positive progress in achieving this objective as measured by the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment. In English Language Arts, 27.2% of the students tested with the NJSLA either fully achieved or exceeded expectations (Levels 4-5) and 45.6% were shown to be partially meeting expectations or approaching expectations (Levels 2-3). In addition, in mathematics, 24.6% either fully achieved or exceeded expectations on the NJSLA, while 47.6% were shown to be meeting partial expectations or approaching expectations. Within the daily schedule of program activities, ample time was devoted to helping students in academic areas that were subsequently tested with the NJSLA. Comparative data show that between program years 2023-24 and 2024-25, KAP students achieved increases in NJSLA scores in both English language Arts (+1.5%) and mathematics (+4.6%). Finally, the data show that attendance rates among students in the regular school year program remained extremely high (92.95%) for both 2023-24 and 2024-25 program years, but disciplinary infractions among students in the regular school year program more than doubled, from 253 in 2023-24 to 636 in 2024-25. The substantial increase in the number of disciplinary infraction probably warrants additional attention by program and school district administrators and staff. (see Tables 1-5, pp. 21-24)

Objective 1.5 - There is clear evidence of the attainment of this objective. During the 2024-25 program year, program administrators and teachers reported that attendance was generally good and consistent, and most students attended every day. It was noted, however, that attendance seemed to decrease a bit during the both the winter months, (Keansburg is a walking district, and it's not always safe for students to walk home in the dark) and the spring months (due to warm weather sports, like baseball and flag football). Both program administrators and teachers,

however, noted that behavioral issues and disciplinary infractions arose at times (this is corroborated somewhat by end-of school student disciplinary statistics). Moreover, there is clear evidence (i.e., high ratings of *excellent* or *good* in student and parent surveys) that students' participation and engagement in the KAP program had a positive impact on their self-confidence and self-esteem; their social behaviors; their critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making skills, as well as on their social-emotional learning. (see paragraphs 9-10, 14, 17 on pp. 16-17, 19-20, Table 4 on p. 24, and selected relevant survey items in Figures 1-6; pp. 27-29)

# Goal #2: To implement activities that promote parental involvement and provide opportunities for literacy and related educational development to the families of participating students.

- *Objective 2.1:* The agency will establish collaborative relationships that offer opportunities for literacy and related educational activities to the families of participating students.
- Objective 2.2: Parents participating in grant-funded activities will increase their involvement in the education of children under their care.
- Objective 2.3: Grantees will adopt intentional strategies to communicate to parents and adult family members about program goals and objectives, activities, and their child's experience in the program.

#### **Assessment:**

Objectives 2.1 to 2.3 - There is clear evidence of attainment in Objectives 2.1 and 2.3, and at least partial attainment of Objective 2.2. During the 2024-25 program year, in addition to the activities sponsored and conducted by the KAP Program itself, the program also coordinated its services and activities with several different partners and other external agencies and programs (e.g., KEA, SBYSB, Kidzart, Family Friendly Center, Titan Family Academy), which provided opportunities for parents and families to become more involved in their children's educations. Moreover, there is ample evidence from stakeholder interviews and surveys that parent and family-oriented services and activities were well-received by those who attended and had a positive impact on participating parents' knowledge, skills, and participation in program activities. However, interview data suggest that there is significant room for improvement in parent attendance and participation in KAP program activities and events. (see paragraphs 3-6, 8, 10, 13, and 14 on pp. 11-13, 15, 17-19); see also selected relevant survey items in Figures 1-6 on pp. 27-29)

# Goal #3: To measure participants' progress and program effectiveness through monitoring and evaluating.

- Objective 3.1: Throughout the grant period, the grantee will continually assess program quality and effectiveness and use this information to support quality improvement.
- Objective 3.2: The grantee will work to obtain data on students' in-school progress in the areas of academic achievement, behavior, and social development and use this information to inform the design and delivery of programming.
- Objective 3.3: Throughout the grant period, the grantee will adopt measures as needed within the program when data is not available from other sources to assess (a) youth engagement in program activities; (b) the academic and/or social-emotional needs of participating youth; and (c) program impact.

#### **Assessment:**

Objectives 3.1 to 3.4 – There is clear evidence of the attainment of these four objectives. Throughout the program year, the KAP program administration worked collaboratively with M and E in planning and implementing evaluation schedules and strategies for the program. In the Fall 2024, M and E met with the program director to establish a plan for the evaluation, and during the program year, M and E conducted two site visits during which interviews were conducted with the program director, site coordinators, and several teachers and students. In addition, data collection protocols (i.e., surveys) were administered to students, staff, and parents near the conclusion of the fall term. Finally, year-end student performance data were collected from the school district. This evaluation effort has been designed to provide relevant and useful feedback to the program administrators and other stakeholders (e.g., advisory boards) regarding the extent to which program goals and objectives have been achieved, the impact the program has had on students' academic, youth development, and social-emotional learning and well-being, the impact of the program's services and activities on parents, and to provide other relevant and useful information that supports program quality and effectiveness and informs the design and delivery of the 21st CCLC Program. (See Conceptual Framework in the Appendix to this report, pp. 25-26)

#### **Limitations of the Study**

While every attempt has been made to ensure the overall validity and reliability of this evaluation study, some limitations were unavoidable. First, the subjects in the study, including the staff, students, and parents, were not randomly selected, thus limiting the generalizability of the study findings. Second, the student performance data were not generated by program staff but were collected from, and limited to, only school district records that were readily available to program staff. Accordingly, the validity of the data was not within the control of the program staff. Finally, while comparative statistics were collected and are presented for student performance in both 2024-25 and 2023-24, (e.g., NJSLA scores, attendance figures, and disciplinary measures), these data represent different student cohorts, which once again limits the generalizability of the findings.

#### **Final Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on the interviews with the program director and selected staff, an analysis of the survey data collected from students, staff, and parents, and a review of the students' performance data; M and E has arrived at the following final conclusions and recommendations as the program concludes its first year of funding under the current cycle.

#### **Final Conclusions**

- 1. The Keansburg After-School Program (KAP) provides a safe, supportive, and well-structured environment where students benefit from academic assistance, engaging enrichment activities, recreational opportunities, and meaningful social interactions.
- 2. A review of program indicators from the approved EWEG application confirms that all planned activities for the program year were successfully completed. Data provides strong evidence that the program has met its stated goals and objectives.
- 3. The program had some significant accomplishments, inclusive of achieving its Level of Service (LOS) by the end of November (demonstrating that recruitment, enrollment, and retention were effective), the reinstatement of the Culinary Class, and the establishment of new collaborations with a local nursing home and Kidzart.

- 4. Strong alignment exists between the regular school day curriculum and the after-school KAP program. Insofar as the after-school staff also work in the district during the regular school day, communication between teachers and after-school staff is smooth and seamless, allowing for consistent academic support and reinforcement of the regular school day curriculum.
- 5. Student feedback indicates high satisfaction with the program. Students report enjoying the activities, especially the Culinary Class and Esports, making new friends, having fun, and appreciating the homework assistance. Data also demonstrates significant positive impacts, including improved self-confidence, self-esteem, and academic performance.
- 6. Parents expressed strong appreciation for and reliance on the KAP program, consistently viewing it as a positive resource for their children and families. Overall parent involvement, however, remained limited, though participation showed modest increases through Saturday family outings and through parent engagement activities conducted in collaboration with the Bolger School.
- 7. The program enjoys broad support from stakeholders, including administrators, staff, students, and parents. The program received positive interview feedback and high ratings on the program surveys, which suggest strong stakeholder engagement. The data also suggest that the Keansburg KAP program is an essential part of the school community, cultivating student success and positive youth development through collaborative efforts.

#### Final Recommendations

M and E offers the following final recommendations for consideration by the program administration:

- 1. Maintain the overall program design given its demonstrated successes, while continuing to incorporate best practices in after-school programming.
- 2. Continue to support students' social and behavioral development by integrating SEL into favored classes and activities such as culinary, eGaming, and recreation. Provide youth development activities that promote positive interactions, self-regulation, and disciplinary growth.
- 3. To sustain student engagement and motivation, diversify offerings each cycle. This may include exploring new engaging options such as a LEGO class, updated board games, the use of outside vendors, and activities that draw upon staff expertise and interests. Incorporating student input into planning is also recommended to ensure programming remains relevant and responsive.
- 4. Partner with parents to design meaningful involvement opportunities that encourage greater participation. Solicit program collaborators and partners to co-host family events and continue offering Saturday activities.
- 5. Continue to seek new partnerships and collaborations that can enrich programming and provide students with expanded opportunities. Potential avenues include engaging local businesses (e.g., Wawa) and nearby universities to contribute resources, expertise, or experiences that support student development.

6. Share this final report with school administration and stakeholders. Use it as a basis for discussion and planning, ensuring that identified issues are addressed and that programming continues to evolve to meet student and family needs.

# **Program Description**

#### **Program Implementation**

The year 2024-25 marked the first year of implementation under the current 5-year funding cycle of the Nita M. Lowey 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Keansburg After-School Program (KAP), with funding in the amount of \$400,000¹. The theme for the program was Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM). During the first half of the program year, the program served students in grades 3-5 from 2:20 p.m. to 5:20 p.m. at the Joseph C. Caruso Elementary School and in grades 6-8 from 2:15 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. at the Joseph R. Bolger Middle School. At the time of the initial site visit on January 30, 2025, with a combined total LOS objective of 135 students, KAP at Caruso Elementary School enrolled 101 students with 90 in attendance for at least 30 days and 49 students at Bolger Middle School with 49 in attendance for at least 30 days. In summary, 150 students were enrolled at both program sites and 139 had been in attendance for at least 30 days. At the time of the second site visit on May 13, 2025, KAP at Caruso Elementary School enrolled 104 students with 104 in attendance for at least 30 days and 63 students at Bolger Middle School with 58 in attendance for at least 30 days. In summary, 167 students were enrolled at both program sites and 162 had been in attendance for at least 30 days. The data clearly demonstrate that the LOS objective for both program sites was achieved and exceeded.

All (100%) students who attended both program sites received free or reduced-price lunch. At the Caruso Elementary School, 19 students were identified as individuals with physical disabilities, IEPs, or some accommodations; while at Bolger Middle School, 11 students were identified as individuals with similar conditions. No non-public school students participated in KAP at either program site.

At the time of the initial site monitoring visit, at the Caruso Elementary School, the gender and racial/ethnic data reported by the program director included 47 male students and 54 female students, 19 African American/Black students, 60 Caucasian/White students, one Asian student, and 21 Hispanic/Latino(a) students. At Bolger Middle School, the gender and racial/ethnic data reported by the program director included 21 male students and 28 female students, 17 African American/Black students, 23 Caucasian/White students, and nine Hispanic/Latino(a) students.

A brief general description of the daily program schedule is as follows:

Caruso: 2:20 - 2:35 Snack and outside activity

2:35 - 3:35 Homework help and tutoring

3:35 – 5:20 Scheduled enrichment clubs and recreation

Bolger: 2:15 - 2:30 Snack

2:30 – 3:30 Homework help, tutoring, academic enrichment

3:30 – 5:15 Choice of recreation, eGaming, arts and crafts, and social club

<sup>1</sup> At the time of the initial site visit, the program director reported that program costs were projected for 2024-25 were \$296,317. and administrative costs projected for the same period were \$103,683.

#### 1. Program Administration

Throughout 2024-25, Mr. Mike Rosenberg, served as both the program director and site coordinator at Bolger Middle School. As program director, he maintained authority and responsibility for all aspects of the program and was assisted by Ms. Deanna Lopez, the site coordinator at Caruso Elementary School. Generally, the site coordinators' responsibilities entailed supervising the day-to-day operations of the after-school program, including staffing and completing staff time sheets, assigning and scheduling staff and students to clubs, monitoring and recording student attendance and academic progress, assisting with the Homework Help hour, assigning and supervising high school volunteers, coordinating the academic and behavioral programs, collaborating with regular school day staff regarding students' assignments and academic struggles, managing program supplies and snacks, monitoring students' behaviors and addressing any disciplinary concerns that may occur. Site coordinators also served as liaisons to parents and teachers and discussed with them any academic issues that arose.

#### 2. Recruitment, Enrollment, and Retention Activities

During the program year, the following strategies for recruitment, enrollment, and retention were employed.

Recruitment: Recruitment for the program was done via Facebook, the school website, emails, and at Back-to-School Night. Summer information and applications were emailed to parents of program students.

Enrollment: Parents registered their children using either an online application or a printed one. Student/parent handbooks were distributed, which included the program's rules and attendance policy and consequences. Handbooks were required to be signed by parents. Pick-up authorizations were also a part of the application. Once program registration was filled to capacity, students were placed on a waitlist.

Retention: Offering interesting new classes and activities along with having an abundance of recreation opportunities for the students helped with retention. Conducting student needs assessments and utilizing the program's Student Advisory Council for input helped to give students voice in the program, which also helped retention. Finally, the caring staff at both program sites and the Culinary Club at Bolger also contributed to retention as students love that program.

#### 3. Programs, Services, and Activities

Several programs, services, and activities were offered during the program year.

#### Academic and Enrichment Programs

- Math/ELA tutoring support targeted supplemental instruction grades 3-8
- Homework Help grades 3-8
- Reveal Math
- IXL
- Snapology
- STEM projects

#### Cultural, Recreational, and Youth Development Activities

- Fun Fridays
- Sports and Fitness clubs (both sites)

- Cultural awareness (Caruso)
- Character Ed (both sites)
- eGaming
- Origami
- Jewelry Making
- Drama Club
- Talk it Out Club
- St. Jude's Holiday Candy Shop

#### Health, Nutrition, and Physical Activities

- Healthy living (both sites)
- Dance Revolution
- Recreation
- Healthy Eating
- Indoor/Outdoor Recreation
- Rutgers University Family & Youth Services
- NJSNAP
- Culinary Class

#### Infusion of Character Education

- Character Education on Fridays (both sites)
- Games and Social Skills

#### Parental Involvement

- Back to School Night
- Build a Haunted House
- Liberty Science Center
- Friends of Diverse Learners
- Holiday Ornaments
- 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade Literacy Night
- HIBB Presentation
- Valentine's Candles
- Bowlero Bowling
- Game Night
- Mad Science
- Monster Mini Golf
- Cupcake Decorating
- Lakewood Blue Claws Game
- Program Orientation
- Titan Family Academy

#### 4. Partners and Collaborating Agencies

Throughout the 2024-25, the program partnered and collaborated with the following agencies.

- Middletown Arts Center Theater Programming
- Father Time Parent Outreach, community events

- KEA Parent Outreach, community events
- School-based Youth Services Program (SBYSP) Parent programming as well as high school student workers
- Snapology of Monmouth County STEM programs included summer activity of creating and building projects with common items found in most homes.
- YMCA STEM programs included summer activity of creating and building projects with common items found in most homes
- NJSNAP-Ed cooking lessons, parent involvement
- Fulfill NJ: Monmouth County Food Bank provides breakfast and lunch in the summer, family food at Caruso
- Music N Motion Summer dance parties and carnival games
- Rutgers University Family & Youth Services health and wellness resources for parents
- Kidzart STEM programming

#### 5. Coordination with External Agencies and Programs

Throughout 2024-25, the program coordinated services with the following external agencies and programs.

- School-based Youth Services Program Parent Programming, Teacher Assistants
- Family Friendly Center- Programming
- Titan Family Academy: Title I district services Family services
- District eGaming/sports/drama/music programs

#### 6. Advisory Boards

Up to the second site monitoring visit in May 2025, the Program Advisory Board had met twice, and two meetings with the program's key collaborators and partners were held via Zoom, emails, and teleconferences (four meetings had been planned for each group). At these meetings, the program director provided program updates and shared information about the program's progress. The Student Advisory Council met 13 times (20 meetings had been planned) through May 2025. Feedback and recommendations which emanated from those meetings were carefully considered. The program was intentional in ensuring that all ideas were explored, and students felt heard and represented. Collaborators shared what they had to offer, and then the program director and site coordinators incorporated their feedback into the program whenever possible and practical.

#### 7. Staffing and Professional Development

During the initial monitoring visit, the program director reported that staffing (three part-time administrators, 18 part-time teachers, one part-time counselor, and one volunteer high school teaching assistant) was complete and in place for the program year. All staff members are highly qualified and hold certifications for their assigned positions, and their credentials are listed in PARS and are on file in the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program office. All KAP teachers taught in the district during the regular school day.

As part of the professional development effort during the program year, the program director attended the new program director orientation and the mandatory NJDOE program director meetings, NJDOE's Full Steam Ahead Conference, and the NJSACC Out-of-School and After-School Time annual conference. The Keansburg school district provided professional development for staff in trauma-based practices (Integrated Care Concepts), full year PDP, special education PDP, RTI Tiering, and Link-It data storage training. The KAP Program sponsored in-service for

program staff in its Fall orientation, monthly staff meetings and emails, individual staff meetings, CPR training and the summer orientation. NJIT also provided professional development sessions for staff in Newark STEM Ecosystem Training

#### **Evaluation Monitoring of Program Implementation**

Status of Recommendations Offered by M and E in its 2024-25 Interim Report

Recommendation #1 - Given the program's continued success, the current structure and design should be maintained, ensuring best practices in after-school program implementation, while continually seeking ways to enhance student engagement and learning experiences.

Status: The program continued following the same structure and design.

Recommendation #2 - Continue to support students' social and behavioral development by integrating structured activities and social-emotional learning opportunities that promote positive interactions, self-regulation, and disciplinary growth.

<u>Status:</u> More youth development activities will be offered for the next program year. The behavioral interventionist on staff helps with de-escalating any issues that arise.

Recommendation #3 - Introduce new and engaging programming to maintain student interest, including both in-person and virtual options. Consider reinstating culinary classes for middle school students and offering certification programs (e.g., First Aid, Babysitting) to increase engagement and reduce excessive phone use during program hours.

<u>Status:</u> Snapology will be replaced with Kidzart. Culinary classes were reinstated this program year.

Recommendation #4 - Strengthen parental involvement efforts by exploring collaborative opportunities with nearby 21st CCLC programs to bring in guest speakers and engaging activities. Continue offering Saturday events and regular monthly engagement opportunities while encouraging parents to take on active roles within the program. Maintain strong district partnerships to enhance parent programming.

<u>Status:</u> The program hosted a cupcake decorating activity with parents. They will continue offering some Saturday activities to attract parents and are open to bringing in guest speakers.

Recommendation #5 - Expand professional development opportunities for program staff, ensuring they receive training aligned with program goals and objectives. Keep staff informed about parent engagement activities, so they can actively encourage students to involve their families.

Status: A periodic newsletter is distributed to program to staff.

Recommendation #6 - Seek new partnerships and collaborations that can bring fresh experiences and opportunities for students. Consider reaching out to local businesses (e.g., Wawa) and nearby universities to explore potential contributions to programming and student development.

<u>Status:</u> For next year, Kidzart will be a new collaboration. The program has also developed a relationship with a local nursing home, and students have made birthday cards for the residents.

Recommendation #7 - The program director should share this report, in whole or in part, with all stakeholders to increase awareness and support for the KAP Program. Program staff should carefully review the report's findings—particularly the areas for improvement, academic needs, and stakeholder suggestions—and collaborate on actionable steps to address these concerns.

<u>Status:</u> The program director has made the Interim Report available to all stakeholders to review.

#### Summary of Stakeholder Interview Feedback

During the initial site monitoring visit, M and E interviewed the program director, the Caruso site coordinator, four members of the teaching staff (two at Caruso Elementary School and two Bolger Middle School) and four students (two each from the Caruso and the Bolger schools). Additionally, stakeholder surveys were administered to staff, students, and parents of participating students. For the sake of convenience, summary survey tables are included in this Final Report as Appendix B.

During the second monitoring visit, interviews were again conducted with the program director, both site coordinators, four members of the teaching staff (two at Caruso and two at Bolger) and four students (two each from the Caruso and the Bolger schools). End-of-year student performance data were also collected. The findings presented in the following sections describe and discuss the interviews and year-end student-related data that were collected during the second monitoring visit on May 13, 2025.

#### 8. Linkage between the After-School Program and the Regular School Day Program

The program director reported that the Homework Help hour, as well as the English language arts (ELA) and math tutoring were directly linked to the regular school day curriculum. Classroom teachers had a list of students who attended the KAP program, and they consistently reached out to program staff to discuss students' academic needs. Communication was smooth and easy and went in both directions based on what situations arose.

The site coordinators at both program sites agreed with the program director and affirmed that there was a direct link between the after-school program and the regular school day curriculum, staff, and activities, as most of the after-school program staff also worked in the schools during the regular school day. The Caruso site coordinator reported that the regular school day curriculum and Homework Help sessions were directly linked as students worked on homework or getting regular school day academic support during that portion of the KAP Program. She also commented that regular school day student performance data were shared with the after-school program staff and supplemental work on content standards for grade levels had been given to students. Similarly, the Bolger site coordinator reported that the Homework Help and ELA/math tutoring were directly linked with the regular school day curriculum as regular school day work and assignments were reinforced during the after-school sessions. Both site coordinators added that classroom teachers knew well which students were participating in the program and contacted the KAP Office with concerns about students who were missing work or needed extra help.

The teachers at both program sites offered comments that essentially mirrored those of the program director and site coordinators. They cited the Homework Help, tutoring, SEL, and STEM portions of the program, which directly linked the regular school day curriculum to the after-school curriculum. The teachers at both program sites noted that, since the school was small and since most of the after-school staff also worked in the building during the regular school day,

communication was easy and frequent, as the teachers collaborated on how to link the regular school day activities with those which occurred during the after-school program.

#### 9. Student Attendance and Social and Disciplinary Behaviors

The site coordinators at both program sites reported that, for most of the program year, a majority of students attended consistently, and parents relied on the program for after-school care. The Caruso site coordinator did, however, remark that attendance in the Spring had declined as a result of warm-weather sports, like baseball and flag football. The Caruso site coordinator further reported that, while students' social behaviors were generally good, there had been a lot of competition among the students, which sometimes created conflict. Nevertheless, while there had been a few disciplinary incidents; overall, there were only minimal disciplinary behavioral issues. However, a problem of student theft had been noticed.

The Bolger site coordinator commented that the program continued to witness consistent attendance by most of the students, but attendance seemed to drop off both during the winter and spring terms. He further reported that middle school students' social behaviors were generally inconsistent and teachable moments arose regularly. Finally, the Bolger site coordinator commented there had been only a few behavioral issues among after-school students. However, "there were some disciplinary issues with sixth grade boys and sports at the beginning of the program year."

The four teachers from Caruso Elementary who were interviewed agreed that attendance was pretty good and most students participated regularly, although some students were inconsistent in their attendance, The teachers also agreed that most students had adjusted well socially to being in mixed grade level groups and not always with their established friends, which was their preference. One teacher commented that transition periods could be socially difficult, and another commented that, when students were in groups there could be some social conflicts. Nevertheless, she commented that a lot of "coffee talk" occurred in the craft classes as students had the chance to interact, as they shared materials with one another and worked well together.

One of the Caruso teachers commented that disciplinary misbehaviors tended to occur when students were doing what they were not supposed to be doing or not doing what they were supposed to be doing. It tended to be the same students engaging in the same wrong behaviors. Some students would fight over balls on the playground. Another teacher reported that some students tried hard to be like other students who displayed negative behaviors. She noted that there was a particular student who needed a lot more attention because of behavioral issues.

The Bolger teachers agreed with their counterparts in Caruso that student participation was good, and students generally attended consistently, although both Bolger teachers commented that, in the warmer weather, attendance diminished because certain sports pulled students away from the program. They further reported that students' social interactions depended on their individual moods and how their school day went. There were some students who isolated themselves from others. Overall, however, students were appropriate in their interactions. Finally, the Bolger teachers agreed that only a few disciplinary behaviors arose, notwithstanding that, on occasion, there was a need to take students aside and have a talk with them.

#### 10. Feedback from Program Participants and Other Stakeholders

The site coordinators at both program sites noted that students and parents alike were positive about the program. Students liked the program and wanted to attend.

The Caruso site coordinator reported that students especially liked the program and enjoyed attending. They also liked the opportunities to offer their input about program activities. The feedback from parents was also positive, as the parents were appreciative and thankful knowing their children were safe and getting their homework done. She noted, however, that some parents were bothered by the reduced size of the program in the summer. The Bolger site coordinator reported that students and parents alike were very positive about the program. Students especially liked having fun in the Culinary Club. He also reported receiving email responses from parents, indicating their appreciation of the KAP program.

One Caruso teacher reported that some students didn't want to be in the program, while others loved attending. The other teacher commented that students liked that teachers were approachable. She added that parents were also very appreciative of the program. Both teachers at Bolger commented that most students liked the program and didn't complain about attending.

Two third and fourth grade students at Caruso and two sixth grade students at Bolger were interviewed during the second site visit, and when asked why they attended the after-school program, three of the four students reported they attended because their parents worked during the day. The two Bolger students added they attended because they wanted to get their work done and engage in fun activities.

When asked whether their participation in the after-school program had affected their grades in school, the two Caruso students responded that their grades hadn't changed as a result of their participation in the program. Both Bolger students, on the other hand, reported their grades had improved because they were able to get help when they needed it to complete their homework and other assignments at KAP.

When asked whether participation in the after-school program had affected their attendance at school during the day, their behaviors, and/or their self-confidence, the two Caruso students reported that participating in the KAP program had not changed their attendance patterns (they always attended anyway), their behaviors (they were already well-behaved), and their self-confidence (they were already self-confident). One Bolger student also reported her attendance hadn't changed, but the other student commented that the program made him want to come to school more than he used to. In addition, one Bolger student reported that her behavior hadn't changed, but the other student commented that his behavior had been a little bit better since being in the program, "They're strict, so it's easy to keep me under control."

Both Bolger students reported their self-confidence had improved as a result of their participation in KAP. One student reported her self-confidence was a little bit better because she finished her homework at the program, which helped raise her grades and made her feel better about herself. The new friends she'd met also made her feel better about herself. The other Bolger student commented that he was more self-confident with sports and academics because of being in the program.

Finally, when asked what they liked and disliked about the after-school program, the four students all offered different things. The Caruso students liked doing different things, such as going outside,

attending the classes that were offered, socializing with their friends, coloring, and playing computer games. The Bolger students liked the snacks and clubs such as the Culinary Club, and the extra time they got to complete their homework, sports, and Esports.

Among the things the Caruso students didn't like were the length of the program and the limited amount of food and snacks. One Bolger student reported she didn't like when students were forced to do things they didn't want to do. (She mentioned there were times they didn't get to do things because the staff didn't want to get the equipment ready so they could use it.) The other Bolger student reported he didn't like waiting to get to the next activity and having to wait in the Media Center because there wasn't much there to do.

The Caruso students suggested there should be more classes and less recess time, and the program duration could be decreased, but more activities added. One student also suggested the program should add a creative snack club. The Bolger students suggested that additional clubs like a Reading Club or a Study Club should be created, and that the program should provide new sports equipment and new board games.

#### 11. Communication with Regular Classroom Teachers

The site coordinators at both program sites reported that since all KAP teachers worked in the same buildings where they taught during the regular school day, there was excellent and seamless communication (either in-person or via email) between classroom teachers and the after-school staff. Classroom teachers informed the after-school staff of any homework and projects assigned and indicated which students could use extra help. The after-school teachers could then monitor students' grades and progress through Genesis.

### 12. Availability of Materials and Supplies

The teachers at both the Caruso and Bolger program sites reported there was no problem getting supplies and materials for the after-school program. Ordering was a simple process if they needed extra supplies or materials. The Caruso teachers commented that they sometimes used things from their classrooms, and the Bolger teachers reported they had everything they needed for the eGaming units.

#### 13. Parent Involvement/Participation

The Caruso site coordinator reported the program had offered a couple of field trip experiences (e.g., bowling, Liberty Science Center) for families, and many parents came out for these and other events (e.g., Monster Golf). However, parent involvement in the program and attendance at other events continued to be minimal. The Bolger site coordinator reported the program partnered with the school district on monthly parent activities; however, parent involvement and participation continued to be low.

Both Caruso teachers reported that, generally, there was minimal parent involvement. The program had offered plays for the parents, and there was a cooking activity that involved parents, but participation was low. One teacher commented that that some parents attended events of special interest, such as immigration rights. Parents' participation varied based on the content and food offerings, but generally attendance and participation was minimal. Both Bolger teachers agreed they were essentially unaware of activities for parents

#### 14. Program Accomplishments

During the program year, the program director identified the following accomplishments:

- Meeting its Level of Service (LOS) by the end of November
- Starting ELA and math tutoring in Bolger Middle School
- Being able to provide SEL counseling twice a month
- Reinstatement of the Culinary Club

The site coordinators also were asked to comment on program accomplishments, and both cited the attainment of the LOS by the required date and the number of students who consistently attended the program. The Caruso site coordinator added other accomplishments, including the fact that students had a voice in the program about the types of clubs that were offered, parent participation was slowly beginning to increase as there were more parents who wanted to participate in the activities offered to them, and getting the local high school Environmental Club to give a presentation about recycling to the participating program students. The Bolger site coordinator cited the fact that the LOS had been achieved and that the Culinary Club program had been reinstated were both accomplishments.

#### 15. Program Strengths

The program director identified the following as significant program strengths:

- Students desired to be in the program
- It was a safe space for students after school
- Academic support was available
- The program staff, and the way they cared about the students.

The Caruso site coordinator identified the program as a safe place for students to grow and have social interactions with other students. She further noted that the academic help that students received, the consistency of the staff returning from year to year, and the collaboration and communication the teachers enjoyed (especially when getting coverage for each other was necessary), and the flexible work schedule were all significant program strengths. The Bolger site coordinator also identified the after-school program as a safe space in which students could interact with other students and receive academic help.

As program strengths, the teachers at Caruso identified the regular classroom teachers who also worked in the after-school program, the SEL program, the love and support that the staff offered students, the academic support students received, and how students socialized with each other in a setting outside of the regular school day.

The teachers at Bolger agreed there were many strengths of the after-school program, including (a) that students got to experience cooking, sports, and crafts, (b) it was also a safe and consistent place for students to be after school, and (c) that program staff worked as teachers during the regular school day and knew the students and their needs. The teachers also reported that students learned how to take on responsibilities, and some activities provided the platform for students to lead. That the Culinary Club had been reinstated was also cited as program strength, as were the opportunities students had to see other sides of their peers outside of the classroom.

#### 16. Concerns, Shortcomings, Challenges, and Obstacles to Success

The program director reported that shared facilities caused the program and student participants to lose access to the gym and/or media center at times. The Caruso site coordinator commented that

the daily program length was too long for many of the students, and the Bolger site coordinator remarked that "planning the summer session without the special education grant that was usually used for summer programming" caused it to be very challenging.

The Caruso teachers identified the lack of parental support, minimal funding for programming, and the lack of field trips as program obstacles. At Bolger, one teacher noted the program filled up early, so some students with academic needs couldn't be a part of it and instead had to be relegated to a wait list. The other teacher commented that students generally didn't want to do academics right after the regular school day, which resulted in it being a challenge.

#### 17. Suggestions for Program Improvement

The program director suggested the program should continue to explore additional vendors who could provide students and/or their families with free services. In addition, both site coordinators suggested that the program should seek outside vendors and establish collaborations with more outside organizations, such as Wawa and Monmouth University, both of which could bring different enrichment opportunities for the students, and it should keep the youth advisory board meetings going to ensure student input.

One Caruso teacher suggested there needed to be better communication between the regular school day staff and after-school program staff. The other teachers suggested that the program (1) needed to determine different ways to encourage more parents to be a part of the program, (2) bring in some outside speakers, (3) offer more field trips, (4) provide more equipment for the program, and (5) make the program bigger, so more students could be a part of it.

The Bolger teachers offered several suggestions, including that there should be more options for students, such as fantasy sports, Legos, and using the back tables in the game room for students to do puzzles. One teacher also noted it would be nice if the program did more of what the students wanted.

#### 18. Plan for Program Sustainability

The program director reported that work with the district is needed in researching other funding sources that could be used to sustain at least part of the program, specifically the academic piece of it. There may be some collaborators who would continue offering occasional programming or resources; however, the program administrators agreed it would not be possible to sustain the KAP Program with its current design and duration without 21st CCLC funding.

#### 19. Plans for the 2025 Summer Program

The summer program for grades three through eight has been scheduled to run July 1<sup>st</sup> through July 29<sup>th</sup>, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Bolger Middle School, with STEAM as its theme. A trip to see the Blue Claws has also been scheduled, Kidzart will be conducting lessons, and there will be a Music & Motion dance party. Breakfast and lunch will be provided through Monmouth County FULLFILL food bank.

#### **Summary of Student Performance Data**

Three different measures were analyzed regarding student performance in the academic and affective (i.e., social-emotional) domains including (a) the results of the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) administered in the Spring 2025, (b) regular school year attendance data, and (d) regular school year disciplinary infraction data. The data tables for each of these

measures follow immediately, including those which offer a comparative analysis of data from both the current and preceding year.

A review of the *Score Interpretation Guide for Educators* published by the New Jersey Department of Education shows that students' scale scores can range between 650 and 850 for all grades and are situated in one of five performance levels. As noted in the Guide, "each performance level is a broad categorical level defined a student's overall scale score and is used to report overall student performance by describing how well students met the expectations for their grade level/course." The five performance levels for the NJSLA-ELA [and NJSLA-Math] included the following:

Level 1 – Did Not Yet Meet Expectations (650-699)

Level 2 – Partially Met Expectations (700-724)

Level 3 – Approached Expectations (725-749)

Level 4 – Met Expectations (750-785)

Level 5 – Exceeded Expectations (786-850)

The data in Table 1 show that, for the 125 students in grades 3-8 for whom data were available, the total mean scale score for English Language Arts (ELA) was 722.5 (a slight decrease from 727.0 that was reported in the Spring 2024), which situates these students toward the upper limit of the Level 2 category, *Partially Met Expectations*. Disaggregating these data reveals that, across all students in grades 3-8, 72.8% were found to have scored in the range of Levels 1-3 (27.2% at Level 1, 23.2% at Level 2, and 22.4% at Level 3). In addition, 24.0% of participating students were found to have scored at Level 4, and 3.2% were found to have scored at Level 5.

For the 126 students in grades 3-8 for whom data were available, the total mean scale score for mathematics was 722.7 (a slight decrease from 724.5 that was reported in the Spring 2024), which also situates these students toward the upper limit of the Level 2 category, *Partially Met Expectations*. Disaggregating these data reveals that, across all students in grades 3-8, 75.4% were found to have scored in the range of Levels 1-3 (27.8% at Level 1, 23.8% at Level 2, and 23.8% at Level 3). In addition, 23.0% of participating students were found to have scored at Level 4 and 1.6% were found to have scored at Level 5.

These data clearly show that, aside from the students who have already fully met or exceeded expectations (Levels 4 & 5) for English language Arts (27.2%), large numbers of students also tested at encouraging levels (partially met and approached expectations), and for mathematics (where 24.6% have already fully met expectations), large numbers of students also tested at similarly encouraging levels.

**Table 1: New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (Spring 2025)** 

1 a	Table 1: New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (Spring 2025)													
	KEANSBURG NJSLA RESULTS BY GRADE													
	SPRING 2025													
	English Language Arts													
Grade	Total Number Of Students	Mean Scale Score	# Level 1	% Level 1	# Level 2	% Level 2	# Level 3	% Level 3	# Levels 1- 3 Combo	% Levels 1-3 Combo	# Level 4	% Level 4	# Level 5	% Level 5
3	31	706.7	13	41.9%	6	19.4%	9	29.0%	28	90.3%	3	9.7%	0	0.0%
4	25	728.0	8	32.0%	3	12.0%	5	20.0%	16	64.0%	7	28.0%	2	8.0%
5	25	717.8	6	24.0%	8	32.0%	5	20.0%	19	76.0%	6	24.0%	0	0.0%
6	26	732.4	4	15.4%	7	26.9%	8	30.8%	19	73.1%	6	23.1%	1	3.8%
7	8	725.9	1	12.5%	3	37.5%	0	0.0%	4	50.0%	4	50.0%	0	0.0%
8	10	741.7	2	20.0%	2	20.0%	1	10.0%	5	50.0%	4	40.0%	1	10.0%
Total	125	722.5	34	27.2%	29	23.2%	28	22.4%	91	72.8%	30	24.0%	4	3.2%
						Mat	thematics							
	Total	Mean							#	%				
Grade	Number Of Students	Scale Score	# Level 1	% Level 1	# Level 2	% Level 2	# Level 3	% Level 3	Levels 1- 3 Combo	Levels 1-3 Combo	# Level 4	% Level 4	# Level 5	% Level 5
3	31	720.8	8	25.8%	5	16.1%	11	35.5%	24	77.4%	7	22.6%	0	0.0%
4	25	729.6	8	32.0%	4	16.0%	2	8.0%	14	56.0%	9	36.0%	2	8.0%
5	25	715.4	10	40.0%	7	28.0%	4	16.0%	21	84.0%	4	16.0%	0	0.0%
6	26	722.6	4	15.4%	10	38.5%	8	30.8%	22	84.6%	4	15.4%	0	0.0%
7	8	734.0	1	12.5%	1	12.5%	4	50.0%	6	75.0%	2	25.0%	0	0.0%
8	11	721.7	4	36.4%	3	27.3%	1	9.1%	8	72.7%	3	27.3%	0	0.0%
Total	126	722.7	35	27.8%	30	23.8%	30	23.8%	95	75.4%	29	23.0%	2	1.6%

The data in Table 2 below show differences in the percentages of students meeting or exceeding expectations (i.e., Levels 4 and 5) in both English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics between testings in 2024 and 2025. In ELA, there was a slight decrease of -2.1% (i.e., from 29.3% to 27.2%) and in mathematics, there was a slight increase of +4.6% (from 18.9% to 24.6%). Exploring the data from the standpoint of grade levels, in ELA, increases in the percentage of students' scores at Levels 4 and 5 were observed in grades 4, 7, and 8. Decreases were noted in grades 1, 5, and 6. In mathematics, increases in the percentage of students' scores at Levels 4 & 5 were observed in grades 4 and 8, while decreases were observed in grades 1, 5, and 6. There was no change in grade 7. It is again worth noting that the data sets from the two years represent somewhat different cohorts of students.

Table 2: Comparative Analysis – Percentage of Students At (Level 4) and Above (Level 5) NJSLA Standards in ELA and Math

NJSLA Standards in ELA and Math										
KEANSBURG REGULAR SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAM										
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS – NJSLA STUDENT PERFORMANCE DATA										
Percentage Meeting and Exceeding NJSLA Expectations for Levels 4 & 5 (Grades 3-8)										
Spring 2024 – Spring 2025										
	English English Mathematics Mathematics									
Grade	le Language Arts Language Arts (Spring (Spring									
	(Spring 2024)	(Spring 2025)	Diff.	2025)	2025)	Diff.				
3	29.6%	9.7%	-19.9%	30.8%	22.6%	-8.2%				
4	12.9%	36.0%	+23.1%	12.9%	44.0%	+31.1%				
5	33.4%	24.0%	-9.4%	16.7%	16.0%	-0.7%				
6	41.2%	26.9%	-14.3%	17.7%	15.4%	-2.3%				
7	45.0%	50.0%	+10%	25.0%	25.0%	None				
8	20.0%	50.0%	+30%	0%	27.3%	+27.3%				
Total	29.3%	27.2%	-2.1%	18.9%	24.6%	+4.6%				

In addition to the academic data described above, attendance data for participating students in grades 3-8 reported below in Table 3 clearly demonstrate that, for both program years (2023-24 and 2024-25), an overwhelming majority (92.95%) of students attended school regularly.

**Table 3: Participant Attendance Rates** 

KEANSBURG REGULAR SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAM COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS – ATTENDANCE RATES (Spring 2024 and Spring 2025)								
# Students Attendance # Students Attendance								
	(2024)	Rates	(2025)	Rates				
Grade		(2024)		(2025)				
3	29	92.51%	31	92.85%				
4	31	91.90%	25	91.69%				
5	18	94.07%	25	92.53%				
6	17	93.07%	26	93.59%				
7	23	93.41%	8	94.44%				
8	11	93.33%	11	94.39%				
Total	131	92.95%	126	92.95%				

Finally, the data below in Table 4 show that there were 636 reported disciplinary infractions among 79 students in grades 3-8 during the 2024-25 program year, for an average of approximately eight infractions per student. It is worth noting that the most disciplinary infractions occurred in grades 3, 4, and 5. The data also show that, in 2023-24, there were significantly fewer disciplinary infractions among the students (253 incidents by 55 students, for an average of a little less than five infractions per student). The data shown for the 2024-25 program year represents an alarming increase in the number of reportable disciplinary infractions and, as such, warrants a careful review of the data and perhaps a discussion among the program and district staffs about the reasons for such a dramatic increase and strategies for reducing such infractions. It is noteworthy that, during the interviews, several staff members reported that many of the disciplinary incidents that occurred were carried over from unresolved regular school day issues.

**Table 4: Participant Disciplinary Infraction Rates** 

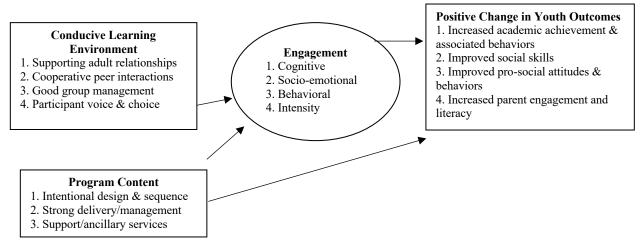
KEANSBURG RREGULAR SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAM COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS - DISCIPLINARY INFRACTION COUNTS (Spring 2024 and 2025)							
# Students Number of # Students Number of							
Grade	(2024)	Incidents (2024)	(2025)	Incidents (2025)			
3	11	66	23	145			
4	11	58	16	160			
5	9	31	15	128			
6	7	34	18	94			
7	8	32	4	94			
8	9	32	3	15			
Total	55	253	79	636			

#### APPENDIX A

# **Evaluation Conceptual Framework and Methodology**

#### **Conceptual Framework for the Evaluation**

As in past years, the model that has guided this evaluation effort is research-based and designed to review data, within selected contextual areas, in light of stated goals, objectives, and indicators. Among the contextual areas are: learning environment (is it conducive for student engagement and learning?), levels of student engagement (i.e., cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral) and its intensity, and program content (its curricular design and sequence, delivery and management, and support services). The evaluation, therefore, focuses on positive changes in youth outcomes, including student achievement, social-emotional development, and character skills needed to foster a healthy and productive school climate, and pro-social attitudes and behaviors that will enable students to perform better in their regular day school programs and progress toward meaningful adult lives. The evaluation also assesses the engagement of parents in their children's education.



**Source:** Grossman, J.B., Goldsmith, J., Sheldon, J., & Arbreton, A.J. (2009, Spring). Assessing after-school settings. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 121, 91.

The logic that underpins this model is predicated upon anticipated positive changes in youth outcomes (this is the dependent variable of the model). The factors (independent variables) that contribute to these anticipated outcomes are represented in the program's learning environment, the program content, and the extent to which program participants (students) are actively engaged in the program. The independent and dependent variables are operationally defined as follows.

#### Learning Environment

In order for the program to be successful, there must be a *conducive learning environment* that includes supportive adult-student relationships, cooperative peer interactions, good group management (in a regular day school environment, this might better be known as classroom management), and youth voice and choice.

#### Program Content

Effective programs are well-planned, well-implemented, and well-managed. The *content* of such programs is intentionally sequenced with empirically observable S.M.A.R.T.<sup>2</sup> objectives. Teachers are highly qualified and motivated and driven by an outcomes orientation. Instructional activities are clear and organized, provide for active (hands-on) participation by students, and are characterized by effective nurturing teacher-student interactions, appropriate support services, and meaningful and candid feedback about learning by teachers.

#### Engagement

Well-planned, well-implemented, and well-managed program content that is delivered in an environment conducive for learning that pro-actively *engages* students cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally will be successful. *Engagement* infers positive motivation and active participation (students have got to want to be there and want to actively participate; but they must also be aware of the objective of what they're doing). Furthermore, engagement is measured in terms of its intensity (as in consistent attendance), its duration (the length of continued participation), and its breadth (scope of activities).

#### Anticipated Changes in Youth Outcomes

Grossman et al. (2009) measure success in terms of the improvements that can be observed in the following youth outcomes: (a) cognitive learning (typically, but not limited to, language arts, mathematics, writing, etc.), (b) personal social skills, and (c) pro-social attitudes and behaviors. Furthermore, because of its importance in the overall teaching and learning enterprise, the extent to which parents are engaged in their children's education, as well as their own literacy, is also assessed.

#### **Evaluation Methodology**

The data collection methodology for this evaluation effort has included the development and implementation of (a) site visit interview guides, which provided data about the program environment, content, and levels of engagement, (b) stakeholder surveys, which also provided data about the program environment, as well as stakeholder perceptions of program impact, and (c) empirical data (where available) about students' academic performance, as measured by report cards and standardized test performance data, attendance, and disciplinary behavior data. These data provided important and useful information about student outcomes and program impact. Readers are advised that the data collection instruments used in this evaluation study (i.e., survey protocols and student performance data collection forms) are available in the 21st CCLC Program Office.

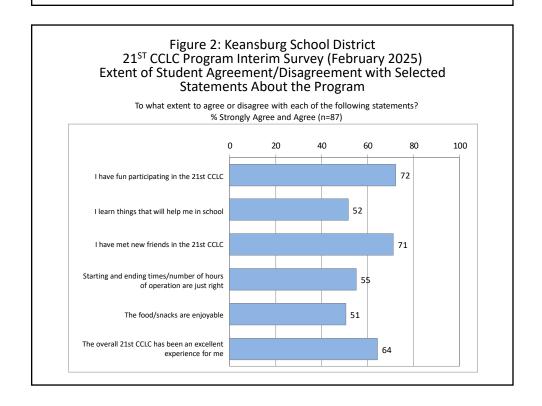
26

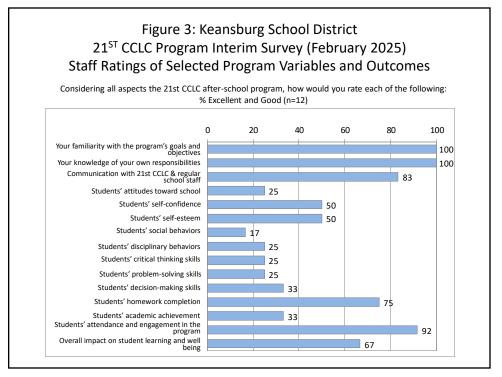
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound.

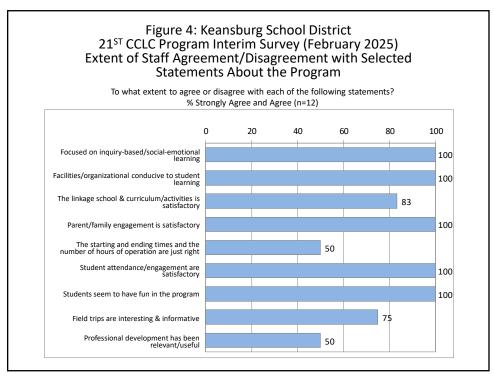
# **Appendix B**

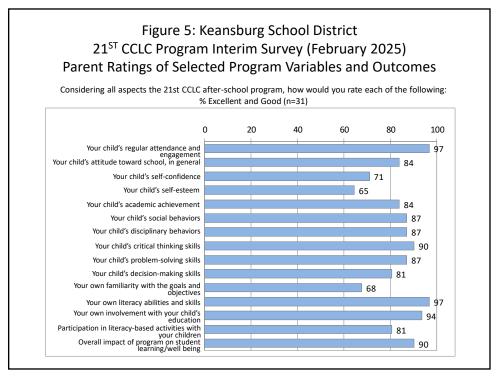
The narrative describing the data in the following tables has been included in M and E's *Interim Report*, which was submitted to the program director in April 2025

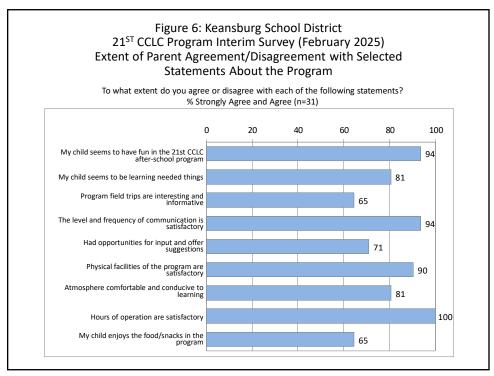
Keansburg 21st CCLC Program (KAP) Figure 1: Keansburg School District 21<sup>ST</sup> CCLC Program Interim Survey (February 2025) Student Ratings of Selected Program Variables and Outcomes Considering all aspects the 21st CCLC after-school program, how would you rate each of the following: % Improved a Lot or a Little (n=87) 20 40 60 100 80 51 My understanding of the goals and objectives My attitude toward school, in general My feelings about myself My ability to get along with others My willingness to follow rules My grades in school 60 My critical thinking skills My problem-solving skills My decision-making skills

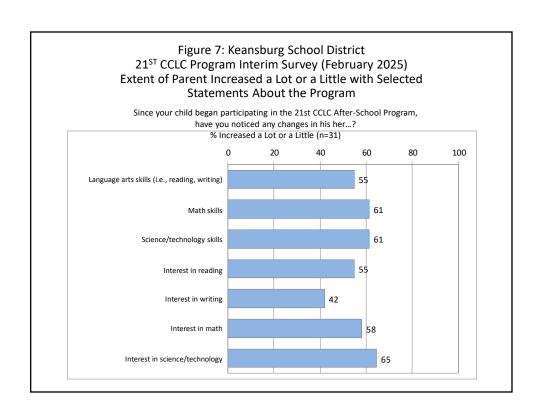












Management and Evaluation Associates, Inc. is a management consulting company specializing in data analysis, professional development, and program evaluation services. Formed in 1977, M and E is staffed with full and part-time staff as well as associates and affiliate organizations. M and E has served clients across the U. S. Clients have included school districts, charter schools, universities, state and regional education agencies, private sector and foundation organizations, health care agencies and community organizations.

The following staff formed the primary team assigned to this project: Mary Beth Slivka, President; Margaret Goodher, 21st CCLC Program Specialist and Lead Evaluator; Tom Monahan, Ed.D. Evaluation Design and Instrument Development Specialist; John M. Quinn, Ed.D. Vice President of Services; and Kathy Twardy, Data Analyst.

## MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION ASSOCIATES, INC.

1382 Newtown-Langhorne Road, Suite H-103 Newtown, PA 18940 PHONE: (609) 903-5556 E-MAIL: mbslivka@gmail.com

Specializing in assessment and program evaluation services to school districts and organizations since 1977.

Manage Your Program and Leave the Evaluation to Us! ®