

Dear Betty,

Thank you for welcoming me to your afterschool program on September 16, 2025. It was a pleasure to see your program in action and to learn more about the ways you're supporting students during out-of-school time.

On the day of the visit, the Sheridan site coordinator was unable to be at the program, however, the assistant site coordinator was available to answer a few questions. Program staff demonstrated strong collaboration with school administration and teachers to support students' academic needs, particularly with iReady assignments. The program schedule included daily grade-level rotations, ensuring that students consistently met their reading requirements and stay on track academically.

Congratulations on the collaboration between the program and school for parent engagement events and using the school site council for the program's advisory board. It is always great to learn more about well-working partnerships which always benefit the entire school community.

**During the visit, a few items were discussed and/or observed for further discussion and/or suggestion:**

- Program attendance (ADA) is a key deliverable for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs. Staff noted that the program currently has a wait list. However, it was also shared that only 55 students are registered, while the proposed Average Daily Attendance (ADA) is 100. This suggests some dissonance related to enrollment capacity, wait list targets, and attendance projections.
  - Please provide further clarification regarding the relationship between the wait list, current registration, and ADA goals.
    - Please include if and what barriers prevent students from registering despite interest.
    - Also include how wait list(s) are being managed with lower than proposed ADA?
- Consider additional depth to enrichment planning. It was observed that students were not given an objective while playing with the marble run activity. While free play during the activity is important, it is equally important to offer a deeper objective to expand students' STEM knowledge and interest. Considering incorporating the following:
  - Marble Run: Create engineering challenge specifics like which build has the fastest/slowest run, and the marble must jump a gap into a target. Incorporating measurements like total height, length, or time where students could graph speed or compare different tracks materials. Adding different materials such as paper towel tubes or wooden blocks could increase creativity and problem-solving skills.
  - General ways to increase enrichment for any hands-on activity would be to ask open-ended questions like "How could you make it stronger?" or "What would you do differently next time?" Encourage planning by having students sketch a design prior to building. Encourage teamwork by assigning collaborative roles like designer, tester, builder, materials manager, etc.

Including a reflection time to discuss what worked, what was hard, what changes were made can allow students to gain more knowledge from the activity.

- Incorporate a district-wide afterschool program training with topics in which front-line staff have shared questions or expressed concerns such as:
  - **Staff Hours vs Workload** – concerns surround insufficient grant hours to prepare and complete reporting expectations.
    - As each site coordinator completes the Program Director’s Report and APR, discuss strategies where district collaboration could alleviate front line staff working outside of the grant specified hours.
    - Implement a shared calendar or shared document with grant specific deadlines and expectations for the following but not limited to: Program Director’s Report, Quality Guidelines Assessment, External Evaluator’s Report, Apr, KGMS, etc.
    - Leadership and role clarity with expectations would be beneficial for program staff.
    - Adding ample staff hours in upcoming re-applications could ensure adequate time for preparation and reporting.
  - **Grant Deliverables and District Continuity** – by completing the attached “What’s in your Grant” document for each Geary County Grant, may afford program administration and front-line staff better understanding of the specific grants and deliverables.
    - This could bolster grant alignment across all Geary County programs and streamline grant management with site specific subtleties, especially during re-applications years.
    - Informing key staff of important grant deliverable information, deadlines and expectations.
- Boosting Moral and camaraderie for program staff during and outside of staff meetings
  - Try introducing a weekly “staff spotlight” (recognition + fun fact sharing) and a monthly team tradition (group activity during monthly staff meetings). These small, consistent efforts compound into a strong culture of morale and camaraderie.
  - Create safe and open formats for staff to voice concerns, express new ideas, collaborate in resolutions, which all promotes staff collaboration.
  - Benefits:
    - Recognition fuels motivation: Staff who feel valued are most engaged and productive
    - Shared joy builds trust: Fun traditions and bonding activities strengthen relationships.
    - Empowerment reduces turnover: Giving staff voice and flexibility increases retention.

Please don’t hesitate to reach out if you’d like to discuss any of these further or if there are other ways we can support your program goals.

**The following links are free web-based resources (which may require setting up an account) that may support your program’s ongoing work:**

- [Net Flex Kids](#) – offers many brain-break activities and ideas
- [Fun Brain](#) – grade level games for math, grammar, science, spelling, and history
- [Phonics and Stuff](#) – offers many grammar and literacy academic activities
- [Half-Pint Kids](#) – includes learning activities which cover the five essential elements of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension)

- [Mr. Nussbaum.com](http://Mr.Nussbaum.com) – where fun meets learning in your classroom
- [Free Training Tutorial](#) – offers educators free high quality online activities for their kids and students (games, tutorials, lessons, tests and fun interactives)
- [Institute for Multi-Sensory Education](#)– IMSE’s mission is to empower districts, schools, teachers, and parents to be agents of change toward equitable literacy instruction for all learners that is driven by research
- [The Wonder of Science](#) – features teacher approved resources surrounding science and engineering
- [Chrome Music Lab](#) – resource to assist in learning music through fun, hands-on experiences
- [Scratch Garden](#) – educational videos for students, teachers and parents
- [Staffall](#) – students learn to read by emphasizing exploration, play and positive reinforcement.
- [ABC YA](#) – provides grade level academic games
- [Story On-Line](#) – read aloud books to boost reading skills
- [Story Nory](#) –free audio series for students, teachers and parents
- [Epic](#) – access to thousands of digital books for grades 8 and under

As always, please reference the [Program Director Resources](#) folder to find additional enrichment ideas. Resources will continue to be added throughout the year.

**Below are a few 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC reminders for all current Kansas grantees:**

- Include LOGO on newsletters
- Label all 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC property/materials
- For year 5 grantees, create or update an inventory list of all purchased items (non-consumables) as this information will be required for year-end reports.

Thank you again for your time and hospitality. We appreciate you and your program staff’s commitment to providing high-quality afterschool experiences for students and families. The contributions you and your team make are critical to the success of our collective 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC efforts. Please extend our appreciation to your staff for their commitment to your program.

Warm regards,

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