

# **EXTERNAL EVALUATION**

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Grant**

**Year 1 Cohort 8**

**Hollandale School District**

**Hollandale Excel-Up II**

**External Evaluators**

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**Prepared for**

**Hollandale School District**

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# List of Acronyms

- Hollandale School District (HSD)
- MS Academic Assessment Program (MAAP)
- Project Director (PD)
- School Information System (SAM)

## Executive Summary

### Overview and History of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program

The Hollandale School District Excel Up II is a collaborative between the Hollandale School District and the Hollandale Economic and Community Development Foundation, Bayer, and Stop and Shop (our partners in the grant application). The grant was written with the input from multiple stakeholders. The district superintendent met with the stakeholders from each core department, school board members, and parents to agree upon the students and their specific academic needs that would be addressed in the grant.

A community-wide meeting was held by the district where key stakeholders from different departments, board members, and parents met to discuss the specific needs and goals of the district based on the performance on the comprehensive benchmark assessment. Input on the ***Excel Up II After School Program*** was asked for, and great feedback and ideas were received.

The HSD included the community in their decision to apply for this grant. Below is an explanation of the sources of input. The Hollandale Economic and Community Development Foundation was consulted to inform them of the intent to apply for the grant and to receive input on the need assessment process. There is one private school in the Hollandale School District which serves grades K-12. Meaningful consultation was held with this private school to inform them of the Hollandale School District's plans for the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. The private school was asked to participate. The decision was made to participate by means of support for their **STEM Robotics Club**.

The Hollandale School District has operated afterschool programs for the last seventeen years successfully. Most recently, an afterschool program through the support of Deer

Creek Promise School Community and other community organizations. The Deer Creek program focused on servicing students after school in grades 3rd through 10th in Reading and ELA. These evidence-based practices and programs focused on weekly test data analysis, small grouping, and providing students' constant feedback. Additional evidence-based practices implemented were instruction focused on vocabulary, fluency, and phonemic awareness. Test data shows the progress these programs have made in student achievement.

This evaluation report is designed to highlight the multiple strengths and accomplishments of the HSD's program, acknowledge challenges, and make recommendations to support grant compliance and continued sustainability. All data collected electronically and were analyzed and used to guide and improve program's implementation. This evaluation report will be submitted to Project Director and Program Director so that they may analyze the findings and reflect on success of this grant. Moving forward, this report will help the sustainability of this valuable program. Finally, this report will be submitted to MDE for program auditing purposes. There were no issues or barriers to collecting data for the evaluation because the Program Director had all necessary data organized in an easily accessible format.

The primary goal of the Hollandale School District *Excel Up II* After-school Program is to minimize the risk factors and address the specific needs of the targeted at-risk students. After carefully conducting an analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data, four major focus areas were identified as detailed below:

- **FOCUS AREA 1: Youth Development - College and Career Readiness**
  - **Goal:** To increase student's knowledge and experiences in their chosen career paths to equip them to compete globally. Students will receive youth development opportunities after school and during the summer on a consistent basis to increase the chances of success in the future. To increase the likelihood of students attending the program, activities will be provided to expose students to individuals, college and career experiences, and STEAM aligned enrichment activities.
- **FOCUS AREA 2: Student Achievement**

- **Goal:** To ensure that all participants meet or exceed state required growth in Reading/ELA and Math and increase student proficiency in science. The Hollandale *Excel-Up II* Program will provide students with 9 hours of academic and enrichment activities to ensure adequate growth is made each year to ensure students reach grade level proficiency in 3 years.
- **FOCUS AREA 3: Family Engagement**
  - **Goal:** Increase opportunities for Family Engagement Due to low parent and community support in the school, students do not receive adequate youth development opportunities on a consistent basis. HSD ensures that parents are knowledgeable of the type of support required based on student deficiency. Parents received the necessary academic and social resources needed to address student deficiencies both academically and socially.

**Hollandale Excel-Up II Program** incorporated research-based activities, professional development, family engagement activities, and activities aligned with school day learning. The planning and ongoing communication between school day staff and project staff has proven to be somewhat effective for student achievement.

The external evaluator's questions are all answerable by academic data collected throughout the program. The teachers, staff, and program director check data for accuracy. This report's findings reflect in both mathematics and language art, it was reported greater mastery.

## Evaluation Purpose and Evaluation Questions

As described above, this evaluation report is designed to highlight the multiple strengths and accomplishments of the HSD's 21CCLC program, acknowledge challenges, and make recommendations to support grant compliance and continued sustainability. This report is formatted based on requirements set forth by the Mississippi Department of Education (Office of Federal Programs) and consists of six primary components:

- 1) Executive Summary,
- 2) Evaluation Purpose and Questions,
- 3) Program Background
- 4) Evaluation Methodology and Limitations,

5) Findings,

6) Conclusions, and Recommendations.

The project coordinator and program director will utilize this report as they seek funding to continue this valuable program. This report will guide their decision making on program scheduling/activities, community/family engagement, and overall program operations. The report will also be submitted to MDE to ensure program compliance as outlined in the approved grant proposal. The data collected for this report was obtained through a variety of sources such as on-site visits, interviews with project/program directors and staff members, and analysis of data collected through ongoing internal evaluations and progress monitoring by the program director.

HSD's 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program is a well-designed and effectively implemented program that diligently strives to create an engaging and impactful experience for its participants. Based on data collected, students not only enjoyed being a part of the program, but they also benefited both academically (specifically in reading and math) and behaviorally. Staff members and parents exhibit high regards towards program operations. Although data indicates student academic and behavioral progress as well as high levels of satisfaction among various stakeholders, there are areas for growth and improvement within the program.

### **Broad Evaluation Questions**

The evaluator approached the evaluation with several questions to guide the process.

- **Did the HSD's 21st CCLC program make progress towards its goals and objectives?**
- **What were the strengths of the Hollandale Excel-Up II program?**
- **In what areas can the Hollandale Excel-Up II program be improved?**

Specific evaluation questions were developed as well to address each objective. These are specified in the section of the evaluation report describing progress towards program goals and objectives.

The Hollandale ***Excel-Up II*** Program specifically addresses the students in the bottom 50 percentile of each target grades. The Hollandale ***Excel-Up II*** Program supports the classroom teacher by promoting student achievement in a motivating and secure

environment.

**Staffing-** Research shows that high quality programs rely heavily upon well-qualified and experienced staff members who provide superior services. HSD's 21st CCLC program has a clearly defined organizational structure that highlights each staff member's strengths.

District staff and participating community-based organizations were provided training. Staff was provided with one day of training and orientation at the beginning of the program through the districts' professional development efforts. The district provided training to project staff in implementing effective literacy instruction and enrichment in an after-school setting and assisted project staff in coordinating extended programming with regular school-day programs.

Position	Number	Roles/Responsibilities
Project Director (PD)	1	Lead project; recruit students; recommend other staff members to superintendent; communicate with families; coordinate activities with site coordinator, instructors, and tutors; arrange for transportation; assess professional learning needs of staff; organize professional development; create and convene the 21 <sup>st</sup> CCLC Advisory Council at least twice per year; and collect and manage data
Site Coordinator	1	Manage the daily needs of students, including checking on students who are absent, checking students in/out, organizing snacks, taking care of any student issues, and coordinating with PD about any issues that arise. Assist the PD with disseminating student information to instructors.
Instructors/ Peer Tutors Teacher Specialists	13	Provide homework help/tutorial services, provide individualized instruction, when needed, serve as primary instructor in program activities

HSD understands the importance of obtaining only highly qualified personnel to the

success of this program. To ensure high quality academic programming, the 21st CCLC program utilized a combination of certified teachers by Mississippi Department of Education, peer tutors (non-certified grade teachers), and other outside contractors for academic and youth development enrichment at a **ratio of 8:1 student**. The overall program operations and leadership was conducted by a certified teacher who will serve as the Program Director. The program director assumed a leadership role with the 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> and directly supervised the 21st CCLC Site Coordinators.

### **Advisory Council and Operating Partnerships**

The ***Hollandale Excel-Up II's*** Advisory Council coordinated the efforts of the Consortium (districts, school, and community partners). The committee consisted of members from local government, business/industry, education, service agencies, and families representing the community. Local resources, agencies and organizations throughout the area were coordinated to support the program. The Advisory Council met on three times a year basis.

**Program goals and objectives** address the risk factors and needs.

The **Hollandale Excel-Up II Program** supports the **Mission and Vision** of the Hollandale School District is to ensure all students receive high quality learning experiences that empower them with optimal thinking skills necessary to compete in an ever-changing, global society and to create a world-class educational system that produces students capable of thriving and adapting in college, career, and life.

The **intended participants and geographic location:** Hollandale School District is in south Washington County, near Greenville, MS. The community has always been rural, and it has been rooted in the industry of farming. Generational poverty plagued the families in and around Hollandale. Poverty has not only been represented in lack of financial resources, but students have also faced educational poverty, parental poverty, social poverty, and experience poverty. This type of poverty is marked by the mindset of daily living to survive vs. planning for the future. Students often come to school in crisis mode, which is extremely stressful.



<b>City of Hollandale</b>	<b>Hollandale School District</b>
Hollandale Population - 2,178	Enrollment - 548
Black or African American - 85.4% White-14.51% Other race - 0% Two or more races - 0.09% Native American - 0.00% Asian - 0.00% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander - 0.00%	Black or African American - 98.54% White- 0% Other race - 0% Two or more races - 0% Native American - 0% Asian-0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander - 0%
Hollandale Median Income - \$33,904	Free and Reduce Lunch - 100%

**Targeted Audience/intended participants** were selected based on the input from stakeholders, Federal Program Needs Assessment, and district data. The district considered the following risk factors that student face when selecting the programs participates:

- The median income is 33,904, and this limits the amount of enrichment experiences that parents can expose their kids to outside of school.
- Only 2 out of every 10 homes in Hollandale have an educational attainment level of an associate degree or higher. Our students are often faced with homework and assignments with no support.
- Risky Behaviors are prevalent because students do not have anything to do afterschool if they are not playing sports. Students resort to social media for entertainment, but it causes conflicts and bullying. Students are faced with the pressures of social media daily.
- Due to low parent and community support in the school, students do not receive mentoring on a consistent basis.

- The social capital and exposure to professions is limited for the students in Hollandale because of the brain drain migration to urban center from rural communities. As a result, the students have limited knowledge of different career opportunities.
- Financial constraints, transportation, and the limited pool of college graduates in Hollandale limit the student's potential to see college a viable choice after graduation.
- Over 65% of the students in the HSD are at least 2 or more grade levels behind. Most students drop out or never attend college because they do not have the skills to maintain academically.
- 100% of our students are eligible for free and reduced lunch.
- Students are limited to the number of classes that are taught because of teacher shortages and the high demand for intervention courses. Often the district is forced to cut art, music, band, and other higher-level math course due funding. Finding certified teachers in technology and engineering is extremely challenging in the HSD.
- The average ACT for the HSD is 16.
- Mississippi is the most obese state, and in the HSD, students are limited to recreational activities near their home because there is no access to parks close their home.

Hollandale School District has **targeted 75 students** in grades 9th through 12th grade that are performing in the lower 50 percentile of their current grade. Students participated in a variety of academic, social, and cultural activities to improve academics and promote success.

## Program Background and Operation

The Hollandale School District has operated afterschool programs for the last seventeen years successfully. During these pervious programs, there were few to no citations from all audits including MDE monitoring, External Evaluator, and annual independent auditors. The program operates after school Monday,

Tuesday, and Thursday from 3:30- 6:30 PM. The Summer Program's operation was 5 hours a day 4 days a week, 5-week. Parent/Community Programs/Services provided during the school year, are conducted, in the late afternoons, on scheduled weeknight evenings, and scheduled Saturday mornings. Academic Enrichment Activities in reading, mathematics, and science were provided to students.

Students were provided a daily "free" afternoon nutritional snack through the USDA Meal Supplement to the National School Lunch Program, known as the "Snack" program, and supervised recreation period for the first 30 minutes following the end of their scheduled school day.

#### **Sample Daily Schedule for After School**

3:30 p.m.-3:45 p.m. - Snacks and Focus Activities

3:45 p.m.-4:45 p.m. - Reading, Homework Help, Math and

Science Tutoring 4:45 p.m.-5:30 p.m. - Small

Group/Individualized Interventions

5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m. - Youth Development Enrichment Activities

#### **Sample Daily Schedule for Summer School**

8:00 a.m. -8:30 a.m. - Breakfast

8:30 a.m. -9:15 a.m. - Reading

Enrichment 9:15 a.m. -10:00

a.m. - Math Enrichment 10:00

a.m. -10:45 a.m. - Science

Enrichment 10:45 a.m. -11:15

a.m. - Lunch

11:15 a.m. -12:15 p.m. - Youth Development Enrichment Activities

**Weaknesses and Capacity Limits of Activities** - The HSD planned their program based on the needs of the district and community which allows the program to successfully execute the activities and accomplish all goals established in the design of the program. Goals and activities of the have not changed since the inception of the program.

# Evaluation Methodology and Limitations

On site observations were conducted by program director during sessions. The goal of the evaluation was to capture perspectives of program participants, staff, and others affiliated with the program. Survey data, benchmark testing data, demographic data, and attendance data were all shared with the external evaluator. On site observation was also utilized by external evaluator.

## Types of Data Collected and Sources of Information

**Qualitative data** was collected from parents, staff members, and school day teachers in the form of surveys. All stakeholders in these groups were asked to evaluate the program.

Academic data were collected from the Hollandale School District.

The evaluation of the HSD's 21st CCLC program, *Excel-Up II*, is designed as a continuous improvement model to provide information to measure the progress of grant objectives over a specified amount of time. All data collected and subsequently analyzed are used to guide and improve program implementation. The evaluation report was submitted to Project Director to analyze the findings and make necessary changes to the program design to maintain grant compliance and achieve the program's goals. Finally, the report was submitted to MDE for program auditing purposes.

Multiple research measures were used to collect and analyze data. The evaluator used a mixed method design examining **quantitative measures** (i.e. assessment scores, teacher progress reports, survey results, attendance, and demographic information) **and qualitative measures** (i.e., interviews, document review, and observations). **Quantitative data** were analyzed using spreadsheets and descriptive statistics such as percentages and means presented. **Qualitative data** were analyzed using thematic analysis procedures to confirm and support the evaluation findings. The measures, timeline, and data sources indicated are consistent with the evaluation plan provided in the approved grant application. These data were provided to the External Evaluator via email and site visit. The Program Director provided requested data that could be collected, organized in an easily accessible format.

## Access to Data and Rights of Human Subjects

There were no **limitations or challenges** associated with the collection of data over the course of the evaluation. The external evaluator understands that the 21ST CCLC PROGRAM made available to the evaluator all data/reports required by the evaluator to do the job. The Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations allow local evaluators to have access to student data if the evaluation is designed to “conduct studies for, or on behalf of, educational agencies or institutions for the purpose of developing, validating, or administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs, and improving instruction, such studies were conducted in such a manner as did not permit the personal identification of students and their parents by persons other than representatives of such organizations and such information was destroyed when no longer needed for the purpose for which it is conducted.

In the implementation of this evaluation, the evaluator took every precaution to adhere to the three basic ethical principles that guide the rights of human subjects as derived from the Belmont Report: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. Evaluation data was collected in a manner representing these principles, and evaluation reporting respects human dignity, provides constructive feedback without bias.

The evaluation was conducted adhering to the American Evaluation Association’s Guiding Principles ([www.eval.org/Publications/GuidingPrinciples.asp](http://www.eval.org/Publications/GuidingPrinciples.asp)), specifically “Evaluators respect the security, dignity and self-worth of respondents, program participants, clients, and other evaluation stakeholders.”

**Types of data collected:**

Source	Frequency	Source
Report Card Results	Quarterly	Local Schools/SAM Student Package
Site Observations	Semi-Annually (Covid-19)	Sites
Parent Involvement	Quarterly (Covid-19)	Sign-In Sheets
Teacher Survey	Annually	Sponsoring Site Teachers

Student Survey	Annually (Covid-19)	Enrolled Students
Parent Survey	Semi-Annually	Parents
Staff Survey	Semi-Annually	Staff Members
Program Attendance	Daily	Attendance Reports
Member Demographics	Annually	School Status/SAM Student Package

## Findings

The following questions were developed as a means of measuring the goals and objectives stated in the approved 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC application narrative. The data below show that HSD's 21st CCLC did meet or make progress on all objectives and goals with available data.

Goal	Measurable Objectives	Measurement Tools	Activities	Timeframe
<b>Focus Area 1:</b> Youth Development  <b>Goal 1:</b> To increase student's knowledge and experiences in their chosen career paths to equip them to compete globally.	1. At least 50% of students who regularly attend the program will show an increased knowledge of at least two academic careers aligned with their career paths  2. At least 50% of students will gain experiences (career professionals, colleges, business exposure) aligned to their career paths.	Pre and post surveys	Career interest surveys Career Research	Quarterly
		Agenda	Guest Speakers	Quarterly
		Trip Itinerary	Field trips to colleges and businesses	Monthly

<b>Focus Area 2:</b> Student Achievement  <b>Goal 2:</b> To ensure that all participants meet or exceed state required growth in Reading/ELA and Math and increase student proficiency in Science.	1. At least 50% of students will show growth on Benchmark Assessments in Reading/ELA.	Benchmark Assessments	Homework Assistance & Tutoring	3 days per week
	2. At least 50% of students will show growth on benchmark assessments in Math.		Parent Data Chats	Quarterly
	3. At least 30% increase in Science proficiency on benchmark assessments in Science.		Professional Development	Monthly

<b>Focus Area 3:</b> Family Engagement  <b>Goal 3:</b> Increase opportunities for Family Engagement	1. 30% of parents and/or family members of regularly attending students (attending 30 or more operational day(s)) will participate in at least one program wide event.	Official attendance sign-in sheets	-Family literacy night -Family math night -Family STEAM night	Monthly
	2. 25% of parents and/or family members of regularly participating students (attending 30 or more operational days) will participate in at least one youth development event program annually.		Family Talent Night-families work side by side with children on fun projects.	Quarterly
			End of program student presentations to celebrate student's cumulative learning	Annually

## Summary of Findings

The following three specific evaluation questions were developed to address the effectiveness of each of the three of the above goals.

1. **Did the HSD's 21st CCLC program make progress towards its goals and objectives? YES What evidence supports progress towards each goal and objective?**

- *Site coordinators reported student participation, attendance, and work samples demonstrated progress towards goals and objectives for the program. Additionally, small group instruction was effective because teaching focused precisely on what students needed to learn to move forward. One-on-one instruction ensured students interacted with the teacher to learn and understand core standards that were presented differentially.*

2. **What were the strengths of the program?**

- *Staff members concur that strengths of program included the following: STEM activities, differentiation of instruction, and other hands-on learning sessions.*

3. **In what areas can the program be improved?**

- *Building parent/community involvement*

This evaluation, while not limited to these questions, used these questions to determine that HSD's 21st CCLC program reached or made progress on objectives/goals as approved for funding by the Mississippi Department of Education.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusion	Recommendation	Evidence
Better/More effective communication between school-day teacher and program staff is needed.	Establish open communication channels. Communicate regularly. Establish procedures for communicating. Celebrate achievements.	Interview with Project Director suggests that school day teacher who are not staff members have little input into the program's design
Low Attendance	<b>Communicate the importance of attendance.</b> Make sure students and parents understand why attendance is important and that the program supports this.	Interview with site directors and site visits.



	<p><b>Recognize and reward students.</b></p> <p>Use a system of recognition and rewards to motivate students. Recognize small improvements and attempts, and make sure rewards are appropriate.</p> <p><b>Share data.</b></p> <p>Analyze attendance data to identify areas for improvement. Share data with schools to evaluate the impact of the program on in-school attendance.</p>	
Program lacks sufficient parental involvement and community support.	<p>Utilize Advisory Council members to recruit additional community support/partnerships as well as plan more intentionally for parent engagement opportunities.</p> <p>Utilize alternate meeting formats (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams) to engage parents and the Advisory Council in the event fact-to-face meetings are not deemed safe or practical.</p> <p><b>Involve parents.</b> Communicate with parents regularly and provide a way for them to access information about their child's program.</p> <p>Be sure to ask questions on parent surveys to address objectives regarding parent engagement so those data can be reported.</p>	Interviews with Site Coordinator and Project Director identify this as a weak area of the program

## Appendices

<u><b>Name of Interviewee</b></u>	<u><b>Title of Interviewee</b></u>	<u><b>Sites visited</b></u>
Kanesha Smith	Program Director	<b>Hollandale District Office</b>
Shelia Gray Daniels	Site Coordinator	<b>Simmons High School</b>

