Iowa 21CCLC Program Evaluation Guidelines

Program Evaluation Overview

Every recipient of federal Title IV, Part B – Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21CCLC) grant funds (grantee) is required to submit an annual local program evaluation conducted by an independent program evaluator. The purpose of this annual evaluation process is twofold:

(1) Assist the grantees with identifying areas in need of correction, refinement or improvement; and

(2) Assist the Iowa Department of Education (Department) in monitoring and assessing program quality, compliance and risk.

To assist grantees with meeting the local evaluation requirements, the Department provides annual training for grantees and local program evaluators, a standardized local evaluation form and additional support upon request. Each grantee is required to complete the local evaluation form with data from the previous school year. Each grantee must submit a single evaluation that encompasses all centers funded by the grantee within that school year.

This form serves as a general guidance and timeline for use by grantees and their independent local evaluation teams. Visit the Department's 21CCLC site for additional information and resources for the Iowa 21CCLC program.

Additional Program Evaluation Considerations

Use of Required Form

The required Local Program Evaluation form has been designed to closely mirror the data and reporting requirements of the federal 21APR system to assist grantees with this annual data submission requirement in November and March of each year. Forms should not be altered in any way other than to insert required data, testimonials, pictures and other information. Local evaluators are, however, able to append additional analysis, local measures and other data when submitting the form to Department staff.

Local Evaluator Training and Funding

The Department offers Local Program Evaluator Training each October for those serving as independent evaluators and anyone interested in becoming an independent evaluator. To join this virtual session or view the recording at a later date, visit the Department's 21CCLC site. No prior registration is necessary. Grantees are able to use their 21CCLC funds to pay their local program evaluator, but are limited to no more than 4% of each site's total budget. Funds may not be used to pay for grant writing services at any time.

Deadline for Submission

Local program evaluations are due by 5:00 PM on November 30th of each year. Extensions are allowed, but prior approval must be requested and received for Department staff. Extension requests need to be sent to joe.collins@iowa.gov and include pertinent information regarding the proposed extension, reason(s) for needing an extension and the new proposed date/time of submission.

Public Posting of Local Program Evaluation

Grantees are required to post their annual local program evaluation online for public viewing and consumption. The location/URL for the local program evaluation should be included with the version of the Local Program Evaluation form that is submitted to the Iowa Department of Education.

Program Evaluator Role & Expectations

Local program evaluators serve an important role in providing an external and independent review of a local 21CCLC out-of-school time program. Although individual contracts and agreements may vary, some typical responsabilities of an evaluator may include:

- Facilitating the implementation of action research methodology and documentation of the process, findings and outcomes;
- Evaluating local program administration and performance, based upon the state's mandated goals and objectives and the grantees' indicators;
- Attending all recommended or mandated Department evaluator trainings;
- Supporting the collection and analysis of data needed to complete interim and final evaluation reports;
- Developing and meeting timelines for all required data collection, analysis and reporting;
- Reviewing and analyzing necessary data, Indicator Reports, school report cards, assessment scores, etc;
- Conducting local site visits, interviews and additional research requested by local grantees;
- Clearly describing observations, explanations for shortcomings and suggestions for improvements;
- Assisting program staff in designing and/or revising program or recordkeeping forms and/or systems;
- Ensuring accuracy of all data and findings before submission of completed forms by set deadline; and
- Identifying strategies for informing advisory board, parents, school-day staff, program staff and other key community stakeholders of conclusions and recommendations drawn from the evaluation.

Local Program Evaluation Timeline

Month	Required or Recommended Actions
April – May	Collect any assessment data that is available for the previous summer and school year that is now ending. Visit school sites if necessary and/or contractually required.
June – July	Collect all remaining assessment data for the previous summer and school year.
August	Begin filling out the required Local Evaluation Form that is updated each year.
September	Submission period **opens**. Submit required Local Program Evaluation form and any supplemental materials in electronic format (Word or PDF) to Joe Collins at joe.collins@iowa.gov by 5:00 PM CST on November 30th.
October	Virtual training for current and interested Local Program Evaluators is provided by the Department. The Local Program Evaluation form is reviewed in detail and additional considerations, expectations and requirements are discussed. The virtual session is recorded and posted on the Department's site for public view and future reference.
November	Submission period **closes**. Submit the required Local Program Evaluation forms and any supplemental materials in electronic format (Word or PDF) to Joe Collins at joe.collins@iowa.gov by 5:00 PM CST on November 30th.
December – January	The Department conducts a thorough review and analysis of the local evaluations in order to provide outreach support to grantees with issues identified by program evaluators, identify consistent areas of need/support across the state and develop the annual statewide evaluation report for submission to the U.S. Department of Education.
February – April	The annual statewide evaluation report is finished, posted on the Department's site and shared with the U.S. Department of Education.