

SCYC-M-CHS 21 CCLC Grant

YEAR END REPORT

2019

SUMMARY

The SCYC-M-CHS Program is a collaboration between the School Community Youth Collaborative (SCYC), a youth serving non-profit founded in 1999, and the Montezuma-Cortez High School (M-CHS) to provide before school, after school, weekend, and vacation activities to students at M-CHS and their families through a 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant. The premise behind offering these activities is that participation in out of school programming will help students academically through tutoring, homework help and credit recovery classes, and that participation in enrichment activities will improve students' attendance by increasing their desire to go to school. To assist in determining if the premises were correct, data on students' participation in program activities, their school day attendance, their credit earned, and their self-reported knowledge of five high school success factors were examined. Regular participation in out of school programming was defined as attending 30 or more days. Goals were established in the areas of core academics, essential skills, attendance, and family engagement.

BACKGROUND

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grant program was authorized by Title IV, Part B, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as reauthorized in December 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The program supports the creation of local programming to provide academic enrichment opportunities and services to students during non-school hours (before school, after school, and weekends) or when school is not in session (vacations periods). Centers also offer programming to students' families. Sub-grantee centers were selected to serve students who attend low-performing and high poverty schools. Montezuma-Cortez High School (M-CHS) received an Improvement rating (50.2/100) in the 2017 School Performance Framework report. It is the largest high school in a rural county of 25,535 (Suburban Stats, Inc., 2018) and serves a high-risk population where 43% of students qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch (from EZ Reports of those students who reported). During the 2017-2018 academic year, M-CHS had a drop-out rate of 3.4%, above the state average of 2.2%.

School administration and non-profit community partners identified increased programming beyond the school day as a means to improve student engagement and provide a safe place for students and their families to participate in activities to empower them educationally, socially, and in turn, economically. To this end, the SCYC-MCHS program was developed as a collaborative effort between the School Community Youth Collaborative (SCYC), a youth serving non-profit, and Montezuma-Cortez High School (M-CHS) to implement a 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grant of \$149,996 annually for three years.

SCYC is a program of Onward! A Legacy Foundation, and as such, Onward! is the fiscal agent for the SCYC-MCHS program. SCYC was founded in 1999 to serve the youth of Montezuma and Dolores counties. With the award of two 21CCLC grants in 2018, SCYC hired a dedicated 21CCLC grant coordinator. At the same time, a new Director was recruited from within SCYC. M-CHS is the site for SCYC-MCHS activities.

A planning team comprised of the M-CHS principal, then SCYC director, the Piñon Project director, OMNI Institute consultants, Montezuma Inspire Coalition (MIC) director, Cortez Adult Education Center director, and SCYC staff identified the following needs at M-CHS:

- ❖ Academic tutoring and enrichment classes to address academic growth, achievement gaps and graduation rates
- ❖ Credit recovery opportunities for students to catch up to grade-level and regain missed skills; high school equivalency diploma preparation for students who have aged out of the school's programming.
- ❖ Extended service-learning, recreation, and life skills opportunities to enhance positive youth development
- ❖ Help for families of students to engage in their student's education.

IMPLEMENTATION

M-CHS Administration identified classes and instructors for physical education and academic support classes. SCYC identified student interests and located instructors for enrichment activities. Activities offered during the 2018-2019 year were:

- ❖ Freshman Academy was provided for two days before the beginning of school to prepare incoming students for their high school years.
- ❖ Before school activities focused on Movement Education. Initially, this was supported Monday through Thursday mornings. The class was expanded to include Fridays and expanded again to add Monday through Thursday afternoons due to high student interest and funding availability. Civil Engineering Club met on Friday mornings.
- ❖ After school, tutoring was provided Monday and Tuesday afternoons, Structured Study Hall and Adulting 101 were offered Wednesday afternoons, a Cooking Class was held on Thursday afternoons, as was the Indigenous Club. Youth Leadership Council met Thursday evenings.
- ❖ Throughout the school year, core classes were offered on nine Saturdays to help students complete credits and maintain their grades.
- ❖ For those students who still needed to regain credit, summer school was offered in the week immediately following the end of school.
- ❖ During the summer, a week long jewelry making class and a week long theater Improv camp were also held.

Attendance, grades, and credits earned were collected by the school district. A survey was designed by OMNI Institute, a 501c(3) non-profit social science consultancy, to measure students' knowledge of the top five factors for high school success: planning classes, organization, supportive connections, careers, and post-secondary opportunities. Monthly tracking sheets were submitted to Colorado Department of Education (CDE) that included the number of students served, student demographics, activities/programming provided to students and adults, activity participation and attendance, staffing, and provider details. The data collected through these means was used to evaluate the program's success in reaching its goals.

IMPACT

Students

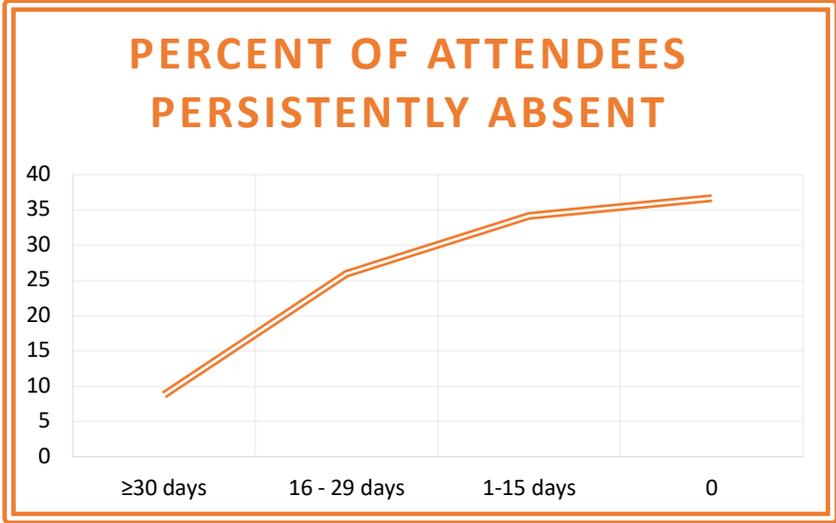
- ❖ 462 M-CHS students and 76 M-CMS eighth grade students participated in 21CCLC activities.
- ❖ 95 Freshmen attended Freshman Academy before the 2018-2019 school year.
- ❖ 207 students received tutoring services.
- ❖ 65 students participated in Movement Education
- ❖ 115 students participated in summer school. 26 of them earned credit through their attendance.

Community

- ❖ Twenty-one teachers received a total of \$55,098 for their out-of-school time.
- ❖ \$10,610 was paid for instructional travel, including after school transportation as well as trips to the Canyonlands National Park, the Gathering of Nations, Grand Canyon and Hoover Dam, Northern Arizona University and Coconino Community College, Colorado Mesa University and Western Colorado Community College, and San Juan College.
- ❖ \$14,142.49 was spent at local restaurants and grocery stores to provide meals to students and their families during activities.

RESULTS

Persistent absence is defined as students who miss 10% of their classes for *any reason*, and has been identified in Colorado’s ESSA plan. The 2017-2018 state average for chronic absenteeism was 24.3%. Among regular attendees of SCYC-M-CHS 21CCLC activities, that rate was just 8.77%. Students who attended 16-29 days of programming had 25.93% persistently absent. Those who attended 1-16 days had 34.12% persistently absent, and of those who attended no programming 36.67% were persistently absent.



Regular attendance in out-of-school activities was associated with a lower incidence of persistent absenteeism.

CONCLUSIONS

538 students participated in some SCYC-MCHS programming during the school year. This was more than the 400 participants envisioned in the grant application. It represents 86% of the student body, and suggests a high level of interest in out-of-school activities. However, only 65 students (10% of the school) were regular attendees with thirty or more days of programming. It may be helpful to look more closely at those students who attended for fewer than 30 days to determine what factors led them to limit participation. Did they only require only a small amount of homework help in order to bring up their grades? Did participation in a sports team, band, or theater class limit their availability?

95 freshmen attended Freshman Academy. The goal was 120. Thus, 79% of the goal was reached. Among those freshmen who attended 30 days or more of programming, 70% had earned ≥ 5 credits by the end of the school year.

Potential challenges in the way Freshman Academy was presented were noted; it appeared from school communication that Freshman Academy was something that one had to apply for, rather than something available and encouraged for all Freshmen. Efforts are underway to enroll students for this August, and to make clear that all Freshmen will benefit. The name has been changed to Freshman Orientation, to more accurately indicate the purpose of the two-day event. Team building activities have been made central to the program. A flier was mailed to all freshman households, and extensive social media promotion was utilized. The Ute Mountain Ute tribe provided transportation and outreach to residents of Towaoc.

207 students participated in after-school tutoring. 65 of them were regular attendees. In response to informal student and staff feedback, tutoring days were moved from Monday and Tuesday to Tuesday and Thursday for the 2019-2020 school year.

115 students participated in summer school. This exceeded the 100 students hoped for. 26 of the attendees gained credit. An additional 45 students participated in other summer programming.

Participation in before school Movement Education and in after school clubs exceeded expectations. Morning movement education was so popular that an additional day (Friday) was added. The five-day per week morning schedule has been maintained for the 2019-2020 academic year.

More outdoor field trips were completed than were projected. In the 2019-2020 year, this will be more difficult as the school calendar has been changed. There are now only two in-service days during the year. Collaboration with Gear Up may enable shared expenses for college exploration field trips.

Regular attendance in SCYC-MCHS activities was associated with a lower incidence of persistent absenteeism, though the 95% attendance rate proposed was not attained.

SCYC looks forward to the second year of implementing the 21CCLC grant at M-CHS