

**Early Childhood Best Practices Project:
21st Century Community Learning Centers Program (21st CCLC)
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education**

**Supporting Statement for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission
Parts A & B**

Project Officer:

Erica Shephard
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue., SW. 3E212
LBJ Federal Building
Washington, DC 20202-6200
Telephone: (202) 205-3871
Erica.Shephard@ed.gov

TABLE OF CONTENTS
Supporting Statement A: Study Justification

	Page
INTRODUCTION and OVERVIEW	2
A. JUSTIFICATION	2
1. Circumstances that Make the Data Collection Necessary	2
2. Purposes and Uses of the Data	3
3. Use of Information Technology	5
4. Efforts to Identify and Avoid Duplication	5
5. Efforts to Minimize Burden on Small Businesses or Other Entities	5
6. Consequences if Data Collection is not Collected or Collected Less Frequently	5
7. Special Circumstances	5
8. Federal Register Comments and Persons Consulted Outside of the Agency	5
9. Payment to Respondents	6
10. Assurance of Confidentiality Provided to Respondents	6
11. Justification for Questions of a Sensitive Nature	7
12. Estimate of Information Collection Burden	7
13. Estimate of Total Annual Cost Burden	7
14. Estimates of Annualized Costs	7
15. Change in Annual Reporting Burden	8
16. Plans for Tabulating and Publication of Results	8
17. Seeking Approval to Not Display the OMB Expiration Date	8
B: COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS	9
1. Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods	9
2. Information Collection Procedures	9
3. Methods to Maximize Response Rates	10
4. Pretesting of Surveys	10
5. Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects of Design	11
REFERENCES	12

INTRODUCTION

This document requests approval for data collection activities to study the characteristics of 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) programs serving children in preschool through grade 3. This study, which will be conducted by Synergy Enterprises Inc. (SEI) and its subcontractor, Children's Institute, will examine 21st CCLC programs for young children and characteristics that may influence the quality of program services. The purpose is to describe the programs (e.g., activities, staffing, curricula, standards, assessments, family engagement, and safety) providing services to these children. The data collection has been designed with two phases: (1) A descriptive electronic survey of 21st CCLC site coordinators will be conducted in late Fall 2010. The universe of all 8900 site coordinators will be invited to participate in the site coordinator survey,¹ and approximately 1500 of these site coordinators are expected to participate within the 2-3 week window of survey data collection. Following the site coordinator survey, 30 of these programs will be chosen to participate site visits with the project team. The 30 sites will be selected for further study based on their variation in program description, curriculum and academic support activities, staffing, and health and safety policies. This data collection will provide baseline information on how programs provide early learning services to children in preschool through grade 3. Further detail regarding high-quality early learning settings is found in the following section, Part A: Justification. The study will provide a foundation for program improvement and to support further research and informed dialogue among program directors, state coordinators and the U.S. Department of Education (ED).

This exploratory study will provide key descriptive information on 21st CCLC programs serving children in preschool through grade 3, but will not provide information on program outcomes or impacts.

There are four main questions guiding the study:

1. How are 21st CCLC programs implementing services for children in preschool through grade 3? What are the similarities and differences in services provided by different programs?
2. What are key issues and concerns faced by programs when implementing services for children in preschool through grade 3? What early learning resources do they have access to and utilize?
3. How do programs vary in quality? What are the characteristics and features of programs that provide vary in their quality of care?
4. What do policymakers, state coordinators and program directors need to know to support quality program improvements?

PART A: JUSTIFICATION

A1. Circumstances That Make Collection of Data Necessary

The proposed information collection will be conducted as part of the 21st CCLC program. 21st CCLC is a formula grant program funded through CFDA 84.287 by ED. It is authorized under Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended. 21st CCLC programs serve children from preschool through grade 12. The 21st CCLC funding supports academic enrichment opportunities

¹ A minimum of N=1500 site coordinators is required for a margin of error of 2 percent.

during nonschool hours, particularly for students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. Funding is awarded to state education agencies (SEAs) through formula grants (noncompetitive awards based on a predetermined formula) and then allocated by SEAs to eligible entities through statewide competitions. Funded programs provide academic enrichment and other youth development activities to help students meet local and state academic standards in subjects such as reading and math.

In the past few decades, implementing high-quality preventive interventions during the early childhood years has emerged as a key strategy for attenuating the effects of detrimental early experiences (e.g., poverty) on child outcomes. These interventions run the gamut of child/family programs from home visitation to early childhood education. A preponderance of research suggests that participation in a high-quality early childhood program has the potential to promote children's development across domains and across the early childhood years (Barnett, Lamy, & Jung, 2005; Campbell, Ramey, Pungello, Sparling, & Miller-Johnson, 2002; Early, 2006; Early, et al., 2007; Epstein, 2009; Love et al., 2003; Love, Tarullo, Raikes, & Chazan-Cohen, 2006; Lambert, Abbot-Shim, & Sibley, 2006; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2004; Peisner-Feinberg et al., 2001; Pianta, 1999; Pianta et al., 2005; Schweinhart et al., 2006; Vandell, 2004; Whitehurst et al., 1999; Zaslow et al., 2006). High-quality early learning settings possess specific structural and process characteristics, including small group size, low staff-child ratio, positive teacher-child interactions, developmentally appropriate environments, and an evidence-based curriculum that addresses young children's school readiness (National Association for the Education of Young Children (1997). Given the potential benefits to children, every early learning environment, including 21st CCLC program environments, should strive to meet these quality criteria.

There have been no systematic attempt to determine the quality of 21st CCLC programs for young children in preschool through grade 3 and to incorporate evidence-based elements of quality into program development. This study will provide ED and state education agency (SEA) liaisons with baseline descriptive data about their grantees and allow them to identify technical assistance needs in early learning programming and engage in program improvement. It will also identify programs implementing high-quality early learning program elements and share best practices with the 21st CCLC community. Among other benefits, this exploratory study can support the development of a specific set of policy recommendations to enhance program practices across 21st CCLC programs and the larger afterschool community.

A2. Purposes and Uses of the Data

Data collection activities are designed to yield valuable information about the quality of 21st CCLC programs, practitioners' needs, and priorities for program improvement. This section describes the data requiring clearance by the Office of Management and Budget as part of this study. The information collected will be used to inform program policy and technical assistance in the coming years.

Exhibit 1 below lists each of the instruments, along with the mode of administration, content, time needed, and estimated timeline for administration.

Exhibit 1. Data Collection Instruments (See Appendices A-D)

Instrument/ Respondent Group	N	Mode of administration	Content	Time	Timeline
Phase 1					
Site coordinator survey ²	1500	Online or paper/mail-in (only if requested)	Program description; family involvement; disciplinary and child abuse policy; curriculum and academic support; learning and social environment; physical environment; staff qualifications; staff assessment; staff professional development; staff retention; health and safety policy; program challenges; description of staff completing the survey	45 minutes	Nov 2010
Phase 2					
Staff survey	150	Hardcopy (pencil & paper)	Document the program from staff perspective, including overall program description; curriculum and academic support activities, staffing issues, health and safety policies and procedures, and center challenges	15 minutes	Jan – May 2011
Parent survey	500	Hardcopy (pencil & paper)	Children’s learning, social development, materials and environment, health and nutrition, communication with staff about child, communicating program goals and policies; staff retention, community relations, meeting parent schedule, overall rating	5 minutes	Jan – May 2011
Site coordinator interview	30	Audiotaped and transcribed by research team	Description of high-quality program; policies and procedures in place; interactions with children; communication with families and community; school alignment; assisting children with special needs, professional development	1 hour	Jan – May 2011

² Note: All 8900 site coordinators will be invited to participate. The research team assumes an expected response rate of 1500 site coordinators, or about 17% of the research sample, to participate in the site coordinator survey within the time allocated (two to three weeks). This expected response rate ensures a low margin of error (2 percent).

A3. Use of Improved Information Technology to Reduce Burden

The respondents in the Site Coordinator Survey should have ready access to technology at their work site; hence the data collection is intended to be conducted online. This has the advantage of reducing costs and possible errors associated with data entry. However, all respondents will have the option to complete the survey as a paper/mail-in should they not have access to an internet connection or if they simply prefer to respond via U.S. mail. The option presented to respondents is intended to reduce respondent burden and increase response rates. Hardcopy surveys completed by respondents during the site visits will be scanned using Scantron technology to reduce possible error in data entry.

A4. Efforts to Avoid Duplication

There are no existing data on a broad spectrum of early childhood services at 21st CCLC sites in the United States. . This was determined through internet and literature searches and conversation with other researchers, associations, and policymakers. Currently no other methods exist that would enable us to systematically capture information about the practices, needs and concerns of such a large, universal sample of site coordinators in the 21st CCLC community.

A5. Efforts to Minimize Burden on Small Businesses or Other Entities

Small business and other entities (e.g. schools) will not be responsible for this survey data collection, nor will their assistance be needed in any response or information collection. Respondents for these surveys, as listed in Exhibit 1, are individual employees of a 21st CCLC program or parents whose children participate in the program.

A6. Consequences if the Information Is Not Collected or Is Collected Less Frequently

In the absence of these surveys, it would be difficult for ED to carry out its responsibility; in particular, it would be unable to effectively determine the level of program quality; needs of the practitioners, and concerns of such a broad spectrum of afterschool practitioners.

A7. Special Circumstances Requiring Collection of Information in a Manner Inconsistent with Section 1320.5(d)(2) of the Federal Regulations

This information collection will not be conducted in a manner that will require using any special circumstances.

A8. Federal Register Comments and Persons Consulted Outside of the Agency

The agency's notice of the information collection request was published in the Federal Register (Vol. 75, No. 140/Thursday, July 22, 2010, page 42725) for 60 days to allow public comment. The public comment period ended September 20, 2010 and no comments were received. A 30 day published September 22, 2010.

Lead researchers for these surveys have consulted on both the content and form of data collection with experts in survey design, early childhood experts, and leaders from the federally funded 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

A9. Payment to Respondents

No payments to respondents to the Site Coordinator Survey will be offered. No direct incentive to respondents is planned.

A10. Assurance of Confidentiality Provided to Respondents

Responses to this data collection will be used only for statistical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific district or individual. Synergy Enterprises Inc. (SEI) and Children's Institute (CI) will not provide information that identifies a subject or district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law

The organizations that are part of the research team will follow procedures for assuring and maintaining confidentiality that are consistent with the provisions of the Privacy Act. The following safeguards are routinely employed to carry out confidentiality assurances:

- All staff members at Synergy Enterprises Inc. (SEI) and Children's Institute (CI) have current Ethical Principles in Research Projects (EPRP) or Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP) certification. All persons associated with this project at both CI and SEI have signed agreements or have written policies regarding confidentiality and privacy. These agreements affirm each individual's understanding of the importance of maintaining data security and confidentiality and of abiding by the management and technical procedures that implement these policies.
- All data, both paper files and computerized files, will be kept in secure areas. Paper files will be stored in locked storage areas with limited access on a need-to-know basis. Computerized files will be managed via password control systems to restrict access and to physically secure the source files, which will be located on secure servers in other locations.
- Merged data sources will have identification data stripped from the individual records or will be encoded to preclude overt identification of individuals.
- All reports, tables and printed materials will be limited to presentation of aggregated numbers.
- Compilations of individualized data will not be provided to participating agencies.
- Confidentiality agreements will be executed with any participating research subcontractors and consultants who must obtain access to detailed data files.

An explicit statement describing the project, the data collection and confidentiality will be sent to all potential participants who are invited to participate in the survey.

A11. Justification for Questions of a Sensitive Nature

The questions on the survey do not address sensitive topics. Even so, survey recipients may choose not to participate, and they may elect to skip any question(s) they wish. In addition, the surveys ask for opinions, so there are no right or wrong answers.

A12. Estimate of Information Collection Burden

As indicated earlier, the survey data collection will occur only once. Exhibit 2, below, shows that the estimated annual/total respondent burden for this data collection is 1270 hours.

Pilot tests with each of these instruments were completed with less than nine people in similar roles to those that will be surveyed. As these samples are small, some surveys will be completed by mail (perhaps taking more time), and some internet connections are slow, the estimates represent a reasonable amount of time within which respondents should be able to complete surveys and the interview.

Exhibit 2. Respondent Hour Burden Estimate

Data Collection Activity	Hour Burden per Respondent (in hours)	Annual/Total Expected Number of Respondents	Annual/Total Hour Burden (in hours)
Site Coordinator Survey	.75	1500	1125
Staff Survey	.25	150	37.5
Parent Survey	.08	500	40
Leadership Interview	1.0	30	30
TOTAL	2.08	2180	1232.50

The estimated annual/total hour/cost burden for all data collection is presented in Exhibit 3 below.

Exhibit 3. Respondent Cost Burden Estimate

The estimated annual/total hour/cost burden for all data collection is presented in Exhibit 4 below.

Data Collection Activity	Annual/Total Respondents	Annual/Total Hour Burden	Hourly Rate	Annual/Total Cost Burden
Site Coordinators	1500	1125	\$15.00	\$16875.00
Staff	300	37.5	\$12.00	\$450.00
Parents	500	40	\$12.00	\$480.00
Site Coordinator Interview	30	30	\$15.00	\$450.00
TOTAL	2380	132.5	---	\$18255.50

A13. Estimate of Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondents

There are no direct costs to participants, with the exception of the time required by respondents to complete the survey.

A14. Estimates of Annualized Costs

The estimated cost to the federal government of conducting these data collection activities is based on the government’s contracted cost of the data collection and related study activities along with personnel cost of government employees involved in oversight and/or analysis. For the data collection activities for which OMB approval is currently being requested, the overall cost to the government is \$624,221.00. This includes activities of the prime contractor and subcontractors to develop the instruments, recruit participants, and collect and analyze the data. This three-year project will encompass the planning, preparation, analysis, and reporting tasks. This estimate includes the required labor and associated administrative costs. This estimate also includes the preparation, training,

travel, and logistical costs for the site visit teams to visit 30 sites. The site visit team will include at least two staff members and they will be on-site for at least two days. Master observers will participate in six of the visits to monitor inter-rater reliability and scoring accuracy.

A15. Change in Annual Reporting Burden

This is a new study/data collection.

A16. Plans for Tabulating and Publication of Results

Project Reports

We plan to produce an implementation report in which results from the data collection will be presented. Following OESE approval, the report will be posted on the OESE public website. The report is expected to be finalized in late summer 2011.

A17. Seeking Approval to Not Display the OMB Expiration Date

No request is being made for exemption from displaying the expiration date.

A18. Explanation of Exceptions

This collection of information involves no exceptions to the Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.

