

# Nita M. Lowey 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center 2020-21 Attendance Requirements and Frequently Asked Questions

## Introduction

Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) across the state have had to make unprecedented adjustments to their program models in 2020-21 in response to the unique health risks posed by COVID-19. These changes have impacted how students participate in program activities and how programs track and report that participation. The purpose of this document is to share the expectations and recommendations of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and the Consortium of Applied Research (CAR) at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay (UWGB) regarding the tracking of student participation in 21st CCLC programs during this unique time.

## Attendance Taking Expectations for 21st CCLC Programs

During the 2020-21 school year, 21st CCLC grantees are charged with supporting students and families most in need of program services regardless of the learning environment in which program activities take place (i.e., in-person, virtual, or blended learning environments). The DPI will require 21st CCLC programs to record attendance beginning January 25, 2021 for **both** synchronous **and** asynchronous program activities. Therefore, in-person, virtual synchronous, and virtual asynchronous activity participation should be tracked and recorded in Cayen's AS21 System. To the extent possible, program staff should create systems in order to acquire accurate participation information for asynchronous activities.

**IMPORTANT:** Programs should enter attendance at the student-level for each activity (synchronous and asynchronous) in Cayen's AS21 System. Although programs can enter headcounts for asynchronous programming, this is not sufficient after January 25, 2021. After January 25, programs are expected to track and report which individual students completed activities. Programs can do this by entering attendance under the "Enter Attendance by Session" or "Enter Classic Attendance" area of AS21 Cayen Systems.

### *Why is tracking attendance for synchronous and asynchronous programming important?*

The DPI recognizes that acquiring attendance data may be cumbersome, especially for asynchronous programming. In many cases, data acquired may not accurately represent the number of students who completed asynchronous activities. The DPI acknowledges that attendance data for asynchronous programming will be a low estimate of the impact the program made in 2020-21. Yet, capturing as much attendance data for asynchronous program activities is important for a number of reasons:

1. At this time, federal reporting requirements remain unchanged. Wisconsin will be expected to submit as much data as possible for the 2020-21 school year into the federal data collection system for 21st CCLC programs (21APR). Tracking participation in all program activities ensures grantees will have the data needed to meet reporting requirements. It also allows them to provide a more complete picture of their work during the 2020-21 school year, which can help them advocate for their programs. Therefore, program staff should consider which options for tracking asynchronous attendance are feasible and sustainable for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year.
2. Research demonstrates that students who regularly attend out-of-school time programs are more likely to perform better in English language arts, mathematics, and in other academic outcomes.<sup>1</sup> Conversely, out-of-school time participants who attend less frequently often have lower academic performance and are less likely to graduate from high school within four years. Tracking attendance and participation will assist sites in continually reflecting on and making adjustments to programming to retain students and, thus, increase such positive outcomes.
3. Tracking attendance also provides after-school programs with information they can use to determine how students are faring during this difficult time. A recent Promising Practices Brief from the United States Department of Education captures the value of monitoring attendance well:

In addition to attendance reporting requirements, monitoring attendance serves as a critical element for assessing student engagement during extended school closures, including those as a result of COVID-19. Attending school serves as a daily wellness touchpoint for students and enables teachers and other educators to identify student wellness needs and report any concerns to the appropriate authorities. Without these daily face-to-face interactions, monitoring student attendance in remote learning during extended school closures serves as the

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<sup>1</sup> Budd, E., Nixon, C., Hymel, A., and Tanner-Smith, E. . "The impact of afterschool program attendance on academic outcomes of middle school students," *Journal of Community Psychology*, 48, 2020, 2439-2456. doi: 10.1002/jcop.22416

primary means for ensuring student well-being in a time of unprecedented disruption to home and family life.<sup>2</sup>

4. 21st CCLC programs are intended to provide academic assistance, as well as other activities that contribute to school success for those most in need of those types of support. Tracking participation allows grantees to determine if they are reaching the students and families most in need of services. It can also assist grantees in determining if the types of programming they are offering are ones that are wanted and needed by the students and families they serve and to make adjustments.
5. The requirement to track program attendance (for both synchronous and asynchronous program offerings) is fundamentally based upon equity values. The field of out-of-school time programming collectively remains focused on how our work accelerates growth and positive change for learners who most need it, while increasing opportunities for all. The intentional and unintentional consequences of our decisions on institutionally underserved and under-resourced populations must be considered. Attendance taking provides out-of-school time programs with data they can use when taking those considerations into account.

## Recommendations for Tracking Participation in 21st CCLC Programs

It is the recommendation of DPI and UWGB that grantees establish a practice of regular attendance taking for participants in **both** in-person **and** virtual learning environments. 21st CCLC programs should recognize the needs of every student by considering their unique experiences and by considering students' families as active partners in learning.<sup>3</sup> To this end, programs should be flexible and consider the different events or evidence that may count as attendance. The approach to tracking attendance recommended below recognizes that students can, and will, participate in different ways. As such, examples have been provided that illustrate what attendance might look like in different activity formats. Note that programs can employ multiple strategies to track attendance data.

*In-person and Virtual Synchronous Learning Environment (in-person activities and virtual "live" activities, such as Zoom):*

Standard reporting practices and guidance apply. Attendance should be taken daily and entered in Cayen Systems. Attendance is taken during synchronous event(s). The student is marked as having participated if the student is present during synchronous event.

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<sup>2</sup> Chambers, D., Scala, J., and English, D. "Promising Practices Brief: Improving Student Engagement and Attendance During COVID-19 School Closures," (5), July 2020., Retrieved from: [https://insightpolicyresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NSAES\\_COVID19\\_Whitepaper\\_Final\\_508.pdf](https://insightpolicyresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NSAES_COVID19_Whitepaper_Final_508.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> "Education Forward: Reopening Wisconsin Schools," Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. page 4. Retrieved on August 18, 2020, <http://dpi.wi.gov/education-forward>.

*Virtual Asynchronous Learning Environment (virtual recordings, posted or emailed activities, take-home packets, etc.):*

There are multiple options for taking attendance for asynchronous virtual activities. In essence, any indication of activity progress or completion should be counted as attendance.

Examples of student participation might include:

- Learning Management System records (such as system log-in).
- Evidence that student accessed the event (if recorded).
  - “Liked” or commented about activity.
  - List of participants who viewed.
- Evidence of work initiated or completed.
  - Asked or responded to questions about activity
  - Shared pictures of work on social media.
  - Confirmed via email or phone that work was initiated or completed.
- Submission or completion of activity (posted, emailed, texted, mailed, etc.).
- Completion of online daily check-out or “exit slip.”
- Submission of student activity log.
- Periodic opportunities to share work through synchronous sessions.
- Other.

*Other Combined or Blended Learning Environments (mix of in-person or virtual synchronous and virtual asynchronous activities):*

Apply the appropriate guidance for the virtual synchronous, asynchronous, or in-person scenarios, above.

## **Attendance-Related Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Data Entry**

**Q1:** *What are the data requirements in 2020-21?*

**A:** Programs are required to use Cayen’s AS21 System in 2020-21. In Cayen’s AS21 System, the following data elements are required:

1. Programming Information (activity name, date, time, APR category).
2. Participant Demographics (grade-level, race, gender, etc.).
3. Participant Attendance.
4. Partner Information.
5. Family Member Attendance (unduplicated number of adult family members who attended).
6. Staff Information.
7. Teacher Surveys (Spring 2021 - At this time, teacher surveys will be required).

Sites are expected to use Cayen's AS21 System regularly (i.e., weekly) to enter attendance and ensure partner, staff, and program information remains current.

**Q2:** *Will there be a Mid-Year Report?*

**A:** Sites will not be required to submit mid-year data to DPI in January 2021. Instead, the data that has been entered in Cayen's AS21 will be pulled on January 31, 2021. Sites should check the "Self-Check Report," using the steps below, to check their data for accuracy. This report is updated weekly (typically on Fridays), so changes made to data may not appear immediately.

- Log into Cayen, change credentials (to a specific district or site and leave term as 2020-21), go to "Reports," select "CLC APR Monitoring," select "Self Check Report," click "View Report."
- Check the data in "Regular Students," "ADA All Weeks," "Operations All Weeks, Days Open," and "Operations Typical Weeks, Hours per Week."

**Q3:** *Will there be a Yearly Progress Report (YPR) in Spring 2021?*

**A:** Yes, in Spring 2021, a YPR will be due for each site. More information will be forthcoming.

**Q4:** *Will teacher surveys be required in Spring 2021?*

**A:** Yes, at this time, DPI has not waived the teacher survey requirement for all regular attendees. The AS21 Cayen System allows for electronic submission of surveys to teachers (as well as hard-copies of surveys). More information will be forthcoming.

**Q5:** *How do we submit the required APR reports to the federal system?*

**A:** All 21st CCLC sites will use Cayen's AS21 System to submit APR reports. Sites no longer need to log into the federal 21APR.gov website. Instead, all programs should certify data in Cayen, in the Reports menu.

Spring 2020 APR is due on January 8, 2021, and only includes data through March 18, 2020 (prior to school closures). Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 APR will be due June 30, 2021.

### **Attendance Tracking and Recording**

**Q6:** *Is tracking and recording of attendance required in 2020-21?*

**A:** The DPI will require 21st CCLC programs to record attendance beginning January 25, 2021 for **both** synchronous and asynchronous program activities. Therefore, in-person, virtual synchronous, and virtual asynchronous activity participation should be tracked and recorded in Cayen's AS21 System. To the extent possible, program staff should create systems in order to acquire accurate participation information for asynchronous activities. For more information on how to track synchronous and asynchronous activities, see above.

**Q7:** *What counts as having "attended" programming in 2020-21?*

**A:** It is the recommendation of DPI and UWGB that grantees establish a practice of regular attendance taking for participants in **both** in-person **and** virtual learning environments. 21st CCLC programs should recognize the needs of every student by considering their unique experiences and by considering students' families as active partners in learning.<sup>4</sup> To this end, programs should be flexible and consider the different events or evidence that may count as attendance. For more information on how to track synchronous and asynchronous activities, see above.

**Q8:** *What about attendance for family events?*

**A:** The requirement that 21st CCLC programs hold at least one family event per year has not been waived. It is recommended that programs hold a minimum of four family events per year. Activities for families may be offered in-person or virtually. For in-person family events, keep track of the number of adults who participated (as usual). For virtual programming, try to keep track of the number of adults who participated. In Cayen, you can enter the total number of unduplicated adults served when you certify APR information.

### **Additional Considerations for Virtual Programs**

**Q9:** *When the 21st CCLC program is operating virtually all or part of the time, what counts as a program day?*

**A:** A program day is any day that at least one 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC activity is offered to participants. When programs are operating in-person or synchronously online (e.g., through Zoom), the day that the activity is offered is counted as one day, even if only one 21st CCLC activity is provided. When programs are operating virtually or remotely in an asynchronous manner (e.g., through recorded videos, activities posted to a learning platform, etc.), program staff will determine how many days a particular activity will count based on the content of the activity and number of steps in the activity.

**Examples:**

- Program staff post one activity online each day the week of October 1, counting this as five days of program, as staff intend for participants to complete each activity on the day it is posted.
- Program staff post one activity online on October 1 and count it as two days of programming, because it consists of multiple steps that may take students multiple days to complete.
- Program staff mail a packet with one large multi-step activity on October 1. Program staff should consider how many days they intend participants to complete the activity to determine how many program days the activity will count for.

To ensure activities count for the appropriate number of days, program staff should set up activities in Cayen to reflect the days that they anticipate participants will complete the activities. In other words, if staff send five activities to participants, with one activity to be completed each day, program staff should enter the date of the first activity as October 1, the second activity as October 2, and so on.

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<sup>4</sup> Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. "Education Forward: Reopening Wisconsin Schools"

**Q10:** *When the 21st CCLC program is operating virtually all or part of the time, what counts as a program hour? Are programs operating virtually still required to operate a minimum of 10 hours per week?*

A: Program staff should consider how much time virtual activities will take to complete. Estimates of completion time should reflect how long a “typical” student in the program would take to complete the activity without distractions. Program staff should set up virtual activities in Cayen to reflect the estimated amount of time to complete the activity, on the anticipated date the participant would complete it. For example, if a virtual asynchronous activity was estimated to take 20 minutes to complete, program staff should list the activity in Cayen as occurring from 3:00 p.m. to 3:20 p.m.

For questions regarding data entry in Cayen, contact Michael Holstead at 920-366-9805 or [holsteam@uwgb.edu](mailto:holsteam@uwgb.edu).

## 21st CCLC Attendance Tracking Resources

Cayen Training Workbook: <https://www.uwgb.edu/UWGBCMS/media/consortium-of-applied-research/files/AS21-Handbook.pdf>

Taking Attendance in Cayen:

<https://www.cayen.net/videos/as21classicattendance.mp4>

<https://www.cayen.net/videos/as21attendancebysession.mp4>

Tracking Virtual Programming in Cayen:

<https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#/s/479ccfae7f21b80002815cd3ebf073646ab103656e511d44b166b7b884941e55>