



**Iowa 21<sup>st</sup> Century**  
**Community Learning Center Report**  
*Allamakee Community School District: Junior/Senior High*  
*Postville Community School District: Cora B. Darling Elementary*  
**October 2014**

Allamakee County’s 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers address student needs with programs to (1) close the achievement gaps in math/reading so all students are proficient, (2) help students to value themselves and be engaged and supported in their communities, and (3) increase parents’ engagement in education and children’s daily lives.

Both quantitative and qualitative data have been collected to assess and strengthen the program.

Section 1: Gathering of Data

1. Qualitative information related to several aspects of the before/afterschool program was gathered
  - a. through interviews with students and parents during the spring semester of the 2013-14 school year,
  - b. through examination of staff monthly reports, site coordinator monthly progress reports, and agendas and minutes of meetings, including advisory board meetings, staff meetings, leadership committee meetings, and partnership meetings from July 2013 through June 2014.
2. Jan Mitchell, CC Program Reviewer, an outsider to the school districts, composed the interview and survey questions to gather information from students and parents of children who participate in the before/after-school programs.
3. This report includes three sections: (1) Gathering of Data, (2) Findings, and (3) Recommendations.

Section 2: Findings

1. **CCLC programming for students at Cora B. Darling Elementary in the Postville Community School District provides frequent learning experiences to help student achievement in math and reading. Junior/Senior High students in the Allamakee Community School District reported fewer experiences when answering questions about the frequency of reading and math activities in an average week.**

Student interviews/surveys included questions about the frequency of reading and math activities in an average week.

The reading question: “In an average week, how often do you get to read and/or write in the clubs you attend?” Fifty-seven percent of the responses indicate that students work with math at least 1-2 times a week in the after-school program. The majority of Postville students experience reading at least 3 times a week in CCLC programs. The majority of ACSD JH/SH students responded with “Not every week.” 60 students provided answers to the question. as shown on the chart below:

How often?	Postville Darling Elementary	ACSD Junior/Senior High	Total	Percentage
Almost every day	15	4	19	32%
About 3 times a week	6	0	6	10%
1-2 times a week	6	3	9	15%
Not every week	6	18	24	40%
No answer	0	2	2	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>

The math question: “In an average week, how often do you get to do math calculations in the clubs you attend?”

Sixty percent of the responses indicate that students work with math at least 1-2 times a week in the after-school program. 45% of Postville students experience math at least 3 times a week in CCLC programs. The majority of ACSD JH/SH students responded with “Not every week.” 60 students provided answers to the question as shown on the chart below:

How often?	Postville Darling Elementary	ACSD Junior/Senior High	Total	Percentage
Almost every day	9	3	12	20%
About 3 times a week	6	1	7	12%
1-2 times a week	12	5	17	28%
Not every week	6	16	22	37%
No answer	0	2	2	3%
Total	33	27	60	100%

Students were also asked an open-ended question: “What do you think you are learning from the club(s)/activities you participate in?” The responses, predictably, included a wide-variety of answers from “How to be smart” to “How to use time productively” and “Science and thinking skills.” No Junior/Senior High students specifically mentioned reading or math, but several gave a general answer such as “how to improve homework” or “improve my skills.” It is worth noting that a number of answers from the elementary students were relevant to reading or math.

What do you think you are learning....?	Postville Darling Elementary
About Reading (responses included reading, spelling, new English words, writing)	15
About Math (responses included math, numbers, counting)	8

**2. CCLC programming for K-8 students in the Postville Community School District and Junior/Senior High students in the Allamakee Community School District provides hands-on experiential learning and increased adult/youth interactions as they help students become proficient in reading and math.**

Site-coordinators’ monthly written reports and oral reports during staff meetings show a wide variety of experiential activities for both Postville K-8 and ACSD JH/SH students.

Postville students:

- Engineering and math: construction of marble runs.
- Science and Math: Introduction to motion, friction, balance, basic physics concepts with a skating activity.
- Science and Math: activities at the University of Iowa at Medical and Dental Colleges and in Postville as part of the participation in Project SEALED [Service, Engagement and Life Career Education in Dentistry]
- Science and Math: experiential learning trip to planetarium
- Math and Reading: Cooking Club activities every Monday
- Math, Navigation, Reading/Writing: Field trip to corn maze, fall activities in pumpkin patch, writing of thank you notes.
- Reading and Math: Trivia games, math games.
- Science: Field trips to Nature Centers with animals, plants, trees, nature trails.

- Math and Reading: Trip to Conservation Center for GPS tracking exercise.
- Science: Boat Tour on the Mississippi River with sightings of turtles, beaver dams, other wildlife, and effects after a flood.
- Math: Mileage Club

ACSD JH/SH Students:

- Math and Reading: Automotive Club
- Math: Bucket Band, Weight-lifting
- Math and Reading: Cooking Club
- Math and Reading: Root Beer Brewing Activity
- Math and Reading: Sewing and Weaving
- Math and Technology: 3D Printing
- Math and Technology: STEM Robotics, Programming, LEGOS, Pneumatics

**3. CCLC programming for K-8 students in the Postville Community School District and Junior/Senior High students in the Allamakee Community School District provides experiences to help students value themselves and be engaged and supported in their communities.**

Site-coordinators' monthly written reports and oral reports during staff meetings include multiple references to experiences which help students value themselves.

- A "Family Engagement through Science Night" showcased Postville students and their hands-on science experiments and other projects.
- During a "Family Engagement through Math and Reading Game Night," Postville students taught their parents and others who attended to play math and reading games they had been learning in the afterschool program.
- Six Postville students made a presentation at a Postville School Board meeting to show what they have learned about robots and coding.
- ACSD JH/SH students learned team-building strategies during an Experiential Learning Day that included laser tag and broom ball on ice.
- ACSD JH/SH students were given time and support to complete failed classes through credit recovery. Twenty-three students completed 26 courses through the program in early summer.
- ACSD JH/SH students built and maintained a garden plot which involved designing and building raised flower beds and a water collection system.

One observation from experiential learning: "Today my group was in the shop building sides for our raised flower beds....I was amazed and so proud of these particular students and their ability to productively work together without one taking over to do all of the work."—journal entry of a Luther College Student, interning in the ACSD JH/SH program.

The reports also show that students learn from community members who come to CCLC programs to extend their learning.

- Three migrant tutors and several CCLC tutors made it possible to provide every Postville 2-8 grade student in the 2013 summer program two hours of help with reading and math skills every day.
- A representative from the Food and Fitness Initiative worked with students in a cooking club and Mileage Club.
- Volunteers from RSVP [Retired Senior Volunteer Program] regularly interact with Postville students and read stories to kindergarteners. Postville also offered a "Senior Buddies" Club.

- ACSD JH/SH clubs were led by community members: Automotive and STEM.
- Luther College students led five ACSD JH/SH clubs: Acapella, Archery, Cooking, Ping Pong, and Weight Training.

Some programming involves collaborative partnerships with community groups which provide interactive learning opportunities involving community members.

- On Mondays, a small group of students went to the Good Samaritan Home in Postville to do activities with the residents. In December, as a community service project, Postville students went to both the Good Samaritan Home in Postville and the Garden View Community Center in Monona to sing holiday songs and visit with the residents.
- The Liaison from *Regional Safe Routes to School* worked with Postville students as they made posters to promote “Walk to School Day.”
- Participation in Project SEALED [Service, Engagement and Life Career Education in Dentistry] was possible because of a grant for community/school dental care for both Postville and ACSD.
- ACSD JH/SH provided students with many learning experiences involving groups/businesses within the community and in other locations. Experiential learning occurred in trips to: House on the Rock, John Deere Engine Works, Imaginarium, Quillins, G&S Materials, Reel Core, Seed Savers, Systems Equipment Corporation, Village Creek, Homestead Dairy, Main Feature.

Student surveys also provide information about engagement and feelings about self.

Students were given a list of five statements describing feelings about themselves relevant to activity engagement.

Sixty percent selected statements that indicate involvement in some school or church activities. Thirty percent indicated active involvement in at least one activity or club “that makes me feel good about myself.”

The students were given these five statements and asked to indicate which of the statements is true most of the time:

1. My life is kind of boring. I don’t have much going on.
2. I might like to do more things.
3. I want to get into some clubs or groups that do things.
4. I am in some school or church activities—sports, clubs, groups.
5. I am active in at least one activity or club that makes me feel good about myself.

*Columns show tabulation. Multiple-answered responses were not tallied for this report.*

Attendance Center	Interviews	Statement 1	Statement 2	Statement 3	Statement 4	Statement 5
Postville	26	4	3	5	8	6
ACSD JH/SH	18	6	0	0	5	7
Total	44	10	3	5	13	13
% of responses		23%	7%	11%	30%	30%

Attitudes about school and schoolwork also relate to students’ feelings about self. When given a list of five statements asking for feelings about school and schoolwork, more than two-thirds of the answers show students are working harder to get schoolwork done or doing better in school.

The students were given these five statements and asked to indicate which of the statements is true most of the time:

1. I don't really care much about school.
2. I know I should do better in my schoolwork.
3. I like the idea of getting help with homework.
4. I am working harder at getting my schoolwork done.
5. My grades are starting to improve because I am doing better in school.

*Columns show tabulation. Multiple-answered responses were not tallied for this report.*

Attendance Center	Interviews	Statement 1	Statement 2	Statement 3	Statement 4	Statement 5
Postville	27	3	6	2	4	12
ACSD JH/SH	19	0	2	3	6	8
Total	46	3	8	5	10	20
% of responses		7%	17%	11%	22%	43%

**3. CCLC programming for K-8 students in the Postville Community School District and Junior/Senior High students in the Allamakee Community School District encourages increased parent engagement in education and children's daily lives.**

Parents of ACSD JH/SH students were invited to specific training sessions to attend with students throughout the school year.

- Schoology
- Financial Aid Training
- Career Development
- College Student Interviews

Twenty-nine parents attended these sessions and gave positive feedback. When surveyed after the trainings, one parent wrote, "The College Readiness Training Program has provided us with much needed information. It has been a place to ask questions and get immediate answers. Because it's open forum, we get to hear others' questions which may be things we never even thought to ask. It has been a GREAT resource for us."

Parents also had the opportunity to go on campus visits with ACSD JH/SH students to Luther College, University of Northern Iowa Coe College, and Kirkwood Community College. A parent of both a 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grader in the CCLC program wrote that "the trips to the various colleges in the area have been very eye-opening. It has given both a hands-on and in-depth view at each college. The tours are more 'personal' in nature than you would get in visiting the individual schools on your own. You get more of a feel for the colleges and if your child would fit into that type of college."

Parents of Postville and ACSD JH/SH students have multiple opportunities for involvement within the afterschool program.

Student perceptions of parent involvement were gathered from students in the CCLC programs. Information gathered from students gives evidence that the majority of students interviewed said they have parents who attend school events. A third of all students interviewed also indicated feeling that their parents are interested in their learning.

The students were given these five statements and asked to indicate which of the statements is true most of the time:

1. My family doesn't pay much attention to what I am doing.
2. I think about my family doing school things with me.
3. My parents have talked about doing some family things at school.
4. My parents come to events at school like parent conferences and family nights.
5. I feel that my parents are interested in my learning because they are involved in family events at the school.

**Columns show tabulation of one-answer responses:**

Attendance Center	Total Interviewed	Statement 1	Statement 2	Statement 3	Statement 4	Statement 5	No Answer	# Students giving multiple answers
Postville	33	4	2	1	6	12	4	4
ACSD JH/SH	27	5	3	0	4	4	4	7
Total	60	9	5	1	10	16	8	11
% of students interviewed*		18%	10%	2%	20%	33%	16%	

\*giving one-answer response (total students interviewed minus number giving multiple answers)

When surveys with multiple-answers are added in, the results are similar:

**Columns show tabulation of all responses:**

Attendance Center	Total Answers	Statement 1	Statement 2	Statement 3	Statement 4	Statement 5	No Answer
Postville	37	5	2	1	10	15	4
ACSD JH/SH	34	9	4	0	9	8	4
Total	71	14	6	1	19	23	8
% of total responses		20%	8%	1%	27%	32%	11%

A small sampling of parents from Postville [5] and ACSD JH/SH [3] was given a list of participation opportunities and asked to mark those that were true of their participation as a parent. Multiple responses were accepted.

The findings show that all of the small sampling of parents participated in one or more involvement opportunities. Participation is strong in two areas: 63% said they attend Family Nights and/or Parent Training, 50% responded that they often have conversations with a staff member. Percentages are based on the number of parents who answered that item divided by the total of parents interviewed.

5	63%	I attend Family Nights and/or Parent Training
4	50%	I often talk with a staff member at drop off or pick up times
2	25%	I attend Parent Advisory Meetings
1	13%	I help to chaperone field trips
1	13%	Other (with explanation)
0	0%	I donate money or program supplies

The results above are strengthened with responses to another portion of the survey showing that 91% of the survey respondents attend events in the school or are involved in family events at the school.

A second area of the parent surveys gives support that 84% of the parents surveyed attend events at the school and perceive that their child knows that the parent is interested in the child’s learning.

The small sampling of parents was given these five statements and asked to indicate which of the statements described their thoughts/perceptions:

1. Our family doesn't pay much attention to what my child is doing.
2. I think about doing school things with my child.
3. I have talked about doing some family things at school.
4. I come to events at school like parent conferences and family nights.
5. My child knows that I am interested in his/her learning because I am involved in family events at the school.

**Columns show tabulation of one-answer responses:**

Attendance Center	Total Interviewed	Statement 1	Statement 2	Statement 3	Statement 4	Statement 5	No Answer	# parents giving multiple answers
Postville	5	0	0	0	2	1	1	1
ACSD JH/SH	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	1
Total	8	0	0	0	4	1	1	2
% of parents interviewed*		0%	0%	0%	67%	17%	17%	

\*giving one-answer response (total students interviewed minus number giving multiple answers)

**Columns show tabulation of all responses:**

Attendance Center	Total Answers	Statement 1	Statement 2	Statement 3	Statement 4	Statement 5	No Answer
Postville	6	0	0	0	3	2	1
ACSD JH/SH	4	0	0	1	3	0	0
Total	10	0	0	1	6	2	1
% of total responses		0%	0%	10%	60%	20%	10%

**4. More evidence is needed for the goal that “Families learn skills to increase their communication skills, build relationships, and increase career options with postsecondary education.”**

The parent responses about conversations with staff members and involvement in school events indicate that one part of the goal is being met—that of building relationships.

The number of parents who completed the surveys is small and may not be representative of the many parents who did not complete surveys.

Also, what isn’t known is whether or not families are learning skills to increase communication skills or career options with postsecondary education.

Surveys included the open-ended question, “What impact, if any, has your contact with the before/afterschool program had on your life and goals?” Only 5 of the 8 parents surveyed responded. Most answers were child-centered, telling that the child is learning more and it’s good for their child to have help with homework. One answer told of benefits for the parent: “Afterschool gives me a chance to work later and it helps a lot that it’s free.”

Parent surveys included one area to learn what relationship the after school program might have in increasing the parents' skills. Their responses clearly show that 50% of the parents surveyed are knowledgeable about the after school program. They come to the school, know the staff and what is going on in the program. 20% of the responders indicate that their parental involvement has impacted their learning, given them new relationships, or caused them to think about their future goals.

The parents were given these five statements and asked to indicate which of the following statements was true:

1. The before/after school program doesn't affect my life.
2. I think about improving my own skills.
3. I have talked about getting more involved with the before/after school program.
4. I come to the school, know the staff and what is going on in the before/after school program.
5. The before/after school program has increased my learning, given me new relationships, and/or caused me to think about my future goals.

**Columns show tabulation of all responses:**

Attendance Center	Total Answers	Statement 1	Statement 2	Statement 3	Statement 4	Statement 5	No Answer
Postville	6	0	0	0	3	2	1
ACSD JH/SH	4	0	0	1	2	0	1
Total	10	0	0	1	5	2	2
% of total responses		0%	0%	10%	50%	20%	20%

### Section 3: Recommendations

**1. Recommendation: To schedule the Search Institute Survey to update student data related to the 40 Developmental Assets.**

More specific information needs to be gathered to determine whether or not the K-8 Postville and ACSD JH/SH programs are meeting the student need "to value themselves and be engaged and supported in their communities." The Search Institute Survey will assess the positive developmental assets and the risk factors when assets are deficient.

**2. Recommendation: To increase the number of parents surveyed.**

The number of parents who completed the surveys is small and may not be representative of the several hundred parents who did not complete surveys.

**3. Recommendation: To add data-gathering strategies to assess whether or not families are learning skills to increase their communication skills, build relationships, and increase career options.**

More evidence is needed to learn if the Postville and ACSD JH/SH CCLC programs are working to involve parents in ways to build communication skills, relationships, and increase career options.