

Springs Valley Elementary School

Hoosier Uplands

21st Century Community Learning Centers

Site Visit Summary

Prepared by:



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PURPOSE OF THE SITE VISIT

Site visits conducted by Limelight Analytics are intended to provide useful feedback to continually enhance the quality of 21st CCLC programming. Limelight Analytics has identified four key areas that can be observed during afterschool programming and developed key indicators that are aligned with the Planning and Implementation Toolkit and User Guide developed by the 21st CCLC National Technical Assistance Center, the Indiana Afterschool Standards, and the Michigan Quality Standards of Care for Afterschool Programs.

Key Area #1: Program Delivery

- There is a planned, daily schedule.
- There are structured activities that are planned and prepared ahead of time.
- The daily schedule includes physical activity, creative activities, and social time.
- Transitions between activities and/or locations in the building are smooth.

Key Area #2: Academic Enrichment

- There is scheduled time for academic enrichment activities (including homework support if applicable).
- Academic activities support student needs in core subject areas (e.g., math and ELA).
- Activities are appropriate for the grade level and academic abilities of youth.
- Staff use varying approaches to help youth learn.

Key Area #3: Youth Engagement

- Youth actively participate in activities.
- Activities offered to participants are aligned with their interests.
- Youth follow directions and stay on task.
- Youth ask questions and seek feedback.
- Staff engage with youth throughout the duration of the program.

Key Area #4: Positive Relationships

- The program provides a welcoming, youth-centered environment.
- The program is intentional about supporting positive relationships and behavior.
- Staff serve as role models, demonstrating positive social skills.
- Staff communicate and teach clear behavioral expectations.
- Staff apply behavioral consequences consistently when needed.

Program Overview

The Springs Valley Elementary 21st CCLC program site was observed on a Wednesday afternoon in late September. Hoosier Uplands has provided afterschool programming at the site for several years. Alissa Livingston is currently in her 2nd year as the site coordinator and her 4th year with Hoosier Uplands. She is assisted by Ms. Shelia and Ms. Janet, and the team of three operates like a well-oiled machine, with clear roles and responsibilities.

Student attendance averages approximately 25 students each day. On the day of the site visit, 22 students attended the program. The site serves students in K-5th grade, with a high proportion of students in 2nd grade attending the program each day.

School is dismissed early on Wednesdays (at 2:30 compared to 3:00), so the afterschool program begins earlier, but still runs until 5:45. Program activities take place primarily in the cafeteria, but Hoosier Uplands also has access to the gym and an outdoor playground. Parents access the building through a nearby side door that is opened by staff when notified of their arrival with a phone call.

Daily Schedule

The afterschool program currently operates Monday-Friday from 3:00-5:45 with a 2:30 start on Wednesdays. The schedule that was followed on the day of the site visit is described below:

2:30 – 3:00 pm – Arrival: Students arrive to the cafeteria, check in and sit while other students in the building are dismissed from school. Since it was an “early release” day, there was time to play in the gym before snack-time.

3:00 – 3:30 pm – Snack: Students use the restroom and wash their hands and return to the cafeteria, where they are served snack.

3:30 – 4:00 pm – Homework: Students complete classroom assignments, work on an activity packet provided by the program, or read.

4:00 – 5:00 pm – Enrichment: Students participate in STEM activities on two days per week and literacy activities on two days per week. On the day of the site visit, students rotated between several stations that involved apple-themed STEM activities. Fridays typically include craft activities or active play.

5:00 – 5:45 pm – Free time: Students can play in the gym (when the space is available), play on the small lawn in front of the school (weather permitting), or choose games and other activities in the cafeteria.

5:45 pm – Student Dismissal/Program Ends: Most participants are picked up from the program between 4:30 and 5:30 pm, although the program officially ends at 5:45 each day.



| Key Area #1: Program Delivery | | | | |
|---|------------|---------|--------------|--------------|
| Indicators of Quality | 1. Minimal | 2. Good | 3. Excellent | Not Observed |
| There is a planned, daily schedule. | | | ✓ | |
| There are structured activities that are planned and prepared ahead of time. | | | ✓ | |
| The daily schedule includes physical activity, creative activities, and social time. | | | ✓ | |
| Transitions between activities and/or locations in the building are smooth. | | | ✓ | |
| Program Strengths | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program operates on a consistent daily schedule that includes homework or reading time, academic enrichment activities focused on STEAM or literacy, physical activity, and free time. • Students were familiar with the schedule and transitioned easily from one activity to the next. • Program staff are well-prepared when programming begins each day. Activity materials and snack are prepped and quickly available when needed. • The program staff team is well-coordinated. They communicate well with each other, and they have clearly defined roles in facilitating the program activities each afternoon. • Program staff do an excellent job balancing the availability of facilitated group activities with opportunities for students to make independent choices for their own activities. | | | | |
| Opportunities to Strengthen Programming | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because school is released early on Wednesdays, there was additional time for physical activity on the day of the site visit. Ms. Alissa took the students to the gym while the other staff members prepared snack. Once in the gym, several students decided to remove their shoes, although it was not clear whether they were allowed to or encouraged to do so. Several students slid around on the floor and fell during the game, and ultimately gym-time was cut short because students were not following expectations. However, rules and expectations (e.g., whether the wear shoes, how to tag people) had not been clearly presented prior to the activity. Because students gathered in the cafeteria prior to moving to the gym, staff should consider reviewing their behavioral expectations before moving to the gym. | | | | |

| Key Area #2: Academic Enrichment | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Indicators of Quality | 1. Minimal | 2. Good | 3. Excellent | Not Observed |
| There is scheduled time for academic enrichment activities (including homework support if applicable). | | | ✓ | |
| Academic activities support student needs in core subject areas (e.g., math and ELA). | | ✓ | | |
| Activities are appropriate for the grade level and academic abilities of youth. | | | ✓ | |
| Staff use a variety of approaches to help youth learn. | | | ✓ | |
| Program Strengths | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were given the freedom to sit with their peers and complete homework together if they wished. Staff circulated throughout the cafeteria to monitor the students and encourage them to stay focused on their selected activities. • Many of the students, especially the younger ones, chose to work on the activity packets developed by the program. Students enjoyed the coloring and word-search activities. • The program offered a good selection of books, and several students brought their own books to read during this portion of the afternoon. • The enrichment activity facilitated on the day of the visit involved several stations through which students rotated in groups. Each group was tasked with building a single item or completing a single task together as a group. All activities were related to a “Johnny Appleseed” theme. | | | | |
| Opportunities to Strengthen Programming | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the Johnny Appleseed activities, students worked in small groups and were encouraged to practice “teamwork”. Teams that excelled in this area would win a prize. However, it wasn’t clear that students understood how to promote “teamwork” within their groups (nor were ideas discussed prior to the activity). In the end, most of the older students completed the activities, and the younger students often sat and watched. Program staff should find ways to ensure that all students can have hands-on experiences with enrichment activities, even if that requires different stations for older and younger students. | | | | |

Key Area #3: Staff & Youth Engagement

| Indicators of Quality | 1. Minimal | 2. Good | 3. Excellent | Not Observed |
|--|------------|---------|--------------|--------------|
| Youth actively participate in program activities. | | | ✓ | |
| Activities offered to participants are aligned with their interests. | | ✓ | | |
| Youth follow instructions and stay on task. | | | ✓ | |
| Youth ask questions and seek feedback. | | | ✓ | |
| Staff engage with youth throughout the duration of the program. | | | ✓ | |

Program Strengths

- Staff circulated throughout the cafeteria during structured and unstructured activities, checking in with students and helping when needed. When students had questions for staff, they were able to get them answered relatively quickly.
- Program participants listened to staff, followed instructions, and remained engaged with the activities presented to them. When they wished to move on to a new activity, students asked staff how much longer until they could choose something new, and they accepted the answer provided.

Opportunities to Strengthen Programming

- During gym time before snack, staff asked students what games they would like to play in the gym. Not surprisingly, they made several different suggestions, which were typically popular only with a subset of their peers. Staff then chose the game from among the suggestions, but it was not clear how they made their final decision. If program staff wish to solicit ideas for gym games from the students, then a more systematic approach is suggested. For example, maintain a list of the most popular games, and then either choose randomly each day (e.g., select randomly from a jar) or rotate through a list so all the games get played during a 1- or 2-week period. This could encourage students to participate in all the games, not just those that are their preference.

| Key Area #4: Positive Relationships & Behavioral Supports | | | | |
|---|------------|---------|--------------|--------------|
| Indicators of Quality | 1. Minimal | 2. Good | 3. Excellent | Not Observed |
| The program provides a welcoming, youth-centered environment. | | | ✓ | |
| The program is intentional about supporting positive relationships and behavior. | | ✓ | | |
| Staff serve as role models, demonstrating positive social skills. | | | ✓ | |
| Staff communicate and teach clear behavioral expectations. | | | ✓ | |
| Staff apply behavioral consequences consistently when needed. | | ✓ | | |
| Program Strengths | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff warmly greeted each of the students as they arrived, and it was clear they knew them well, as they asked questions about their day or their interests. • Staff listened to student ideas and feedback, even when they were unable to accommodate special requests or activity modifications. • Students responded well when staff redirected their behavior with gentle reminders. No major behavioral issues were observed during the afternoon. | | | | |
| Opportunities to Strengthen Programming | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, students were engaged throughout the afternoon and behavior was good. As they were picked up, students were given the opportunity to select something from the “prize box”. However, it was not clear if prizes were intended to support specific positive behaviors or overall “good behavior” across a span of time. While both forms of behavioral reinforcement can be practiced, it can be helpful for students to identify the behaviors they should practice more often (e.g., listening when staff speak, lining up quietly, and cleaning up after themselves). Program staff should look for opportunities to let students know what they are doing well and what they should continue doing. | | | | |