

2025-2028 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Cohort 18 Competitive Grant Program



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

NOTE: This document may be updated periodically as additional questions are posed to program staff.

Revised 01/31/2025

General Questions

NEW Can I exceed the character count limits for any narratives if needed?

- No. Applicants cannot exceed the character count limits outlined in each application question. Character count limits are inclusive of spaces, hidden characters, charts, and images.
- Any text, chart, and/or image beyond the specified character limits set will not be scored.
- It is the responsibility of the applicant to review and ensure that their narrative responses do not exceed the character count limits.
 - Please note: Applicants should refer to the **“Characters (with spaces)” information ONLY** to determine if their narrative response meets the character count limit.

NEW How can I check the character count for each of my responses?

- To check the character count for a specific narrative response, applicants can follow these steps:
 - Highlight the section of text you want to count.
 - Use the built-in tools in your word processor:
 - Microsoft Word: Go to the "Review" tab and click on "Word Count." A dialog box will appear showing the character count (with and without spaces).
 - Google Docs: Click on "Tools" in the menu, then select "Word count." A box will pop up with the character count.
 - For a video tutorial, applicants can click [here](#) to view a tutorial provided by Microsoft Word. *(This link will take you to the section needed starting at 51 seconds)*
 - Please note: Applicants should refer to the **“Characters (with spaces)” information ONLY** to determine if their narrative response meets the character count limit.

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Can organizations submit an application in CCIP for both “Cohort 18 New” and “Cohort 18 Summer Only New?”

- No. Organizations can only submit one application in CCIP.

When will applications be opened for cohort 18 in CCIP?

- The Cohort 18 application opened on Monday, January 13, 2025.

Where are the recordings and training materials from the RFP webinars located?

- The webinars and all other resources for Cohort 18 are located on the 21st CCLC webpage. [Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers | NC DPI](#)

Is it correct that pgs. 41-46 of RFP are blank?

- No. The most up to date version does not have blank pages. Please check the NCDPI website for the most recent version. [Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers | NC DPI](#).

Who do potential applicants contact with additional questions and when will office hours be provided?

- Please direct your questions to the Office of Federal Program RFP Committee (Hawhana.Locklear@dpi.nc.gov, Wendy.Buck@dpi.nc.gov or Areli.Perez@dpi.nc.gov)
- Office hours will take place on January 30, 2025, from 10:30-12:00 noon. The link to join the office hours will be found on the website under the cohort 18 tab. [Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers | NC DPI](#)

Will each State Board region be guaranteed a Tier 1 AND Tier 2 awardee?

- No, there is no guarantee that each region will receive a tier 1 and tier 2 awardee.

For the 2025-2028 NCDPI Cohort 18 21st CCLC Competitive Grant Program, NCDPI may award

- **At least one (1) 21st CCLC grants proposing to operate an academic year program (with or without a summer program) per each State Board of Education (SBE) region of the state** pending submission of quality applications by at least one (1) eligible organization in the SBE Region and following Level I and Level II reviews.

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- **At least one (1) 21st CCLC grant proposing to operate summer only programs per each State Board of Education (SBE) region of the state** pending submission of quality applications by at least one (1) eligible organization in the SBE Region and following Level I and Level II reviews.

After reviewing applications, will SBE (School Board of Education) award only one (1) grantee per region?

- RFP page 23: After the initial awardees are identified, NCDPI may continue to recommend one (1) additional organization per region proposing to operate academic year program (with or without a summer program) for the award based on total application score and ranking. If funding is available, NCDPI will then recommend one (1) additional organization per region proposing to operate summer only programs for the award based on total application score and ranking until funds are depleted.

Are there any concerns that federal funding may be eliminated during this cycle with the changes in federal administration and statements about the U.S Department of Education?

- RFP page 5: *Please note that all federal funds are contingent upon U.S. Congressional approval of the budget on an annual basis.* Visit the NCDPI [21st CCLC web page](#) for additional information as it becomes available.

Under Capacity to Implement/Sustainability - when we are discussing other funds that are not braided, but still significant, should we name the specific funders?

- If using funds from private entities (non-governmental agencies), you might reference funders in the Capacity to Implement, Partner, and Sustain narrative and upload in Optional Documents *Other Partnership/Collaborative Agreements (No template provided)* to support your case. Additionally, if you will be receiving significant funding that might help explain some expenditures that would not be reflected in your 21st CCLC budget request, you might mention in the Budget Narrative and Alignment section that you are receiving additional funding (or in-kind support) from external funders with the name and overall amount since braided funds from private organization(s) would not be reflected on the Total Cost worksheet. Again, this helps to reinforce the case of leveraging community partnerships to support (and possibly sustain) the program.

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CCIP

Who is the email contact for CCIP request forms?

- Please email completed CCIP Access Request Forms to Talbot.Troy@dpi.nc.gov. If adding multiple users, only one form is to be completed per organization.

Eligibility to Apply

Can nonprofits apply as the grant administrator for a school/LEA?

- This is determined by the organizations entering into a joint application. See RFP pgs. 20-21 for requirements to submit as Joint Applicants.

Can someone be Fiscal Agent for two (2) organizations applying for a 21st Century Grant in Cohort 18?

- No. RFP page 16 states: "An organization or individual serving as a Fiscal Agent is limited to submitting one application per 21st CCLC grant competition."

Competitive Priorities

If there is a new school in our area that does not have this data listed but a potential applicant plans to serve that school with this application, how would the potential applicant answer the priority points question for that school?

- As a new school, some data may not be available through NC Schools Report Card Data website or the CSI/TSI spread sheet; thus for any new school where this is the case for CSI/TSI status, Chronic Absenteeism, or Short-Term Out-of-School Suspension or In-School Suspension related to priority points, or student performance, or poverty status, the applicant should note on *the 21st CCLC Proposed Feeder School(s) w/School Poverty & Performance Status* form that the school is new and the school year in which the school opened. (Note: There will be data if the school opened prior to the 2024-2025 school year). Keep in mind that when applying for priority points, a majority (at least 51% or more) must meet the criteria indicated for priority points. Other priority points opportunities (i.e., Joint Applicant, Underserved Counties, Rural Counties, County Distress Ranking, Use of Braided Funds, and Implementing Trauma-informed Practices) are not contingent on providing prior year NC Schools Report Card Data.

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What are braided funds?

- Braided funds are a combination of local, state, and federal funds used for the unified purpose of operating a 21st CCLC program. However, each funding source is still tracked separately and follows its unique reporting requirements. For example, an organization may braid funds by using 21st CCLC funds to pay for the program's tutors and use local government funds to pay for transportation costs to transport students to and from the program.

Do the multiple funders have to be governmental or do private foundations count too?

- Organizations can use private foundations in conjunction with 21st CCLC funds to implement programming. However, in order to qualify for the braided funds competitive priority point, organizations must use local, state, and/or federal funding sources.

Does Tri-Share and Subsidy Funds through Smart Start and Federal/ State Child Care subsidy programs count towards braided funds?

- Local, state, or federal funding all refer to funding that would come from a government agency. Local could be city or county agency that commits funds to the project. However, any funds counted as braided funds would need to support out-of-school time programming only.
- Applicants will receive priority consideration if they sufficiently demonstrate how federal, state, and local funds will be combined or coordinated (i.e., braided) for the most effective use of public resources to support out-of-school time programs.

Where is the information about suspensions located in the NC School Report Card?

- See [North Carolina School Report Cards](#) Select year 2023 and then scroll to School Environment.

If the school district a potential applicant is planning to serve has the trauma and mental health components, can the applicant collaborate with them?

- Yes. Services should still be provided during program hours RFP pg. 22.

Can a nonprofit and faith-based organization partner?

- They can partner, but they are not eligible for a joint applicant priority point since one partner is not an LEA. RFP pg. 18.

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General Program Implementation

NEW If an applicant is proposing to operate multiple sites, can each site offer different core academic and/or enrichment areas?

- Yes. Applicants can offer different core academic and/or enrichment area activities at each site.
- When completing the application, organizations must select all applicable academic and enrichment areas in question 3. They should then clearly outline the different areas offered at each site in all relevant narrative sections and sample program schedules.

NEW How can organizations determine if the proposed science and math activities fall under core academic Science, core academic Math, or core enrichment STEM?

- Organizations should refer to the links located in the RFP on pages 11-12 to review the required activity alignments and determine which option best aligns with their proposed program.
- Activities that are aligned with NCDPI adopted Digital Learning Standards should be considered STEM under the core enrichment areas. While activities that are aligned with NCDPI K-12 Science and/or Math Standards should be considered Science and/or Math under the core academic areas.

What happens if enrollment falls below 50 students for a limited period of time?

- 21st CCLC programs are not considered drop-in programs. Awarded applicants are expected to provide continuous services to a minimum of 50 students each academic year of the three (3) year grant. If students drop out of the program, programs must enroll additional students in order to continue meeting the minimum requirement of 50 students.

Is there a specific requirement on where programming can occur? For example, can it take place in a physical school, or would it need to be offsite?

- Program locations can be at a school site, or another site as determined by the applicant if all safety measures are in place for programming. See RFP pg. 52: Center definition.

Are Home School children allowed to be served under this grant?

- As long as the student participant eligibility priority is met meaning at least 51% of students served come from schools eligible for Title I, Part-A school-wide programs.

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Student Participant Eligibility

Under Section 4203 of the ESEA, the State must give priority to applications proposing to primarily serve students who attend schools eligible for Title I, Part A school-wide programs. Additionally, students served by the 2025-2028 NCDPI Cohort 18 21st CCLC Grant Program must meet federal 21st CCLC eligibility requirements. RFP pg. 18.

If this is a first-time application and the predicted/projected number of students to serve is on the lower end, can additional students be added in years 2 and 3?

- Yes. However, funding for 21st CCLC will not be increased.

The Student Academic and Enrichment Program Design rubric assesses the extent to which applicants identify academic and enrichment goals, objectives, and outcomes that illustrate a theory of change. What is a “theory of change”?

A theory of change is a strategic roadmap that:

- Explains HOW and WHY a program or initiative is expected to create meaningful change
- Connects specific activities to anticipated long-term outcomes
- Provides a logical framework for understanding the program's potential impact

If numbers are over and above the projected numbers, can funds be collected?

- No. As per the RFP pg. 18, “The intent of the 21st CCLC program is to ensure equal access to all students and their families targeted for services; therefore, in North Carolina, fees cannot be collected for participation in the 21st CCLC program.”

Can a specific population of students be targeted for service (i.e.: newcomer students, migrant students, homeless students, etc.)?

Yes. Applicants must be sure to align the needs assessment and program narrative to the population to be served. Additionally, Applicants must meet the minimum program requirements for each program selected, including total program hours and student enrollment.

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Completing Related Documents

Should the application narrative responses be provided in a text format?

- The narrative responses should be provided in text format inside the designated text areas located in the application. The application is a Word document.
- The application will be uploaded as a required document instead of completing grant details within the CCIP for cohort 18.

Are the related documents due upon submission as in years past?

- Yes. RFP page 36: All information, including Required Documents must be entered on the web-based grant management system. Only those proposals that are submitted through CCIP as at least 'Draft Completed' by 12:00 p.m. NOON EST February 18, 2025, will be reviewed and/or evaluated.

How should responses to Box 5 - Program Schedule Narrative be formatted in the application?

- Applicants have two acceptable ways to complete Box 5 - Program Schedule Narrative:
 - Bulleted list format
 - Standard sentence format
- Applicants must provide separate program schedule narrative details for each distinct program format they are proposing.

If a joint application is completed, can other feeder schools be offered services in an LEA other than the one who is the joint applicant?

- If partnering with an LEA, then your feeder schools would be those schools that are agreed upon by both partners and can include feeder schools in more than one LEA.

What types of signatures are accepted on Related Documents?

- NCDPI will accept wet signatures in blue or black ink or electronic signatures (i.e., Adobe, DocuSign) on Related Documents.

For the Basic Organization sheet, how should the section labeled "non-service days" be completed if the school district intended to be served has not released the 2025-2026 calendar which lists all school breaks and teacher workdays?

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- Applicants can estimate non-service days to the best of their ability. If awarded, organizations will have the opportunity to update the dates at a later time.

Should the percentage of Title 1 schools or the poverty percentage for each school be listed in the grant application?

- When responding to question 1 of section 2 of the grant application, organizations must list the names and poverty percentages of each proposed feeder school.
- In the Required Documents section, in the *21st CCLC Proposed Feeder School(s) with School Poverty & Performance Status* template applicants must list the same feeder schools listed in question 1 of section 2 and provide various data points. Applicants should refer to the individual instructions listed under each column to determine what information to provide.

Where can the most current link for CSI/TSI schools be located?

- Utilize the link provided in the RFP pg. 19 [CSI/TSI 2023-2024 list](#)

Where is the list of private schools located?

- The current list of North Carolina conventional non-public schools (i.e., private schools) is available at: <http://www.ncdnpe.org/convnonpub.aspx>.

Summer Programs

NEW Are organizations applying to implement summer programming allowed to close for a full week during the Fourth of July holiday?

- No. Organizations can choose to close on Friday, July 4th, 2025, to honor the holiday, but cannot take a full week off. Organizations must offer consecutive weeks of programming in alignment with the Standard Summer Learning program and/or the Intensive Summer program.
- Organizations can also schedule programming to end prior to the week of July 4th or start programming after July 4th. For example:
 - Offer 4 weeks of programming starting on June 2nd and ending on June 27th.
 - Offer 4 weeks of programming starting on July 7th and ending August 1st.

Is there a summer enrollment requirement (# of students and contact hours) as with school year programs?

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- Yes. Applicants proposing to implement summer programming must serve a minimum of 25 students, as identified in pages 25 and 26 of the RFP under the Summer Learning Programs Funding Levels. Additionally, the following dosage requirements apply:
 - Standard Summer Learning Programs- RFP page 14: Proposed standard summer learning programs must operate for at least four consecutive weeks and provide a total of at least 80 hours of programming. *Please see page 14 of the RFP for all program requirements.*
 - Summer Intensive Programs-RFP page 14: Proposed summer intensive programs must operate for at least two consecutive weeks and operate for at least 16 hours per week. *Please see page 14 of the RFP for all program requirements.*

Is there a minimum number of contact hours a student must attend summer programming (for option 3 of the application) to count towards the enrollment goal?

- No, however continuation funding is contingent upon full program implementation. RFP pg. 26 and pgs. 13-15

Do the performance goals and indicators apply to summer only programs?

- Yes. Continuation awards are contingent upon the availability of federal funds and are based on the program's (a) ability to demonstrate compliance with state and federal laws, (b) progress toward fully implementing the approved program, and (c) progress toward local and statewide program goals, including enrollment and attendance goals. RFP pg. 26

What are the expectations for enrichment programming for the summer only option?

- RFP pgs. 13-15

Standard Summer Learning Program

Proposed standard summer learning programs must meet the following criteria¹:

1. Duration:

- Operate for at least four consecutive weeks, and
 - Provide a total of at least 80 hours of programming
-

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2. Program Design Requirements:

- Offer at least 3 hours of core academic learning per day, and
- Include at least 1 hour of varied daily enrichment opportunities per day
- Core academic learning and enrichment opportunities must align with core areas as described in NCDPI 21st CCLC Statewide Performance Goals - Objectives 3.1 and 3.2.

3. Student Participation:

- Each year serve the same group of students throughout all four consecutive weeks.

Can the three hours of daily core instruction for summer program be in one area, such as literacy?

- Summer programming must adhere to the requirements outlined in the RFP pgs. 13-15

Proposed standard summer learning programs must meet the following criteria:

1. Duration:

- Operate for at least four consecutive weeks, and
- Provide a total of at least 80 hours of programming

2. Program Design Requirements:

- Offer at least 3 hours of core academic learning per day, and
- Include at least 1 hour of varied daily enrichment opportunities per day
- Core academic learning and enrichment opportunities must align with core areas as described in NCDPI 21st CCLC Statewide Performance Goals - Objectives 3.1 and 3.2.

3. Student Participation:

- Each year serve the same group of students throughout all four consecutive weeks.

Can you serve the county at different times (i.e. 4 weeks inner city and 4 weeks rural area) during the summer due to the physical location of the schools in the county?

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- Yes. RFP pgs. 13-15

Standard Summer Learning Program

Proposed standard summer learning programs must meet the following criteria:

- Duration:
 - Operate for at least four consecutive weeks, and
 - Provide a total of at least 80 hours of programming
- Program Design Requirements:
 - Offer at least 3 hours of core academic learning per day, and
 - Include at least 1 hour of varied daily enrichment opportunities per day
 - Core academic learning and enrichment opportunities must align with core areas as described in NCDPI 21st CCLC Statewide Performance Goals - Objectives 3.1 and 3.2.
- Student Participation:
 - Each year serve the same group of students throughout all four consecutive weeks.

Family Engagement

Do the educational workshops have to be in person, or can they be done virtually?

- Educational Workshops must be hosted in person. There may be a need to conduct workshops in hybrid fashion when necessary. See RFP pgs. 12-13 (school year) pg. 15 (summer)

Does time with parents/guardians at family engagement events count as a program activity time for students?

- Parent engagement activities do not count towards student program hours, program dosage requirements, or 45/90hr goals for installments, unless there are interactive activities for both parents and students to participate in and the activity is logged into 21DC.

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Fiscal Questions

Can 100% (40 hours per week) of a site director's wage be charged to the 21st CCLC grant?

- Costs must be reasonable and necessary for the proposed programming. The Budget Narrative and Alignment (along with the Total Cost Worksheet must demonstrate how the hours/budget for a site director are warranted for the program. See RFP Appendix E for the Budget Narrative and Alignment rubric. Also, remember that costs for indirect student services may not exceed 20% of the total budget.

Is the Total Cost Worksheet available online?

- Yes. The Total Cost Worksheet is found under the Required Documents section of the CCIP application.

Which required Total Cost Worksheet should we utilize for our application?

- Please make sure you are using the latest document which is dated 1/21/2025 for the correct calculations of direct versus indirect costs for your proposal.

Is there a maximum number of staff that can be paid with 21st CCLC grant funds?

- Costs must be reasonable and necessary for the proposed programming. The Budget Narrative and Alignment (along with the Total Cost Worksheet must demonstrate how the hours/budget for staffing are warranted for the program. See RFP Appendix E for the Budget Narrative and Alignment rubric. Also, remember that costs for indirect student services may not exceed 20% of the total budget.

Is there a cap or rules around the hourly rate teachers or other 21st CCLC staff can be paid, using 21st CCLC grant funding during the academic year and/or summer programming?

- RFP Appendix E Budget Narrative and Alignment for this grant's requirements
- RFP Appendix E for the Budget Narrative and Alignment rubric. Also, remember that costs for indirect student services may not exceed 20% of the total budget. Grant Guidance Section 2.E: Compensation states: To assist subgrantees, NCDPI recommends reviewing resources including but not limited to the North Carolina Public School Salary Schedules, [NC May 2023 OEWS State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates](#) (bls.gov)(Sections 25-2012 through 25-3099, Sections 11-9031-11-9032), a full-cost analysis report by [The Finance Project and Public/Private Ventures on The Cost of Quality Out-of-School-Time Programs](#), and the [Wallace Foundation Cost](#)

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[Calculator](#) which provides information on the overall price per student slot for OST programming.

What key staff are required to attend the onboarding for Cohort 18 in July?

- The fiscal agent **and** program director or designee must attend the mandatory onboarding in July. See pg. 16 of the Cohort 18 21st CCLC RFP.

May one person fulfill both the fiscal agent and the program director roles for grant implementation?

- One person may fulfill both roles; however, for onboarding purposes two people should attend in order to be able to be in both fiscal and programmatic sessions to receive imperative information for grant implementation. See pg. 16 of the Cohort 18 21st CCLC RFP.
- However, there should be segregation of duties among job roles. Time and effort must be maintained designating the hours in which the roles are performed.