
























Executive Summary

With funding from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC), Living Classrooms Foundation implements the Baltimore Environmental Education Summer Math and Reading Trailblazers (BEE SMART) program. The program is designed to prevent summer learning loss and raise below-average reading scores among rising 3rd through 5th grade students living in the low-income communities surrounding Lakeland Elementary Middle School (Lakeland) and Maree Garnett Farring Elementary Middle School (Farring), both school-wide Title I schools. The program weaves academic learning with hands-on enrichment that emphasizes linkages between school year learning and summer activities. The following findings are based on evaluation data from the 2020–2021 academic year, Year 3 of this 21st CCLC funding cycle.

Findings by MSDE Objective

The following is an overview of BEE SMART’s progress toward MSDE’s 21st CCLC Objectives. For more detailed information about the rating scales and available data, please refer to the body of the report.

Objective	Performance Measures
Objective 1: <i>Progressed</i> Educational and social benefits and positive behavioral changes	 79% of participants increased by one level or more (who were below in the W level) from beginning to end of program. (n=47) <i>Target=80%</i>
	-- Fall 2021 standardized reading assessment data not yet available.
	-- Fall 2021 standardized reading assessment data not yet available.
	-- Fall 2021 Q1 report card grades not yet available.
	-- Report card and school day attendance not available.
	 83% of students demonstrated appreciation of the value of high expectations. (n=23-25) <i>Target=80%</i>
	 57% of students participated in a “presentation of learning.” (n=61) <i>Target=95%</i>
 81% average daily attendance for the summer program. (n=51) <i>Target=85%</i>	
 16% of BEE SMART students participated for at least two consecutive summers. (n=61) <i>Target=40%</i>	
Objective 2: <i>Met</i> High-quality educational, developmental, and recreational services	 All participants had the opportunity to be engaged in daily STEM lessons.
	 All participants had the opportunity to be engaged in weekly reading tutoring sessions.
	 All participants had the opportunity to be engaged in morning mentoring sessions and guided recreation sessions.
	 All participants had the opportunity to contribute to a service-learning project.
	 BEE SMART hosted events during which staff, parents, and students could become acquainted with each other and the program.
	 Staff maintained frequent communication with families including daily attendance calls and regular usage of the text message reminder system.
	 Staff were available in-person every day
	 All parent documents were provided in Spanish and English. The Parent Liaison(s) was available by phone, text, and email.

Objective	Performance Measures
Objective 3: Met Parental involvement and family literacy	 89% of families participated in at least one family event hosted by program staff that offered opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles, child development, and team/community-building skills. (n=61) <i>Target=80%</i>
	 77% of families engaged in services and activities that improve literacy and parenting skills. (n=61) <i>Target=70%</i>
	 88% of families for whom English is a second language participated in workshops or services to improve English fluency. (n=32) <i>Target=50%</i>
Objective 4: Met Safe physical space to meet the needs of participants	 Program spaces were accessible to all participants.
	 Outdoor spaces were safe and arranged for a variety of activities, with full program sessions taking place in outdoor classrooms.
	 Program spaces were arranged so that various activities could happen simultaneously without disruption.
	 Indoor alternatives were offered in extreme summer heat and/or cases of inclement weather.
Objective 5: Met Program relates to participants and responds to individual needs	 BEE SMART Program Director collected yearly updated resumes for all staff.
	 Returning staff were re-interviewed to ensure enthusiasm for and commitment to the program.
	 All staff participated in a week-long training session prior to the start of the program or took part in training sessions if hired after the start of the program.

 Met
  Approached
  Not Met
  Data Not Available

Successes

The BEE SMART program demonstrated successes in reading achievement, with 79% of participants increasing by at least one level or maintaining a high level; high levels of parent engagement, including a 69% increase from Year 2 in engagement of families for whom English is not a first language; outdoor teaching strategies; and development of adult partners for youth.

Challenges

The program faced challenges in the search for quality staffing, though ultimately equipped with a strong, talented team of educators; overall program attendance, with some registrants never attending or responding to communication attempts; and physical challenges related to the outdoor program setup procedures.

Recommendations

BEE SMART recommendations include exploring alternative phrasing for social-emotional targets to be more in line with the program’s unique approach to character development; building on lessons learned from various program delivery methods to craft a program that might best meet participant, family and staff needs; and tailoring access to reading specialist sessions, specifically from a more granular level to include student grade level, small group members, and the topics of mentor sessions.