

## **5.1 Project Abstract or Summary**

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers** is a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center program that serves 109 at-risk Fort Pierce (K-8) youth during the 2017/2018 school year and 120 at-risk Fort Pierce (K-8) youth during the summer attending D/F rated Title 1 schools in St. Lucie County: Lawnwood Elementary, St. Lucie Elementary, Chester A Moore (C.A. Moore) Elementary and Dan McCarty Middle School. Three priority outcomes of the program are academic success, good character and citizenship, and healthy lifestyles. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers' goal is to help students improve math, science, and reading academic skills to meet state standards while working to help youth develop the qualities needed to become responsible citizens and leaders. The program also reinforces living healthy lifestyles and teaches necessary skills to address lifestyle risks found directly in their community. Provisions for participating students' parents/guardians are also included, providing opportunities to improve parenting and finance literacy skills.

**5.2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT.** The leadership team used numerous data elements from a variety of sources to identify target populations and pinpoint strategies to meet the educational needs of students and their families. Using 2016-17 school year student performance data on the Florida State Assessments (FSA) from The Florida Department of Education website, it is clear that the majority of students attending St. Lucie Elementary, Lawnwood Elementary, CA Moore Elementary and Dan McCarty Middle School, all located in the City of Fort Pierce, are struggling to meet state proficiency levels for grade level standards in reading, math and science. Trend data for 2015/2016 provided by St. Lucie Public Schools showed 73% of C.A. Moore and Lawnwood students did not demonstrate proficiency levels in reading. With a decrease of 10.26%, C.A. Moore had the largest drop in reading scores from the prior year. Trend data in math shows 60% of C.A. Moore students and 63% of Lawnwood students did not reach proficiency.

### **Demographics and Risk Factors of Target Population.**

The City of Fort Pierce encompasses 21 square miles, with a current population of

approximately 44,484. Fort Pierce suffers from a high rate of violent crime - especially gang-related gun violence -- to such an extent that in 2014, the Federal Bureau of Investigation ranked Fort Pierce 9th on the list of Florida's most dangerous cities. A 2015 study shows that violent crimes per 1000 residents in Fort Pierce was 10.76% compared to Florida at 5.40% and the national median of 3.8%.

There are five recognized gang areas within a five-mile radius of the Boys & Girls Clubs Garden Terrace Clubhouse and Avenue D satellite facility, where the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers Program will be conducted. In fact, the community in which the Garden Terrace Club is located has been referred to as "Little Nam" - a war zone of high crime rate and gun proliferation on the streets. Gang-affiliated activities place youth at an increased risk of truancy, poor academic success and low civic engagement.

According to American Fact Finder, United States Census Bureau, the 34947 zip code area (Garden Terrace Clubhouse) –had a median annual income in 2014 of \$22,926; grossly below St. Lucie County (SLC)'s median income of \$42,655 and the state average of \$47,212. U.S. Census Bureau data shows that in 2013, one of three adults and 54% of children in Fort Pierce lived in poverty. Club member demographics reflect those of their community, with approximately 94% receiving free or reduced-cost lunch at school, while 75% live in single-parent families.

Low family income affects students in several ways. For example, a high percentage of students who drop out of high school and college are low-income, of ethnic minority status or have disabilities. Other risk factors, such as living in a single-parent family or low parent education levels, especially when combined with poverty, can increase children's chances of adverse outcomes. Additionally, children affected by multiple risks are the most likely to experience school failure and other negative outcomes (Robbins, Stagman, & Smith, 2012).

### **Lifestyle Risks.**

The percentage of children in St. Lucie County who are obese has grown dramatically in the last decade. According to the Roundtable of St Lucie County, 17% of adolescents in the county are obese. Other statistics show that 19% of children entering first grade and 27% of

sixth graders are already obese. The consequences of obesity during childhood are well known and include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes, breathing problems, joint problems, depression, behavioral problems, and issues in school.

This problem is compounded in Fort Pierce by the fact that these children have limited access to fruits and vegetables. Many Fort Pierce families live in “food deserts,” described by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as low-income census tracts where a significant number or share of residents is more than one mile (in urban areas) and 10 miles (in rural areas) from the nearest supermarket. Limited access to supermarkets, supercenters, grocery stores or other sources of healthful and affordable foods means that affected low-income people must rely on food obtained from convenience stores or small markets that offer limited food choices and few or no fruits and vegetables.

Florida Department of Health 2016 data shows substance abuse rates among middle school students in St. Lucie County were 7% for tobacco or vaping, 11% for alcohol, and 4.1% for marijuana. These statistics are significant, as the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (2000) determined approximately 52% of youths who smoked cigarettes and 66% of youths who drank alcohol heavily within a month of the survey date were users of illicit drugs.

**To validate the need for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs in our community**, BGCSLC called on its many partnerships with community leaders and organizations. For more than 22 years, BGCSLC has been at the forefront of youth development, working with young people from disadvantaged economic, social and family circumstances. To determine neighborhood needs, BGCSLC met with parents, school staff and St. Lucie Public Schools administrators. In addition, BGCSLC uses up-to-date data from reliable sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau and the Roundtable of St. Lucie County, a community organization dedicated to improving outcomes for children.

**BGCSLC reached out to the community and Private Schools within the targeted area to determine the need for a 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program.** Administrators from St. Anastasia Catholic

School and the Church of God Palm Vista agreed that a 21<sup>st</sup> Century program was needed and support BGCSLC in this effort, but they do not plan to send their students to the program. As part of a survey conducted by the Roundtable of St. Lucie County, 40% of respondents stated there is not enough affordable child care and 47% agreed there is a need for more subsidized child care. BGCSLC currently provides before- and after-school programs at 12 public school locations throughout the County in partnership with St. Lucie Public Schools, as well as after-school programs at five neighborhood Clubhouses. It provides summer programs at the Clubhouses and a select number of public school locations. The 21st CCLC programs will provide students with a safe learning environment, one that will support, encourage and inspire students to be creative and innovative. The 21st CCLC program will offer students the opportunity to rise above the many risk factors they face every day.

### **5.3 PROGRAM EVALUATION**

#### **Identifying the independent evaluator was determined through a competitive bid**

**process.** Through this process, the Center for Assessment, Strategic Planning, Evaluation and Research (CASPER) was selected. BGCSLC chose CASPER because they have overseen the evaluation of over 500 educational programs and is led by a professional evaluator and licensed psychologist. The Lead Evaluator for CASPER will personally conduct all evaluation tasks. As an active member of the American Evaluation Association and American Psychological Association, evaluations will be conducted under the ethical codes and procedures of these professional organizations. CASPER will oversee all aspects of program evaluation, including formative, summative, and data reporting to both the Florida and U.S. Departments of Education. All BGCSLC employees, officers or agents are free from any real or apparent conflict of interest.

#### **5.3.a – Activities Included in the Evaluation Plan**

Based on the research-based concept of M.Q. Patton, the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC evaluation plan is firmly

rooted in the Developmental Evaluation model<sup>1</sup>. This model is most appropriate for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs, as it does not see the program as a static system (unlike traditional evaluation models). This developmental model evaluates programs in “real time”, embracing the complex interactions between the various stakeholders and environmental factors (e.g., students, parents, teachers, administrators, school district, community partners, the state, the federal government, etc.)<sup>2</sup>. The evaluation plan is further enhanced with the use of Utilization-Focused Evaluation which frames evaluation to focus on actionable results (rather than static numbers)<sup>3</sup>. Overall, these approaches form a system-oriented approach for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC evaluation, with an emphasis on knowledge integration and the communication of evaluation results internally and externally.

Evaluation will include three connected elements: continuous improvement, formative evaluation, and summative evaluation. Ongoing evaluation will be conducted using the Continuous Improvement Model (CIM), a quality-based approach used within educational settings and particularly effective for reducing achievement gaps between student subgroups. Evaluation will also be conducted through formative and summative evaluations, both of which incorporate elements from the CIM process and provide formal reports about processes and outcomes. The evaluation process will provide a structure for (1) generating information needed for ongoing program refinement, (2) assessing progress in meeting outcomes, (3) documenting and analyzing how the model works, and (4) documenting and analyzing change in student’s actions, attitudes, knowledge, and performance.

#### **Data Collection Activities and Timeline.**

Data collection will include: (1) Average daily attendance and student enrollment (**Monthly**); (2) State Standardized Assessments in Reading, Math, and Science (**Annual – FSA** for grades 3-5, FSA Science 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade only); (3) District-Based Diagnostic Assessments (all grades) in Reading, Math, and Science (**Bi-Annual**); (4) District-Based writing diagnostics, if administered (all grades; **Bi-Annual**); (5) School ‘Grades’ in Reading, Writing,

---

<sup>1</sup> Patton, M. Q. (1994). Developmental evaluation. *Evaluation Practice*, 15(3), 311-319.

<sup>2</sup> Patton, M. Q. (2011). *Developmental evaluation: Applying complexity concepts to enhance innovation and use*. Guilford Press.

Math, and Science (**4X Annually - Quarterly**); (6) School records on student absences from regular school day (**Bi-Annual**); (7) Pre-post knowledge assessment in healthy lifestyles and financial literacy (**Quarterly**); (8) Staff surveys of professional development to effectively provide 21st CCLC activities (**Annually**); (9) Teacher and Staff Surveys on student impact and change (**Annually**); (10) Attendance logs from parent events (**By Event**); and (11) Student and Parent Satisfaction and Impact Surveys (**Annual**).

#### **Data Collection, Maintenance, and Reporting.**

St. Lucie Public Schools has agreed to provide all necessary data to complete the proposed and required state and federal evaluation reporting requirements. BGCSLC has an outstanding relationship with the schools and the Superintendent, which allow for the collection of all data necessary for this grant (including tracking progress and outcome measures). BGCSLC leadership also has communicated with the principals of the four target schools, all of whom have indicated willingness to comply with data sharing.

#### **Coordination of evaluations with staff, students, adult family members and others will be done directly by the evaluator with support from BGCSLC.**

Additionally to support the evaluation process (and under a formal legal agreement), the external evaluator will be able to work directly with the School District to obtain all necessary data needed for **21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers**. The data includes all student demographics, state standardized tests (from all prior years), student report card 'grades, district diagnostic results on all students, and a variety of other data used for the evaluation process. All teachers also have access to data on the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC students - providing for the necessary data to engage in the Continuous Improvement Model with the support of the evaluator. The program will collect and provide all required teacher surveys, parent surveys, and student surveys through the procedures developed by the FLDOE and enhanced through collaboration with adult family members. All survey data will be collected through electronic systems to ensure accuracy of collected data, either those provided by the FLDOE or developed by the program. Response rates will be improved through a number of methods: (1) the principals and district administrators have

---

<sup>3</sup> Patton, M. Q. (2008). *Utilization-focused evaluation*. Sage publications.

agreed to assist in encouraging completion of surveys, (2) surveys will be distributed across multiple teachers to avoid overburdening of any one teacher, and (3) teachers will be provided incentives. The FLDOE will have access to all FERPA-compliant data collected by the program.

**The evaluation design and data collection plan will examine the intended impact of the program through the following:**

A formative evaluation summary will be completed at mid-year, with additional interim evaluation debriefings completed after on-site visits. Each report will include a review of accomplishments and challenges, actual versus proposed operations, progress towards approved objectives, and recommendations for improvement. Summative Evaluations will be completed at the end of each year (submitted by July 31) and will have additional information on program outcomes and more detailed information about activities and operations with the greatest success. The purpose of the evaluation is recording and developing a model program that can be presented to potential funders to enhance sustainability and continuation of the program after federal funding ends. Summative evaluations will include program operation, activities, attendance, academic performance, teacher impact surveys, staff information, and partnerships. Focus will be placed on: (1) evidence of program quality (using the Florida Afterschool Network Standards); (2) student attendance trends; and (3) progress towards the performance measures included in the Measurable Objectives Table. Recommendations for program refinement will be provided and based on both quantitative and qualitative data collected to assess progress on objectives. Focus groups with providers, school staff, students and parents may be conducted to collect additional qualitative and satisfaction data to help inform evaluations.

**Evaluation results for the program will be shared with the community for program**

**improvement through the following dissemination plan:** Distribution will occur at three levels: (1) administrators, (2) staff members, and (3) stakeholders. Monthly conferences will be held with the evaluator, program director, principals, and any staff wishing to participate. Data trends and operations will be reviewed with a focus on program improvement, refinement, and alignment with Florida's Afterschool Standards. Data will also be utilized by

the program director and teachers during weekly meetings to help tailor program offerings to the needs and progress of individual students. For formative and summative evaluations, the evaluator will provide written reports to the program director, and (under the developmental evaluation model) will help guide administrators in refining and addressing any identified concerns within the complex and evolving system of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. In addition, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC staff will be debriefed and engaged in addressing challenges. Finally, evaluations will be shared with all stakeholders electronically (e.g., administrators, parents, partners) to disseminate information and encourage feedback. To inform the community as a whole, evaluation results will be uploaded to the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC website accordingly.

### **5.3.b. Measurable Objectives and Assessments.**

Measurable objectives/assessments were created using the Excel-based document required by FLDOE and uploaded to website as required. All objectives were designed to align with needs/gaps identified in needs assessment. As described in an attached letter from St. Lucie Public Schools, the schools will make all appropriate data available.

## **5.4 Applicant's Experience and Capacity**

**Program Administration and Fiscal Management.** BGCSLC has experience managing publicly-financed programs. For example, current public funding includes the Children's Services Council of St. Lucie County (BGCSLC's largest single funding source); Federal Title 1 Housing funds via the City of Fort Pierce, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, and the Summer Food Service Program funded by the State of Florida.

The Finance Department follows financial processes that include a strict policy on conflict of interest, multiple signatures on checks, purchase orders for items over \$500, inventory management, annual audits, and monthly financial reports. The organization uses QuickBooks accounting software and a membership tracking system called VISON. In addition, BGCSLC employs a grant coordinator and has a Human Resources Department. These resources are available to support the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program to ensure that internal and external rules and regulations will be followed.



BGCSLC has a professional 3<sup>rd</sup> party audit conducted every year to ensure excellent fiscal management. The organization's audit for 2015 and 2016 showed a few deficiencies which have been addressed. Additional staff, including an Accounting Assistant to work with the Finance Director, have been hired and trained. A bank reconciliation that was not in agreement with the general ledger balance has been corrected. Employees have been trained to not delete transactions. The subsidiary ledger is recorded properly and reviewed monthly. The PTO policy has been revisited by the HR Manager and CEO, and adjustments have been made.

**Qualifications of leadership and organizational structure.** The Boys & Girls Club of SLC is part of Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA), a national organization. BGCA assists local Clubs through program creation, staff and resources. Because of the proven management and youth development experience of BGCSLC's leaders, the organization is well-positioned to support the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. Key staff supporting the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program include **Chief Executive Officer:** William Armstead, who has been with the Boys & Girls Clubs movement for the past 10 years, previously serving as board president and a board member. Armstead holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, is a Veteran with 16-years military leadership experience as a non-commissioned officer, and 15-years experience in regional corporate leadership. **Chief Operating Officer:** Melanie Wiles, 10 years with BGCSLC (previously Director of Marketing and Special Events and Vice President of Development). Bachelor's Degree, Communication, University of South Florida. Both the CEO and COO have participated in Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Advanced Leadership Program (ALP) in 2016. This comprehensive leadership program was developed in conjunction with the University of Michigan, Ross School of Business, and is designed to increase personal leadership skills and strategies, strengthen team alignment/effectiveness, and increase organizational impact on youth and communities. At the end of the BGCA-led portion of the program, staff are prepared to teach and develop leadership capacity in their own departments. BGCSLC's continuing ALP project is focused on how to serve more kids with quality programming, organizational core values, selecting staff, and training. Additional Key Staff: **Director of Finance:** Susanne Patterson, (1 year at BGCSLC, 21 years in

corporate finance positions). M.S. Strayer University, Finance/Controlling; BBA St. Leo University, Business Administration and Management. **Director of Education:** Cecilia Martin. (More than 15 years' experience with Title I schools.) Bachelor's Degree, Computer Information Systems, DeVry Institute; Master's Degree, Mathematics, Nova University; Doctoral Candidate, Organizational Leadership, Grand Canyon University. **Coordinator of Programs and Professional Development:** Omar Ferreira, (8 years at BGCSLC -- Teen Director, Program Director, Club Director). Graduate, University of Central Florida, Bachelor's Degree, Criminal Justice. These organizational leaders will ensure that BGCSLC fully complies with federal, state and local rules and regulations. The organization's Board members are leaders in the region, and include police and fire chiefs, school officials, elected officials and business leaders.

### **Program Implementation.**

In the 22 years since its founding, BGCSLC has been recognized as a leader in youth development across St. Lucie County. Through its 17 locations, it serves more than 6000 youth annually with quality after school and summer programming, as well as outreach programming in such areas as truancy prevention.

The Clubs offer daily access to a broad range of programs that promote academic enrichment and remedial education, literacy, healthy and active lifestyles, drug and violence prevention, STEM, and assistance to students who have been truant. The scope and depth of BGCSLC programming positively addresses the community's lack of positive programs for at-risk youth. The roster of programs currently being operated by BGCSLC aligns well with 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC's list of approved program activities. For example, BGCSLC offers daily homework help, tutoring and reading enrichment activities, and sports and physical fitness activities throughout the week. Programs also include nutrition education, arts and cultural programs, and programs that encourage good decision-making in resisting tobacco, alcohol and drugs. Club members also can participate in special programming in leadership, STEM, and career readiness. These programs are conducted by trained youth professional staff and qualified volunteers, as well as community leaders. Documented performance has been recognized in the community with the following awards in 2016: the United Way Spirit of St. Lucie County Agency Excellence Award, St.

Lucie Chamber of Commerce Business and Industry Award, The Links Inc. Arts & Community Service Award and Children Services Council Champion of Youth Award.

### **Program Evaluations**

As an organization that relies on the proceeds of grants and donations to provide services to the community, BGCSLC is experienced in gathering and providing data demonstrating the effectiveness of its programs and adherence to pertinent rules and regulations. BGCSLC has a process in place to electronically collect and track demographics, attendance, pre-and-post-assessment scores and survey data. Data is evaluated on a weekly basis at leadership staff meetings to ensure program quality. Changes are made as needed. At the direction of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Outcome Officer, required data will be collected and submitted monthly to DOE and other partners within our 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. Also responsible for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program oversight, the Outcome Officer will work with CASPER, the independent evaluator, to maintain the evaluation activities and timeline.

## **5.5 PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATION AND SUSTAINABILITY**

### **5.5a. Community Notice.**

BGCSLC has been proactive in informing the community about its intention to submit a 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC application. An announcement was placed on the organization's website, [www.bgcofslc.org](http://www.bgcofslc.org) and on its Facebook page. Notices have been posted on parent bulletin boards at applicable BGCSLC's Clubs. Club leadership met with officials of St. Lucie Public Schools to invite them to collaborate with us on this submission. BGCSLC plans to provide community access to its 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant application by posting the complete application on the website, [www.bgcofslc.org](http://www.bgcofslc.org). Informational flyers directing the public to the application on the BGCLFSLC website will be distributed.

To ensure that parents have the latest information about 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorer program activities, BGCSLC has created a multi-platform strategy to ensure maximum dissemination of information. BGCSLC will maintain a web page devoted exclusively to the 21<sup>st</sup> Center Explorers program, easily accessible on the BGCSLC home page. A staff member whose job

description includes maintenance of the website will be charged with maintaining the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program web page, and will have it operational within one week of notice that the program has been funded. The web page will be updated monthly with news and information of interest to 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC members, their families, stakeholders and the community at-large. BGCSLC will also work with St. Lucie Public Schools to establish a link on the District website to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers page. Further, BGCSLC will place articles in local newspapers, including the *St. Lucie News-Tribune* (the newspaper with the largest circulation in the target area), and will enlist the services of local radio stations to publicize the program and its services.

BGCSLC will also create a 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Community Advisory Board that will ensure the program enjoys widespread community support. Advisory Board members will include at least two parents, two middle school students, one regular school day teacher from each of the four target schools and other members representing community organizations and the private sector. The Board will meet at least twice yearly to discuss matters of interest or concern to its members, including future 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorer programming and activities, and they will report findings accordingly.

**5.5b. Partnerships.** BGCSLC has the support of several partners whose collaboration will ensure that all elements of the **21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers** program are operating optimally and will enrich student/family member activities. St. Lucie Public Schools will promote the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers program in its schools and ensure that data collection, so essential to measuring students' progress, is completed properly. They will also provide daily nutritious snacks to all members. Additional partners include Girl Scouts, Indian River State College (IRSC), FL. Health Department, the First Tee of the Treasure Coast, the Inner Truth Project, CASTLE, the Parent Academy of St. Lucie County and the Children's Services Council of St. Lucie County. For example, the Girl Scouts have committed to providing volunteers who will conduct special STEM activities; The First Tee has committed to provide educational programs that build character and promote healthy choices through the game of golf; and

the Parent Academy has agreed to participate in scheduled parent workshop, during which they will provide parenting information and resources. Attached is a complete partners table and letters of support from each. Throughout the year we will continue to strengthen the quality of programming by adding strategic partners from the community which may include professional chefs, photographers, writers and other professionals and businesses.

### **5.5.c Collaboration with the Regular School Day**

#### **Collaboration During the Development of the Application**

In accordance with ESSA Sec. 4204 (b)(2)(D), 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers has been designed and will be carried out in collaboration with the schools attended by the students served. BGCSLC included the schools attended by the targeted students during the needs assessment and in development of the program. BGCSLC's close relationship with the St. Lucie Public Schools made it possible to consult with regular school day administrators and teachers to align learning activities, program objectives and enrichment activities with the schools' curriculum and improvement plans. Support letters from principals of the target schools and St. Lucie Public Schools Administration are attached.

#### **Continued Collaboration.**

BGCSLC has developed a number of strategies that allow it and the St. Lucie Public Schools to continue to collaborate in a way that best meets the needs of the targeted students. In order to allow students to gain as much as possible from afterschool instruction it was determined that 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers would be best served by adopting some curriculum for academic enrichment developed by Scholastic Inc., the world's largest publisher and distributor of children's books and a leading provider of print and digital education programs. For example, after consulting the schools' improvement plans, we concluded that a greater emphasis should be placed on K-2 grade level activities stressing fluency and sight words, while grade 3 activities should focus on reading grade-level passages and writing to respond to text. Students' progress will be tracked through FSA practice assessments and monthly pre-post tests. BGCSLC has obtained St. Lucie Public Schools' most recent pacing guide and

has developed program activities based on its content. These practices are designed to ensure that members' learning experiences, whether in school or in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers activities are as seamless as possible.

Open communication channels will be maintained at several levels between the two organizations, including direct phone conversations, email, and meetings among the School Liaison, Site Coordinator, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC teachers, targeted schools' regular school day teachers, the Outcome Officer, BGCSLC and St. Lucie Public Schools administration. The BGCSLC school liaison will work with the above parties to evaluate student needs and make additional referrals throughout the year, monitor student progress, identify underperforming students, and develop remediation plans. They will also administer and evaluate a teacher survey and attend advisory board meetings and the parent orientation meeting.

#### **5.5.d Sustainability**

Our organization strives to diversify its funding with all programming. Each year our executive team, finance committee, and resource development team work towards a budget that is balanced with income streams from public support, government and local grants, program fees, corporate partnerships, individual giving and special events. We have already secured funding from Children's Service Council of St. Lucie County to ensure that all Club members can benefit from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers program. As per the attached letter of support Children's Services Council of St. Lucie will continue to help BGCSLC operate its programs at a high level. In addition, members of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Advisory Board will be assigned the task of helping to find outside funding to continue the program.

### **5.6 PROGRAM PLAN**

#### **5.6.a. Target Students**

This program targets students grades K-8 who attend four D/F schools- St. Lucie Elementary, CA Moore, Lawnwood Elementary and Dan McCarty Middle School. 100% of students attending these schools qualify for free or reduced-cost lunch and 62% are from single-parent

families. All students who attend these schools are eligible for the BGCSLC 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers program. The demographic breakdown of students participating in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers program is as follows: Ages 5-18; 51% boys and 49% girls; 89% African-American, 4% multi-racial, 3% Hispanic; 2% white, 1% Asian. These students live in low-income and high crime neighborhoods. As referenced in the Needs Assessment (5.2), studies show that factors including single-family households, and low-income, high crime communities are known to cause significant barriers to academic achievement. Approximately 109 students will participate daily in BGCSLC's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers program during the school year; 120 are expected to participate during the summer.

#### **5.6.b. Recruitment and Retention.**

All students who attend St. Lucie Elementary, CA Moore, Lawnwood Elementary and Dan McCarty middle school are eligible for the BGCSLC 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers program. BGCSLC, in close cooperation with the St. Lucie Public Schools, is using several techniques to reach qualified students and their parents. First, we draw from current Club members who qualify as 21<sup>st</sup> Century students. Second, we rely on referrals from principals, teachers and other leaders of the targeted schools. Third, through the schools, we distribute flyers and other promotional material geared to attract parents. A waiting list of students who want to enter the program will be maintained. BGCSLC will engage the adult family members of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorer participants by holding an orientation meeting of the program and subsequent quarterly parent workshops/ parent nights. Strategies implemented to ensure that students consistently attend BGCSLC's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers include: Parents will be asked to sign agreements that include the expectation that their child will participate in the full program each day. St. Lucie Public Schools, its principals and teacher and other school personnel will remind students of the need to stay in the program until completion each day. BGCSLC will continually monitor attendance using VISION software. Program staff will identify members who are not engaging fully in the program and create individual action plans to encourage students to attend regularly for an extended period of time. In addition, should attendance issues develop, program leadership will seek guidance from the Advisory Board.

BGCSLC programs help young people develop a sense of self and of belonging, which increases the Club's rate of retention. The Boys & Girls Clubs Key Elements for Positive Youth Development are: 1) A safe and positive environment; 2) fun; 3) supportive relationships; 4) opportunities and expectations; and 5) recognition. These principles form the foundation that supports Club staff as they create enriching Club experiences for members. In short, the Club experience influences members to participate day after day. Member enthusiasm, in turn, influences parents to ensure their children continue to participate.

### **5.6.c Student Program Activities.**

BGCSLC 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers program provides academic and other enrichment activities – many of them project-based -- that are structured to align with identified student needs.

#### **Academic Enrichment Activities**

**Homework Help-** Explorers will receive homework help for a minimum of 45 minutes each day. Homework completion helps young people develop valuable organizational and interpersonal skills – including time management, prioritizing, task completion and working cooperatively with others. These skills are necessary for achievement in school and are a foundation for a successful life. Extra attention and focused assistance will be given to at-risk members and those in need of motivation and direction. With the proper guidance and support, every 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorer has the chance to develop self-directed learning skills and be successful in school. Students who have completed their homework will engage in academic lessons and reading activities. These lessons include the usage of Marzano's High Yield Strategies, which has proven to result in percentile gains on standardized tests. Curriculum is Common Core aligned and supports reinforcement of what members are learning during the school day.

#### **Academic Enrichment**

Additional Academic enrichment will include tutoring and remedial education. Since the St. Lucie Public Schools 2015/2016 State assessment scores in reading and math show targeted



students are struggling to meet state proficiency levels (see scores in needs assessment 5.2) the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers program will incorporate a **specialized tutoring program**.

Working with approximately four students at a time, each tutor (certified teachers) will provide reading and math instruction. The students will be in groups of this size because research shows that tutoring in small groups can be highly effective. In fact, the most effective group size is no more than five students. (Lou, et al, 1996), and small-group tutoring can be more effective than one-on-one instruction because of the positive effect that other students can have on the learning process. In kindergarten, for example, in regards to reading proficiency, students will work on sight words, with reading fluency and comprehension added in later grades. In Grades 3-8, the focus is on English Language Arts -- comprehension and writing to respond to text. Because of the close collaboration between BGCSLC and SLPS, the material taught during tutoring will align with that taught in the students' classes, ensuring that the lessons learned in tutoring have the maximum effect on the student's ability both to learn and to demonstrate progress when taking standardized tests.

A pilot of this specialized tutoring program that BGCSLC implemented earlier this academic year has shown positive results. In the third grade, the average student comprehension score in February 2017, before the tutoring program began, was 48%. The average score two months later increased to 63%. Among kindergartners, the average pre-test fluency score was 31, while the April score increased to 58. The average student knew 88 sight words on the pre-test and in April knew 110. We expect that longer-term results should show student performance similar to that reported in a study (Morris et al, 1990) of an after-school tutoring program in which low-achieving second- and third-graders were tutored for two years. Half the tutored children made a full year's gain in reading, while only 20% of the children in the comparison group did.

**Remedial education will be provided to 21st Century Explorers through summer academic reinforcement.** Designed to combat the learning loss that often occurs during summer vacation, this program consists of eight weeks of common core-aligned learning

modules that provide engaging project-based activities with an emphasis on math, literacy, science and 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers will learn through discovery, creative expression and collaborative group work that evolve into a final project or production. Staff support and guide participants in a manner more like a mentor or coach, rather than a teacher; therefore, Explorers are the programs' drivers and are highly engaged. Members will begin the summer with an assessment test by grade (similar to the schools end-of-year tests). Summer academic reinforcement activities include six weeks of literacy, introducing members to new books and engaging activities supportive of literacy skill development. In collaboration with the St. Lucie Public Library opportunities for both small group and individual reading are available each day. The library provides library cards and books to read, and gives awards to young people who reach a target number of books during the summer.

### **Other Enrichment Activities**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers have access to a variety of enrichment activities that will advance their academic achievement and support their overall success in life.

Explorers will participate in **healthy and active lifestyle programming**, including nutritional education and regular, structured physical activities. They will learn about good nutrition and how to make smart meal and snack choices. The program design is dynamic and interactive and encourages open discussions. It also features engaging, hands-on activities to maintain excitement and interest. As a result of participation in the nutritional education program

Explorers should:

- increase their understanding of the relationship between behaviors (choices) and health;
- increase their nutrition knowledge and skills;
- make more responsible food choices – increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables and decrease the consumption of foods with limited nutritional value;
- understand the principles of the food groups;

- increase their understanding of portion sizes;
- become aware of environmental cues that prompt eating; and
- how to make smart choices when eating away from home.

This program was developed by BGCA in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**Structured physical activities** include daily fitness challenges that give youth at every age the chance to play longer and harder at various games – from jumping rope to basketball and creating games of their own. Explorers receive coaching in sports leagues developing their coordination and leadership skills. Organized social recreation activities strengthen character, increase confidence and enhance the ability to relate well to others. As a result of participation in structured physical activities, Explorers should:

- improve their level of physical fitness – increase physical activity and decrease sedentary activity;
- encourage achievement, cooperation and sportsmanship;
- teach members rules related to equipment, facilities and games;
- teach youth rules of good behavior; and
- help members develop self-confidence.

Explorers will participate in **drug and violence prevention programming**. Participation in this program will help drive healthy lifestyle choices for youth by teaching them how to resist alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, and early sexual behavior. Using age-appropriate modules, members will obtain knowledge, skills and self-esteem to help them make healthy choices and practice responsible behaviors. This prevention program has been scientifically evaluated with documented results and has received nationwide acclaim becoming a mainstay in the prevention efforts of communities across the country. Last year, 90% of Club members who participated in this drug and violence prevention program maintained or increased their knowledge and resistance skills regarding substance abuse, HIV/Aids, smoking and premature sexual activity. Of special importance in Fort Pierce, where gang activity is commonplace, this program counteracts the negative lures of gangs, violence and

street influences on young people. It teaches young people how gangs work and how to resist being recruited, how to recognize and resolve conflicts peacefully and how to become positive peer helpers.

Explorers will also build skills in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) that foster innovation and learning. **Explorers will participate in a DIY STEM Program.**

Through partnership with the Girl Scout organization, the DIY STEM program promotes interest and awareness of STEM among traditionally underserved groups, including girls and young people of color. Exposure to science, technology, engineering and math is critical during the K-12 years when natural curiosity drives interest and builds capacity for success in these disciplines. This is an ideal time to engage Explorers who might otherwise not have access to STEM experiences in these simple, hands-on activities.

The DIY STEM Program is an activity-based program for youth that helps them make connections between scientific principles and real-world applications. Using everyday materials, the current four units allow youth of all ages to explore science concepts like engineering design, chemistry, energy/electricity and aeronautics. Each unit comes with Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)-aligned background, guides, instructional videos and extension questions to further learning.

The four units are: Energy and Electricity – Hands-on experiences with common applications of energy, including how to use electricity in electromagnets, motors, speakers, power robots and light bulbs. Engineering Design – Practical exposure to the application of engineering using the engineering design process to design water filters, build stable bridges to hold specified amounts or weights, and design rockets powered by pressure. Food Chemistry – Experiments with chemical reactions from a combination of different ingredients to create products to eat and develop experiments that can be explosive, including rock candy and rockets powered by Mentos and soda. Introduction to Aeronautics – Common applications of the four forces of aeronautics from designing pop, straw and effervescing rockets with ordinary products and ingredients to constructing rockets designed to carry specified payloads.

**Career readiness skill and financial literacy will also be developed.** Through

collaboration with community and business partners, Explorers will be exposed to future career choices by introducing them to the “working world.” The program provides a range of services to identify the skills and education needed for various career paths and to help Explorers develop skills essential for workforce success. Additionally, it allows them the opportunity to explore various careers based on their interests and talents, and determine the corresponding educational path they would need to pursue. Students will also participate in Money Matters financial literacy programming as an enrichment activity.

**5.6.d. Adult Family Member Program Activities.**

The first activity will be a 90-minute parent information session reviewing the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC

program requirements and activities. The meeting will be conducted by the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC

Outcome Officer. **Adult Family Member Services** will be meaningful and ongoing to include

quarterly Parenting Workshops. 1) September 2017 - CASTLE, a Fort Pierce-based

organization dedicated to preventing child abuse and neglect through education, will conduct a

session on Positive Parenting, introducing the audience to new parenting skills that might

include positive discipline techniques, ways to improve communication with children,

redirecting unsuitable behaviors, managing anger, nurturing skills, nutrition and home safety.

2) December 2017 - Parent Academy of St. Lucie County will offer a workshop on parenting

and finding resources in the community. 3) March 2018 - Dr. Lois McGuire, a former teacher,

principal and school superintendent, will lead a session based on her book, “Don’t be THAT

kid,” which provides opportunities to discuss character building values like honesty,

responsibility, respect, making good choices, and kindness, and how to develop them in

children. 4) June 2018 - Financial responsibility. BGCSLC is partners with a number of local

financial institutions. A representative of one will conduct a seminar on financial responsibility,

the importance of saving, and how to make good financial choices.

**5.5.e. Staffing Plan and Professional Development.**

**Staffing Plan.** The BGCSLC 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers program will be staffed as follows:

Outcome Officer (4yr degree) is directly responsible for the operations and implementation of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. Has fiscal accountability, oversees collection and preparation of program data for performance reports, implements professional development under the guidance of COO. The Site Program Coordinator will coordinate schedule and provide oversight of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC certified teachers, enrichment program specialists and volunteers. Certified teachers (possess a valid FDOE certificate), will provide academic instruction to actively participating 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC students. Enrichment Program Specialists provide instruction and assist teachers. School Liaison is responsible for smooth operation of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program both with school administration, school teachers and school support staff. Parent Liaison responsibilities include development and implementation of adult family member activities. Director of Education is responsible for the design and coordination of curriculum. Staff Development Coordinator establishes on-going training and mentoring for teachers, staff and volunteers. Accounting Specialist will maintain payroll records, perform payroll tasks, and maintain compliance with State and Federal rules governing payroll for the federally-funded 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. Data Entry and Collection Specialist responsible for collecting data supporting documents from the sites. Contractual services: CASPER Evaluation Service, external evaluator services provided exclusively for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC project. The staff-to-student ratio will be 1:10, and in enrichment activities, no more than 1:20. All employees all must pass a Level 2 FBI background screening.

The plan to recruit, hire and train any new staff needed for the program is based the positive and productive ongoing relationship between BGCSLC and St. Lucie Public Schools. This relationship affords us the opportunity to work with principals and draw teachers directly from the schools we work with for the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. Additional staff will be hired as a result of marketing to local colleges and career centers such as Career Source Research Coast. Job opportunities are also posted on Indeed, Glassdoor, and Linked Up. The BGCSLC Human Resources department is responsible for hiring. All applicants must apply online at www.bgcofslc.org. Once an applicant is selected, he/she will be interviewed by the hiring

manager of selected department/location. HR will conduct background screenings for those potential applicants. Once, backgrounds are clear/complete, the new hire will attend a 3-4 hour orientation to the Boys & Girls Clubs. After orientation, the new hire will receive a five-day "hands on training" schedule and begin work. **The required organizational charts are attached for review.**

**Professional Development** BGCSLC takes pride in professionally developing staff. A Program and Professional Development Coordinator works with Club Operations and Human Resources to plan robust trainings throughout the year in subjects that have been identified as a need. In addition to monthly trainings, quarterly hands-on trainings take place for specific educational and enrichment programming. The participants go through the actual program and what it looks like for implementation. All trainers have completed trainer certification and will be qualified for specific topics. Training for the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC staff will include data collection and outcome measurement and implementation of key program activities in 1) homework help; 2) tutoring; 3) remedial education; 4) healthy and active lifestyles; 5) drug and violence prevention; and 6) STEM.

**5.5.f. Program Center(s).**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers Fort Pierce program will be conducted in two BGCSLC sites- the Garden Terrace Clubhouse, 3104 Avenue J, Fort Pierce, FL 34947 and a satellite facility, 2902 Avenue D, Fort Pierce, FL 34947. The Garden Terrace Clubhouse is air-conditioned and includes a large education/computer/ library room that is used for academic enrichment programming including homework help, tutoring and remedial education. A large recreation room and two smaller rooms are used for other enrichment programs including healthy and active lifestyle, drug and violence prevention and STEM programming.

The facility also has a small kitchen prep area and a community space shared with the Sheriff's Dept. Outside, the Clubhouse features multiple basketball courts under roof which are used for the majority of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs structured physical activities.

The Garden Terrace Clubhouse can accommodate up to 170 youth. This Clubhouse is strategically located in the Fort Pierce public housing community and is within walking

distance of CA Moore Elementary School and many Club members' homes. Additionally it is on the bus route of the other three target schools- St. Lucie Elementary, Lawnwood Elementary and Dan McCarty Middle School. The satellite facility located at 2902 Ave D, Fort Pierce, is a large gymnasium approx. 10,000sq ft. with two additional large rooms. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorer program will be conducted within the two large rooms and partitioned space within the gymnasium that can accommodate up to 225 youth. The building is completely under air and has a central check-in location. Neighborhood youth are delivered to the program by school bus or can walk directly from their homes in the surrounding City of Fort Pierce Housing Authority. Two local partnering agencies will be providing additional programs space - Indian River State College which shares the same campus as the gymnasium, and the Zora Neale Hurston Public also on the same campus. The gymnasium is a central meeting place for community events, so communication with parents will be especially effective here. Both facilities are in compliance with federal, state and local health/safety and accessibility standards. Facilities provide an appropriate safe environment with a security alarm system, fire alarm system including sprinklers, outside door deadbolts and key locks on inside office doors.

#### **5.5.g. Safety and Student Transportation.**

##### **Student Safety.**

All 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC staff, other Club employees and volunteers undergo a Level 2 background screening. Upon arrival, all participating youth must check in. At days end, adult family members are required to come into the Club to sign their children out. Adult family members must complete Clubs written permission form to allow students to walk home. All visitors for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program must sign in and out on a visitor registry. Students transition from one activity to the next under staff supervision. All rooms not in use are locked and no child or group of children are left alone. All staff are certified in CPR/ First aid. For emergencies, student accident management and reporting procedures are in place. Emergency response drills are conducted regularly. Emergency contacts are kept on file for students. Field trip activities require a supervision ration of 1 staff member for every 10 children. Safety



procedures include the buddy system, regular head count and training to identify symptoms of heat exhaustion.

### **Student Transportation.**

The St. Lucie Public Schools will continue to provide bussing from target schools to the BGCSLC 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC locations. Bus drivers are employees of SLPS and have proper CDL licensing in addition to Level 2 background screening. Students walking from CA Moore Elementary are accompanied by three 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC staff. Transportation home is provided by parents or other authorized persons, as noted above.

### **5.6.h. Dissemination Plan.**

BGCSLC's plan to disseminate information about 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers starts with the BGCSLC website, [www.bgcofslc.org](http://www.bgcofslc.org) , where the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers web page will be prominently displayed. The website will be updated regularly with dated material. Among the information to be displayed will be the approved program application; program contact information; a list of scheduled events and activities; program impacts; a schedule of parent meetings and a "news" section that will include descriptions of activities and student projects. BGCSLC has proposed that St. Lucie Public Schools link to this page, providing another logical pathway for interested persons to learn about the program. Brochures containing information on program activities and upcoming events will be distributed to the four target schools, both for school administrators and teachers and for distribution to parents who may request them.