

## **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 80 at-risk City of Port St. Lucie youth during the 2017-18 school year and 100 at-risk City of Port St. Lucie youth during the summer who attend D-rated Mariposa Elementary School, a K-5 facility located at 2620 SE Mariposa Ave., Port St. Lucie, FL. The priority outcomes of the program are academic success, good character and citizenship and healthy lifestyles. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers' program 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 financial literacy skills.

## **5.2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT.**

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

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 Mariposa Elementary School are struggling to meet state proficiency levels for grade level standards in reading, math and science. Trend data for 2015-16 provided by St. Lucie Public Schools showed that 56% of Mariposa Elementary students did not achieve proficiency in reading, while 47% and 59% did not achieve proficiency in mathematics and science, respectively.

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

The City of Port St. Lucie encompasses 77 square miles, with a current population of approximately 174,000. The neighborhood served by Mariposa Elementary School is

experiencing increases in several types of crime in several areas. For example, the St. Lucie Police Department reports that in just the one-year period from 2015 to 2016, crimes related to the possession and sale of drugs increased 51%, while assaults increased 15%. Thefts increased by 17%, while the number of robberies more than doubled. The Roundtable of St. Lucie County, an organization of community leaders working to improve outcomes for young people, identifies five teen gangs active in Port St. Lucie.

According to American Fact Finder, United States Census Bureau, the 34952 zip code area – in which Mariposa Elementary is located – had a median annual income in 2015 of \$41,828; below St. Lucie County (SLC)'s median income of \$43,459 and the state average of \$47,507. U.S. Census Bureau data shows that in 2015, 14% of the overall population and 26% of children in Port St. Lucie lived in poverty. Of the children now participating in before-and after-school programs run by the Boys and Girls Clubs of St. Lucie County (BGCSLC) at Mariposa, 50% receive free or reduced-cost lunches and 45% live in single-parent households.

Low 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.

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> Century programs in our community,** BGCSLC called on its many partnerships with community leaders and organizations. For over 22 years, BGCSLC has been at the forefront of youth development, working with young people from disadvantaged economic, social and family circumstances, including those in Port St. Lucie. BGCSLC also met with parents, school staff and St. Lucie Public School administrators and used up-to-date data from such reliable sources as the U.S. Census Bureau and the Roundtable of St. Lucie County. BGCSLC currently provides before- and after-school programs at 12 public school locations throughout the County in partnership with St. Lucie Public Schools (one of which is located in Mariposa Elementary School, most recently serving an average of 120 students a day), as well as after-school programs at its five neighborhood Clubhouses. It provides summer programs at the Clubhouses and a select number of public school locations. In addition to BGCSLC, other community and church organizations provide after-school care in St. Lucie County, but a survey conducted by the Roundtable of St. Lucie County showed that 40% of respondents said there is not enough affordable child care, while 47% agreed there is a need for more subsidized child care, supporting BGCSLC's conclusion that there is a need for additional quality programming

In the course of this work, BGCSLC determined there were no private schools within the Mariposa neighborhood.

The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program will provide students with a safe learning environment, one that will support, encourage and inspire students to be creative and innovative. The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program will offer students the opportunity to rise above the risk factors described above.

### **5.3 PROGRAM EVALUATION**

#### **The External Program Evaluator was identified through a competitive bid process.**

Through this process, the Center for Assessment, Strategic Planning, Evaluation and Research (CASPER) will be the external evaluator for this project. BGCSLC chose CASPER because it has overseen the evaluation of more than 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. 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). Rather, developmental evaluation brings rigor, method, and understanding to highly complex and evolving systems (which includes the vast majority of education programs). In essence, 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

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<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.

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: continued 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, Math, and Science (**4X Annually - Quarters**); (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 21<sup>st</sup> 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**).

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

### **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. BCGSLC 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). BCGSLC leadership had communicated with Mariposa Elementary's principal, who has indicated a willingness to provide all needed data.

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

Additionally, to support the evaluation process (and under a formal legal agreement), the external evaluator will be able to work directly with the 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, student surveys through the procedures developed by the FLDOE and enhanced with the strong connection the program will have with the parents and teachers. 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 agreed to assist in encouraging completion of surveys, (2) surveys will be distributed across multiple teachers to avoid overburdening 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 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, evaluation results are uploaded to the 21st CCLC website.

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

Measurable objectives/assessments were created using the Excel-based system required by FLDOE. 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. Objectives and assessments uploaded to website as required.

## **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 VISION. 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 third-party audit conducted every year to ensure excellent fiscal management. The organization's audit for 2015 and 2016 showed some 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 Paid Time Off policy has been revisited by the HR Manager and CEO and adjustments have been made.

**Qualifications of leadership and organizational structure.** The Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Lucie

County 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 Club 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 and 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 the BGCA 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 the right 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 6,000 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's 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, daily sports and fitness activities throughout the week. Programs also include nutrition education, arts and cultural programs, and a program that encourages good decision-making in such matters as tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. Club members can also participate in special programming that includes leadership, STEM, and career readiness. These programs are supervised 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 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 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 target 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. Notice has been posted on parent bulletin boards at applicable BGCSLC's Clubs. Club leadership has met with officials of the St. Lucie School District 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 its website, [www.bgcofslc.org](http://www.bgcofslc.org). Informational flyers directing the public to the application on our 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 webpage devoted exclusively to the 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 site, and will have appropriate pages operational within one week of notice that the program has been funded. The website will be updated monthly with news and information of interest to members, their families, stakeholders and the community at-large. BGCSLC also will 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 to ensure the program enjoys widespread community support. Advisory Board members will include at least two parents, two middle schools students, one regular school day teacher from Mariposa Elementary, 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 their findings accordingly.

**5.5b. Partnerships.** BGCSLC enjoys the current 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 managing students' progress, is completed properly. They will also provide daily nutritious snacks to all members. Additional partners include the Girls Scouts, Indian River State College (IRSC), FL Health Department, The First Tee of the Treasure Coast, Inner Truth Project, CASTLE, the Parent Academy of St. Lucie County, and Children's Services Council of St. Lucie County. For example, the Girl Scouts have committed to provide volunteers that will conduct special STEM initiatives. The First Tee has committed to providing learning fundamentals of the game of golf, character education and life skills

programs to help 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers prepare for success in high school, college and life; and the Parent Academy has agreed to participate in scheduled parent nights, 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. They may include professional chefs, photographers, writers and other 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 Mariposa Elementary School, the school attended by the students served. BGCSLC included Mariposa 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 Mariposa's curriculum and improvement plans, support letters from the principal of Mariposa 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 after school 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 Mariposa's improvement plan, we concluded that a greater emphasis should be placed in K-2 grade level activities stressing literacy 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, will be as seamless as possible.

Other 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, Mariposa's 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 funding with all programming. Each year, our executive team, finance committee and resource development team work toward 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 Services 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 County 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 to 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-5 who attend Mariposa Elementary School, a D-rated school in Port St. Lucie. All students chosen for the program will be attending Mariposa,

whose after school program's current demographic profile is: Ages 5-13; 61% boys and 39% girls; 50% white; 25% Hispanic; 14% African-American, 6% multi-racial, 1% Asian. These students live in neighborhoods affected by poverty and crime. As referenced in the Needs Assessment (5.2) studies show that factors including single-family households and low income, high-crime neighborhoods are known to cause significant barriers to academic achievements. Approximately 80 students will participate daily in school-year 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers activities at Mariposa Elementary and 100 during the summer.

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

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 at Mariposa Elementary. Third, through Mariposa Elementary, 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 Explorers by holding an orientation meeting 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, teachers and other school personnel will remind students of the need to stay in the program until completion each day. BGCSLC will continually monitor 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 provides academic enrichment activities and other enrichment activities – many of them project-based -- that are structured to align with identified student needs.

**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, even 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 usage of Marzano's High Yield Strategies, which has been 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 2015-16 State assessment scores in reading and may show that 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 group 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 3-5, the focus is on Language Arts – comprehensive and writing to respond to text. Because of the close collaboration between BGCSLC and St. Lucie Public Schools, the material taught during tutoring will align with that taught in the students' classes, ensuring that the lessons learned in tutoring will have the maximum effect on the students' ability both to learn and to demonstrate progress when taking standardized tests.

In preparation for a club-wide launch of this program, BGCSLC, in collaboration with St. Lucie Public Schools, began a pilot tutoring program at Windmill Point Elementary School Club in Port St. Lucie, where a certified teacher, under the direction of BGCSLC Education Director Cecilia Martin, is successfully providing students in kindergarten and Grade 3 with small-group and one-on-one tutoring.

Early test results at the Windmill Point pilot are positive. 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 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 regularly scheduled 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:
- 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 food groups;
- increase their understanding of portion sizes;

- become aware of environmental cues that prompt eating; and
- learn how to make healthy 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 by increasing physical activity and decreasing sedentary activity;
- encourage achievement, cooperation and sportsmanship;  
teach members rules related to equipment, facilities and games;
- teach youth rules of good behavior;
- 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 of resistance skills regarding substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, smoking and premature sexual activity. Of special importance in Port St. Lucie, where five gangs have been identified as active and recruiting members, 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-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 and financial literacy skills 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. Money Matters financial literacy program will also be offered.

#### **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

Outcomes 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 – Leslie Corcoran, a Certified Financial Planner, will present

information on family financial management, the importance of saving, and how to make good financial choices.

#### **5.6.e. Staffing Plan and Professional Development.**

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

Outcome Officer (4 yr. 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 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 ongoing 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 is responsible for collecting data and supporting documents from the site. Contractual services: CASPER evaluation service provides external evaluator services exclusively for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC project. All employees must pass a Level 2 FBI background screening.

The plan to recruit, hire and train any new staff needed for the program is based on the positive and productive ongoing relationship between BGCSLC and St. Lucie Public Schools. This relationship allows us the opportunity to work with the principal and draw teachers directly from Mariposa. Other program specialists come 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.bgcfslc.org](http://www.bgcfslc.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 Program will be held at Mariposa Elementary. The primary location in the building is the cafeteria, which accommodates as many as 248 children with breakout rotations in the Computer Tech lab, educational portables, outdoor covered area and recreation fields, which includes an uncovered basketball court. Young people safely walk from their final class rooms each day to check in at the school cafeteria. The building is completely under air and security measures are in place where all children are signed in and out by parents. Because of their location within a school building, the facilities provide an appropriate, safe, and secure venue for the program.

**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 is left alone. All staff are certified in CPR/ First aid. Emergency 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 ratio of one staff member to supervise ten children. Safety procedures include the buddy system, regular head count and training to identify symptoms of heat exhaustion.

#### **Student Transportation.**

Because all Explorers are students at Mariposa, they already are in the building when program activities start each day. Transportation home is provided by parents or other authorized persons, as noted above. Summer check-in, check-out and transportation arrangements also are outlined 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.bgcfslc.org](http://www.bgcfslc.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 Mariposa, both for school administrators and teachers and for distribution to parents who may request them.