

### **3.1 Project Abstract or Summary**

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers at Floresta** is a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center program. It serves 100 at-risk City of Port St. Lucie youth during the 2020-21 school year and 80 at-risk City of Port St. Lucie youth during the summer who attend Floresta Elementary School, a K-5 facility located at 1501 SE Floresta Dr., Port St. Lucie, FL. Floresta is a B-rated facility identified for Targeted Support & Improvement, with the underperforming subgroups identified as Black Students and Students with Disabilities.

**Goals and Objectives.** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers at Floresta provides its students with academic enrichment and offers them a broad array of programs and activities that include nutrition and health education, physical fitness, and youth development activities that improve decision-making skills. The program's 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. Built on principles of Social Emotional Learning (SEL), the program also reinforces living healthy lifestyles and teaches necessary skills to cope with lifestyle risks found directly in their community. Provisions for participating students' parents/guardians are also included, providing opportunities to support positive parenting.

The program will operate from 3 - 5:30 pm from Oct. 1, 2020 until the end of the 182-day school year, and 8-4 during the 29-day summer session from June 7 through July 16. Dates and times are based on current School District calendars and subject to any changes caused by COVID-19.

### **3.2 APPLICANT'S EXPERIENCE AND CAPACITY**

**Program Administration and Fiscal Management.** BGCSLC has experience managing publicly-financed programs. Current public funding includes two 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center sites; the Children's Services Council of St. Lucie County; 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 EZReports. In addition, we employ a grant coordinator and have 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.

There is strong Board oversight of and input into the budget through its Finance Committee, headed by the Treasurer, a Certified Public accountant. The committee reviews the budget monthly and makes quarterly presentations to the Board.

We have a professional third-party audit conducted every year to ensure excellent fiscal management. The last two years' audits have resulted in no significant findings. Additional staff, including an Accounting Assistant to work with the Chief Financial Officer, has been hired and trained.

**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, training and resource development. Because of the proven management and youth development experience of our 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 13 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, 13 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 and 2018 . 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. Our continuing ALP project is focused on how to serve more kids with quality programming, organizational core values, and selecting and training staff. Additional key staff: **Chief Financial Officer:** Susanne Patterson, (4 years at BGCSLC; 21 years in corporate finance positions). M.S. Strayer University, Finance/Controlling; BBA, St. Leo University, Business Administration and Management. **Vice President, Operations:** Dr. Anastasia Legakes. Master's Degree, Drury University. Ed.D., Argosy University, Phoenix. More than 15 years as a public school educator, and several years in social service agency leadership.

These organizational leaders will ensure that we fully comply with federal, state and local rules and regulations. Our Board members are leaders in the region, and include law enforcement and fire chiefs, school officials, elected officials and business leaders.

**Program Implementation.** In the 25 years since our founding, we have been recognized as a leader in youth development across St. Lucie County. Through our 20 locations, we serve approximately 15,000 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, STEAM, and assistance to students who have been truant. The scope and depth of our programming positively address the community's lack of positive programs for at-risk youth. The roster of our current programs aligns well with 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC's list of approved program activities. For example, our programs include

nutrition education, arts and cultural programs, and a program that encourages smart decisions in such matters as tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. Members can also participate in special programming that includes leadership, STEAM, and career readiness. All are supervised by trained youth professionals and qualified volunteers, as well as community leaders.

**Awards.** Documented performance has been recognized in the community with the following awards: In 2017, we were named the Chamber of Commerce's Nonprofit Business of the Year; In 2017 and 2018, the Fort Pierce Teen Club Director was named Children's Services Council's Champion of Youth; In 2019, Chief Operating Officer received Trailblazer Award from the Treasure Coast Business Summit; the Chief Executive Officer received Paul Harris Fellow recognition from the Port St Lucie Rotary Club, for a person whose life demonstrates "a shared purpose with the objectives of the Rotary Foundation." In 2019 the Boys & Girls Clubs' Florida Area Council awarded us the Program Impact Excellence Award, and gave our Board member, Charles Cuomo, its Board member of the Year Award.

**Program Evaluations.** As an organization that relies on the proceeds of grants and donations to provide services to the community, we are experienced in gathering and providing data demonstrating the effectiveness of its programs and adherence to pertinent rules and regulations. We have 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. The subjects of parent workshops are chosen based on feedback obtained from questionnaires collected from participants in previous years' workshops. At the direction of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Project Director, 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 Project Director will work with the independent evaluator, to maintain the evaluation activities and timeline.

### **3.3 NEEDS ASSESSMENT.**

**Demographics and Risk Factors of Target Population.** The BGCSLC leadership team met with community leaders and used numerous data elements from a variety of sources, including its close partners, St. Lucie Public Schools, to identify target populations and pinpoint strategies to meet the educational needs of students and their families.

**Academics.** Based on 2018-19 school year Florida State Assessments (FSA) from the Florida Department of Education, it is clear that particularly in English/Language Arts (ELA) a significant number of Floresta students struggle to meet grade level. Fully 43% of the school's students underachieved in ELA, including 47% of economically disadvantaged students; 62% of English language learners; 69% of students with disabilities 43% of Hispanic students, and 50% of Black students. The overall math score was considerably better, but 37% of the school's students still need help to bring their scores up to grade level, including 53% of students with disabilities, 53% of English language learners, 41% of economically disadvantaged students, and 53% of Black students. In all, 48% of students taking the standardized science test scored below grade level. As will be seen in later sections of this application, we expect 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers' strong emphasis on reading and remediation will make a major difference in the academic lives of these students.

**The fast-growing City of Port St. Lucie** encompasses 77 square miles, with a current population estimated by the US. Census Bureau at 195,000. The Roundtable of St. Lucie County, an organization of community leaders working to improve outcomes for young people, identifies five teen gangs active in the city.

Census Bureau 2017 data shows that in Floresta's 34983 zip code area, 15% of children lived in poverty. But children attending Floresta are affected more, with 71% of them considered economically disadvantaged, according to state Education Department statistics.

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. Children from low-income families often start school as much as three academic

years behind their peers. Other risk factors, such as living in a single-parent family, exposure to alcohol or drug abuse, poor housing and living conditions, 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). Other research confirms poverty's negative influence on student behavior, achievement and retention.

**Lifestyle Risks.** The effects of poverty are felt in matters of health as well. People living in poverty cannot afford healthier food choices, and so are more prone to a variety of health problems throughout their lives, starting at the earliest ages. According to the state Health Department (2019), 26% of St. Lucie County children over the age of 2 who participate in the WIC program are 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 2018 data shows substance abuse rates among middle school students in St. Lucie County were 22% for tobacco or vaping, 23% for alcohol, and 8% for marijuana, all close to the Florida state averages. According to the 2018 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey, middle and high school protective factors – such as family opportunities and rewards for pro-social behavior, school opportunities and rewards for pro-social behavior, and religiosity – were slightly lower in St. Lucie County than in Florida or the United States as a whole, and some risk factors were slightly higher. The countywide prevalence of protective factors dropped by 10% from 50 in 2016 to 45 in 2017.

**To validate the need** for 21<sup>st</sup> Century programs in our community, BGCSLC leadership involved itself in a number of community groups. For example, we played a leadership role in the Violence and Delinquency Subcommittee of the Roundtable of St. Lucie County, a collaboration of community leaders and organizations tasked with determining the most

pressing needs of Fort Pierce's youth. During the course of this year-long work, it became clear that children in the community needed strong academic support and their families would benefit from the family support features that a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center would bring to the area.

The subcommittee found a number of risk factors in neighborhoods within the city, including a high exposure to poverty, high exposure to family conflict, and early initiation of problem behaviors, all of which combine to set the climate and culture of the area. In addition, two highly negative social norms were noted – a fear of consequences if residents reported crime to authorities and a ready availability of weapons, alcohol and drugs throughout the community.

We 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. Our CEO also served on the local Workforce Readiness Task Force. We currently provide before- and after-school programs at 15 public school locations throughout the County in partnership with St. Lucie Public Schools (one of which is located in Floresta Elementary School, most recently serving more than 60 students a day), as well as after-school programs at our five neighborhood Clubhouses. We provide summer programs at the Clubhouses and a select number of school locations.

According to the Afterschool Alliance, for every child enrolled in an after-school program in the United States, there are two others who would attend if a program were available (1). In St. Lucie County, demand for quality, affordable after-school care is high. 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 our conclusion that there is a need for additional

quality programming. While there are a number of private day care facilities in the area offering after-school care, none offer the academic resources and school-program alignment that 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers would provide.

**Meeting the Needs.** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers at Floresta addresses the needs of this community by providing kids with academic help, guides them to healthy decision-making, nutritional awareness and problem-solving skills in a safe, structured and fun learning environment. Floresta's School Improvement Plan (3) reported that the school's area or greatest performance decline was in math, and attributed this decline to teachers' difficulty in fitting in small-group instructional sessions into hour-long blocks of math time. This is an area that we can help with through small-group instruction during our academic periods. In the area of English/Language Arts, the school Improvement Plan reports that writing skills need improvement. We propose partnering with Big Brothers-Big Sisters, to bring their literacy program to our 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center, targeting writing skills.

In addition to this programming flexibility and useful partnerships, what's unique about a BGCSLC program is that all this is conducted in collaboration with the child's school and classroom teachers. We will rely on numerous additional community resources to help meet the needs of Club members, as can be seen in the attached Partner's Table.

In the course of assessing the need for 21<sup>st</sup> Century services, we have reached out to private schools within the Floresta Zip Code.

### **3.4 COMMUNITY NOTICE AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION**

**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 our website, [www.bgcslc.org](http://www.bgcslc.org) , and on our 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. By May 29,



2020, we will provide community access to our 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant application by posting the complete application on our website, [www.bgcofslc.org](http://www.bgcofslc.org). We will distribute informational flyers directing the public to the application on our website.

**Webpage.** To ensure that the community has the latest information about 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorer program activities – in all the ways that they might want to receive that information -- BGCSLC has created a multi-platform strategy to ensure maximum dissemination of information. we will maintain a webpage devoted exclusively to the program, easily accessible on our home page, [www.bgcofslc.org](http://www.bgcofslc.org). A staff member in our Resource Development Department 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.

Our website will be updated regularly with dated material. Among 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. We have proposed that St. Lucie Public Schools link to this page, providing another logical pathway for interested persons to learn about the program.

**Public Relations.** Further, we will submit articles to 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, including those serving the area’s Hispanic and Haitian communities, to publicize the program and its services.

Brochures containing information on program activities and upcoming events will be distributed to Floresta, both for school administrators and teachers and for distribution to parents who may request them.

### **3.5a Partnership and Collaboration**

**Partnerships.** We enjoy the current support of several partners whose collaboration will ensure that all elements of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center 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 see that data collection, essential to ensuring students' progress, is completed properly. The district's Child Nutrition Services will provide all members with daily nutritious meals during the school year and lunch and snacks during the summer.

Additional partners include: the Roundtable of St. Lucie County, which will support us with information and activities in the areas of gangs and juvenile crime and its Kids at Hope subsidiary, which will train staff and parents in communicating and motivating children; the state Health Department, which has committed to providing health education programs for Explorers and their parents; 211, which will run a community resource workshop for parents; Florida Atlantic University Harbor Branch and the Manatee Center in Fort Pierce, which provide lessons in Oceanography; Seacoast Bank, whose staff will provide a parent workshop on household finances and taxes; and the Port St. Lucie and Fort Pierce Police Departments and the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Department which will run programs that build members' self-esteem and teach members to avoid gangs and crime. Attached is a partners table with letters of support from the partners. Throughout the year we will continue to strengthen the quality of programming by adding strategic partners from the community.

#### **Collaboration**

**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 is carried out in collaboration with Floresta Elementary School, the school attended by the students served. We included Floresta during the needs assessment and in development of the program. Our 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 school's curriculum and improvement plans, and a support letter from the St. Lucie Public Schools Administration is attached. We also know that hiring teachers who work at the school cements relationships between the program and the school.

**Continued Collaboration.** BGCSLC has developed several strategies that allow it and the St. Lucie Public Schools to continue to collaborate to best meet the needs of the targeted students. For example, after consulting Floresta'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. We have obtained St. Lucie Public Schools' most recent pacing guide and have 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 in terms of both academic and behavioral programs. We implement in our after-school program whatever behavior methods the school is using.

Other communication channels will be maintained at several levels between the two organizations, including direct phone conversations, email and meetings among the Site Coordinator, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC teachers, Floresta's regular school day teachers, the School Advisory Committee, the Project Director, BGCSLC and St. Lucie Public Schools administration. The Site Coordinator 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.

### **3.6 TARGET POPULATION, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

This program targets students grades K-5 who attend Floresta Elementary School, a B-rated school in Port St. Lucie. All students chosen for the program will be attending Floresta, whose after-school program's current demographic profile is: Ages 5-13: 51% boys and 49% girls; 42% White; 34% Hispanic; 15% African-American, 8% Other or Multiracial; and 1% American Indian or Alaska Native. These students live in neighborhoods affected by poverty and crime. As referenced in the Needs Assessment, studies show that factors including single-family households and low income, high-crime neighborhoods are known to cause significant barriers to academic achievements. Approximately 100 students will participate daily in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers at Floresta Elementary and 80 in summer.

**Reaching Students and Parents.** BGCSLC, in close cooperation with the St. Lucie Public Schools, is using several techniques to reach qualified students and their parents. We will draw from students identified by school administration as scoring below a Level 3 on standardized testing in all core subject areas. Students with special needs, regardless of their severity of need, will not be excluded from services provided they can be safely accommodated within the program. Additionally, we will collaborate with the school district to review individual education plans to make accommodations appropriate to student needs.

Because about 50% of students scored below proficiency level on state assessments, the program may have to institute a first-come, first-served policy for enrollment. Any spaces not filled in this manner will be available to current Club members who qualify as 21<sup>st</sup> Century students. Finally, through the school, we will distribute flyers and other promotional material to inform parents of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC goals and objectives. A waiting list of students who want to enter the program will be maintained.

Printed materials in English and other appropriate languages promoting the program will be sent home with students to targeted families during the first week of school. We will promote the program during the school's Open House. We 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. Our safe and supportive environment will allow Club staff to create enriching experiences for our members. The Club experience will influence members to participate day after day, and member enthusiasm, in turn, will influence parents to ensure their children continue to participate.

**Retention.** We have adopted strategies to ensure that students consistently attend our 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers programs. They include asking parents to sign agreements stressing the expectation that their child will participate in the full program each day; and ensuring that the school district's principals, teachers and other personnel remind students of the need to stay in the program until completion each day.

We continually monitor attendance using EZReports software. Program staff 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. After a second absence, we send a letter to reminding parents that they signed an agreement committing their child to regular attendance. Should there still be attendance issues, program leadership seeks guidance from the Advisory Board.

### **3.7 TIME AND FREQUENCY OF SERVICE PROVISION FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES**

**Club Operating Hours.** During the school year the Club will be open 12.5 hours a week, Monday through Friday, from 3– 5:30 pm. During the summer it will be open 40 hours a week, Monday through Friday, from 8-4.

**Adult Family Member Program Activities.** It is well established that children do better educationally when their parents are involved in the educational process. As a result, the overall goal of the adult family member programs is to encourage parental support for their children's educational development, including helping increase their children's literacy skills. The first activity will be a parent information session, to be held in October 2020, reviewing the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program requirements and activities, along with providing information about

resources in the community available to parents, conducted by the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Project Director and 211. Further family activities will be meaningful and will include four additional Parenting Workshops. December 2020 – The Power of Words, conducted by Kids at Hope; January 2021– Financial Literacy/Tax Tips for Parents, conducted by various finance/tax experts; March 2021 How to Help Your Child Read, conducted by Big Brothers-Big Sisters; and May 2021, Social Emotional Learning, supported by Tykes & Teens. The subjects of family workshops are determined by the results of questionnaires completed by parents who participated in previous year’s workshops.

### **3.8 Program Evaluation**

**Selection and Qualifications.** Boys and Girls Clubs of St. Lucie County utilized a competitive bid process to select an experienced ***Independent Evaluator*** for this project. The selected evaluator has agreed to oversee all aspects of program evaluation, formative, summative, and data reporting to both the FLDOE and USDOE. The selected firm is led by a professional evaluator and licensed psychologist, with the firm having overseen the evaluation of over 600 educational grants, schools, districts, and states. As per agreement, the Lead Evaluator will personally conduct all evaluation tasks for this project. As an active member of the American Evaluation Association and the American Psychological Association, all evaluations tasks will be conducted under the ethical codes and procedures of these professional organizations.

**Evaluation Plan and Activities.** 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. 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 majority of education programs). In essence, this model evaluates programs in “real time”, embracing the plethora of complex interactions between the various stakeholders and

environmental factors (e.g., students, parents, teachers, administrators, school district, community partners, the state, the feds, etc.). The evaluation plan is further enhanced with the Utilization-Focused Evaluation (to support developmental evaluation), which frames evaluation to focus on actionable results (rather than static numbers). Overall, these approaches form a system-oriented evaluation approach, with an emphasis on knowledge integration and communication of results both internally and externally.

Based on this developmental and utilization-focused evaluation approach, the 21st CCLC Evaluation Plan is firmly grounded in a commitment to continuous improvement of operations, services, and outcomes. The cornerstone is a logical process of planning, data collection, analysis, reporting, and refining. As such, 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. The model focuses upon individualized assessment using both formal (e.g., surveys) and informal (e.g., meetings) techniques to guide incremental changes within ongoing services, adopt new ways to improve and measure outcomes, discontinue or adapt activities that have no value, and increase emphasis on program objectives and outcomes. The immediate and individualized feedback provided through CIM is particularly important for implementation of this 21st CCLC model to help guide/ensure the highest impact for each student. Evaluation will also be conducted through formative and summative evaluations, both of which incorporate elements from CIM and provide formal reports on processes/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/analyzing how the model works in practice, (4) documenting/analyzing change in student's actions, attitudes, knowledge, performance.

**Data Collection and Timeline.** The following provides the types of data to be collected to assess project objectives and performance. Each type of data is followed by the estimated frequency with which the data will be collected. When possible, specific instruments are listed. Details about measures specific to objectives are provided in the objectives table (attached). Data collection will include: (1) Average daily attendance and student enrollment (**Monthly**); (2) State Standardized Assessments in Reading, Math, and Science (**Annual – Prior and Current Years FSA for grades 3-5, FCAT Science 5<sup>th</sup> grade only**); (3) District-Based Diagnostic Assessments (all grades) in Reading, Math, and Science (**Bi-Annual**); (4) School Grades in Reading, Writing, Math, and Science (**Quarterly**); (5) School records on student absences from regular school day (**Bi-Annual – Mid-Year and End-of-Year**); (6) Pre-post curriculum-based knowledge assessment in Social Emotional Learning (**Quarterly**); (7) Pre-Mid-Post Physical Fitness Assessments (**Quarterly**); (8) Teacher and Staff Surveys on student impact and change (**Annually**); (9) Attendance logs from parent events (**Monthly; By Event**); (10) Adult Literacy Performance Surveys (ALPS) from all literacy-based parent events (**Monthly; By Event**); and (11) FLDOE Student and Parent Satisfaction and Impact Surveys (**Annual**).

**Data Collection, Maintenance, and Reporting.** The St. Lucie County School District has agreed to maintain the current data sharing agreement with the Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Lucie County to provide any and all necessary data to complete the proposed and required state and federal evaluation reporting requirements. Provided data includes all student demographics, state standardized tests (from all prior and current years), student report card grades, district diagnostic results on all students, and a variety of other data used for the evaluation process. 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 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. The FLDOE will have access to all FERPA-compliant data collected by the program.

**Coordination of Evaluation Activities.** The evaluation process will be coordinated with program staff, students, family members, and other stakeholders. Program staff will be provided training by BGC St. Lucie administrators on how to use the evaluation findings to inform decisions at the classroom and site levels, while also using ongoing data assessment to drive differentiated instruction within the broader project-based learning plans. Students, parents, and stakeholders will be part of the Advisory Board and will help inform program content that drives the evaluation of program processes and impact. All stakeholders are provided opportunities to inform the evaluation process from design, to implementation, to reporting of results, to modifications.

**Examining Program Impact.** A Formative Evaluation summary will be completed at mid-year, with additional interim debriefings provided after on-site visits. The formative summary 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 reports is recording and developing a model program that can be presented to potential funders to enhance sustainability and continuation of the program. Summative evaluations will include program operation, activities, attendance, academic performance, teacher impact survey, 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 (impact) 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.

**Reporting Outcomes.** As detailed above, the evaluation process will include all elements of the required Reporting Outcomes detailed in the Request for Proposal. The External Evaluator will submit and validate all data to the US Dept. of Education 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC data collection system. The program and the external evaluator are fully aware that there may be changes to the online method of collecting data through the US Department of Education, as well as potential changes with data collection by the Florida Department of Education. The program and the external evaluator are committed to submitting all required data as instructed and through whatever system developed by these entities. The program and external evaluator are also committed to 'beta test' and assist with the development of any data collection or reporting system for the Florida Dept. of Education or the US Dept. of Education with regards to 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs.

**Use and Dissemination of Evaluation Results.** Distribution will occur at three levels: (1) administrators, (2) staff members, and (3) stakeholders. Monthly conferences will be held with the evaluator, project 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 project 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 project director, and (under the developmental evaluation model) will help guide the program in refining and addressing any identified concerns within the complex and evolving system of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. In addition, all 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC staff will be debriefed and engaged in addressing challenges identified through evaluation activities. Finally, evaluations will be shared electronically with all stakeholders (e.g., the Board of Directors, administrators, parents, partners) to share information and encourage

feedback. To inform the community, evaluation results will be uploaded to the 21st CCLC website.

**Program Objectives.** Program objectives have been prepared, as required, and placed on the Measurable Objectives and Assessments form required by the FLDOE. Please refer to the completed form, *2019-2020 RFP Measurable Objectives and Assessments* in the attachments.

### **3.9 APPROVED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

BGCSLC 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers provides academic enrichment and other enrichment activities – many project-based -- that align with identified student needs. Activities will reflect various learning modalities. Some examples include cooperative learning; auditory learning; computer-based learning; visual and tactile learning, such as LitArt and the Getty Museum’s curricula, including Language Through Art, and Telling Stories in Art and Reader’s Theater. Program lessons are designed to meet students where they are academically. Scaffolding and differentiated instruction support student academic achievement. Implementation of scaffolding includes model/demonstrate, describing concepts in multiple ways, visual aids, time to practice, and activating prior knowledge. Likewise, differentiated instruction may include grouping students based on knowledge, creating tiered lessons, providing study guides, and leveraging students’ strengths.

**Social Emotional Learning (SEL).** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers’ programming is steeped in SEL principles. It uses Lions Quest, a Social Emotional Learning program now being used in schools in 90 nations around the world. Lions Quest Skills for Growing Program for elementary students ensures that Explorers learn such SEL lessons as identifying emotions, setting goals, responsibility, and learning how to be calm. Lion’s Quest is being introduced in St. Lucie Public Schools, and is one of many ways that our programming will align with that of the school district. Club personnel will participate in the robust training program offered by the Lions Quest organization.

Of special importance in Port St. Lucie, where five gangs have been identified as active and recruiting members, our programming counteracts – especially that involving SEL -- the negative lures of gangs, violence and street influences on young people. As they get older, kids learn how gangs work and how to resist being recruited, how to recognize and resolve conflicts peacefully, and how to become positive peer helpers.

**Homework Help and Remediation.** Explorers will receive homework help for a minimum of 30 minutes each day. Extra attention and focused assistance will be given to at-risk members and those in need of motivation and direction. Club members will have access to several online learning programs, including IReady, the online system employed by St. Lucie Public Schools. This means students will be able to maximize the use of their homework help time by completing online homework and remedial work assigned by their teachers.

**Academics.** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers' academic program also features Mindworks, a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Math) curriculum that fosters innovation and learning. The program promotes interest in and awareness of STEAM subjects, with each Mindworks curriculum kit covering nine weeks of learning, in the process encouraging critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving through hands-on fun. Exposure to these subjects is critical during years when natural curiosity drives interest and builds capacity for success in these disciplines. For example, a Mindworks exercise might use commonly-found objects to construct such fascinating structures as a model space station or a model roller coaster. As they build these structures, students learn the scientific principles that are the foundation of the experiment or project.

**LEGO Education** is a key component of the Club's academics. Members will use LEGO Early Simple Machines and Simple Machines to learn the basics of coding and robotics, in the process further stimulating their interest in science and math. Working with LEGO Education increases fine motor skill development and spatial awareness and develops constructive problem-solving and lateral thinking, and teaches children concentration and

focus. It helps develop teamwork, communication and organizational skills, all in a fun and engaging manner. All these attributes are not only beneficial for academics, but also for development of life skills.

**Cultural Programming.** We will use the Tour-A-Culture curriculum to teach students about other cultures while stimulating a sense of community within each child. This curriculum teaches etiquette, language, art, music, food and dance of various cultures; bridges cultural gaps and integrates STEAM, language and other educational programs; and encourages children to work in teams and solve problems.

**Academic Enrichment.** Additional academic enrichment will include tutoring and remedial education. Since the St. Lucie Public Schools' 2018-19 state assessment scores in reading and math show that targeted students are struggling to meet state proficiency levels, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers program will incorporate a **tutoring program**. Working with small groups of students, each tutor (certified teachers) will provide literacy and math instruction. The students will be in small groups because research shows that tutoring in such groups can be highly effective. Small-group tutoring can be more effective than one-on-one instruction because of the positive effect 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 our close collaboration with 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.

**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 six weeks of state-aligned learning modules that provide engaging, project-based activities with an emphasis on math, literacy and science. Summer academic reinforcement activities include LitArt, a fun, multifaceted and evidence-based approach to literacy. Each week members pick an age-appropriate book, read it and connect to it by engaging in a creative response activity, which might be drama, pantomime, art, games, or writing, all designed to support and extend the children's experience with the book. These features should help the Club meet its goal of giving members a significant reading advantage in the fall.

### **Other Enrichment Activities.**

**Lifestyle Programs.** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers have access to a variety of enrichment activities, led by qualified staff, 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. The programs are designed to build the skills, attitudes, knowledge and behaviors essential to an overall healthy lifestyle. The programs help our students to sustain the health of their minds, bodies and souls by increasing healthy decision-making skills, nutritional skills, and physical fitness skills.

**Structured physical activities** include dance, yoga and team sports, as well as daily fitness challenges that give youth at every age a chance to play longer and harder at various games, from jumping rope to basketball and creating games of their own. Members receive coaching in leagues, developing their coordination and leadership skills. Organized social recreation strengthens character, increases confidence and enhances the ability to relate well to others. As a result of participation in these programs, Explorers should make more responsible food choices, increase their understanding of portion sizes, and learn how to make healthy choices when eating away from home; improve their level of physical fitness by increasing physical activity and decreasing sedentary activity; encourage achievement,

cooperation and sportsmanship; learn rules related to equipment, facilities and games; and develop self-confidence.

Members also have the opportunity to take part in a variety of special clubs and activities. These clubs, taught either by contractors who partner with us or by our staff typically include a variety of visual arts and music. More than one club will be offered each week, giving members the chance for multiple engaging experiences that stimulate interest and attendance.

### **3.10 Staffing & Professional Development.**

**Staffing Plan.** The BGCSLC 21<sup>st</sup> Century Explorers program will be staffed as follows: Project Director 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, as well as collecting data and supporting documents from the site. The Site Coordinator will coordinate schedule and provide oversight of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC certified teachers, enrichment program specialists and volunteers, and is responsible for smooth operation of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program both with school administration, school teachers and school support staff, as well as for development and implementation of adult family member activities and for serving as collaboration liaison with the school. 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. The ratio of students to staff will be 10:1 for academic activities and 20:1 for other activities. The Curriculum Coordinator and Assistant Curriculum Coordinator are responsible for the design and coordination of curriculum. Human Resources 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.

Contractual services: an independent evaluation service provides external evaluator services exclusively for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC project. All employees must pass a Level 2 FBI background screening. At least two staff members with CPR and First Aid certification will be present at all times at the facility.

**Hiring.** The plan to recruit, hire and train any new staff needed for the program is based on our positive and productive ongoing relationship with St. Lucie Public Schools. This relationship allows us the opportunity to work with the principal and draw teachers directly from Floresta. 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 LinkUp.

Our Human Resources Department is responsible for hiring. All applicants must apply online at [www.bgcofslc.org](http://www.bgcofslc.org). Once an applicant is selected, he/she will be interviewed by the hiring manager of selected department/location. HR will conduct Level 2 background screenings for those potential applicants. Once backgrounds are clear/complete, all new hires participate in a four-week onboarding process, as well as ongoing educational opportunities. The required organizational charts are attached for review.

**Professional Development** BGCSLC takes pride in professionally developing its staff. Club Operations and Human Resources work together 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 onboarding process includes knowledge of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century program, extensive safety measures, and behavior management. The onboarding process includes knowledge of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century program as well as behavior management.

Staff will participate in Social Emotional Learning and Trauma-Informed Care training provided by Tykes & Teens, a mental health agency specializing in the care of children, and by Lions Quest, the evidence-based SEL program. A Harvard Graduate School of Education



(2016-18) study of Lion's Quest reported statistically significant improvement in school-age students' and adolescents' perceptions of physical and emotional safety, peer interaction, and problem-solving skills. In addition, training provided by Tykes & Teens, will deepen staffers' knowledge of Trauma Informed Care. Training for the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC staff will include data collection and outcome measurement and implementation of key program activities. The Site coordinator and Project Directors will participate in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center trainings. Staff will attend all webinars sent by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century REU Department of the Florida Department of Education, and will use the YouForYouth website to attend online professional learning sessions specific to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers.

### **3.11 Facilities.**

The program will be held at FLORESTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. During the school year, the primary location in the building is the cafeteria, which accommodates as many as 900 children. This is where academic and other group work will occur and where students will eat meals. The program has access to a playground and covered outdoor area, for fitness and athletic activities.

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, accessible, safe, and secure venue for the program. In summer, the program is conducted in four portable classrooms and a secure storage area will be available as well. Students eat their meals in the portable classrooms during the summer.

**Childcare Licensing.** Because it is subject to more stringent Boys & Girls Clubs rules and procedures, our facility at Floresta is DCF-exempt from day care licensing. We apply annually for this exemption.

### **3.12 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, show identification and sign their children out and transport them 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.

Emergency student accident management and reporting procedures are in place. Emergency response drills are conducted regularly and logged. 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.

We have an extensive field trip and safety policy that covers permission forms; number of employees, equipped with walkie-talkies, who accompany members on trips; and the requirement that members never be left unsupervised; that each group leader have a class roster of the children for which they are responsible; and the requirement that a person certified in CPR be on every trip. Staff participate in various online trainings in transportation and field trip safety. Attendance is taken before getting on the bus and before getting off the bus. A First Aid kit must always be available and incidents must be documented. The Club Safety Manual includes a detailed injury reporting policy.

**Student Transportation.** Because all Explorers are students at Floresta, they already are in the building when school year program activities start each day. For summer field trips, buses are provided by BGCSLC and St. Lucie Public Schools, and the bus owners are responsible for the maintenance and safe condition of their vehicles. All drivers undergo a Level 2 background check and are required to have a CDL license.

### **3.13 Sustainability.**

Over our 25-year history, our organization has sought to diversify funding with all

programming. Each year, our Board of Directors, executive team, 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 also rely on the support of numerous community partners that are in long-term collaborative relationships that promote students' academic achievement and provide out-of-the-classroom educational experiences. BGCSLC's marketing plan includes communication with existing partners and cultivation of new partners to increase interest in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center program and its students' accomplishments. By continually increasing partner relationships and community awareness of the program, we anticipate being able to grow the program throughout its five years of existence and position it for further growth in the period beyond five years.

**Advisory Board.** We are creating a 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Community Advisory Board to ensure the program enjoys widespread community support. Advisory Board members include at least two parents, one regular school day teacher from Floresta, and other members representing community organizations and the private sector. The Board meets 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, program evaluation results, program operations and active recruitment of resources to implement the sustainability plan. 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.

Our leadership will work with the Board to seek future community support for the program as well as other sustainability options. We have many longstanding community partners that are committed to supporting our students, including those who help our students with after-school learning experiences. Our sustainability plan includes communication with all partners through such vehicles as meetings and periodic reports, as

well as an annual marketing campaign that includes the program. During the course of the year, the plan calls for us to reach out to businesses, community organizations and agencies and religious organizations throughout the county to increase support of our organization and this program, both during the five-year grant period and beyond.