Stepping Stones is a collaborative project of City of Davenport Parks and Recreation, Davenport Community School District, and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Scott County. The partners share resources, responsibilities and risks of the Stepping Stones program, each contributing to its operations, programming and quality according to individual areas of expertise and mission-alignment.

During the 2013-2014 program year, Stepping Stones operated 3, 21st Century Community Learning Center grants at five elementary schools. In addition, 13 fee-based Stepping Stones sites were also offered. Before school programs were offered at schools with daily school start times of 9:00 AM or later. Afterschool programs were offered at all sites until 5:30 PM. Summer programs were operated at all grant sites and select fee-based sites.

The vision of the Davenport Stepping Stones Program is:

*All children in Davenport will have access to high quality and affordable expanded learning opportunities through school-based community collaborations within Stepping Stones before, afterschool and summer programs.*

The mission of the Davenport Stepping Stones Program is:

*The mission of Stepping Stones Out of School Time Programs is to enhance each student’s developmental assets and abilities by providing expanded learning opportunities that are enriched by collaborations with our diverse community.*

The guiding values of the Davenport Stepping Stones Program are:

- *All children deserve physical and emotional environments that satisfy their basic needs.*
- *All children need supportive adult relationships and role models.*
- *All children benefit from expanded learning opportunities.*
- *All children can contribute to and serve their community.*
- *All children benefit from community collaboration.*
Demographics

The following students were served by 21st Century Community Learning Center funds during the 2013-2014 school year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monroe Elementary School</th>
<th>Hayes Elementary School</th>
<th>Washington Elementary School</th>
<th>Buchanan Elementary School</th>
<th>Jefferson Elementary School</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students served during the summer and school year</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students served only during the school year</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students served only during the summer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who attended fewer than 30 days during the reporting period</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who attended 30 days or more during the reporting period</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority students served</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students receiving Free or reduced lunches served</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males served</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females served</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each program day during the school year, students receive the following from the time school ends to until 5:30 PM:

- A healthy snack provided through the school snack program by Davenport School Food Service.
- Academic time. During academic time, students receive homework help and tutoring from both certified teachers and Stepping Stones staff members. In addition, students participate in small group reading using leveled readers pairing fiction and nonfiction of the same topic. Each site has over 60 different math hands-on math activities, written specifically for small group work. Fourth and fifth grade students at some sites have been trained in the Literacy Leaders program, where they read a children’s book and facilitate a reading comprehension activity with kindergarten and first grade students. Stepping Stones staff members also use high frequency word games, developed specifically for Stepping Stones programs, as well as practice spelling words. The Stepping Stones administrative offices have developed a lending library of hands-on academic activities that are rotated each month among the Stepping Stones sites to keep students’ interest. In addition, Stepping Stones has an extensive library in which books
appropriate for a variety of grade levels are rotated monthly among the sites.

• Enrichment time. During enrichment time, students participate in expanded learning opportunities that help them further explore and apply the knowledge they have learned during the school day. Enrichment activities are provided by both Stepping Stones staff members and community partners who rotate among sites. Students engage in a variety of programs, including Japanese Culture, Detective Science, Disability Awareness, Art History, Insects, Archery, Gardening, etc.

• Recreation time. During recreation time, students participate in a variety of structured and semi-structured activities including Zumba, teambuilding games, playground games, and small group indoor and outdoor activities.

Once each month, students attend a field / study trip to expose them to a variety of local enrichment, cultural and entertainment venues. These trips are especially important for our lowest-income students, as they often do not have opportunities to engage in activities such as these in their life outside of school-based programs.

Staff

Stepping Stones uses a blended staffing model that allows it to leverage resources and capitalize the strengths of each partner. There are three types of staff members in Stepping Stones. They are:

• Program staff. Program staff are City of Davenport employees who operate each site. Each site has one site leader and between one and five program assistants, depending on the average daily student attendance at each site. These staff members attend 20 hours of training before the beginning of the school year, 12 hours of training during the school year, and 20 hours of training before the beginning of summer. In addition, site leaders meet once per month to address issues, share ideas, and continuously improve program implementation.

• Certified teachers. Each Stepping Stones site has between one and six teachers who share responsibility for providing extra support around academic activities, homework completion and tutoring. Certified teachers are employed by Davenport Community Schools.

• Enrichment staff. Organizations and agencies around the Quad Cities that provide expanded learning opportunities for children and youth, may choose to partner with Stepping Stones to bring enrichment programs to 21st Century Community Learning Center programs. Organizations attend an enrichment provider orientation and training, as well as receive a handbook of policies, procedures and expectations for enrichment. Before an enrichment program is started in a Stepping Stones site, the
curriculum that the provider is using is outlined and approved by Stepping Stones staff members.

Objectives

Each Stepping Stones 21st Century Community Learning Center site may have individual nuances that are differentiated for the needs and culture of diverse populations. However, there are three main objectives that are embedded in each Stepping Stones program. They are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Assessment Tool</th>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>Assessment Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Stepping Stones participants will show increased growth in reading over the course of the school year in comparison to like-demographic students from the same school who do not participate in 21st CCLC programs. | • Kindergarten students are assessed using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), and use the PSF (Phoneme Segmentation Fluency) subscale.  
• First Grade students are assessed using DIBELS, and use the CLS (Correct Letter Sounds) and WWR (Whole Words Read) subscales.  
• Second Grade students are assessed using DIBELS DORF (Daily Oral Reading Fluency) subscale.  
• Third-Fifth Grade students at most sites use SRI (Scholastic Reading Inventory). However, one site uses MAP (Measures of Academic Progress). | Students are assessed during the school day, and information is shared with Stepping Stones administrative staff. Students who are regular Stepping Stones attenders (more than 30 days) have their free-reduced lunch status matched with non-Stepping Stones attenders from the same school. Growth over the course of the school year is compared between the two groups (Stepping Stones and non-Stepping Stones). | August (baseline) May (post assessment) |

| Stepping Stones participants will show increased growth in math over the course of the school year in comparison to like-demographic students from the same school who do not participate in 21st CCLC programs. | Third-Fifth Grade students at most sites use SMI (Scholastic Math Inventory). However, one site uses MAP (Measures of Academic Progress). | Students are assessed during the school day, and information is shared with Stepping Stones administrative staff. Students who are regular Stepping Stones attenders (more than 30 days) have their free-reduced lunch status matched with non-Stepping Stones attenders from the same school. Growth over the course of the school year is | August (baseline) May (post assessment) |
80% of Stepping Stones participants will be proficient for their grade level in teacher-preferred social behaviors, peer-preferred social behaviors, and classroom adjustment behaviors. Compared between the two groups (Stepping Stones and non-Stepping Stones).

The Walker-McConnell scale was designed to sample the two primary adjustment domains that usually are subsumed under the broad term of social competence – that is, adaptive behavior and interpersonal social competence. Adaptive behavior refers to the skills necessary to function independently in classroom instructional settings, and interpersonal social competence refers to the skills necessary to maintain adequate social interactions and relationships with others. The Walker-McConnell scale consists of three subscales:

1) Teacher-Preferred Social Behavior, measuring peer-related social behavior that is highly valued or preferred by teachers.
2) Peer-Preferred Social Behavior, measuring peer-related behavior that is highly valued by peers.
3) School Adjustment Behavior, measuring adaptive social-behavioral competencies highly valued by teachers in classroom instruction contexts.

Students are assessed twice each year by Stepping Stones staff members, according to the instrumental instructions. Scores are tabulated and percentile equivalent scores are used to determine if students are deemed to proficient for adaptive behavior and social competence, according to the scale psychometrics.

The objective ratings for the 2013-2014 school year are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Monroe/Buchanan</th>
<th>Washington/Hayes</th>
<th>Jefferson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stepping Stones participants will show increased growth in reading over the course of the school year in</td>
<td>Did not meet, but progressive toward the objective.</td>
<td>Did not meet, but progressive toward the objective.</td>
<td>Did not meet, but progressive toward the objective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This rating was selected because at some grade</td>
<td>This rating was selected because at some grade</td>
<td>This rating was selected because at some grade</td>
<td>This rating was selected because at</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stepping Stones participants will show increased growth in math over the course of the school year in comparison to like-demographic students from the same school who do not participate in 21st CCLC programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels, Stepping Stones participants outpaced the growth of non-Stepping Stones participants, but not at all grade levels.</th>
<th>Did not meet, but progressive toward the objective. This rating was selected because at some grade levels, Stepping Stones participants outpaced the growth of non-Stepping Stones participants, but not at all grade levels.</th>
<th>Met stated objective. This rating was selected because at all grade levels assessed, Stepping Stones participants outpaced the growth of non-Stepping Stones participants.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80% of Stepping Stones participants will be proficient for their grade level in teacher-preferred social behaviors, peer-preferred social behaviors, and classroom adjustment behaviors.</td>
<td>Met stated objective. This rating was selected because more than 80% of regular Stepping Stones attenders received a score of “proficient.”</td>
<td>Met stated objective. This rating was selected because more than 80% of regular Stepping Stones attenders received a score of “proficient.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluation charts for Stepping Stones 21st Century Community Learning Centers 2013-2014 school year are as follows:
*No school day data available within selection criteria.

Stepping Stones 2013-2014 Grade One Evaluation

Average Change in Correct Letter Sounds (CLS) Between Pre and Post Assessment

Average Change in Stepping Stones Students
Average Change in School Day Students (Control)

Buchanan  Monroe  Washington  Hayes  Jefferson
Stepping Stones 2013-2014 Grade One Assessment

Average Change in Whole Words Read (WWR) Between Pre and Post Assessment

Stepping Stones 2013-2014 Grade Two Evaluation

Average Change in DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (DORF) Between Pre and Post Assessment

*No School day data available within selection criteria.
Stepping Stones 2013-2014 Grade Two Evaluation

Average Change in DIBELS Composite Score Between Pre and Post Assessment

*No school day data available within selection criteria.

Stepping Stones 2013-2014 Grades Three - Five Evaluation

Average Change in Lexile Score Between Pre and Post Assessment
Stepping Stones 2013-2014 Grades Three - Five Evaluation

**Average Change in Quantile Score Between Pre and Post Assessment**

- Buchanan
- Washington
- Hayes
- Jefferson

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Average Change in Stepping Stones Students</th>
<th>Average Change in School Day Students (Control)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buchanan</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayes</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stepping Stones 2013-2014 Grades Three – Five Evaluation at Monroe

**Average Change in Reading/Language Arts and Math Between Pre and Post Assessment**

- RIT Reading
- RIT Math

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Average Change in Stepping Stones Stones</th>
<th>Average Change in School Day (Control)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RIT Reading</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIT Math</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Performance Summary

There are three main objectives within the Stepping Stones 21st Century Community Learning Centers programs. They are:

- Stepping Stones participants will show increased growth in reading over the course of the school year in comparison to like-demographic students from the same school who do not participate in 21st CLC programs.
- Stepping Stones participants will show increased growth in math over the course of the school year in comparison to like-demographic students from the same school who do not participate in 21st CLC programs.
- 80% of Stepping Stones participants will be proficient for their grade level in teacher-preferred social behaviors, peer-preferred social behaviors, and classroom adjustment behaviors.

Academic growth is measured using data collected during the school day in August (baseline) and May (post assessment).

Reading scores in kindergarten through second grades are collected using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) in the following subscales:

- Kindergarten: Phoneme Segmentation Fluency
- Grade One: Correct Letter Sounds and Whole Words Read
- Grade Two: Oral Reading Fluency

Grades Three-Five use Scholastic Reading Inventory at most sites and Measures of Academic Progress at one site.

Math scores are collected in grades three – five only, as there is no standardized, district-wide math assessment in grades kindergarten through second grade at this time. Most sites use Scholastic Math Inventory, and one site uses Measure of Academic Progress.

The social-behavioral objective is measured using the Walker-McConnell Scale. This instrument was designed to sample the two primary adjustment domains that usually are subsumed under the broad term of social competence – that is, adaptive behavior and interpersonal social competence. Adaptive behavior refers to the skills necessary to function independently in classroom instructional settings, and interpersonal social competence refers the skills necessary to maintain adequate social interactions and relationships with others. The Walker-McConnell scale consists of three subscales:

1) Teacher-Preferred Social Behavior, measuring peer-related social behavior that is highly valued or preferred by teachers.
2) Peer-Preferred Social Behavior, measuring peer-related behavior that is highly valued by peers.
3) School Adjustment Behavior, measuring adaptive social-behavioral competencies highly valued by teachers in classroom instruction contexts.

Attainment of the Stepping Stones 21st Century Community Learning Center’s academic objectives are variable for the 2013-2014 school year. Some sites at some grade levels showed that Stepping Stones participants outpaced their non-Stepping Stones peers in reading and math growth over the school year. Other site and grade levels did not.

All Stepping Stones 21st Century Community Learning Center sites showed that 80% or more of students attending regularly showed social-behavioral proficiency in social behavior and school adjustment behavior.

Recommendations

This evaluation could be strengthened with the additional of a standardized math assessment for grades K-2. As more schools move from Scholastic assessment products to MAP assessment products, additional comparisons will be made.

It appears that some sites may benefit from additional and/or more systematic training about how to use academic-based activities, to ensure that all Stepping Stones participants receive equivalent experiences across sites. This is especially important when sites have a turnover in staff members during the course of the school year.
Anecdotal Data

Parent surveys from the 2013-2014 school year collected information about parents’ perceptions of the Stepping Stones program. Responses were overwhelmingly positive. Open-ended comments about Stepping Stones provided information such as:

- My kids are happy and doing activities or their homework. They don’t want to leave when I come and get them.
- My favorite thing about Stepping Stones is that my kids get to experience different things.
- Stepping Stones has helped my child improve their reading skills.
- My favorite thing about Stepping Stones is the staff. They are patient and knowledgeable.
- My kids are cheerful and happy when they get picked up. They have a good balance of work and play.