

Abstract
Community Connections 21st Century Learning Center

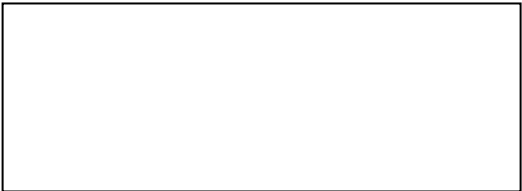
Community Connections 21st Century Learning Center (CC) is a partnership of the Allamakee Community School District (ACSD) and Upper Iowa University (UIU). CC will provide extended school day programming for three hours and summer based on student interests and to meet the needs of students with working families. These lead agencies work closely with more than 140 partners reviewing needs assessments from multiple data sources to combat the issue of (A)poverty and the relationship to the student achievement gap in reading/math, (B) at-risk behaviors, and (C) family literacy. Students in poverty do not have the experiential background knowledge that middle and upper income students have, resulting in slower rates of learning and comprehension. A senior citizen commented “We have many single parents who are working and raising kids alone. It is unrealistic to expect that they are functioning like the Beaver Cleaver family from the 1950’s.”

School sites participating are West Elementary grades K-2, East Elementary grades 3-6, and Waterville Elementary grades K-6. All three elementary schools qualify for and participate in school-wide Title I programming, as they have more than 40% of the students qualifying for free/reduced lunch. The non-public St. Patrick Elementary and home-schooled students will be served in the public school setting. **Free/reduced lunch**

Free/Reduced Rate	Elementary
62%	Waterville
53%	East
52%	West

rates have nearly doubled in ACSD in the past ten years, from 26% in 2001 to 49% district-wide this fall. These schools have a significant achievement gap between low socioeconomic (low-SES) students and non-low socioeconomic (non-SES) students in reading and math.

Student achievement gaps will be addressed through a Learning Menu composed of seven strands: 1) students join **homework assistance** groups based on student need supported by paraeducators for work completion, makeup, and corrections 2) students participate in **grade level re-teaching** and assistance provided by a certified teacher from the school day focusing on attainment of the Iowa Core Curriculum 3)students select **skills based/student centered guided learning** provided by a certified teacher to become proficient in reading and/or math, 4) groups of students self-select **inquiry based learning and STEM** academic enrichment clubs to support reading/math skills through hands-on activities such as cooking, woodworking, and science kits 5)students join **career readiness** clubs and activities such as chemistry club 6)students will join in **mentoring and service learning** programming that may include visiting the hospital/nursing homes 7)student will join in **wellness** activities to increase physical activity, improve health to facilitate learning, and the **USDA Snack and Summer Feeding Program**. The school day is designed to improve student learning and achievement, the extended day is designed to complement and supplement that work. **The learner is responsible for designing his/her learning.** The teacher guides those choices. The Student Learning Liaison (SLL) facilitates the implementation of those choices. We strive to keep projects **fun and creative**. Hence the importance of the **Learning Menu, to strengthen the connection to school day and focus on targeting individual student needs. UIU faculty/college students provide academic assistance and professional development. The activities balance concrete experiences involving materials, people, experiential learning trips, experiments, interviews, and creative writing with abstract concepts like lectures, diagrams, and formulas. The application of reading/math skills is imbedded into all of our enrichment activities.**

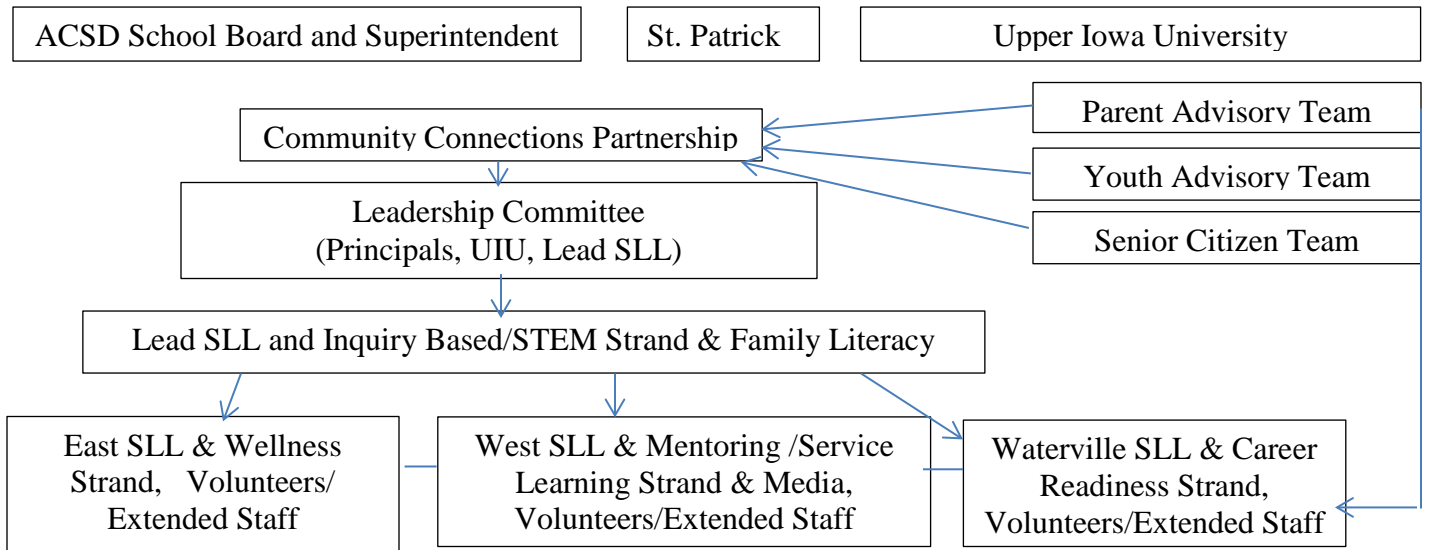


In our small rural community, we have learned that we can accomplish more by working together than separately. “A caring community committed to enhancing the lives of our families; providing skills through making healthy, positive choices; and promoting lifelong learning for all” is the common vision. **Community Connections cultivates relationships and invites new partners** as agencies and individuals. We will build on those connections and **expand opportunities and resources**. Our model will be to nurture the families to become strong partners and members of the various Advisory Teams. **“Ideas for change emerge from intergenerational dialogue and involve youth in the change process. Community conversations create and plan the project for change.” We respect families’ traditions, values, and voice.**

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<u>Student Need</u> Poverty and the relationship to student achievement gap	3.1 Goal	Close the achievement gaps in math/reading so all students are proficient.
	3.2 Activities	Learning Menu with 7 targeted learning strands, homework assistance, enrichment activities including chess club, book clubs, cooking programs,
	3.3 Objectives	Improve student achievement through hands-on experiential learning and increased adult/youth interactions, each presenting information to the other.
	3.4 Iowa Core Standards	Reading: Employ the full range of research-based comprehension strategies. Math: Use multiple strategies and approaches to solve problems.
	3.4 CSIP Goal	All students will achieve at high levels in reading and math, preparing for success beyond high school.
<u>Student Need</u> At-risk behaviors	3.1 Goal	Value themselves, engaged, and supported in their communities.
	3.2 Activities	Physical literacy clubs, music clubs, arts, change negative perception by dream clubs, theater, service-learning, leadership clubs, mentoring
	3.3 Objectives	Increase the positive youth developmental 40 assets, decrease risk factors
	3.4 Iowa Core Standards	Health Literacy: Describe the interrelations of the wellness dimensions: Physical, emotional, intellectual, environmental, and spiritual.
	3.4 CSIP Goal	Foster a safe and positive learning environment where learners can thrive.
<u>Student Need</u> Family Literacy	3.1 Goal	Increased engagement in education and children’s daily lives.
	3.2 Activities	Expanded school hours, parent nights, technology clubs, connect to education, student/parent education games together, family digital education
	3.3 Objectives	Families learn skills to increase their communication skills, build relationships, and increase career options with postsecondary education.
	3.4 Iowa Core Standards	Employability Skills: Demonstrate initiative, self-direction, creativity, and entrepreneurial thinking, exploring individual talents/skills to be successful.
	3.4 CSIP Goal	Develop 21 st century learners through digital education.

Community Connections Organizational and Leadership Structure



High involvement of all partners in **program design, implementation, and evaluation** insure community needs are being addressed. **Effective reading and math enrichment**, along with **youth freedom of choice and voice**, are priorities in **refining projects and activities**. Youth learn best when they are **mentally and physically active**. Students will benefit through the **language rich, stimulating environment of extended learning** by working in groups **led by caring adults**. **Individual and small group participation** will allow **youth to create, combine, reform materials and/or ideas or improve a skill**. **Senior citizens, college students and other volunteers** will develop relationships, such as mentor and supporting adult, for our youth in extended school day activities.

Student Need 2.1 Needs assessment:

Community Connections 21st Century Learning Center (CC) is a partnership of the Allamakee Community School District (ACSD), and Upper Iowa University (UIU). School sites participating are West Elementary with 210 students in grades K-2, East Elementary with 264 students in grades 3-6, and Waterville Elementary with 87 students in grades K-6. The non-public St. Patrick Elementary and home-schooled students will be served in the public school setting. These **lead agencies work closely with more than 140 partners** reviewing **needs assessments from multiple data sources** to combat the issue of (A) **poverty** and the relationship to the student achievement gap in reading/math, (B) **at-risk behaviors**, and (C) **family literacy**. Students in poverty do not have the experiential background knowledge that middle and upper income students have, resulting in slower rates of learning and comprehension. ACSD data shows a **significant achievement gap between low socioeconomic (low-SES) students and non-low socioeconomic (non-SES) students in reading and math**. A senior citizen commented “We have many single parents who are working and raising kids alone. It is unrealistic to expect that they are functioning like the Beaver Cleaver family from the 1950’s.”

(A) The evidence of poverty and the relationship to student achievement gaps Poverty is the unifying factor between the schools. In 2010 Allamakee County had a **per capita income of \$21,349** compared to the state average of \$25,335 (**US Census Bureau**). Iowa State University compiled data on poverty and food needs based on the US Census Bureau data in October 2011. **The poverty status of individuals by age: 36.2% of children under the age of 18 live below the poverty line, compared to 29.7% state.** The data supports that we have many working poor families. That report also highlighted health insurance. “The cost of obtaining health care services may require families, especially those lacking health insurance coverage, to make trade-offs between health care and food.” **It is estimated 12.3%-14.9% of persons under 65 years old in Allamakee County are uninsured, compared to 9.75-10.3% state average.**

Families Ratios of Income to Poverty 0-130% of threshold	Allamakee County	State of Iowa
All families	14.7%	10.9%
With children under 18	22.4%	17.5%
Single parent, no spouse present	54.3%	40.9%

The data supports that we have many working poor families. That report also highlighted health insurance. “The cost of obtaining health care services may require families, especially those lacking health insurance coverage, to make trade-offs between health care and food.”

Free/Reduced Rate	Elementary
62%	Waterville
53%	East
52%	West

Free/reduced lunch rates have nearly doubled in district wide in the past ten years, from 26% in 2001 to 49% this fall. All three elementary schools qualify for and participate in school-wide Title I programming, as they have more than 40% of the students qualifying for free/reduced lunch. The ACSD principals studied the **Iowa**

Department of Education Title I programs 2012 Iowa Assessments data. They looked at the percentage of students proficient in reading/math. The goal is that 100% of students be proficient in reading and math according to federal law No Child Left Behind. There is a significant achievement gap between low-SES and non-SES in reading/math. As evidenced by these charts, the **impact of poverty accumulates over the years, causing a nearly 20 point difference by sixth grade in reading and 30 points in math.**

SES=Socio Economic Status is determined by family income.
 Low-SES = family qualifies for federal free or reduced lunch.
 Non-SES= family does not qualify for federal free or reduced lunch.

Iowa Department of Education Title I Programs 2012 Iowa Assessments Percent Proficient				
Grade	Reading		Math	
	Low-SES	Non-SES	Low-SES	Non-SES
3	73.5	90	71.4	84
4	77.5	88	77.5	92
5	73.7	88.2	65.8	88.2
6	62.9	81.5	54.3	85.2

When we think in terms of letter grades a fuller picture develops. **Youth performing at high 81-92% are considered B-A students. Those in 54-77% range would be thought of as F-D students. Poverty should not determine grades, knowledge, or opportunity. We must close the achievement gap.**

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessments are administered in ACSD to students in grades K-2 to assess early literacy skills to provide school-based data to inform instruction. Students who are identified as low risk have met the benchmarks set for that particular assessment during that testing period. In a kindergarten class this fall, **70% of low-SES missed that benchmark, compared to 25% of the non-SES students.** It becomes increasingly difficult for struggling learners to “catch up” with their peers. The

principals studied grade patterns. When we compare the letter **grades of low-SES** students to their non-SES peers we find **they earn lower grades by 19%**. An elementary principal states “I see the disparity among the socioeconomic levels in our community increasing. Each year it is more difficult to close the achievement gap.”

*School Resources: **ACSD uses Title I** funds to for reading in grades K-6 at all centers including St. Patrick Elementary. Schools participate in the **USDA meal and snack programs** and the **USDA summer feeding** program. **Keystone AEA materials, resources, and professional development** will be utilized.

*Community Resources: **Robey Library** in Waukon has a summer reading program for elementary students. 90 students participated in that program in July 2012. Students **read on their own and report pages read**.

*Program Addresses Need: **Student achievement gaps will be addressed through a Learning Menu composed of seven strands:** 1)homework assistance groups 2)grade level re-teaching and assistance 3)skills based/student centered guided learning 4)inquiry based learning and STEM activities 5)career readiness, 6)mentoring and service learning and 7)wellness. Key to the success of integrating the extended school day with the school day staff includes: positive relationships, open communication, trust, on-going planning, and collaboration. **CC programming is based on student interests and needs within the 14 federal activities in this application for three hours of extended school day to meet the needs of students with working families. UIU faculty/college students provide academic assistance and professional development.**

B) The evidence of at-risk behaviors There are clear relationships between youth outcomes and their assets. The **Search Institute Survey (SIS)**, Minneapolis, MN, **Developmental Assets** are 40 commonsense, positive experiences and qualities that help influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible, successful adults. **Assets are the basic building blocks** of human development, such as family support, creative activities, integrity, and honesty. Because of its basis in youth development, resiliency, and prevention research and its proven effectiveness, the Developmental Assets framework has become one of the most widely used approach to positive youth development in the United States. The SIS concludes sixth grade

Allamakee County Search Institute Survey, 2011	
35%	Students spend 2 hours or more alone per day
34%	Perceive that adults in the community value youth
34%	Young people are given useful roles in the community
32%	Know how to plan ahead and make choices

students in our schools average about **22 out of 40 assets**. Many parents in our community **work one or two jobs** and must travel 30-60 miles to their employment. **79% of individuals commute alone** to work. (US Census Bureau 2010) The three hours for extended school day are to **accommodate the working parents, supervision, and safety** of youth to decrease at-risk behaviors.

*School Resources: ACSD has a .7 **guidance counselor** to serve all three elementary schools for academic and behavioral supports. **Keystone AEA staff** support IEP students and families and collaborate to promote success.

*Community Resources: Community activities provided by organizations include **4-H, Boy and Girl Scouts. Robey Library and local churches** provide safe places for youth to access support.

*Program Addresses Need: CC provides educational enrichment programming based on **student choice and academic need**, and the **needs of working families** which fall within the 14 federal activities listed in the application. The Learning Menu includes two strands to **build the developmental 40 assets**. Those strands are **career readiness and mentoring/service learning led by college students, senior citizens, community members, and certified teachers**. As we evaluate community resources, many services have been moved out of the county making it difficult for families of poverty to access services. Due to current weak economy, CC will **make referrals** to enable students and families of poverty to access mental health services in the schools.

C) The evidence of need for family literacy There is a need for increased parent engagement in their children’s education and daily lives. The SIS (2011) results for ACSD students revealed that **38% of youth** states **“Parents are actively involved in helping young people succeed in school”** and **34%** report **“A young person and his or her parent(s) communicate positively.”** A child will only spend 11% of his waking hours in school the remaining **89% is with family and others**. Adult family members of students participating in CC will **participate in educational services and activities appropriate for adults to advance the students academic achievement**. As a **response to interviews** from students, *“What helps you when something is hard to learn?”*, **only 26%** told about **getting adult help from either a teacher or a family member. Less than 9%** [4 out of 46 students interviewed] specifically **mentioned a parent helping them learn**. Research shows that a literate family tends to be stronger family, more likely to remain a wholesome unit. An overwhelming **99% of the completed 340 parent surveys** reported **support to a great extent or of some help for**

before/after school programming in the three school buildings. A parent stated, “Stop judging the parents and accept the reality of the situations that families are living in today.” Many parents do not believe a college education is affordable for their children because they have never had this experience for themselves, as reflected in the table below. The Waukon elementary school counselor states, “Career preparation is one of the core tenets of guidance programs. Preparation for the workplace begins the day a

2010 Allamakee Census Data 25/older	
13%	No high school diploma
47%	Have a high school diploma
13%	Have a college degree

preschooler enters school. Families are often unaware of the diverse postsecondary choices available, and how those choices are connected to career planning.” **The data reveals the need for targeting families in poverty with post-secondary information to motivate them and allow more choices.**

***School Resources:** ACSD has well attended **parent/teacher conferences** twice a year. It holds an annual **Title I parent meeting** with activities for parents to use with their young readers. It also provides guidance services.

***Community Resources:** **Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC)** is located across from the school and holds college and skill certification classes. **Keystone AEA** for family literacy materials.

***Program Addresses Needs:** CC provides **programming based on parent choice** which falls within the 14 federal activities listed in the application. Activities may include instruction on how to advance student academic achievement and training of the developmental 40 assets. **UIU faculty and students will model and encourage families in school beyond graduation.** Working families may easily participate in trainings **when they come for their children.**

2.2 Evidence of stakeholders identifying needs and developing the program:

Focus groups from 2009-2010 of both students and adults revealed, “**Ideas for change emerge from intergenerational dialogue and involve youth in the change process. Community conversations create and plan the project for change.**” This is a real, functional and efficient model for our rural community. This application reflects the input from more than **140 enthusiastic participants** in planning this program.

Youth, parents, senior citizens, school staff, and representatives from colleges, business, agencies and organizations met over coffee, lunch, in small and large groups to come to agreement that extended school day activities would be beneficial for youth in our community. They discussed what possibilities there were for people of all ages to be involved, as volunteers, or to donate time or materials, or meet to plan and develop the program. A minister commented, “**Poverty is the driver of so many things and there may be a more helpful way to approach our learning.**” **Upper Iowa University was invited to be a partner,** as school principals reported how pleased they are with the UIU teacher candidates. We have had some positive experiences with a UIU work study student who did individual and small group tutoring. **The UIU Dean said, “I am amazed and impressed at the relationships and planning process of this community. The youth were spontaneously presenting their opinions, senior citizens speaking, and the genuine interest of everyone in the room!”** **Senior citizens expressed a desire to become more involved.** Key individuals and agencies such as **faith-based, business owners, college representatives,** were involved by taking information to others. In our meetings we sensed the excitement in the room when **youth expressed their desires to the adults. A sixth grade boy reported, “I want to lead a science club. We will look at things through microscopes. We will study friction and gravity, or whatever the students want.” Youth met more than 14 hours to develop the program.** A survey was completed by youth, parents, teachers, and community. **The positive response was overwhelming as reflected in the table below. We respect a family’s traditions, values, and voice. A**

Support to a great extent or of some help for before/afterschool programming	
Youth	96%
Parents	99%
Teachers	100%
Community	100%

guidance counselor stated, “Many elementary students and their parents are unfamiliar with postsecondary education.” CC will emphasize preparation for college and career as a priority in family literacy. In addition CC partners met with others to talk about what an afterschool program would mean to the community as evidenced by **more than 140** partners attached in Memoranda of Understanding. **Other stakeholders met 110**

hours over 20 days to identify needs, research strategies, and developed a cohesive plan. CC coordinates and fills in the gaps for the working families between activities such as, **Waukon Park and Recreation, Scouts, Ecumenical groups** and extended school day. A **wide variety of stakeholders** were engaged in the **identification of needs and development** of the extended school day program.

Project 3.1 Program activities linked to student needs assessment: Our past experiences with afterschool focusing on tutoring and enrichment has been partially successful, but has not kept up with the changes in the needs of our children. The data from test scores and rising poverty demonstrates that we **need to serve more children, more often, in a learner specific academically targeted extended school day model.** We strive to keep projects **fun and creative.** Thus, we are **applying for a new grant rather than a continuation grant.**

A **Learning Menu composed of seven strands** is designed to reduce **achievement gaps** resulting from **poverty, at-risk behaviors, and the need for additional family literacy.** The Learning Menu is developed and implemented during the school day. The three hour extended school day is considered part of the school day beginning at dismissal times, with additional time for enrichment and summer. **This supplementing of education is a paradigm shift which has been planned very carefully so as not to supplant what already occurs in the school system.** The decisions the learner makes for the Learning Menu has implications for the extended school day. **The learner is responsible for designing his/her learning.** The teacher guides those choices. The Student Learning Liaison (SLL) facilitates the implementation of those choices.

A) Academic activities link to needs Refer below to *Figure 1: Achievement gaps resulting from poverty* leads us to the Learning Menu composed of **seven strands**: 1) students join **homework assistance** groups with a ratio of 1:15 based on student need supported by paraeducators for work completion, makeup, and corrections 2) students participate in **grade level re-teaching** and assistance with a ratio of 1:8 provided by a certified teacher from the school day focusing on attainment of the Iowa Core Curriculum 3)students select **skills based/student centered guided learning** with a ratio of 1:6 provided by a certified teacher to become proficient in reading and/or math, 4) groups of students self-select **inquiry based learning and STEM** academic enrichment clubs to support reading/math skills through hands-on activities with a ratio of 1:15 such as cooking, woodworking, and science kits 5)students join **career readiness** clubs and activities with a ratio of 1:15 such as chemistry club 6)students join in **mentoring and service learning** programming with a ratio of 1:15 that may include visiting the hospital/nursing homes 7)student join in **wellness** activities with a ratio of 1:20 to increase physical activity, improve health to facilitate learning, and the **USDA Snack and Summer Feeding Program.**

B) Enrichment activities link to needs Refer below to *Figure 1*: “I would really like to see about studying animals. Maybe to learn what someone knows about them—then let us see the animals.” said a fifth grade student. This is an example of a **student requesting enrichment activities.** **At-risk behaviors and the relation to the student achievement gap** will be addressed through the **seven strands.** Some examples are: a) students participating in **individual mentoring** with adults in the community, b) within **small groups** (3-8) choosing outdoors club learning math by distance, measurement and critical thinking skills; storytelling club students learn to read and speak; c) students join **homework assistance groups** of 10-15 based on student need supported by paraeducators for work completion, makeup, and corrections d) groups of students (10-15) **self-select academic enrichment clubs** for reading/math skills through hands-on activities include quilting, video creation, cooking e)build teamwork and civic engagement skills with adults in the community through leadership club, service-learning, and adventure-based. A federal project officer stated, “I continue to be impressed with the level of youth involvement that Community Connections has been able to achieve.”

C) Family literacy activities link to needs Refer below to *Figure 1: Family engagement in education, children’s daily lives and the relationship to student achievement gaps* will be addressed through the **seven strands.** Some examples are: a) **students participate in educational experiences with families,** a child/youth plays educational games on the computer with parent or focuses on math/reading education using verbal instruction and inquiry based learning. These **activities improve communication skills** and develop of the 40 assets, as **developmental needs of each child are considered** and **referrals** to other partner agencies are made.

3.2 Variety of high quality services within the 14 federal activities Refer below to the *Figure 1: CC includes a large variety of high quality academic, enrichment, and family literacy services within the 14 federal activities.* Youth learn best when they are **mentally and physically active.** Students will benefit through the **language rich, stimulating environment of extended learning** by working in groups **led by caring adults.** **Individual and small group participation** will allow **youth to create, combine, reform materials and/or ideas or improve a skill.** A first grader stated “I would like to learn how to read. Reading helps me think.” Program activities lead to **tangible products or performances that reflect ideas or designs of the youth** and provide **all youth opportunities to talk about or communicate what they are doing or thinking about to others.** They will participate in large motor fitness activities through dancing and in the fine arts through

painting and music. The **activities balance concrete experiences involving materials, people, experiential learning trips, experiments, interviews, and creative writing with abstract concepts** like lectures, diagrams, and formulas. **The application of reading/math skills is imbedded into all of our enrichment activities.** *Figure 1-Proposed academic, enrichment, and family literacy activities linked to the student needs assessment within the 14 eligible federal activities*

	7 Strands linked to Student Need	Variety of Services within the 14 eligible federal activities:
Learning Menu	<u>1)Homework Assistance:</u> <i>Needs assessment-Poverty</i> <i>Propose activity-Academic</i>	<u>Remedial Education & Academic Enrichment:</u> Build skills in reading/math, book clubs, online reading/math by paraeducators <u>Parent involvement:</u> Increase knowledge in reading/math
	<u>2)Grade level re-teaching:</u> <i>Needs assessment- Poverty</i> <i>Propose activity-Academic</i>	<u>Remedial Education & Academic Enrichment:</u> Build skills specific to grade level Iowa Core by certified school day staff, online reading/math, project and daily work completion
	<u>3)Skills based/student centered guided learning:</u> <i>Needs assessment- Poverty</i> <i>Proposed activity- Academic</i>	<u>Tutoring Services:</u> Apply reading/math skills and instruction by certified teachers including school day staff, Vocabulary Games <u>Parent Involvement:</u> Increase knowledge in reading/math, hands on games and lessons to practice skills, electronic flashcards,
	<u>4)Inquiry based & STEM activities:</u> <i>Needs assessment- Poverty</i> <i>Proposed activity- Enrichment</i>	<u>Math & Science (STEM):</u> chess & conservation club, lego engineering, cooking, VAST science kits, student led programs <u>Technology:</u> virtual field trips, videos, webcasts, Skype, blogs, <u>Arts & Music:</u> photography, theater club, painting, artistic clubs,
	<u>5)Career readiness:</u> <i>Needs assessment- Family literacy</i> <i>Proposed activity- Family literacy</i>	<u>Entrepreneurial Education:</u> Set goals, make decisions, and develop teamwork through real-world interest groups, Career Club, Business Partners with Youth, Experiences in the Future
	<u>6)Mentoring & service learning:</u> <i>Needs assessment- At risk behavior</i> <i>Proposed activity- Family literacy</i>	<u>Character Education:</u> Student Advisory Team, mentor activities, field trips to local business, hospital, nursing homes, food shelf <u>Expanded Library Hours:</u> Child/adult interest project, e-books
	<u>7)Wellness:</u> <i>Needs assessment- At risk behavior</i> <i>Proposed activity-Enrichment</i>	<u>Physical Literacy:</u> Group games, walking clubs, dance club <u>Drug & Violence:</u> Fitness fun, cooking, student led activities <u>Counseling:</u> Comprehensive counseling, Referrals to agencies

3.3 Measurable goals and objectives for activities: **Figure 2 below reflects the connection between our student needs, our activities to meet the needs, the goals and objectives for those activities, and those connections to the Iowa Core Curriculum and the district’s Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP).** It is the goal of ACSD that every child becomes proficient in reading and math. **The evaluation alignment with the goals and objectives is reflected in Figure 7.** The school day is designed to improve student learning and achievement, the extended day is designed to complement and supplement that work.

Hence the importance of the **Learning Menu is to strengthen the connection to school day and focus on targeting individual student needs.** We want to collect data to validate what helps kids learn. In a recent interview a sixth grade student said “It’s hard for me to learn when we are beginning something new. It helps me to make a song about it like ‘6 and 8 went on a date and then came back as 48’.” For that student, the innovative and fun strategy for learning will be measured and evaluated. The Quantitative and Qualitative **Program Evaluators gather data to measure success meeting the goals for the three student need areas.** The data will reflect if we are making gains to **close the achievement gaps in reading/math and increasing academic focused engagement between parents and children.**



3.4 Linkages and relationships with school-day instruction and staff: The ACSD Comprehensive School Improvement (CSIP) achievement goal is all students will achieve at **high levels in reading/math**, preparing for success beyond high school. This has led us to a **shared purpose and a new model for student learning.** School staff guide student planning for their Learning Menu. It is shared and implemented during the extended day program. Each student will have a **Learning Menu portfolio.** Each week, during a guided planning time during the school day, students will review the progress made on the 7 strands. This will **occur during the**

school day and the extended school day. Each strand will **vary based on student interest and need.** Each student is required to work on each strand. The **school day staff and extended day staff will approve** the student planning and completion of a strand. All SLLs have **offices in the schools allowing numerous daily contacts** with students and teachers, access to all student records, and inclusion in district **in-services, staff and student meetings.** Many school day staff, including teachers and paraeducators work in the extended school day program. Classroom teachers provide professional development for the extended day staff to **link the curriculum/Iowa Core (IC) into the extended school day.** School day staff is responsible for the development of three strands and the SLLs will be responsible for the other four strands. SLLs collaborate with the teachers to learn what skills the students are missing then create an extended day club to meet that deficit in fun, hands on, and creative way. **Figure 2 below reflects how our activities and objectives align with the IC standards and CSIP goals.** Only a few IC standards are reflected, however **many standards will be addressed.** CC has evolved over the past 14 years. As a result there is a **high level of shared trust, leadership, ownership for student learning, and communication** with the community and **UIU faculty and students.** Time and attention is required as all are accountable in this process and everyone is vested.

Figure 2-Student Needs Assessment Linked to Goals and Activities

<u>Student Need</u> Poverty and the relationship to student achievement gap	3.1 Goal	Close the achievement gaps in math/reading so all students are proficient.
	3.2 Activities	Learning Menu with 7 targeted learning strands, homework assistance, enrichment activities including chess club, book clubs, cooking programs,
	3.3 Objectives	Improve student achievement through hands-on experiential learning and increased adult/youth interactions, each presenting information to the other.
	3.4 Iowa Core Standards	Reading: Employ the full range of research-based comprehension strategies. Math: Use multiple strategies and approaches to solve problems.
	3.4 CSIP Goal	All students will achieve at high levels in reading and math, preparing for success beyond high school.
<u>Student Need</u> At-risk behaviors	3.1 Goal	Value themselves, engaged, and supported in their communities.
	3.2 Activities	Physical literacy clubs, music clubs, arts, change negative perception by dream clubs, theater, service-learning, leadership clubs, mentoring
	3.3 Objectives	Increase the positive youth developmental 40 assets, decrease risk factors
	3.4 Iowa Core Standards	Health Literacy: Describe the interrelations of the wellness dimensions: Physical, emotional, intellectual, environmental, and spiritual.
	3.4 CSIP Goal	Foster a safe and positive learning environment where learners can thrive.
<u>Student Need</u> Family Literacy	3.1 Goal	Increased engagement in education and children’s daily lives.
	3.2 Activities	Expanded school hours, parent nights, technology clubs, connect to education, student/parent education games together, family digital education
	3.3 Objectives	Families learn skills to increase their communication skills, build relationships, and increase career options with postsecondary education.
	3.4 Iowa Core Standards	Employability Skills: Demonstrate initiative, self-direction, creativity, and entrepreneurial thinking, exploring individual talents/skills to be successful.
	3.4 CSIP Goal	Develop 21 st century learners through digital education.

3.5 Extensive experience in providing educational and enrichment activities that complement and enhance the academic performance, achievement, and positive youth development: Since 1998, CC has purposefully focused on a commitment to discover our communities’ capacities and assets instead of focusing on the negative aspects of poverty in our community. This program is built upon **people committed to investing themselves including talent, time, and resources, regardless of income** along with the generous **resources and support of our community.** This collaboration has helped us build an afterschool program and develop family activities. This has resulted in several successful grant opportunities to provide educational and enrichment activities afterschool in Allamakee County. ACSD and CC has administrated: **2001-2004 21st Century Learning Center program \$1.5 M** funded by US Dept. Of Education, **Safe Schools Healthy Students \$2.8 M** funded by the US Department of Education, **2008-2012 Reducing Alcohol Abuse grant \$1.3M** funded by US Department of Education and other **21st Century Learning Centers** funded by Iowa Department of Education. CC synergy takes it to the next level to address the achievement gap.

Research Base 4. CC program activities were chosen from scientifically based research that provides evidence that the program/activity will help students become proficient in reading and math:

The proposed activities to address (A) poverty and the relationship to the student achievement gap in math and reading, (B) at-risk behaviors, and (C) family literacy are based on the research below. The importance of providing scientifically based programming is clarified by **Gene Maeroff**, “Readiness to learn from the perspective of older children has not only to do with cognitive and physical development but also with **creating a support system that will enable children to be free to focus on learning**. By encompassing more aspects of the lives of these children, schools can give them a better chance at succeeding. It may also involve **keeping schools open and accessible** to children and their families during evening or early morning hours so they have **safe, quiet places to study** and have **access to athletic facilities, recreational activities, computers, libraries, tutoring, and other resources**. This can provide poor children with a full range of support so they can develop a **sense of connectedness or belonging with their schools and can concentrate on learning and being students.**” This is confirmed by our own students. A sixth grade boy said, “I like the quiet place to do homework at afterschool.” Most parents, regardless of their socio-economic status, love their children and want them to succeed. (McGee 1996)

Figure 3-Multiple sources of research supporting proposed activities.

	Menu linked to Student Need	Research supports the activities in reading and math
Learning Menu	<u>1)Homework Assistance:</u> <i>Needs assessment-Poverty</i> <i>Propose activity-Academic</i>	(Slavin 1998) Children of poverty generally achieve at lower levels than children of middle and upper classes. A good education is often the only means of breaking the cycle of poverty for children.
	<u>2)Grade level re-teaching & assistance:</u> <i>Needs assessment- Poverty</i> <i>Propose activity-Academic</i>	(Becker Reading First) In a typical hour the average child in a welfare home will hear 616 words , working class 1251 words and professional 2153 words . (NREL) We will be “ creating a rich alternative to the learning experiences that students experience in schools”
	<u>3)Skills based/student centered guided learning:</u> <i>Needs assessment- Poverty</i> <i>Proposed activity- Academic</i>	(Borman and Dowling 2006) It need not repeat classroom instruction, but can use different methods to support and reinforce what students learn in school . Student engagement in school is correlated with improved academic outcomes .
	<u>4)Inquiry based & STEM activities:</u> <i>Needs assessment- Poverty</i> <i>Proposed activity- Enrichment</i>	(Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris 2004) Student choice, cooperative learning experiences, and hands-on and real-world activities, as well as supportive relationships between staff and students, have been linked to student engagement, persistence with learning activities, and connection to the school .
	<u>5)Career readiness:</u> <i>Needs assessment- Family literacy</i> <i>Proposed activity- Family literacy</i>	(Payne 1996) It is important to respect a family’s traditions and values , yet to continue to teach all community members the importance of a strong education . The relationships that will motivate them to learn need to be established.
	<u>6)Mentoring & service learning:</u> <i>Needs assessment- At risk behavior</i> <i>Proposed activity- Family literacy</i>	(Search Institute 2011) The Search Institute Survey is research-based framework that identifies basic building blocks of human development for the 40 developmental assets . The results are compelling, the more assets kids have, the better .
	<u>7)Wellness:</u> <i>Needs assessment- At risk behavior</i> <i>Proposed activity-Enrichment</i>	(Maeroff, 1998) Because it is known that perceptions and emotions contribute to learning, brain research provides rich possibilities for education. This may include developing a support network with community partners by offering or referring students and families to community programs that meet health, social and recreational needs .

Please refer to **Figure 1** in the Project Section for a **description of specific activities/services** in each learning strand that are **linked to student need and the research base**, thus building effectiveness.

Management Plan 5.1 Effective Staffing:

***Aligns Closely with School Day Instruction:** Academic and enrichment activities are aligned with the Iowa Core, the school curriculum, and the seven strands of the Learning Menu. Each Student Learning Liaison (SLL), including Lead, in collaboration with school day staff, is responsible for developing a variety of activities and professional development for their Learning Strand. This **integrated staff model** is a significant change, with each SLL managing a site and learning strand through all sites. Many school day staff (**teachers, paraeducators**) are employed by the program. **Family literacy and parent engagement is increased through the coordination between school day staff and CC staff.** It is **frequent and structured** through **regular communication** via **email, face-to-face, or phone** and through **daily contact with the school principal, teachers, parents, and youth to monitor student success.** Our model of successful communication has been recognized nationally by Lead SLL webinar presentation, “*How to Work with School Administrators.*”

***Strong Program Leadership:** The Lead SLL, Barb Winters, has gained support for the extended school day programs through her strong personal relationships and access to resources. One of her unique attributes is the way she **works in the program afterschool** and supports her staff. The strength of relationships with **direct contact with students and staff** is the basis for program success. She has **presented at conferences/webinars** on afterschool programs at the state and national level. Her commitment is demonstrated by her large donation to open an account with the Allamakee Foundation for After School Programming. Barb is certified in the following skill areas: Family Outreach Worker; Olweus Bullying; Partnering With Parents; Families And Schools Together; Strengthening Families; and Families In Action. As a result, Barb **has trained staff, families, and community** and is responsible for the **family literacy component.** She has **managed numerous federal grants** and has **highly effective documentation and procedures to comply with auditing measures.**

***Recruits and Retains Highly Qualified Staff:** CC hires **numerous staff positions for bridging the achievement gap.** The **CC staff advocate** for the **interests of youth, academic needs, and families.** Background checks are required, as all staff are **school district employees** or volunteers. **Senior citizens, college students and other volunteers** will develop relationships, such as mentor and supporting adult, for our youth in extended school day activities. Staff typically stay over 10 years with CC and know our families well.

Figure 4-Highly Qualified Staff

Position	Qualifications and Summary of Position
Lead Student Learning Liaison and primary source for Inquiry Based /STEM Strand & Family Literacy (all sites) (50% of full time position for 12 months)	Degree in relevant area, and experience. Responsible for administration, student contact, implementation of Learning Menu, and learning strand.
SLL Mentoring/Service Learning (all sites) & Media (all sites) & West Elementary Site (full-time for 12 months)	Meets the educational requirements of paraeducator or degrees in relevant areas, and experience. Responsible for building coordination, learning strand, and media.
SLL Wellness (all sites) & East Elementary Site (82% of full-time for 11 months)	Meets the educational requirements of paraeducator or degrees in relevant areas, and experience. Responsible for building coordination and learning strand.
SLL Career Readiness(all sites) & Waterville (63% of full-time for 11 months)	Meets the educational requirements of paraeducator or degrees in relevant areas, and experience. Responsible for building coordination, learning strand, plan summer
Technology and Budget Coordinator (11 hrs. per week for 12 months)	Meets educational requirements, and experience. Responsible for website, budget, and state reports.
Homework Assistance: School year (7hrsx170daysx\$10)	Paraeducators supporting a group of students for reading/math remediation and homework completion.
Grade Level Re-teaching & Assistance or Skills Based/Student Centered Guided Learning (6.5hrsx110daysx\$17) Summer(14hrsx20daysx\$17)	Certified teachers responsible for re-teaching Iowa Core or for individualized instruction in the content areas of reading and math.
Learning Menu Leaders: School year (6.5hrsx170daysx\$15) Summer (9hrsx20daysx\$15)	Expertise to lead and develop activities for youth in the seven strands in fun and interesting clubs.
Learning Menu Assistants: School year (8hrsx170 daysx\$10) Summer (15hrsx20daysx\$10)	Assisting Learning Menu Leaders in activities to reduce the student adult ratio by engaging youth.

***Personally invite Volunteers, especially Senior Citizens to Support High Quality Programming:** Upper Iowa University is a partner in this extended school day initiative. It is with their involvement and engagement that we are assured to provide high quality programming with knowledgeable, skilled, and motivated college-aged volunteers. Their interest in becoming educators adds a level of excitement and diligence to the program. Senior citizens volunteer to serve in many capacities including: sharing their previous professional abilities, service learning, literacy activities, math, science enrichment, and to accompany students on extended learning trips. This diverse group will join the many community members, business people, volunteers, parents and youth, to lead academic enrichment activities. CC targets persons at the margins of communities and recognize their capacities and gifts. Persons of all ages are valued and feel well-connected to people in our schools, families, and community.

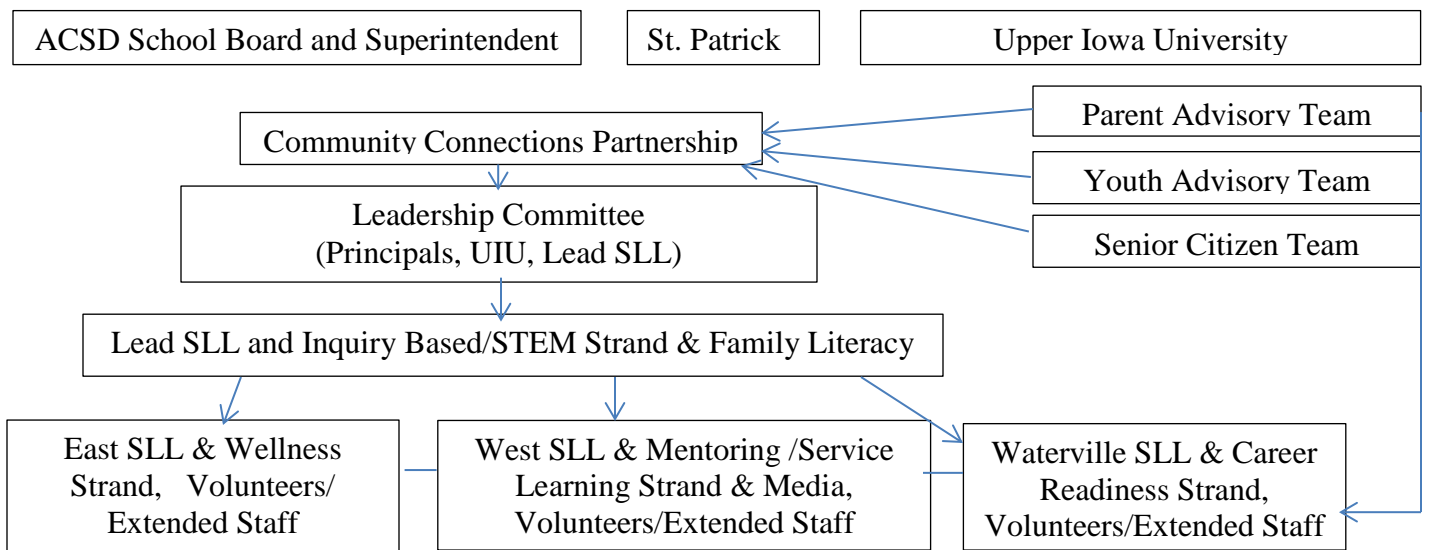
***Provides Quality Professional Development:** Quality professional development for staff, stakeholders, families, and communities is the key to the success in CC’s extended school day programming. The needs of the community drive the action plan. The Lead SLL reviews the data, identifies needs, and then works with the CC Partnership and Leadership Team to determine the appropriate presenters and topics to meet that need. Professional development is aligned to train full and part time extended day staff, volunteers, parents, and community in activities to address closing the academic achievement gap. These trainings occur during the school day or evenings as people are available to attend. One of our strategies is to bring in as many individuals, both paid and volunteer, from diverse sectors and economic and cultural groups to attend professional development. Some presenters may also provide training for students. “The afterschool program endeavors to retain these valued personnel by providing training through workshops and conferences” according to Judy Caplan. (Third Party Reviewer, US Dept. of Education 2006)

5.2 Plan for student transportation to and from the program: CC has no need to transport ACSD students to or from programming because students attend in their local schools. However, St. Patrick Elementary students will be transported to ACSD schools at no charge to the grant. Student safety is thoroughly and effectively provided for by the following provisions: 1)Parents/guardians give specific written instruction as to how their student is permitted to travel home; 2)Parents indicate whether their child may walk home, sign him/herself out or ride home with someone other than a parent; 3)If there is any deviation from this plan, a student must present written permission or a telephone call from the parent to the SLL.

***Student access:** Students with disabilities may attend the extended day program and their academic needs are met through the individualized Learning Menu, much like their school day individualized educational plan (IEP). All sites are ADA compliant and handicap accessible. In addition, all program facilities are fully inclusive of adults and youth and include translation services when needed.

5.3 Organizational and/or Program Leadership structure: The lead members for this application are ACSD and Upper Iowa University. St. Patrick’s students are also invited to attend at the public schools. CC is unique based on the large number of actively involved stakeholders which comprise our leadership structure. This structure has been named the CC Partnership. We strive to make everyone comfortable to express their view.

Figure 5-Community Connections Organizational and Leadership Structure



1. ACSD School Board and Superintendent, Upper Iowa University- It is the role of our school board and superintendent to **guide and support** an effective school program through **strong fiscal management**. Upper Iowa University will provide **guidance, student volunteers, and experience** for their college students.

2. Community Connections Partnership- These are the over **140 stakeholders committed to a common vision and shared goals**. The CC Partnership **brings together the whole community with school districts** for efficient use of resources and curriculum to include more opportunities. They will **meet four times per year**.

3. Leadership Committee- This committee is composed of the **building principals**, a representative from **UIU, Lead SLL and Partnership stakeholders**. They will **meet monthly in person or via teleconference**.

4. Lead Student Learning Liaison (SLL)- Responsible for hiring and **administration of all program components**, as well as engaging CC Partnership and families in meaningful ways for **sustainability**. She **works in the extended day program** and is **available each day** to address needs as they arise.

5. School site SLL, Staff, Volunteers, and UIU college students - Program staff at each center will include a **Student Learning Liaison** responsible for organizing programming and staff composed of **tutors, homework assistants, academic enrichment leaders and activities**. Paraeducators are hired as **homework assistants** and may also lead academic enrichment activities. Hired staff members have a wide range of relevant experience.

6. Youth Advisory Team- Each building has a youth team which gives insight into programming, **Youth Voice and Choice**. They also are **representatives to the CC Partnership**. Students' opinions are often the best. By **listening to them**, we encourage their **ownership** in the program and a **sense of belonging** to CC.

7. Parent Advisory Team- Each building has a parent team which gives **insight into programming** for students and for **their own needs**. They also are **representatives to the CC Partnership**. We **personally invite them** to give their opinions and **build their capacity** to support their student's education in their own way.

8. Senior Citizen Advisory Team- Senior citizens **give insight** and have representation **to the CC Partnership**.

5.4 Continuous program improvement: Youth, family, and community development principles guide ongoing program improvement. Youth and parents, along with partners **assess the effectiveness of activities and goals on an annual basis**, often at parent-teacher conferences. Data from their ideas, concerns, and opinions are **collected throughout the life of the project**. Emerging needs are addressed in professional development delivered to all partners. **High involvement** of all partners in **program design, implementation, and evaluation** ensure community needs are being addressed. **Effective reading and math enrichment**, along with **youth freedom of choice and voice**, are priorities in **refining projects and activities**. The goals and objectives are reflected through program, trainings, curriculum, and activities. Data continues to be compared to baseline data from the **Iowa Youth Survey, Search Institute Report, and school district data**.

***Program sustainability by combining and coordinating resources:** CC Partnership and Leadership Committee members continuously work on program sustainability through a **shared vision** in planning for increasing financial capacity. One permanent sustainability component is the **Allamakee Foundation for After School Programming**. Money donated to this endowment will provide dollars for programming **beyond the life of this grant**. This foundation is attractive to donors because of the **501.c3 tax incentive**. Capacity building occurs **with intentional and effective family and community outreach and advocacy**. We strive not to duplicate services but to **coordinate access** to those services. We have created a **resource guide of every business, church, organization, and group** in Allamakee County which is accessed and utilized by the program. It is the role of the **Data Collector, Technology/Budget Coordinator and SLL Media** to **educate and communicate with stakeholders** in an effort to **build program sustainability**. Partners **contribute to program resources, either monetarily, through donated program supplies, or volunteering time and expertise to help students achieve academic growth and master new skills**. The schools provide: facilities, custodial hours, equipment and electric/water so that our programming may occur at each school site. We **access and make efficient use of all of the funding available through ACSD** which at this time include **Title I and USDA federal food programs including summer feeding**. We coordinate and **provide a space for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, collaborate with the Waukon Wellness Center, and Robey Memorial Library summer reading**. The benefits from these **collective relationships will continue** after the life of the grant. CC partners will **combine and coordinate all relevant federal, state, and local programs**, assist with grant preparation, mentor new partners, and build positive relationships with students and staff as evidenced in our **Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with over 140 partners donating more than \$48,000 to program resources demonstrate our program is taking advantage of the multiple resources in the community**.

Communication Plan 6. Outreach strategies or activities to be employed to share evaluation/program

information: CC values communication among individuals, families, and groups. The SLL responsible for media focuses our work, to cultivate relationships and understanding through one-on-one and small group conversations. This is extremely important with our low-SES families. Personal contact with all stakeholders, including legislators, on a regular basis informs them of our successes, challenges, evaluation data, and needs. We encourage legislators and partners to visit our programs, so they will keep extended school day programs on the forefront of needed resource allocation. We have previously compiled hard bound data books and look forward to using this strategy, as this has been successful with legislators and other partners. One state senator stated, “He loved this book for it was easy to find on his bookshelf.” Another example is the series of six posters of student data that were placed in waiting rooms of clinics and coffee break rooms at businesses that aroused interest, dialogues and expectation for the next poster or series. CC provides information in a variety of methods regarding the location within the school buildings for our extended school day programs in a manner that is clear and understandable to our families and community.

Figure 6-Community Connections Communications And Evaluation Dissemination Plan

Community Connections Communication and Evaluation Dissemination Plan			
Outreach Strategy	Target Audience	Frequency	Impact on program
Presentations of annual report	School boards, PTA groups, Partnership members	Annual	Communicate progress towards goals and develop ownership
Website, Facebook	Broader community	On-going	Communicate vision and successes
Radio interviews and PSAs	Communities, parents, youth	Monthly	Raise awareness of community needs and resources
Newspaper articles	Communities, parents, youth	Monthly	Raise awareness of community needs and resources
Site newsletters	School youth and parents	Monthly	Invite to participation in program and develop ownership
Information flyers, community bulletin boards, and brochures	Laundromats, businesses, foodshelf, post office, library, clinics, hospitals,	On-going	Involve broader, diverse community into program inform families, such as when single parent does laundry
Data/information posters	Business coffee break rooms, beauty shops, and waiting rooms for clinics	On-going	Spark interest as people are intrigued and want more information and dialogue with each other
Church bulletin inserts	Faith-based community	Monthly	Encourage contributions and dialogue
Pennants and bookmarks	School parents and youth	Annually	Communicate and educate of developmental 40 assets information
Table tents	Restaurants and taverns patrons and broader community	On-going	Communicate and educate of developmental 40 assets information
Powerpoint presentations	Small group meetings of all ages: Lions Club, PEO	On-going	Encourage contributions as a program resource
Hardbound data books	Legislators, partners	Bi-annual	Create program sustainability
One-on-one conversations	Parents, youth, and community	On-going	Develop program ownership and refinement

The students, parents, and community members communicate information collected through interviews and conversations on ways to address student achievement gap. Information about students’ perceptions regarding what is hard to learn, how they try to overcome learning challenges, what they want to learn, what they have learned recently, what they expect to learn in the future, and what they enjoy doing is communicated to school day and extended day staff, as well as the community in an effort to strengthen the program. **Effective two-way communication is valued. Open-ended questions are often a great basis for communication.** As shown in the figure above, we expect an extensive impact by using such a large variety of methods.

Partnerships 7.1 Meaningful partnerships and their impactful role in programming and sustainability:

The CC Partnership has been a successful working group for over ten years, bringing together representatives from business, schools, youth, parents, faith-based, senior citizens, colleges, organizations, agencies, and local government. In our small rural community, we have learned that we can accomplish more by working together than separately. **“A caring community committed to enhancing the lives of our families; providing skills through making healthy, positive choices; and promoting lifelong learning for all”** is the common vision. The Iowa Afterschool Alliance (IAA) and the Iowa Department of Education expressed this best in their report from November 2011 after visiting one of CC’s programs, **“With the Partnership serving as their advisory board, they often have anywhere from 40-100 people show up at their meetings and have maintained a strong relationship with their community partners. In this community, partnerships are necessary-there are so few community resources that competition is impossible; all partners must rather work cooperatively to ensure all needs are met.** There are still too few resources in Allamakee County, and the Partnership has made program sustainability a priority.”

The Partnership has been involved in all of the successful grant and school bond referendums in our community. An example is the ACSO construction of a new high school that was merged with building a Northeast Iowa Community College satellite center and the Waukon Wellness Center. The combination of funds through grants, city, county, and bond referendum can only occur when there are developed, trusting relationships among various stakeholders. A federal project office stated, “I continue to be impressed with the level of youth involvement that Community Connections has been able to achieve.

Efforts to link community resources to state-level resources and learning supports is an excellent mechanism to sustain many of the gains made in the community by Community Connections as well as share the results with the broader community and state. As always, please pass along to your staff and partners my appreciation for all of their hard work and dedication on behalf of the young people and families in your community.” As we prepared for this grant we met with many individuals and groups multiple times. For example, parents, students, and teachers were surveyed about the need for an extended learning day and expressed an overwhelmingly positive response to move forward with planning. A series of meetings were arranged and interviews were held with individuals and groups of students. Meetings were held with St. Patrick’s school staff to clarify their involvement and program needs.

School staff met at each site **to commit** to their involvement to address needs.

Youth met in student councils, and in classrooms, to **define what they need** for afterschool support and activities. A group of school, youth, parents, community members, and senior citizens met over lunch and brainstormed how to talk about this opportunity with their peers, how the program structure should be defined, and what program activities were important. Each of those partners then met with their own peer group. Community members went back to their businesses and groups to dialogue about the need for afterschool for youth and the commitments they could make; college faculty and students met to discuss their involvement; and senior citizens met in their own groups at exercise classes, church groups, coffee clubs to talk about their involvement. As our story suggests successful partnerships are what enable us to accomplish so much, though we are small, isolated communities. We meet, we discuss, and then we ask “what can I do, what can my co-workers do, what can my friends do, what can my community do.” We make those commitments in writing for volunteering for programming, donating materials and supplies, donating of time or talent, joining the advisory teams, donating space, or donating money. **All are valued and accepted.** Successful implementation of CC is expected because it reflects the **desires of over 140 partners** in the Memoranda of Understanding. The table below is only a sampling of these commitments for programming and sustainability.



Programming	Dr. Behrends, UIU	A. Hanson, senior citizen	B. Christoffer, community member
Materials/Supplies	C. Triggs, parent	M. Goodman, business	S. Adam, teacher
Time/Talent	K. Hay, AEA	T. Siegenthaler, banker	E. Walleser, senior citizen
Advisory	E. McQuade, student	G. Vandervelden, pastor	J. Blong, senior citizen
Space	Robey Library	Farmers&Merchants Bank	Northeast Iowa Community College
Cash Donations	N. Sullivan, parent	S. Houg, Insurance Agency	L. Stegen, teacher

7.2 Plan for meaningfully engaging and maintaining all partners while recruiting new partners:

***Plan for Recruiting New Partners: Community Connections cultivates relationships and invites new partners** as agencies and individuals. **Upper Iowa University is a new member** of the Partnership this year and a lead partner in this application. We want to develop a partnership with other colleges in the area. The Lead SLL **personally invites all partners**, new and old, to attend partnership meetings. She explains the purpose of the meeting and how it involves them. The Student Learning Liaisons talk to partners about what they can offer. Then the **families and partners are given meaningful jobs**. This is an ever-expanding partnership that has grown dramatically due to its success. The ACSD superintendent often states, "Success breeds success!" The churches are broadening the scope of work that they are willing to do. For instance, Robey Memorial Library and Retired Senior Volunteers joined the Partnership in the past 12 months. It becomes a habit for partners to become heavily involved.

What is measured is given more value by the mere focus of being measured. The **Collaboration Rating Scale** is a tool used to evaluate the levels of collaboration among members of the CC Partnership since 2004. CC utilizes this rating scale every 1-3 years to monitor growth and plan for partners' next steps. The tool describes **five levels of collaboration**: networking, alliance, partnership, coalition, and collaboration. Within each of these levels the rating scale has a purpose, structure, and process.

Youth through adults become rapidly committed to involvement in the collaboration. We **build momentum and interest** due to the fact that stakeholders learn from each other. One example of the effectiveness was this comment shared at a partnership meeting, "I have been waiting to talk to you about..." By using this process we create and develop a plan for maintaining relationships with partners and recruiting new partners. Perhaps Judy Caplan, says it best, "The greatest strength of CC depends on the ability of its partners to be both stable and fluid."

***Maintaining Relationships:** CC takes extra measures to develop and maintain partnership relationships with parents. CC staff are often the "front-line" of communication with parents as partners. CC staff strives to **know parents and share the daily happenings** specific to their child. As they greet the parents, they share how he/she did today and where they are now and what they are doing. The SLLs are the caring adults to **nurture and maintain the relationships with the parent**. This is critical for the family literacy component to be successful. SLL's personally invite parents to join the **Parent Advisory Team**. Parents are nurtured in a small group at their own comfort level and then supported to get information to the larger partnership either in person or by report. We use a similar process to involve the students in the **Youth Advisory Team** as well as senior citizens on the **Senior Citizen Advisory Team**. When these three groups of people first start working with us, they can often be intimidated by the people with more education.

Targeted processes are in place to work with our families of poverty. We **work very purposefully with colleges and business owners to form more meaningful collaborations**. For example, a local bank contributes a cash donation and attends the partnership meetings. We provide an avenue to work with the students and/or families on financial literacy. We will build on those connections and **expand opportunities and resources**. Again, our model will be to nurture the families to become strong partners and members of the various Advisory Teams. This is an established structure that has worked. Barriers such as time schedules are overcome. We recognize and work with local, state, and federal legislators to educate them about the effectiveness of our project. This has a powerful impact on program activities, commitment of our partners, and efforts to sustain and maintain relationships. Proof of our successful strategies was expressed by Judy Caplan, in her on-site visit: "I have seen many successful afterschool programs, but none with the amount of passion as your staff, students, families, and community demonstrate."

Our/My Group Name _____
Group selected for this Ranking _____
Current Level of Collaboration
1 2 3 4 5 Key words/phrases that describe current relationship _____
Desired Level of Collaboration
1 2 3 4 5 Key words/phrases that describe desired relationship _____



Evaluation 8.1 Experienced evaluators:

Dr. James Veale will serve as the principal and quantitative evaluator. He will conduct all statistical analyses. He received his **doctorate in statistics in 1972 from Iowa State University**; served academia, the private sector, and government; **published several journal articles** in statistics, measurement, and research in education and health; **authored numerous government reports** on research and evaluation in education and health; is a statistical/research consultant and educator in Des Moines; **conducts surveys, research, and evaluations for state and local programs**; and provides statistical consultation to private researchers and health. **Dr. Veale has been evaluator for previous Community Connection grants and for the Iowa Department of Education.**

Ms. Jan Mitchell will serve as the qualitative evaluator. She received her M.A. in education in 1968 from University of Northern Colorado; taught communications at Marshalltown High School 1974-2002; National Board Certification 1999; Distinguished Service Award Iowa Council of Teachers of English Language Arts 2000; **contributing author *Powerful Teaching: Developmental Assets in Curriculum and Instruction Search Institute 2003***; has been a program evaluator for Mid-Iowa Community Workshops, Grinnell College Teachers Project, and Fort Dodge High School Reviewer of Action Plan Improvements. **Ms. Mitchell has been the qualitative evaluator for previous Community Connection grants.**

Dr. Veale and Ms. Mitchell are **active participants in program development, improvement, and sustainability** for CC 21st Century Learning Centers. They **attend the CC Partnership meetings**. They attend physically or via telephone the Leadership Committee meetings and staff meetings. **These evaluators have the capacity and experience to conduct a very comprehensive and rigorous evaluation for the schools and the Iowa Department of Education. All requested data and program information will be provided to the state.**

A **position unique to our program**, but critical for the success of program evaluation is that of Data Collector. **The Data Collector works with the evaluators as a liaison within the school and community, under the direction of Dr. James Veale and Ms. Jan Mitchell. S/he works with the school principals to collect data from Iowa Assessments, student attendance, Search Institute results, surveys, etc. S/he will help to conduct interviews and focus groups. Participant confidentiality will be done in a system by coding of all participants responses to ensure input and output anonymity of information and written consent will be required of all program participants.**

8.2 Evaluation reports will be used and communicated to the public in a form and language that is easily understood: CC is a model for the state of Iowa in the areas of **using evaluation to refine, improve, and strengthen the program to build community support.** The webinar on the 2012 21st Century Learning Centers wiki was given by the project director and evaluators as an **example of best practices** in the state. **The best practices site visit report** in November 2011 observed, **“Evaluation is a very strong aspect of the Allamakee 21CCLC program. They have both qualitative and quantitative third party evaluators that provide feedback on the goals outlined in the grant. Going above and beyond the basic evaluation, they evaluate all aspects of the program, including community partnerships to ensure that the services offered are meeting the goals of the program.”** CC plans to **continue this practice.**

Evaluation results are reported annually to the CC Partnership, focusing on student academic progress and increasing in the developmental 40 assets. The results are **reported to the School Board, published in the newspapers, and posted on the CC Website.** Data over time is collected, evaluated, and **compiled into a bound document that is shared with legislators, stakeholders, and others as a part of our social marketing and sustainability efforts.**

We also **report the data to our community through the work of SLL Media and others.** It is her job to **compile the data into useful documents, as pamphlets, as a flyer or a table tent, and then share that information with a targeted public.** This will be in **restaurants or in business employee break rooms.** We want to communicate our evaluation information with our communities.

We use evaluation to strengthen the program and build community support. Input from students and parents are used to **assess the level of customer support and satisfaction.** **Focus groups, interviews, or surveys** will be the primary mechanism for gathering this type of data. **Ratings of collaboration among partners**, as compared with current and desired ratings also provides data to improve and strengthen collaboration among these program partners. This leads to discussions and addressing of future needs and plans.

External evaluators will enable continuous improvement in programming and build support from all partners and participants. For example, we will review achievement gap data and revise strategies within the program. Thus, the program revisions may include more tutoring or homework assistance or different types (i.e. more STEM) of experiential opportunities.

CC evaluation procedures, listed in Figure 7 below, are clearly and strongly aligned with the project goals, objectives, and program activities: detailed plan, including timelines and strategies.

Figure 7-Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation Alignment with Goals, Objectives, and Activities

1)Student Need	Close the achievement gap in reading, and math so all students are proficient.
CC Activities and Strategies	Tutoring, homework assistance, Enrichment: chess club, book clubs, cooking programs, lego engineering club, Federal snack program, STEM activities, and student led enrichment
Goals and Objectives	85% of students attending 30 or more times will make one year’s growth in reading and math as measured by the Iowa Assessments.
Quantitative Indicators	Annual Iowa Tests NSS results Reading, Mathematics; Iowa Tests Student Growth Charts, Student attendance; Teacher Survey
Qualitative Indicators	Annual student interviews, focus groups, and/or surveys
Timeline	June 1 – May 31 for annual information
2)Student Need	Value themselves and be engaged and supported in their communities.
CC Activities and Strategies	Physical literacy clubs, music clubs, arts, theater, service-learning, leadership clubs,
Goals and Objectives	Increase by 10% the positive youth developmental 40 assets in sixth grade
Quantitative Indicators	Bi-annual Search Institute Survey; office referral data; teacher survey; Collaboration Rating Scale
Qualitative Indicators	Annual student and partner interviews, focus groups, and/or surveys; Collaboration Rating Scale
Timeline	June 1 - May 31 for annual information, 2013 & 2015 SIS
3)Student Need	Increased engagement in education and children’s daily lives.
CC Activities and Strategies	Extended school hours, parent nights, technology clubs, connect to education, communication/vision of expected outcomes,
Goals and Objectives	Families learn skills to increase their communication skills, build relationships, and increase career options with postsecondary education.
Quantitative Indicators	Bi-annual Search Institute Survey (SIS)
Qualitative Indicators	Annual parent interviews, focus groups, and/or surveys
Timeline	June 1 - May 31 for annual information, 2013 & 2015 SIS

The success of the Learning Menu consisting of the seven learning strands supported by the extended school day program along with family involvement will be assessed. The above **quantitative and qualitative data will be reviewed** and used to refine the program and build family and community support. Family literacy, parent engagement in education and in their children’s daily lives is expected to reduce the student achievement gap. This premise will be evaluated through the gathering of data. This process of **continuous improvement** provides the venue for change. The goals and objectives will be focused upon through program data collection. As we know, whatever we focus on will be strengthened as we evaluate progress and **make data-based decisions** for the future. The community’s input brings **additional substantial support because they are involved** in the process. **The CC detailed evaluation plan is organized to assess and strengthen the program to meet and overcome the needs of (1)poverty and the relationships to the student achievement gap in math and reading, (2) at-risk behaviors, and (3) family literacy.**

Budget Narrative 9.1 The basis for cost estimates is described in extensive and concise detail:

Schools in this project qualify for **applying for \$299,850** based on **at least 230 students** attending three hours extended school day for 170 days at **\$7.50 per student**, and **at least 33 students in the summer at \$10.00** per student. **Our experience with other afterschool programming confirms that this is a realistic expectation** and attendance will vary based on time of year and family commitments. In fact, we expect even **more than 230 students are likely to attend afterschool as the program becomes an established extension** of the school day. West has 210 students in grades K-2. East has 264 students in grades 3-6. Waterville has 87 students in grades K-6. St. Patrick has 123 in grades K-6. **Please refer to Budget Form D2 per each school site for specific dollar amounts in each category. As you will see, Family Literacy is reflected in personnel, materials, professional development, and evaluation.** Major expenditures are itemized below and **align with proposed activities.** Personnel are the largest percentage of total budget requests. Some expenses are shared between sites. CC will participate in the **USDA snack and summer feeding programs.**

***Personnel: Costs are justified, necessary, reasonable, and align with proposed activities** refer to Figure 1 for types of specific activities

Staffing linked to learner menu responsibilities	Annual	14 Eligible Federal Activity Alignment
Lead Student Learner Liaison and Inquiry Based/STEM Strand & Family Literacy Lead all sites (50% of full-time for 12 months)	\$25,740	Math & Science (STEM), Technology, Arts & Music
SLL Mentoring/Service Learning (all sites) & Media (all sites) & West Elementary Site (full-time for 12 months)	\$34,695	Character Education/Expanded Library Hours
SLL Wellness (all sites) & East Elementary Site (82% of full-time for 11 months)	\$26,021	Physical Literacy, Drug & Violence, Counseling
SLL Career Readiness(all sites) & Waterville (63% of full-time for 11 months)	\$20,016	Entrepreneurial Education
Technology & Budget Coordinator (11 hrs. per week for 12 months)	\$9,541	Technology Assistance and Quicken Entries
Homework Assistance: School year (7hrsx170days x\$10)	\$11,900	Remedial Education & Academic Enrichment: remediation and homework
Grade level re-teaching & assistance or Skills based/student centered guided learning Leaders Certified Teachers: School year(6.5hrs. x (110daysx\$17)/Summer (14hrs.x20daysx\$17)	\$16,915	Tutoring Services/Remedial Education & Academic Enrichment: reading/math skill building and Parent Involvement
Learning Menu Leaders: School year (6.5hrsx 170daysx\$15) Summer (9hrs.x20daysx\$15)	\$19,275	Academic Enrichment: leaders in the reading/math, chess, cooking, STEM
Learning Menu Assistants: School year (8hrsx170daysx\$10)Summer (15hrsx20daysx\$10)	\$16,600	Academic Enrichment: assisting in above activities

***Staff travel: \$2,250** for year 1 for the **SLL's to attend meetings, less than 1%.** The **Lead SLL** works very closely with national, state, and local entities. These include: monthly best practice webinars, serving on state committees including monitoring and evaluation, quality program and services, **outreach and communication** with local initiatives. **Staff travel costs are justified, necessary, reasonable, and align with proposed activities.** If we travel out of state we 1) obtain approval and 2) fill out an out of state travel request. When we travel for professional development we will share new ideas with local staff and parents during planned times.

***Materials:** CC is very **purposeful in selecting and purchasing materials for \$17,184 less than 6% of the budget for year 1 and less following years.** When CC staff attends a conference, they may learn/practice with hands-on activities that fit the needs of the youth in their school site. CC then **purchases those materials for the enrichment clubs to meet that specific need** thus making sustainability much easier as these are re-usable items. Start-up costs for computers in year one will be moved to personnel in years 2 and 3. **Material costs are justified, necessary, reasonable, and align with proposed activities.**

***Professional development costs are justified as necessary, reasonable and costs align with activities.** No less than 5% recommended, we have **5.1% of the total \$15,315 budgeted for training, staff development, and technical assistance. Professional development will help our staff to better serve children.**

PD Activity	Activity Description	Annual
Beyond School Hours	Conference for staff professional development/programming	\$6,000
21st Century Summer Inst.	Lead SLL and SLL	\$3,000
State meetings	Lead SLL and SLL	\$1,500
On-site trainings include:	Inquiry Based Learning/STEM/Digital Education for parents/partners	\$2,000
Certified teachers provide training for CC staff	Teachers instruct CC staff in the Iowa Core standards for reading/math into all academic enrichment.	\$2,815

***Student Access, Transportation:** CC has **no need to transport ACSD students to or from programming because students attend in their local school. However, St. Patrick Elementary students will be transported to ACSD at no charge to the grant.** Due to our isolation and poverty, we are budgeting **\$8,000 for transportation costs to academic enrichment locales. This is less than 3% of the total budget, less than the maximum 8% allowed.** Some funds moved into personnel years 2 and 3 for additional youth in program.

***Reserved funds for evaluation:** **No less than 4% recommended, we have 4.2% budgeted \$12,732** includes positions, purchase of the Search Survey, and Data Collector benefits.

This team of evaluators will collect data that will assess and refine this program based on the impact of the extended school day activities. **CC works closely with Iowa DE on evaluation.**

CC Evaluation Position	Annual Total
Quantitative Evaluator (subcontract)	\$2,760
Travel	\$525
Qualitative Evaluator (subcontract)	\$2,760
Travel	\$525
Data Collector (5.5hrsx52weeksx\$16.68)	\$4,771

***Administration/Indirect Costs: \$5000** has been allocated for ACSD expenses to off-set some payroll and auditing expenses. This is **less than 2% of the total budget and less than the maximum of 8% allowed.**

Other administrative costs or in-direct costs are in-kind from ACSD.

***Family Literacy:** Funds are allocated in personnel, materials, professional development, and evaluation.

9.2 Requested funds will supplement, rather than supplant, existing funding:

ACSD will use the CC program funding to provide extended school day activities to supplement school day and Title I instruction. CC determines that **these fiscal expenditures supplement** because the activities are **not required** by the state, local, or federal law. **State or local funds are have never been used to pay for the targeted, individualized extended day programming with the Learning Menu composed of 7 strands directed by the learner.** Students join 1) **homework assistance** groups based on student need supported by paraeducators for work completion, makeup, and corrections 2) students participate in **grade level re-teaching** and assistance provided by a certified teacher from the school day focusing on attainment of the Iowa Core Curriculum 3) student select **skills based/student centered guided learning** provided by a certified teacher to become proficient in reading and/or math, 4) groups of students self-select **inquiry based learning and STEM** academic enrichment clubs to support reading/math skills through hands-on activities such as cooking, woodworking, and science kits 5) students join **career readiness** clubs and activities such as chemistry club 6) students will join in **mentoring and service learning** programming that may include visiting the hospital/nursing homes 7) student will join in **wellness** activities to increase physical activity and improve health to facilitate learning. The Learning Menu is **not implemented in schools** that do not receive Title funds and thus are not being funded with state or local dollars. These activities will be predominantly fun, hands-on enrichment activities. Family literacy activities will be built around the Learning Menu.

Students need to attend the extended school day 60 hours per month in order to make significant improvement and narrow the achievement gap. This is our long-range goal. However, we are very cognizant of our working families and are glad to accommodate many students attending extended school day 30 times or more throughout the school year. Today **we have from 52-62% of our elementary youth qualifying for free/reduced lunch** with an upward trend of poverty. **We need to provide extended school day for more students more often. A life in poverty should not define a person, nor eliminate opportunity for success.**