

# 21st Century (ExPLORES After School Program) Grantee Evaluation Report (Due- January 30, 2026)

Sept 5 - Dec. 21, 2025

Rantoul City SD 137

\*submitted via email 1/26/2026

## I. **Grantee:** Rantoul City SD 137 (Cohort 22)

### **3-Sites:**

- Eastlawn Elementary School,
- Northview Elementary School,
- Pleasant Acres Elementary School

## II. **Overview and History of Program**

Brief Abstract: The proposed After-School program: Rantoul EXPLORES (**EX**periential **P**laying and **L**earning **O**f **R**antoul **E**lementary **S**tudents) will provide 300 at risk K-5 students at Eastlawn, Northview and Pleasant Acres Schools with a safe place to participate in fun, educational, hands-on experiences that reinforce their learning while increasing their understanding and appreciation of others. The goal of the Rantoul EXPLORES Program is to provide opportunities for our students to participate in out-of-school time programming that emphasizes academically enriching activities that foster academic and social youth development in a safe and secure environment. Partnerships such as Safety Training with our local Police Department (Bike Safety, Stranger Danger, etc..), and Exploring the Natural World through the local Park District, will expand our capacity to provide a variety of sessions for students. The afterschool program will operate 147 days per year, Monday through Friday from 2:30 pm-5:30 pm. Students/families in the program will not be charged for participation and transportation will be provided free of cost. Light meals will be provided once a week in addition to family engagement activities.

### **Goals & Changes:**

**Goal 1:** Students who attend the **ExPLORES** program for 75% or more of the sessions, will increase their school attendance by 10% by the end of the year.

**Goal 2:** Students who attend at least 80% of a Literacy session will increase their reading by 5% as measured by the Fastbridge assessment

**Goal 3:** Students who attend the **ExPLORES** program for 75% or more of the sessions will meet grade-level expectations on Next Generation Science

Standards by the end of the year as indicated on their Standards Based Report card.

**Goal 4:** 80% of students who attend the **ExPLORES** program for 75% or more of the sessions will improve their perception about school by 10 points as measured by a pre and post perception survey given at the beginning and the end of session.

**Adjustments:**

The district has restructured its elementary schools from all K-5 buildings to two K-2 buildings (Northview, Pleasant Acres) and one 3-5 building (Eastlawn)

III. **Evaluation Methods**

**Evaluator:** Jennifer Frerichs, Retired Administrator  
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**Guided Evaluation:**

**Goal 1: Objective:** Schools will show an increase in student attendance

Measurement Tool: Skyward attendance reports

Timeline: Sept 2025 - May 2026

**Goal 2: Objective:** Schools will improve student achievement in core academic areas

Measurement Tool: Fastbridge Word Segmenting (K-2), Fastbridge CBM Reading Assessment (3-5). Pre and post data collected each session.

Timeline: (Oct. 26, Jan 19, March 22, May 17)

**Goal 3: Objective:** Schools will improve student achievement in core academic areas

Measurement Tool: Standards Based Report Card; Collected annually

Timeline: June 2026

**Goal 4: Objective:** Schools will see an increase in the social-emotional skills of their students

Measurement Tool: student self-reflection survey; data collected weekly and summarized at the end of each session.

Timeline: (Oct. 26, Jan 19, March 22, May 17)

**Logic Model:**

Proposed Activities & Services	Research Proven - Evidence-based Practice	Identified Program Goal Achieved with Activity or Service	Supports CCR, alignment to II Learning Standards, etc...
<p><b>Hiring of RCS Teachers, Teaching Assistants</b></p>	<p>Understand curriculum used during the school day. Expanding the sense of community Trained in: * Conscious Discipline Strategies * Instructional strategies * ESL Strategies * Equity and * Culturally Relevant / Culturally Responsive strategies</p>	<p>Goal 1, 2, 3,4</p>	<p>Provides highly qualified staff for enrichment classes</p>
<p><b>Hands-On Enrichment opportunities in academic, social emotional, arts, and recreation</b></p> <p>(Academic enrichment learning programs, Literacy education programs and tutoring services that are aligned with the challenging state academic standards and any local academic standards, including financial literacy programs and environmental literacy programs; • Programs that</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Promotes critical thinking and problem solving</li> <li>* Self-selection of classes builds interest and student self-confidence</li> <li>* Creates connections to the school day</li> <li>* Promotes cross-curricular activities</li> <li>* Makes learning more meaningful, valuable &amp; rewarding</li> <li>* Increases engagement</li> <li>* Increases retention of information</li> <li>* Increases technology-based learning</li> </ul>	<p>Goal 1, 2, 3,4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Supports all College and Career Readiness Skills and Illinois Learning Standards.</li> <li>* Reinforces academic content from the school day and exposes students to new content.</li> <li>* Requires students to utilize higher order skills through application of knowledge across content areas.</li> </ul>

support a healthy and active lifestyle, including nutritional education and regular, structured physical activity programs; Programs that provide after-school activities for students who are English Learners that emphasize language skills and academic achievement)			
<b>Family Events with light refreshments</b> (Parenting skills programs that promote parental involvement, family engagement, and family literacy)	*Increases student achievement *Improves grades, test scores and attendance *Improves self-esteem and behavior	Goal 1, 2, 3,4	Supports academic achievement and Social emotional standards
<b>Community Volunteers &amp; Partnerships</b>	* Creates community building among schools and community *Provides positive role models *Improves students self-esteem *Improves program quality and more efficient use of resources	Goal 1, 2, 4	*Supports College and Career Ready / 21st Century Skills through exposure to other careers *Supports social emotional learning standards through successful experiences with other adults

**III. Program Implementation**

A. Students Served: Recruitment and Retention

Recruitment and Retention process: Flyers home to all parents about ExPLORES every six weeks, Facebook postings about ExPLORES, Emails to staff members to discuss ExPLORES with their students. Post successes of the program, including Parent Nights at the end of each 6 week session, on Facebook (videos of programs, etc), All of these modes of communication need to specify deadlines for the upcoming sessions. Build an engaging program that students WANT to join and participate in!

**Criteria/Process:** We will encourage all students to attend but will specifically target our identified student groups. Students will be prioritized based on academic, programmatic and demographic information. If the number of students exceeds the number of spaces available, the site coordinator will utilize the following criteria to select the students most at-risk.

Criteria:

1. First focus is on grades 3-5
2. Then create a list of students with low attendance
3. Identify targeted student groups based on each school's School Improvement Plan
  - a. Pleasant Acres: English Learners
  - b. Northview: Students with IEP's
  - c. Eastlawn: English Learners

**Student Enrollment by Site:** (Program start date: Sept 5 - Dec. 21, 2025)

Fall Enrollment by Site: 2025-2026

Site Name: Eastlawn	2025-2026
Total Unduplicated Enrollment	146
a) Number of students attending less than 15 hours	6
b) Number of students attending 16-45 hours	33
c) Number of students attending 46-90 hours	43
d) Number of students attending 91-180 hours	64
e) Number of students attending 181-270 hours	0
f) Number of students attending 271 + hours	0

Site Name: Northview	2025-2026
Total Unduplicated Enrollment	113
a) Number of students attending less than 15 hours	1
b) Number of students attending 16-45 hours	12
c) Number of students attending 46-90 hours	29
d) Number of students attending 91-180 hours	71

e) Number of students attending 181-270 hours	0
f) Number of students attending 271 + hours	0

Site Name: Pleasant Acres	<b>2025-2026</b>
Total Unduplicated Enrollment	115
a) Number of students attending less than 15 hours	5
b) Number of students attending 16-45 hours	17
c) Number of students attending 46-90 hours	29
d) Number of students attending 91-180 hours	64
e) Number of students attending 181-270 hours	0
f) Number of students attending 271 + hours	0

Site Name: Eastlawn	<b>Fall FY 26</b>
Overall Average Daily Attendance	97.5
a) ADA for Summer Program	0
b) ADA for Afterschool Program	97.5
c) ADA for Before school Program	0
d) ADA for weekend/holiday Program	0

Site Name: Northview	<b>Fall FY 26</b>
Overall Average Daily Attendance	90
e) ADA for Summer Program	0
f) ADA for Afterschool Program	90
g) ADA for Before school Program	0
h) ADA for weekend/holiday Program	0

Site Name: Pleasant Acres	<b>Fall FY 26</b>
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Overall Average Daily Attendance	89
i) ADA for Summer Program	0
j) ADA for Afterschool Program	89
k) ADA for Before school Program	0
l) ADA for weekend/holiday Program	0

**Family Participation:**

Eastlawn

Family Activities Sept. 5 - Dec. 21	# of family members attending	% Participation
Session 1 Family Showcase Date: Oct. 31- Bingo Night	6 families/92 students	94%
Session 2 Family Showcase Date: Jan. 16 SLIME Day	32 families/97 students	99%
Session 3 Family Showcase Date:	TBD	
Session 4 Family Showcase Date:	TBD	

Northview

Family Activities Sept. 5 - Dec. 21	# of family members attending	% Participation
Session 1 Family Showcase date: Oct. 30	38 family members/72 students	80%
Session 2 Family Showcase Date:	27 family members/78 students	86.6%
Session 3 Family Showcase Date:	TBD	
Session 4 Family Showcase Date:	TBD	

Pleasant Acres

Family Activities Sept. 5 - Dec. 21	# of family members attending	% Participation
Session 1 Family Showcase Date:	51 adults/66 students	66%
Session 2 Family Showcase Date:	TBD	
Session 3 Family Showcase Date:	TBD	
Session 4 Family Showcase Date:	TBD	

### IIIB. Program Operations

Hours: 2:30 pm - 5:30 pm daily

Site Name: Eastlawn, Northview & Pleasant Acres	FY 26
Total number of weeks site is open	36 weeks
Typical number of days per week	5 days per week
Typical number of hours per week	15 hours per week

#### Staffing:

All staff are hired for 1 hour or two hour sessions 2-5 days per week for each six week session. This means there are not any “full or part time” employees as the staffing changes with each session. The staff to student ratio is 1:20 for non-teaching workshops (games room, homework help), 1:15 for teaching workshops (STEAM, flags, guitar) and 1:4 for Literacy tutoring. Staffing includes Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Volunteers and High School Students. We have become popular enough that we now have more staff and volunteers interested in participating. Most individuals are interested in teaching workshops.

#### Staff Training:

	Topic	Duration	# of staff Attending	Provider
Required for all staff (annually prior to starting)	Child Abuse and Neglect	20 minutes	All staff	Infinitec

	Mandatory DCFS training			
Required for all staff (first day of each session)	ExPLORES Staff Handbook Review	10 minutes	All staff	Building Coordinator
Required for all staff	Weekly staff meetings	10 minutes	All staff	Building Coordinator
Required for all staff (annually prior to starting)	Asthma & Diabetes Training	10 minutes	All staff	Infinitec
Required for all staff (annually prior to starting)	Setting Up a Positive Learning Environment	20 minutes	All staff	Online PD Portal designed for Explores
Required for all staff (annually prior to starting)	Building Relationships	20 minutes	All staff	Online PD Portal designed for Explores
Required for all staff (annually prior to starting)	Behavior Management	20 minutes	All staff	Online PD Portal designed for Explores

## Program Governance

### Leadership Team:

Jackie Huntley- Districtwide Program Coordinator/Director

Kelly Mahoney: Principal, Northview

Samantha Bean: Northview Building Site Coordinator

Samantha Sebestik: Principal, Pleasant Acres

Kris Martin: Pleasant Acres Site Coordinator

Rebecca Ramey: Principal, Eastlawn

Site Coordinators: Eastlawn, Meriolys Ramirez, Emily Stratton

Scott Woods: Superintendent

Jennifer Frerichs- Program Evaluator

## IV. Progress toward Objectives

Objective #1: Participants in the program will demonstrate increased academic achievement.

Activities: STEAM workshops, Literacy Sessions

Assessments: Illinois Science Assessment, Fastbridge literacy data

Data Collection: Science: annually; literacy data: pre/post data collection per session

Analysis: The schools saw a dramatic increase in the ISA assessment with the significant increase in a focus on hands on STEAM activities. Most schools have doubled or tripled the percentage of students that scored Proficient or Exemplary over the past three years. Northview dropped their score in Science overall this year so this will be an area of discussion at our quarterly meetings. The Fastbridge scores demonstrated another session of increased student achievement.

	<b>Illinois Science Assessment (+, -)</b>	<b>Fastbridge (+/-)</b>
Eastlawn	2021: 11.5 Proficient 2022: 14.8 Proficient 2023: 25 Proficient + 6.3 Exemplary 2025: 12.5 Proficient	32 students tutored; 23 students improved (72%); 5 students were absent for 2nd assessment; 4 students did not improve
Northview	2021: 31 Proficient 2022: 33.3 Proficient + 6.7 Exemplary (40) 2023: 10.3 Proficient + 12.8 Exemplary (23.1) 2025: 12.5 Proficient	16 students tutored 14 students improved (88%); 1 student was absent, 1 student dropped.
Pleasant Acres	2021: 5.9 Proficient 2022: 17.9 Proficient 2023: 19.6 Proficient + 8.7 Exemplary 2025: 18.2 Proficient	8 students tutored 100% of students improved 15 students tutored; 14/15 students improved; 1 dropped.

Objective #2: Participants will demonstrate an increased involvement in school activities and will have opportunities in other subject areas such as technology, arts, music, theater, and sports and other recreation activities.

Activities: Sisters in Science Club, Sessions: Art sessions, Painting, Pottery, Solar System, Basketball, Thematic Art, Cheerleading, Dance/Flags, Cooking, Music Club, STEAM/Tech/Coding, etc..

Assessments: Student schedules

Data Collection: Weekly for each session

Analysis: Each program offers a variety of sessions that provide students with opportunities that they typically would not experience. Surveys are provided to allow students to provide feedback regarding sessions they enjoy and sessions that they would like each program to offer.

	<b>Student Surveys</b>
Eastlawn	100 % of students attending session 1 attended at least two sessions in “other” subject areas.
Northview	100 % of students attending session 1 attended at least two sessions in “other” subject areas.
Pleasant Acres	100 % of students attending session 1 attended at least two sessions in “other” subject areas.

**Objective #3:** Participants in the program will demonstrate social benefits and exhibit positive behavioral changes.

**Activities:** Social Emotional Sessions, Collaborative Sessions, Hands-On Sessions, Expectations established for behavior

**Assessments:** Student surveys, Family Survey

**Data Collection:** daily, weekly, end of program

**Analysis:** Perception data demonstrated that students were feeling positive about the afterschool program, the sessions and themselves based on weekly data collection. Students who attended sessions had a survey with a maximum number of 10, being the highest positive responses. The majority of students scored 8-10. Students' attendance improved with the students' desire to participate in their “fun” sessions after school.

	<b>Student Surveys</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Eastlawn	90% of students who attended the afterschool sessions 80% or more indicated that their perception of school was improved.	100% of parents strongly believe that their child’s participation in afterschool improved the child’s attendance.
Northview	91% of students who attended the afterschool sessions 80% or more indicated that their perception of school was improved.	96% of parents strongly believe that their child’s participation in afterschool improved the child’s attendance.
Pleasant Acres	100% of students who	100% of parents strongly

	attended the afterschool sessions 90% or more indicated that their perception of school was improved.	believe that their child's participation in afterschool improved the child's attendance.
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Objective #4: The 21st CCLC programs will provide opportunities for the community to be involved and will increase family involvement of the participating children.

Activities: Student work/talent Showcase sessions,

Assessments: following each session

Data Collection: Adult surveys

Analysis: Initial responses regarding afterschool were hesitant of concerns of students being tired if they stayed afterschool however, over time the responses changed to high praise regarding the activities, motivation and excitement by the students, and the opportunities for families to participate.

	<b>Adult Surveys</b>
Eastlawn	100 % of family members that returned the survey scored the program a 4/4 . 100% of family members that returned the survey scored their child's perception/enjoyment of the program at 4/4 with many giving a score of 5/4.
Northview	100% of family members that returned the survey scored the program a 4/4. 100% of family members that returned the survey scored their child's perception/enjoyment of the program at 4/4
Pleasant Acres	97.25% of family members that returned the survey scored the program a 4/4 ; 2.5% scored the program 3/4 as "good".

Objective #5: Programs will provide opportunities, with priority given to all students who are lowest performing and in the greatest need of academic assistance.

Activities: Process in place to ensure highest priority students are selected first

Assessments: Demographic data

Data Collection: prior to each session registration

Analysis: The schools continue to have more students interested in attending than spaces available. The schools are using their rubric processes and it has allowed for a fair method of selection.

	<b>Demographic Data</b>
Eastlawn	100% free lunch
Northview	100% free lunch
Pleasant Acres	100% free lunch

Objective #6: Professional development will be offered by the programs and ISBE to meet the needs of the program, staff, and students.

Activities: Asthma & Diabetes Training, Setting Up a Positive Learning Environment, Building Relationships, Behavior Management, Child Abuse and Neglect Mandatory DCFS training, Evacuation and Intruder training

Assessments: Workshop List, sign in sheets, staff surveys

Data Collection: following each session

Analysis: Regular professional development is provided for staff covering important regulatory topics as well as classroom management strategies and positive relationship building. Staff are paid for additional time to complete training before they begin teaching and each one completes a quiz and exit survey to demonstrate their knowledge. Staff are able to complete surveys on their own time which allows for flexibility.

	<b>Staff Surveys</b>
Eastlawn	100% completed with most staff stating that the PD was somewhat helpful (1%) or very helpful (99%) and neutral (0%)
Northview	100% completed with most staff stating that the PD was somewhat helpful (22 %) or very helpful (72%), and neutral (6%)
Pleasant Acres	100% completed with most staff stating that the PD was somewhat helpful (35%) or very helpful (65%)

Objective#7: Projects will create sustainability plans to continue the programs beyond the federal funding period.

**Strategies for sustainability:**

Rantoul City SD 137 has utilized multiple funding sources to ensure quality programming. RCS uses local funds for transportation, United Way funding for snacks, storage equipment, and a program secretary, ISU provides tutoring for each program, an After School State grant provides additional staff, and the Community Partnership grant provides additional staff and materials. New partnerships and expanding community support will benefit the program in the future.

**Partner List:**

- Anita Purvis Nature Center: Does a presentation for the students attending the afterschool program highlighting the Nature Preserve and the animals, flora and fauna.

**Changes to Partners:**

None

**Addition of Partner:**

None

**Other Objectives/Findings:**

None

**V. Overall Recommendations, Action Plans, and Tracking Improvements**

Summary of Progress:

Objectives: RCS is moving in the right direction with their objectives. They appear to be achieving the goals of the program- both state and local.

Strengths: The high interest sessions are providing each program with a waiting list of students that want to attend. This makes the afterschool program a “privilege” and students’ behavior and attitudes are much improved in order to maintain their spot in the program. Parents are participating in the end of session programs and the community sees the photos of the amazing activities that are happening.

Strengths: This program seems to not only be well received by the students and families but also with staff. The programs have been able to keep all programs staffed and have had more staff than needed each session.

Comments from families:

Eastlawn: My daughter definitely love ExPLORES, she cries if she has to miss a day.

I like and appreciate this program, kids have fun and are learning great things, school should be like this too.

Comments from staff:

**Program Strengths:**

Eastlawn: Builds community, help kids that struggle, allows teachers and other community members to establish good rapport/relationship with other students, allows for interactive activities that are interesting for kids, gives students opportunities to talk, interact and share with other students that are not on their grade level (very important )

Northview: Giving students a great outlet to develop friendships while learning a new and fun activity

Pleasant Acres: I would say we provide a safe and and supportive environment by allowing the kids to express themselves but be mindful of others as well. I would say we are very inclusive and adaptable when it comes to students with different needs.

**Ideas for Strengthening program:**

Eastlawn: Sustain these classes over time and continue providing students with consistent opportunities to explore and discover their passions and interests, while intentionally developing discipline, creative thinking, and a healthy competitive spirit.

Northview: Consistency

Pleasant Acres: To strengthen the program, we could implement a Peer Leadership Initiative. Students who have excelled in specialized tracks—like Engineering or Cheering—could take on 'Junior Mentor' roles. This would give them a deeper sense of responsibility and ensure that the skills learned in the Team Work Class are applied directly to the younger students.

**Recommendations:**

Continue the work that is being done as it appears to be a beneficial and appreciated program. Review staff, family and student feedback and consider a program council or team that could assist in gathering and addressing feedback. Continue to recruit community members to join the program and participate in the schools as part of the sustainability of the program as grant funding ends.

**VI. Dissemination of Evaluation**

The evaluation will be shared with the Leadership team, the Board of Education and the Public through emails and a post of the RCS website. All materials will be filed at the Central Office for review.