



WINGS for kids at Bethune Elementary

21st Century Community Learning Centers

2016 - 2017 Evaluation

Prepared by



CREATIVE RESEARCH SOLUTIONS

Program Overview

WINGS for kids is a social and emotional learning program designed to help K-5 children improve their ability to understand and manage their emotions, communicate, resolve conflicts, and improve their behavior. WINGS programs are located at Title I schools, and Bethune Elementary, located in College Park, GA, is no different. Unlike many other after school programs, WINGS intentionally targets students who are having behavioral issues. Recruitment is not exclusive to these students, however, as the program is also open to families who simply value the care and programming WINGS offers.

The WINGS for kids program utilizes a model designed to remain consistent across WINGS sites. WINGS activities incorporate a weekly curriculum designed to promote specific learning objectives. The basic program activities are as follows:

- **Community Unity:**

WINGS kids talk about their day at school and what happened in their classes. The kids recite the WINGS Creed together, play a game based on the week's learning objective, and receive a healthy snack immediately after the session. This session typically takes place in the school gym. That way, kids who arrive early are able to use the space to play until the start of the program.



WINGS kids sit with their nests for Community Unity

- **Discussion:** On Mondays, WINGS Leaders lead the kids in a discussion of the weekly objectives in their small groups (Nests).
- **Academic Center:** On Monday through Thursday, the kids spend an hour on academics. These sessions are guided based on what the principal has targeted. It could be just homework time, or a tutoring session in a specific subject. WINGS staff coordinate with the principal and teachers at the school to identify areas of focus for these sessions to best support the kids in completing their homework. WINGS Leaders are typically responsible for leading academic center, and their role includes assisting kids with homework and ensuring a peaceful learning environment. WINGS Leaders are also usually expected to play classical music for the kids as they work.

- **Freeplay:** About twice a week, WINGS offers a recess period where kids are given open play time on the school's playground or other play facilities under the supervision of WINGSLeaders.
- **Choice Time:** The Choice Time period is an activity period where kids engage in extracurricular learning. These classes may include science, cooking, robotics, art, dancing, music and other activities. Classes which require specialized skills may be led by certified teachers instead of WINGSLeaders; however WINGSLeaders remain in the session to support the teacher when this is the case. Each class is a semester long commitment for the kids. At the beginning of each Choice Time period, kids choose their classes by ballot so they will make their selection based on their own interests instead of where their friends will be. Many of the Choice Time activities this year were designed to incorporate STEAM activities.
- **WINGSWorks:** During WINGSWorks, WINGSLeaders help the kids do a community service activity, usually within the school. The specific activities vary based on the WINGS curriculum and the needs of the school.
- **WildWINGS:** On Fridays, WINGSLeaders lead kids in fun games based on the week's learning objectives. These activities are followed by a discussion where kids talk about what they have learned. While the specific activities vary greatly from week to week, they are intended to emphasize and reinforce social and emotional learning.

WINGS students are organized into small groups called "nests" which are divided by grade and gender. WINGSLeaders are trained college student mentors responsible for guiding the kids through the program activities and moving them from location to location throughout the day.

One of the major roles of the WINGSLeader is also to help kids improve their behavior during the program. In addition to the social and emotional curriculum itself, WINGS kids who display positive SEL skills are rewarded with tickets. These tickets can be traded in for various prizes over the course of the program.

Student Attendance and Enrollment

WINGS for kids staff provided enrollment and attendance data through the CAYEN online data management system and by providing spreadsheets generated by their internal data management system. Per the specifications established by 21st CCLC, many of the outcomes in this document are based on "regularly attending" students. These students are defined as those who have attended the program for at least 30 days.

Average Daily Attendance

Bethune Elementary had a total of 172 participants registered in CAYEN for the 2016-2017 school year. Of these, 151 were considered "regularly attending", having attended WINGS for

at least 30 days. Please note that this number includes students who only attended one semester. The average daily attendance rate for WINGS at Bethune was 120 students per day; this serves as a better indicator of the number of students typically on-site at any given time. As of the end of the school year, 128 students were listed as “active.”

Demographics

All 172 registered students identified as Black, with 79 girls and 91 boys.

Program Operation

During the 2016-2017 school year, the WINGS program at Bethune was open a total of 152 days. Each day, the WINGS program operates between 3:00pm and 6:00pm. As the program is embedded in the school, kids are able to transition from their school day directly into WINGS. The following table breaks down the number of times each major program activity was offered by days and hours:

Activity	Average Hours per Session	Number of Days Offered	Total Hours Offered
Academic Center	1	129	129
Free Play	0.33	67	20.79
Snack	0.25	160	38
WINGSWorks	0.66	34	22.44
Choice Time	1	67	67
Community Unity	0.75	152	114
Discussion	0.67	30	19.8
WildWINGS	2	23	46

In the table above, please note that Choice Time sessions represent multiple classes. These numbers reflect days when a Choice Time period was offered.

Community Unity and Snack are the only activities that are normally offered at every WINGS session; the other activities vary by day of the week. WINGSWorks, WildWINGS, and

discussion usually occur once per week each, Free Play and Choice Time periods each occur twice per week, while Academic Center takes place four times per week.

Quality of Staffing

Data on staffing at WINGS was collected through interviews and email communication with staff, program documentation, and data available through CAYEN.

The major onsite roles at WINGS for kids locations are the Program Director, Program Assistant, WINGSLeaders, other volunteers, and certified teachers. Program Directors, Program Assistants, and WINGSLeaders each receive a minimum of 65 hours of training prior to beginning their work with the program.

At WINGS sites, the Program Director is typically responsible for leading the WINGS staff in delivery of the program activities. In addition to managing the volunteers and paid staff, the Program Director also usually leads group activities such as Community Unity, while WINGSLeaders manage the kids as outlined in the Program Overview above.

The Program Assistant serves a similar role to the Program Director in supporting the WINGSLeaders or leading sessions when the Program Director is unavailable. Since the various nests are often spread out into different locations, the additional support provided by the Program Assistant is invaluable in situations where a Program Director would otherwise need to be in two places at once. Program Assistants rotate between WINGS sites on a 9 week basis.

WINGSLeaders provide most of the primary service delivery for the WINGS program. They are recruited from among local college students, and serve to supervise and implement activities for a specific group of kids throughout WINGS' weekly activities.

In previous years, the Peace Manager role provided support for kids who are having behavioral challenges. However, as of this year, this role was eliminated from the program.

The Program Director is a paid staff member, while the Program Assistant, Peace Manager, and WINGSLeaders are AmeriCorps members who receive a stipend.

WINGS' certified teachers are paid consultants who work to support the academic rigor of WINGS' educational program components. WINGS staff noted that certified teachers help them link ChoiceTime, Academic Center, Discussion, and some Community Center games with State standards and Fulton County Schools' priority areas, as well as providing other pedagogical advice and support. During the program day, they often serve to support ChoiceTime activities by bringing specific areas of expertise that WINGSLeaders may not possess themselves. During ChoiceTime sessions that require a certified teacher, WINGSLeaders remain in place to support the teacher.

Volunteers provide basic support to WINGSLeaders by helping with activities and providing additional guidance to the kids.

Student to Staff Ratio

The daily WINGS staff at Bethune consisted of:

- 1 Program Director
- 1 Program Assistant
- 13 WINGSLeaders
- 1 Teacher

Based strictly on the average daily attendance (120) and total staff (15), WINGS had about 8 students per staff member. In practice, WINGS usually keeps nest sizes at about 10-12 kids, with each nest having one assigned WINGSLeader, while other staff lead large group activities, help manage the program, and support WINGSLeaders during small group activities.

Objectives

One of the challenges for the WINGS program is that while academic excellence is certainly valued and supported, WINGS' core mission is social and emotional learning. Thus, most of their programming focuses on this area rather than academic success. Having said that, WINGS at Bethune has nonetheless demonstrated success for the most part in maintaining the academic performance of its students. Please note that for the purpose of this analysis, students' grades were considered "maintained" as long as they remained within 5 points of their starting grade, as in the report generated by CAYEN.

Objective	Benchmark	Status	Details
Improve academic performance	75% of regular attendees' math grades improve or remain the same	Met	84.30% of regularly attending students with grades for both Q1 and Q3 improved or maintained their grades in Math.
Improve academic performance	75% of regular attendees' reading grades improve or remain the same	Met	88.62% of regularly attending students with grades for both Q1 and Q3 improved or maintained their grades in reading.
Improve academic performance	75% of regularly participating students will meet or exceed state standards in math	Not Met	62.30% of regularly attending students with Georgia Milestones exam scores in math scored at achievement level 2 or higher.
Improve	75% of regularly	Not Met	57.38% of regularly attending

academic performance	participating students will maintain or improve report card grades in reading		students with Georgia Milestones exam scores in reading scored at achievement level 2 or higher.
Increase positive student behavior	90% of students attending more than 30 days will attend school 90% of the time	Not Met	46.05% of students attending more than 30 days attended WINGS 90% of the time.
Increase positive student behavior	80% of regularly participating students will have two or fewer disciplinary referrals	Met	92.73% of students attending more than 30 days had two or fewer disciplinary referrals.
Increase family involvement	50% of adult family members of regularly participating students will participate in at least two literacy, educational, or family involvement activities during the year	Not Met	Only 36.42% of students attending more than 30 days had adult family members participate in at least two family involvement activities during the year.
Increase family involvement	50% of adult family members of regularly participating students will participate in at least one afterschool parent conference with WINGS program staff	Not Met	Only 35.76% of students attending more than 30 days had adult family members participate in at least one afterschool parent conference with WINGS program staff.

90% of students attending more than 30 days will attend school 90% of the time. Ideally WINGS would have access to school attendance records to measure how many students actually attend school; unfortunately this data has not been available thus far. The evaluation team has utilized students' attendance at WINGS as an alternative measure of this outcome. However, since many students join or leave WINGS at different times during the year, the number who attend school 90% of the time is significantly underestimated.

Recommendation: The evaluation team has had to use attendance at WINGS as a proxy for attendance at school, which is likely to result in attendance being underestimated, particularly when students join or leave the program. We encourage WINGS to continue its efforts to work with the schools to gain access to this data for more accurate reporting.

50% of adult family members of regularly participating students will participate in at least two literacy, educational, or family involvement activities during the year. WINGS held three family involvement activities this year: a parent orientation at the start of the year, a holiday event, and closing ceremony at the end of the year. **Recommendation:** This particular objective has been particularly challenging for WINGS across program sites. Ultimately it may be necessary for WINGS to increase the number of events available to parents in order to consistently meet this goal.

75% of regularly participating students will meet or exceed state standards in math and reading. WINGS was not able to meet its objectives for either of the Georgia Milestones exams this year. As a social and emotional learning program, WINGS' impact on exam scores will generally be limited. WINGS may be able to further improve its results by continuing to increase STEAM offerings during Choice Time, and continuing to provide support to students during academic center.

Additional Data & Observations

Parent Responses

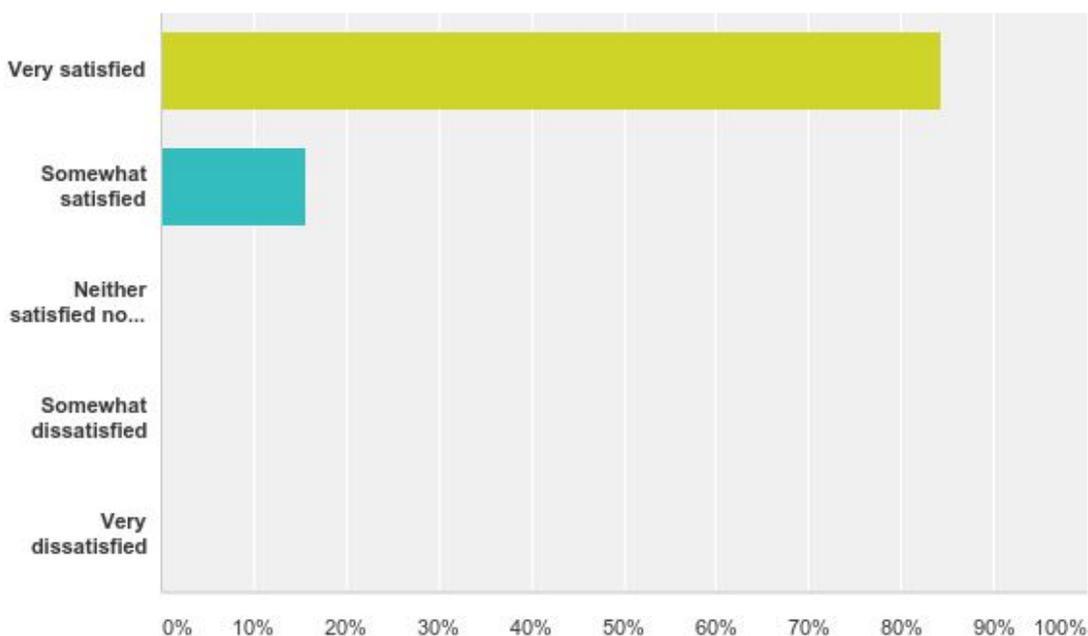
Parents of WINGS kids who participated in the survey were very positive about the program overall. Parents responded to the following survey questions in a likert-type (strongly agree to strongly disagree) format:

- The program is helping my child's behavior improve.
- The program is helping my child to complete and turn in his/her homework on time.
- The WINGS program is helping my child's social skills improve.
- My child has his or her homework done before s/he comes home from WINGS.

The survey was distributed on site. Parents were given the opportunity to complete the survey at a computer workstation while waiting to pick up their kids from the program. A total of 32 parents responded to the survey, with positive responses in each question area. Of the 32 parents, no more than 1 responded negatively to any question. Overall satisfaction with the program is outlined in the chart below:

Q4 How satisfied are you with your child's 21st CCLC program?

Answered: 32 Skipped: 0



Formative Evaluation

During this year's formative evaluation process, the evaluation team conducted a focus group of parents and interviews with several WINGSLeaders. Generally speaking, both parents and staff had positive feedback about the program. Some staff expressed concerns about the loss of the Peace Manager role and the additional responsibilities placed on WINGSLeaders and the Program Director to manage students. Parents noted that their children participating in WINGS seemed to be more mature, improved their grades, and were more confident. Some parents expressed interest in volunteering with the program in the future.

Student Survey

At the end of the fall semester, WINGS kids completed a survey on their experiences with the program. They were asked to respond to the following likert-type questions via a paper survey administered by WINGS staff, with the goal of getting a response from each student:

- I like the 21st CCLC program.
- My overall behavior has improved because of the 21st CCLC program.

- The 21st CCLC program helps me complete and turn in my homework on time.
- I'm doing better in school since I started coming to the 21st CCLC program.
- I feel better about myself because of the 21st CCLC program.
- I have made new friends because of the 21st CCLC program.
- I feel like the WINGSLeaders understand me.
- I like the prizes I can get with my tickets.

Response options were offered using faces (smiling a lot, smiling a little, neutral, frowning a little, frowning a lot) rather than text (strongly agree to strongly disagree). Students were asked to circle the face that corresponded to their response. 108 students responded to the survey. Responses to each question were positive overall. The students rated the program above a 4 (agree) on most questions. Only students' ratings on feeling like their behavior had improved and feeling like their WINGSLeaders understood them were slightly lower, at 3.8 and 3.97 respectively. Overall, the survey results indicated that students generally enjoyed and benefitted from the program.

Student Interviews

The qualitative component of this evaluation consisted of interviews with the students attending the WINGS for kids program. The selected nests were balanced for grade and gender to make sure that there was a good representation of boys and girls from different grades. Eight students (4 girls, 4 boys) were randomly selected within the nests and invited to participate in 15-20 minute interviews during the WINGS for kids program.

Interview Protocol Design

The student interview protocol was customized to the developmental needs of each program participant. Questions were tailored to target the Positive Student Behavior Goal of the WINGS Program. Transcription of the student interviews were reviewed for accuracy. Student interviews and program observations were analyzed with attention to the processes underlying the impact of the WINGS Program on academic performance and positive student behavior. A list of the selected students was sent to the WINGS program prior to the interviews. On the day of the interviews, students from the list were sent from the school gym one at a time and told that they were going to be interviewed. Interviews were held in a school classroom.

Students were asked about their experience in the WINGS program; specifically, their view of their WINGSLeader, and experiences with Academic Center. They were also asked about how they manage stress, anger, and problems with others. The questions were designed using the WINGS for Kids weekly curricula for three areas: Social Awareness Learning, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision Making. With this in mind, students were encouraged to share their understanding of responsibility for outcomes (e.g., "Hijacking", "making amends"). They were also encouraged to share examples of when they prevented a conflict from escalating.

Results

This report includes responses from boys and girls in the first through fifth grades. Students that completed interviews had been in the program for one to two years and reported a number of program components as their favorite WINGS activity, including Choice Time and Free Play.

Choice Time

Several students noted that Choice Time as their favorite WINGS activity. Choice Time activities discussed included dancing, sports, and Nature's Spa. One student described how Nature's Spa was enjoyable and exposed her to something new:

Interviewer: Can you tell me about one activity that you enjoy the most?

Student: I like to go to Choice time.

Interviewer: What do you do during Choice Time?

Student: Well I'm in this thing called Nature's Spa and we make things like sugar scrubs and things to help your skin. We make crafts - on Tuesday we made liquid chalk.

Interviewer: Cool!

Student: And it was fun.

Interviewer: So why do you like the Nature's Spa?

Student: Well I like it [because] we get to make things and it's kind of soothing. I've never really been in a spa before - it costs a lot of money - so if you can just make the things at home, then you can experience them.

Emotional Reactions and Stress Management

A core program goal of WINGS is to help children manage their emotions and exhibit positive behavior. When interviewed about the last time they got angry with someone, students were able to generate examples and decide if they made the best decision in handling the situation. The students also discussed how they handled stress and provided examples of labeling their emotions as anger or stress, as well as describe the ways they managed their feelings.

Interviewer: Can you remember a time that you felt stressed?

Student: I kinda felt stressed when they let me be the WINGS leader for the day.

Interviewer: That's cool!

Student: That was really stressful [because] no one was listening and even though I thought they would listen cuz they're supposed to be my friends. But it was like they

weren't really listening and they were all just talking and stuff. But when Miss [teacher]'s here, they don't do all that.

Interviewer: How did you react?

Student: I told [teacher] I didn't want to be the WINGS leader anymore [because] it's harder than I thought! The WINGS leaders they make it look so easy, but it's not.

Strategies for Success and Academic Center

The Academic Center facilitates the WINGS program objective to improve achievement. Students identified steps they use to perform well in class, as well as the assistance they received during Academic Center.

Interviewer: What kinds of help have you received at the Academic Center? How helpful is it?

Student: It's really helpful, [because] the WINGS Leader do[esn't] just tell you something. They make you sit down and then if you don't understand, you have to get back up. They'll help you and if you still don't understand, they'll keep helping you and explain it in simpler terms for you to better understand.

Sustainability

WINGS Atlanta does not typically solicit funds separately for individual sites, so the sustainability of each location is largely dependent on the overall fundraising of the organization as a whole. As of the previous year, WINGS staff described their fundraising approach as follows:

- As we grow, WINGS continues to expand our profile on a national level as a leader in the SEL field and to develop new strategic partnerships. WINGS' CEO, Bridget Laird, is frequently invited to be a featured speaker at leading conferences and symposiums, including the National Afterschool Association's Social and Emotional Learning Convention, and the national convening of the Expanded Learning Opportunities Professional Learning Community (PLC) and the Afterschool System Building Network. Denise Blake, WINGS Atlanta's Executive Director, is a recurring speaker on the United Way Speakers' Tour, has secured a number of local media appearances, and is a participant in local education working groups and think tanks.
- WINGS is piloting alternate service delivery methods and exploring opportunities to expand them.
- WINGS will provide training and technical assistance to Atlanta's Department of Parks and Recreation.
- Using our *Meet WINGS* program to introduce new potential funders annually and raise support from individuals, corporations, and foundations.

- Continuing to seek financial and in-kind support from Fulton County Schools and Atlanta Public Schools to provide budget relief.
- Continuing our relationship with the Corporation for National and Community Service; current support is more than \$300,000 annually.
- Continuing to have multi-year support from the Department of Education through our three 21st Century Community Learning Center grants.
- Utilizing rigorous program evaluations to obtain funding from large national foundations, particularly those that put a premium on data driven results. Recent supporters include the NoVo Foundation; the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation; The Wallace Foundation; The Zeist Foundation; and The Goizueta Foundation.
- WINGS is under consideration for a new multi-year grant from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation.

Conclusions & Recommendations

The following recommendations are provided to aid WINGS for kids at Bethune Elementary in meeting its program goals next year.

This year WINGS has struggled with meeting some of its program objectives. One of the newer challenges facing WINGS this year was the loss of the Peace Manager role, which in previous years had assisted WINGS Leaders and other program staff in managing student behavior. The absence of the Peace Manager is likely to have had an impact on program operations as staff had previously raised concerns about their workload and now have fewer resources with which to support the program. However, Bethune seems to have been largely successful in maintaining program quality in spite of this change; although students rated the program slightly lower than previous years in terms of improving their behavior, the ratings remained high overall.

However, one area where WINGS has experienced ongoing challenges is in meeting its academic achievement objectives. As a social and emotional learning program, WINGS academic impact is likely to unfold gradually as a result of improved classroom behavior and a more welcoming social environment. Although WINGS at Bethune has been quite successful in meeting its' targets for student grades, it may be difficult for WINGS to have a substantial impact on state standardized test scores due to the nature of being a social and emotional learning program rather than one that focuses primarily on academic outcomes.

Tracking attendance remains difficult without data provided by the school; it is fairly likely that WINGS is actually meeting its attendance goals but underreporting due to the fact that WINGS can only track attendance at the program itself. Overall, WINGS at Bethune has been largely successful in spite of some significant challenges this year.