

Excel Kids Academy After School Program
Lorah Park Elementary, Holmes Elementary and Benjamin Franklin K-8 Center

3.1 Project Abstract

Excel Kids Academy (EKA) promotes school improvement by serving 120 students in Pre-K through 5th grade from Lorah Park Elementary, Holmes Elementary and Benjamin Franklin K-8 Center. The program serves “at-risk” students in two distinct neighborhoods. All students receive academic-focused activities designed to be interactive, engaging, and creative using the project-based learning model to focus STEAM. Enrichment lessons teach social emotional behaviors, reasoning, arts and health and nutrition for students and families via Positive Action combined with SPARK, CATCH PE, Peace Work, DOLE 5 A DAY, creative arts and dance. Program goals are to (1) improve academic achievement and understanding in core academic areas; (2) promote positive youth development and personal growth to help enhance motivation, dedication, and academic performance; and (3) enhance parenting skills and literacy to promote parental involvement. These align directly with the needs of low academic achievement, lack of positive youth development and personal growth, and lack of parental involvement. The adult family members receive various Parent Activities to strengthen parenting skills.

3.2 Community Notice and Needs Assessment

3.2.a. Community Notice

Staff collaborated with several agencies and schools during a needs assessment in order to determine after-school services likely to impact school improvement. A committee was formed to analyze student achievement, attendance, and principal interest in extended learning opportunities. This information helped the committee to better identify appropriate services for students attending listed school sites in RFP. The Public School Eligibility Survey, FDOE School Accountability Report, School Grades for 2017-2018 and other relevant data from Florida Department of Education also helped identify schools in need of improvement and proposed services. A planning committee of EKA employees also looked at the following data: poverty rates, English Language Learner status, reading and math scores, education levels, discipline information, and demographics. EKA will extend learning to help these children overcome low academic achievement, lack of positive youth development, personal growth, and lack of parental involvement.

Notice and Plan – The Executive Director has consulted with stakeholders throughout

the community to include the Miami Children's Museum, Lorah Park Elementary, Holmes Elementary and Benjamin Franklin K-8 Center, and the community grassroots organizations such as Miami Children's Initiative of Liberty City. These reach a broad spectrum of community members. Meetings were via conference calls and in person visits to school to gather input from Principals. These contacts have laid the foundation to either partner with or support this new application. As a private school, EKA has had conversations with parents and staff members to determine participation and preferences. Conversations are underway for principals to do the same with their schools' parents and staff members. Planning is still in process to fine-tune opinions as research has already been gathered to best impact targeted schools. Implementation will be a multi-layered process.

Program Timeline – The proposal will appear on the EKA's web site. Public will be able to review it.

3.2.b. Needs Assessment

Poverty Rates An overriding need throughout Miami Dade schools is combatting poverty. Poverty is 15.1% in the United States, 16.1% in Florida, and 19.9% in Miami-Dade County. The poverty rate of Liberty City is 35.7% and North Miami is 24.2%.¹ The economic stresses of poverty impact families in many ways. They tend to lack the resiliency to keep small problems from becoming large problems. Lack of transportation and child care adds to the stress. All three targeted sites are school-wide Title I schools. The percent of children from low income families as reported on the Florida Department of Education Title I Part A, School List are: Lorah Park 98.7%, Holmes 99.8% and Benjamin Franklin 94.21%. All schools are eligible to participate in CEP (Community Eligibility Provision) through the District, which means each school offers free breakfast and lunch to all students based on the level of community participation in public assistance programs.² EKA can impact these families quickly and with appreciable impact by helping to relieve some of these stresses by providing a safe place for extended learning to help working parents.

English Language Learners Compared to 57% for the district, Florida Standard Assessment 2018 reveals Lorah Park has 13% ELL, Holmes has 15% and Benjamin Franklin has 14%. The number of ELL students scoring proficient on the ELA test at Lorah Park is 58%, Holmes is 20% while Benjamin Franklin is 34%.

¹ <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

² <https://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Food-Nutrition-and-Wellness/National-School-Lunch-Program/Community-Eligibility-Provision>

Reading and Math Scores The percentages of students across all grades producing satisfactory reading and math scores in 2018 at the targeted schools all are well below their non-charter peers. In reading, school-wide proficiency at Lorah Park (30%), Holmes (30%), and Benjamin Franklin (32%) – are significantly below Miami-Dade County (45%) and the State (57%). In math, proficiency at Lorah Park (42%), Holmes (30%) and Benjamin Franklin (28%) are again well below Miami Dade County (48%) and FL (57%). These schools are ideal candidates for the 21st CCLC program and progress would begin immediately because extended learning has shown a positive impact on student achievement.

School Name	E/LA Achievement	E/LA Learning Gains	E/LA Learning Gains Lowest 25%	Math Achievement	Math Learning Gains	Math Learning Gains Lowest 25%
Lorah Parks	30	29	40	49	62	48
Holmes	21	46	55	49	71	79
Benjamin Franklin	32	40	44	46	49	50

Education Levels All areas are similar. Lorah Park Elementary, Holmes Elementary and Benjamin Franklin K-8 sit in inner city areas of Miami Dade County. While 13.1% of adults ages 25+ lack high school diplomas in Florida, the rate of Miami- Dade County is 16.9%. Most disturbing is the Population of adults 18-24 lacking a high school diploma in Florida is 16.4%, in Miami Dade County 21.9%, Lorah Park 25%, Holmes 25% and Benjamin Franklin 24.3%³. All schools have a higher population age 18-24 and 25+ with no diploma and a lower percentage of college educated. These schools would benefit from an After-School program that improves academic achievement and helps parents become more involved in their children’s education.

³ American FactFinder <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

	Florida	Miami-Dade	Lorah Park Elementary 33142	Holmes Elementary 33150	Benjamin Franklin K-8 33168
Population ages 18-24 with no diploma	16.0%	14.8%	26.9%	27.9%	16.1%
Population ages 25+ with no diploma	7.6%	9.0%	16.3%	14.0%	13.5%
Population ages 25+ with at least a BA degree	17.8%	17.4%	6.5%	8.5%	8.9%

Discipline Data As per principals, due to the high rate of discipline incidents, there is a need for positive social-emotional skills training. This aligns with our need to improve interpersonal behaviors.

Demographics – All three schools are determined most likely to benefit from the 21st CCLC program: Lorah Park Elementary, Holmes Elementary, and Benjamin Franklin K-8 Center. All schools have a high rate of poverty as determined on the Public School Eligibility Survey submitted to the DOE.⁴ All school sites are geographically within available after-school services, they are in need of programs with evidenced based services to accelerate learning versus babysitting. The students are dealing with socioeconomic issues that impact discipline and behavioral issues.

School	Enrolled	Black	Hispanic	White	ESE	ELL	% Free Meals⁵
Lorah Park	433	100%	0.0%	0.0%	8%	13%	98.68%
Holmes	489	85%	15%	0.0%	9%	15%	99.81%
Benjamin Franklin K-8	485	85.3%	15.9%	0.7%	6%	14%	94.21%

Risk Factors – Lorah Park Elementary, Holmes Elementary and Benjamin Franklin K-8 Center chosen for new EKA 21st CCLC:

⁴ Miami Dade Public Schools School Performance Data 2017-2018

⁵ Community Eligibility Option program by USDA, offering free breakfast and lunch to all students based on level of community participation in public assistance programs.

- have either been designated by the state as Comprehensive and Targeted Support and Improvement Schools according to the Final Differentiated Accountability (DA) Support List 2017-18 or identified by the LEA as in need of academic support⁶
- received a letter grade of C or D for 2017⁷
- Holmes is listed among Florida's 300 lowest-performing elementary schools in 2017-18.⁸
- more than 94% of schools' students qualify for free breakfast and lunch through the USDA School Lunch Program's CEP, based on families receiving public assistance. ⁹
- have a high rate of Economically Disadvantaged students – Lorah Park Elementary – 97.9%, Holmes Elementary – 99.8%, and Benjamin Franklin K-8 Center – 96.1% ¹⁰
- have a high rate of local adults residing in the geographic area that did not graduate from high school or earn GED ¹¹
- have a low rate of Parent Involvement according to the MDPS Climate Survey 2017-2018. Completion rates of the parent survey were: Lorah Park 34.5%, Holmes 15.9% and Benjamin Franklin 22.1%

Planning Data – Executive Director communicated with the principals from Lorah Park Elementary, Holmes Elementary, and Benjamin Franklin K-8 Center. All principals were briefed on the program expectations, requirements, and obligations of the 21st CCLC Program. The needs assessed at each school are: low academic achievement and understanding in core academic areas, lack of positive youth development which leads to discipline issues, and lack of parental involvement.

Needs to be Addressed – Our identified needs are low academic achievement, poor interpersonal behaviors resulting in discipline issues, and lack of parental involvement. Our goals and objectives will focus on 1) improving academic achievement and understanding in core academic areas; 2) promoting positive youth development and personal growth to help enhance motivation, dedication, and academic performance; and 3) enhancing parenting skills and literacy to promote parental involvement. The issues above address school needs, family wishes, and community support which will allow for immediate benefits. This grant opportunity

⁶ Florida Department of Education - Differentiated Accountability (DA) Final Differentiated Accountability (DA) Support List 2017-18 retrieved 7/20/18 from the CIMS database, Florida DOE Bureau of School Improvement.

⁷2017-18 School Grades <http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org/>

⁸ "2017-2018 Lowest 300 Performing Elementary Schools," Florida DOE Division of Accountability, Research and Measurement. Retrieved 7/17/18 from The 300 Lowest Performing Elementary Schools: 2017-2018 Lowest 300 Performing Elementary Schools

⁹ <http://oada.dadeschools.net/StudentMembership/Membership.asp>

¹⁰ Miami Dade County Public School Eligibility Survey 2017-2018

¹¹ American FactFinder <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

could really have a positive impact on needs of all schools.

Community Planning EKA's vision bodes well with Miami Dade Public School's strategic plan- 2020 Vision.¹² Key staff members solicited advice from community stakeholders Miami Children's Initiative, Miami Children's Museum, The Children's Trust and other private schools listed in the areas to be served. We discussed our intent to apply with above mentioned stakeholders and schools and we emailed our intent to area private schools. The schools were asked to submit an "intent to participate" response. We analyzed the locations of the private schools in the neighboring areas and emailed each of them individually. We asked each private school in the geographic area to provide specific input as the proposal was in development.

Availability and Accessibility of Out-of-School Services – EKA gathered data regarding after school service opportunities from the surrounding areas near all proposed school sites. There are little to no nearby centers for students to attend after school. Areas are more saturated with daycares and pre-schools versus sole after school programs. Students from targeted schools have limited access to after school programming and are economically challenged. Although Holmes and Lorah Park are 21st CCLC sites, enrollment is limited leaving most students without services. Benjamin Franklin does not have above mentioned program onsite and services are needed. Overall, more students from targeted schools are ideal candidates for the 21st CCLC Grant opportunity.

3.3 Dissemination of Information

Appropriate Plan – EKA has a website with program schedules and information about special events, updated at least monthly. It gives contact information for the Program Coordinator and Lead Counselors (site coordinators). To add, EKA will make frequent posts on its Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages to promote the Family Literacy series and special events. Information will be presented in English, Spanish and Creole. We use email lists of participating parents to send monthly newsletters. This provides for accurate and timely information. Advisory Board meeting dates will be published at the beginning of the year. They will include updates on progress toward objectives, which will also go on EKA's web site.

3.4 Target Population, Recruitment and Retention

Targeted Students – Each of EKA off-school centers serve students from the targeted schools. **Liberty City Center** is located in Liberty City, Florida. **Miami Gardens Center** is

¹² <http://strategicplan.dadeschools.net/>

located in Miami Gardens, Florida. EKA will create the extended learning opportunity to focus on academic achievement, programs to promote interpersonal behaviors, and parent involvement that is so desperately needed in school success. EKA at each off-school site will first register students who struggle to stay on grade level. EKA has shown it can increase student gains to improve school performance. Lorah Park, Holmes and Benjamin Franklin will prioritize invitations to first, second and third grade students based upon recommendations by teachers and the guidance counselor. They will consider risk factors and informally rate these young students with an indicator checklist that points to the following risk factors: a) low self-esteem, b) lack of a positive adult role model, c) parents with anti-social behavior, d) difficulty getting along with others, and e) early academic failure. If we can catch the students who struggle academically compared to their peers, we will better prepare them for future success.

Schools Meeting Eligibility – Table 3 lists the target schools with eligibility criteria, and Table 4 depicts the demographics located in the school attendance zones. Based on planning sessions, we anticipate a smaller enrollment at Lorah Park and Holmes simply due to the number of enrolled students onsite with another 21st CCLC provider. We anticipate double the enrollment at Benjamin Franklin K-8 Center due to their enrollment totals and no 21st CCLC nearby. Participants will most likely have siblings who also fill after-school slots.

Table 3: School Qualifications for 21st CCLC

EKA Centers	Title Status	School Grade 2017 - 2018	% Economically Disadvantaged	Grades to be Served
Lorah Park	School-wide	D	97.9%	PreK-5
Holmes	School-wide	C	99.8%	PreK-5
Benjamin Franklin	School-wide	C	96.1%	PreK-5

Table 4: School Demographics ¹³

School	Enrolled	Black	Hispanic	White	ESE	ELL	% Free Meals ¹⁴
Lorah Park	433	100%	0.0%	0.0%	8%	13%	98.68%
Holmes	489	85%	15%	0.0%	9%	15%	99.81%

¹³ Student Membership Report – Miami Dade Public Schools

¹⁴ Community Eligibility Option program by USDA, offering free breakfast and lunch to all students based on level of community participation in public assistance programs.

Benjamin Franklin	485	85.3%	15.9%	0.7%	6%	14%	94.21%
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Recruitment

Recruitment Plan – In conjunction with counselors and teachers, we will send invitation letters during the summer. Program staff will follow up with telephone calls. In addition, we will post vacancies on EKA's website, social media pages, at public housing communities where targeted students reside; and interface with community agencies that provide other services to targeted students. Should there be vacancies, we will offer applications to non-targeted students. We will keep a waiting list once the program fills, and prioritize placements by academic need. We will continually recruit based upon recommendations of daytime teachers and community/ faith-based organizations and place students to keep the program full.

Engaging Families – In addition to program promotion at school, our business and civic partners have promised to broaden our reach with posters, announcements, newsletter articles, and word of mouth. When the program opens, families of targeted students will receive a calendar of events with details about family literacy opportunities and an invitation to volunteer or serve on the Advisory Board. Family members are invited to follow the program on Facebook and the Internet. The locations/links to these outlets are included on all print distributions.

Consistent Attendance – EKA promotes consistent attendance through monthly recognition programs. Students with perfect attendance for the month receive a certificate. Students can also earn treats, free tokens for Chuckee Cheese, ice cream at Chick-fila, McDonalds, etc. The Student sign-in sheets are evaluated weekly by the lead counselors, who check with daytime teachers if students miss multiple days of the 21st CCLC program. If they are in school, we ask parents to be sure they stay after school. If they miss school, our policy does not allow them to attend EKA the same day. Parents of students with unexplained absences are contacted by telephone. All efforts are made to accommodate families so students may attend the program.

3.5 Times and Frequency of Service Provision for Students and Adult Family Members

Due to the lack of parental involvement noted with the lack of participation in the parent surveys, we expect to significantly involve and show perceived growth in a minimum of 10 parents/family members per targeted school, representing 20-30 participating children. The Family Literacy series will have at least seven sequenced sessions per after school site. To

meet the needs of all parents, the program is using Positive Action for adult and family services. Positive Action lessons all have home connections and activities. Parents and children will learn and work together on specific skills (e.g. dealing with anger, accepting “no,” self-control). Other parent meetings will focus on teaching parents about the new ELA and math standards, adult education, and life skills (enrichment). One of the family activities mirrors an after-school lesson in pro-social skills and emphasizes positive reinforcement. Another family activity strives to give parents information about the Florida Standards and resources to use at home to increase student achievement. One meeting discusses positive pro-social behaviors and “Positive Action.” Our family evenings target young parents. We do our best to connect families to community services with activities at community centers where our partners teach literacy and coach parenting. Our partnership organizations will enrich family literacy with services of varying intensity, ranging from ABE/GED education to presentations on financial literacy.

3.6 Program Evaluation

Independent Evaluator Identification and Qualifications: Identification of an independent evaluator took place through research and recommendations. When identifying an independent evaluator, the organization considered important evaluation items that were relevant to the proposed 21st CCLC program and that also met the 21st CCLC RFP requirements. The required qualifications for the evaluator included 21st CCLC grant evaluation experience, positive client testimonials, capacity to develop and carry out detailed evaluation plans with timelines, personnel availability, report writing experience and data collection storage capacity. EduMatrix is a recommended and an experienced company in 21st CCLC program evaluation and has been identified to serve as the independent evaluator for this project. They specialize in 21st CCLC grant evaluation specifically, and currently evaluate other 21st CCLC programs in the state of Florida. The evaluation team have many years of relevant experience which makes them highly qualified to perform the 21st CCLC program evaluation duties. This evaluation team was chosen because they promised to match or beat any price on evaluation services.

Evaluation Activities and Proposed Timeline: Conducting evaluation activities in a systematic way using a timeline will help to inform the program and stakeholders about the program progress being made toward meeting grant goals and objectives throughout the year in a timely manner. These activities include data collection, data analysis, and reporting.

Evaluation Activity #1 - Data Collection: Evaluation activities will be discussed and coordinated

with the Program Coordinator to ensure that they are delivered in a non-intrusive way. Each evaluation activity will be coordinated with program stakeholders to increase effectiveness and minimize distraction. The following will be collected or conducted by the evaluator for analysis in September 2018 (baseline data), January 2019 (mid-year data) and May 2019 (end-of-year data): *Program student data (quantitative) including demographics, enrollment, attendance, participation, assessment scores, report card grades and other relevant data. *Program documents (qualitative and quantitative) including student files, assessments, data collection tools, meeting minutes and scoring rubrics. *Interviews (qualitative) with the Program Coordinator, Lead Counselor, Teachers and Program Staff. *Program observations and site visits (qualitative) including evaluator field notes from site visits, assessing student and staff performance, personal enrichment activities, and academic enrichment activities. *Stakeholder surveys (qualitative) completed by an adult family member of the student, school day teachers of students, and students participating in the program will also be collected in May 2019 by the evaluator for analysis.

Evaluation Activity #2 and #3 – Data Analysis and Reporting: EduMatrix will analyze all of the data to create a comprehensive analysis that details a variety of sources. Baseline data will be analyzed in September 2018 and December 2018 for completeness and level of student performance. The results of both baseline data analyses will be provided to the program so that they know which areas to target and focus on. Mid-year data will be analyzed in January 2019. The results of this data will be included in the Mid-Year Data Report and will show whether the students have made gains between the baseline and mid-year time points for each grant objective. The evaluator will meet with the Program Coordinator to discuss the results of the Mid-Year Data Report and will note any changes needed in the areas of data collection and programming. These changes, if any, will be included in the Formative Summary Evaluation Report that will be completed in March 2019 on behalf of the program. End-of-year data will be analyzed in June 2019 and those results will be reflected in the Summative Evaluation Report that will be completed in July 2019. This report will reflect the program's overall annual performance, recommendations for program improvement, and reporting outcomes.

Processes for Accurate Data Collection, Maintenance and Reporting: EduMatrix will meet with the Program Coordinator to discuss data requirements which align to the grant objectives. There will be a student survey/testing schedule, parent survey/testing schedule, report card grade collection schedule and a data entry schedule created so that the program

stays on track with data collection, entry and maintenance. They will create internal deadlines for the program so that they will have the correct data prepared for each reporting time point. Accurate data collection will be verified by the evaluator by comparing the grant objectives to the data that was collected, as well as using the data collection tools (assessments and/or surveys) as a guide when analyzing the data.

Coordination of Evaluation Activities: Each evaluation activity will be coordinated with program staff, students, adult family members, and others so that the evaluation process is most effective. Indicators of student achievement and behavior appear in report cards four times each school year. Program Coordinator will obtain data in electronic format to make easier for sharing. We will send data files containing these and all other elements requested by the evaluator at the intervals specified in the evaluation plan approved by the evaluator and the district early in the project year. The evaluation plan follows individual student progress, academic and behavior progress of demographic subgroups, and peer comparisons. The evaluator will create statistically valid comparison groups based on socioeconomic, ELL and ESE status, promotion/retention, and the prior year's standardized testing results. We will monitor activity and fidelity by observations at three levels. The lead counselors will compile student sign-in sheets daily and record the information on spread sheets. The Program Coordinator will keep parent sign-in sheets, teacher professional development sign-in sheets, and all other documents for monthly deliverables. We will also utilize our Grant Technician to oversee data analysis.

Examination of Program Impact: The evaluation design will allow for the measurement of progress made towards meeting each grant objective as described above. The tools that will be used to evaluate program impact include program participant data, analysis of student English Language Arts, Math and Science assessment data and report card grades, program observations, and the analysis of lesson plans and program schedules. Interviews with program staff, results of site visit reports, analysis of student data and grades, academic enrichment data, personal enrichment data, review of the curriculum used, adult family member participant and performance data will also be used as program impact measurement tools. These tools will help to answer specific program impact questions through data analysis including the following: (1) Did the program efforts to address each core subject area result in positive outcomes for program participants? (2) Did the program efforts to address academic enrichment and supplementing the school day curriculum in innovative ways result in positive outcomes for

program participants? (3) Did the program efforts to address adult family members result in positive outcomes for those family members that participated? Using the aforementioned measurement tools to answer these program impact questions through evaluation will help stakeholders to understand whether the program had any substantial impact in a variety of areas. The results will be used to help inform the program about any areas that may need improvement which will positively impact program quality in future years.

Use of Evaluation Results and Sharing Results with Community: Sharing data results to help improve the program and its impact is an important part of the evaluation plan. A true learning community can be fostered through data sharing for the purposes of student and adult family member achievement and improvement. Evaluation results will be shared at each Advisory Board meeting, monthly staff meetings, program leadership meetings, adult family member workshops and events, and with the Principals of each target school. Data results, program operations and evaluator recommendations for program improvement will be covered in these meetings so that the community is well aware of program performance and student-level performance of the 21st CCLC program. Feedback is highly encouraged from the community and stakeholders so that the program can learn more about what is needed and assist in developing other ways to help the students improve academically and socially.

3.6.a. Statewide Standard Objective

See Measureable Objectives and Assessment for details

3.6.b. Objectives for Academic Benchmarks

See Measureable Objectives and Assessment for details

3.6.c. Applicant-Specified Objectives

See Measureable Objectives and Assessment for details

3.7 Approved Program Activities

Activities – To meet our identified needs of low academic achievement and poor interpersonal behaviors, daily student program activities include a snack, social/recreation time, homework time, group literacy, differentiated literacy, and participation in personal enrichment activities. At minimum, an academic/PBL session takes place weekly utilizing S.T.E.A.M. Based upon best practices and recommendations by The Children’s Trust, each daily session contains 45 minutes of self-selected, supervised physical activity. The exercise provides a brain-break and provides the after-school session with a playful, cooperative flavor. Action for Healthy

Kids¹⁵ says, “Physical movement increases blood flow bringing more oxygen to the brain and leads to improved concentration. Brain breaks can energize a group after lunch or relax and calm a class before a test, after lunch or at the end of the day.” Time is also allocated daily for homework which is directly linked to student achievement. Students are grouped by grade level and supervised by a teacher or other staff member for homework help. Best practices and Educators advise this is sufficient daily time. Students can engage in homework, self-study, or independent reading/journaling. Staff assures that each student is actively engaged. With students still grouped by grade, they then have 30 minutes group literacy and 30 minutes differentiated instruction twice per week, for active learning that supports the Florida Standards in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science. The Curriculum has been plotted out for the year and follows the district curriculum map. The academic/PBL requirements of the 21st CCLC grant are met through implementation of **Model-Eliciting Activities (MEAs)** provided by the Department of Education through the Collaborate, Plan, Align, Learn, Motivate, Share (CPALMS) website. CPALMS was created by the Florida Center for Research in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) at Florida State University using evidence-based practice. Participants will explore STEAM and Engineering classroom applications aligned to the Florida State Science Standards. Topics include aligning Science, Engineering, Mathematics with ELA, and digger deeper into authentic applications of the Florida NGSSS for Science. MEAs are small-group activities that encourage students to invent and test models. They look like real-world problems and require students to work in teams to generate solutions. Research shows MEAs support cooperative learning, require students to interpret problem-solving situations, and promote mathematical reasoning¹⁶ We extend STEAM into English Language Arts via MEAs by critical reading of scenarios describing problems, and challenging students to find solutions under given perimeters/constraints. MEAs support critical reading in content areas.¹⁷ Students’ final products consist of written documentation and oral presentation. Research suggests argumentative writing among K-6 students improves through collaborative problem solving. Student interest levels in writing increased with the implementation of MEAs.¹⁸ We have chosen specific MEAs aligned to daytime curriculum and

¹⁵ www.actionforhealthykids.org

¹⁶ Kahveci, M., & Imamoglu, Y. (2007). Interactive learning in mathematics education: Review of Recent Literature. *The Journal of Computer in Mathematics and Science Teaching*, 26(2), 137-153.

¹⁷ Thomas, A., & Bostic, J. (2015). Improving argumentative writing through mathematics and collaboration. *Voices from the Middle*, 22(3), 38-49.

¹⁸ Thomas, A., & Bostic, J. (2015).

instructional timelines. The Program Coordinator, using the district's curriculum maps and instructional sequences in ELA and Math, selected MEAs that focus on the same standards students are learning during the daytime. MEAs are specific to the grade level. MEAs are facilitated by certified teachers and supplemented by hands-on activities to further engage students and increase differentiation. For example, one fifth grade MEA charges students with managing beach equipment rentals. Extension of this MEA could include making scaled, two- or three-dimensional models to test hypotheses and support recommendations. Material costs to implement MEAs are minimal. The plans are available at www.cpalms.org and <http://www.nextgenscience.org>. Each grade will complete 2-3 MEAs per month. These activities support the goal of increased academic achievement.

The remaining 30 – 45 minutes per day is for personal enrichment. EKA has three enrichment objectives: a) improve students' social-emotional behavior, self-esteem, and problem-solving skills; b) improve students' knowledge of and participation in healthy activities (physically and mentally) and nutrition; 3) improve literacy/ reading skills through music training as research conducted by Adam Tierney & Nina Kraus in 2013 shows how music training improves reading skills.

EKA is using proven programs: Positive Action, SPARK, CATCH PE, DOLE 5 A Day, Teeny Violini, and dance which have been factored into the budget. These programs target individual learning styles of elementary children and are vetted through research. A study of Positive Action effects on students with emotional and/or behavioral disorders revealed the following outcomes: a) participants were excited about Positive Action and anxious to attend the sessions; and b) participants received zero suspensions while participating in the program reduced from an aggregate average of one every two weeks prior to the program. Positive Action uses modeling, role-playing, performance feedback, and generalization to promote students' understanding and acceptance of pro-social skills. It is organized in six units by grade level. This sequence allows programs to align entire scope of services behind Positive Action lessons and concepts. Unit topics are: 1) Self-Concept, 2). Positive action for your body and mind, 3). Managing yourself responsibly, 4). Treating others the way you like to be treated, 5). Telling yourself the truth, and 6). Improving yourself continually. Counselors will use curricula to teach social and character development to youngsters. The program components focus on intellectual, physical, and emotional development. The curricula address the hierarchy of needs that prevent problematic behaviors that cause students to struggle socially and academically.

Curricula also include the family which in turn promotes consistent and positive relationships between the school and home. Positive Action is conducted twice a week for 30 minutes in group sessions. Modules are fun and engaging and afford students an opportunity to role play. Students are awarded on demonstrated learned skills from the time they begin each day until the time they leave. A board is mounted on the wall with each student's name with slots to place a star. Everyone receives a yellow star each day for positive behavior (no more than 3 redirections). Those with no redirections receive a red star and those with 1 to 2 redirections receive a blue star. Students with 2 or more red stars receive an incentive at the end of each week. Those with blue stars or 1 red star receive a happy face stamped on the back of their hands. The others receive encouragement and reinforcement to keep being on their best behavior. At the end of each month, a pizza party ends month of positive behaviors with red and blue stars getting an extra slice of pizza. This program aligns with our need to improve interpersonal behaviors which in turn will improve discipline. **SPARKS and CATCH PE** exciting practical and effective tools. Students will exhibit gains in fitness level. Physical activity is structured in such a way that students can apply learned social skills; develop speed and agility skills to be applied in any organized sports; and simply have fun. Activity is for 45 minutes where the first 15 minutes is in free play for warm up purposes for students to run, throw, jump rope, play hopscotch, tug-a-war, climb monkey bars, slide, play hide-and-seek with staff supervision (ratio of 1:15). The remaining 30 minutes will be in an organized structured activity utilizing the SPARK curriculum. Each student will not only be more fit as demonstrated by pre and post testing, but walk away more confident, boosted understanding of school subjects; improved life and social skills; happier; healthier hobbies; and a brighter future. Confidence: As students discover that they have talent in certain physical activities, SPARKS research supports that it translates into better behavior at school. When a child learns something new, it could boost their understanding of school subjects. Improved Social Skills: Utilizing the Positive Action curriculum, students will have an opportunity to apply learned skills such as respect, active listening, teamwork, working with others, honesty, exercise, conflict resolution, anti-bullying, etc. Happier: While sports help to remove some of the tension that could have built during the day, EKA physical activity helps to reduce the stress associated with everyday schoolwork both in and out the classroom as endorphins are released. Research supports that releasing endorphins creates a positive feeling in the body, creating happier kids. Healthier Hobbies/Brighter Future: Afterschool Alliance

research supports that physical activity promotes healthier lifestyle, even reduces obesity 12% and learned skills and habits shape a child's future. Fitness Activities: Activities are structured to promote fitness, fun, teamwork, and cooperative play. Activity Kit Instruction provides 300+ unique non-elimination activities that engage students in fun and motivating age-appropriate activities; provides meaningful movement experiences and themes that target individual fitness and the skill level of all learners; increase MVPA (moderate to vigorous activity) in physical education class; maximizes time on task and learning opportunities; promotes adequate amounts of physical activity now and throughout life. Specific activities may include, but not limited to team sports and skills development in throwing, kicking, striking and fielding games, drop-kick- & catch, inside foot pass, yoga, soccer, kickball and much more. **CATCH PE** is a developmentally appropriate physical education program that reinforces movement skills, sports involvement, physical fitness, social development, skill competency, and cognitive understanding about the importance of lifelong physical activity. CATCH PE instruction is designed to increase motivation and participation in moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) while emphasizing non-elimination games for K-8 children of all skill levels. Research has demonstrated the benefits of MVPA in preventing chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Students will utilize **AfterSchool Kidzlit** and **Reader's Theater (Playbooks)** as evidence based reading resources to support reading fluency, comprehension, and enrichment. Time allotted to group literacy reading is 30 minutes twice a week in groups of no more than 15 students. Group literacy is conducted by a Certified Teacher who implements curriculum effectively while observing interaction of each student as to keep them engaged.

Literacy Activities involve reading with teacher, one-on-one, silent reading, group activities, board games, writing and more. **AfterSchool Kidzlit** is specifically designed students in grades K–8. It allows students to connect stories being read aloud with their own lives. During group literacy, students are either paired or put in groups with support of a Certified Teacher/qualified staff or college student. Students express their feelings and explore big ideas through discussion, drama, art, movement, and writing. Kidzlit promotes literacy growth/ thinking skills and supports social and emotional development. Literature is engaging to increase a student's enjoyment of reading while building their vocabularies, deepening their thoughts and help them work well with others. Each proposed site or mini-lesson begins with literal comprehension, and ends with open-ended constructed response. **Reader's Theater (Playbooks)** takes the reading

experience to a whole different level as students are engaged as if they were in a play, without memorization, props or a stage. Students are each assigned a character role and read their part with expression, meaning and enthusiasm. Within a group of 15, there are 3 groups for students to work together in practicing their role. This format supports "Repeated Guided Oral Reading" where readings in multi-leveled small groups (high, medium and low readers together) is found to be the only proven method of building reading fluency according to research and Reading Rockets.org. Accommodations for Children With Disabilities: The children will be grouped by age and ability levels. Activities will be modified and adapted as needed to accommodate all children.

Studies show that the more kids know, the more they'll show. We will also have arts and music integrated directly into programming. Each site will add attractive opportunities and experiences for the students such as arts and culture education aligned to Hispanic Heritage and Black History months, introduction to second-languages, dance and music education. Individual sample site schedules are uploaded.

3.8 Applicant's Experience and Capacity

Program Administration and Fiscal Management – Shawna Pointville is the Executive Director of EKA. Under her leadership, students within EKA day and after school have shown progress in reading, math and science. FSA scores have steadily been improving under her direction for her after school students. Mrs. Pointville along with Lead Counselors have administrative experience and capacity to move the program forward. Ms. Pointville has over 12 years' experience in education and numerous years' experience managing extended learning centers. With the help of a contracted grants manager, she will be responsible for the accuracy of program records, will authorize payroll and purchases. To be hired Grants Technician has worked more than 23 years in grants management to include the 21st CCLC. She brings a wealth of experience in excel and other data management programs from her previous experience as a provider contracted with local quasi-government programs. The Finance Department manages multiple million in grants. All accounting and personnel records are in accordance with General Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP) standards. EKA undergoes annual audits. The above mentioned education, finance, and audit professionals all help bring their expertise to EKA.

Implementation Experience – EKA is completing another successful year of operating an

after school/ summer program in two locations. The full time, grant-paid, 21st Century Program Coordinator will be knowledgeable about prevention programs, government regulations, policies and procedures, project management, and evaluations. The coordinator will handle purchasing and payroll processing, coordinate community services and partnerships, and research best practices. All school activities are supervised by Lead Counselors under management of the Executive Director, who will work directly with the Program Coordinator. EKA has a grant from The Children's Trust (TCT), quasi-government entity to promote quality out of school time for all children, to help build our after school program to capacity. The 21st CCLC grant will complement such a grant. Each after-school site will have an hourly Lead Counselor assisted by the Program Coordinator. We are in year twelve of running successful programs. We are in year one of implementing a TCT program. Below, is listed Formative Evaluation information from the previous year demonstrating our experience collecting, maintaining, and reporting program data. Success rate of EKA students reveals that 82% show an increase in reading skills while 85% in math. Regularly participating students at EKA Parent surveys in 2017 indicated 100% overall program satisfaction, and 93% reported being "very satisfied" with the programs as a whole. All two of our after school sites serve a high number of economically challenged and academically challenged students. Despite this, we have had 95% combined attendance.

Excel Kids Academy's (EKA) programs are based upon the principles of limitless learning. Its goal is to give each child a warm environment that encourages the development of socialization skills, independence, and a positive self-image. Its experienced teaching staff embraces the view that each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of social, physical, and intellectual development. EKA recognize and fosters an active partnership between home and school. EKA has history with partnerships and support from Miami Children's Initiative, Speech & Physical Therapy, Early Learning Coalition, The Children's Movement, APPLE Accreditation, Department and Children and Families, Family Central, Wells Fargo, Business Leadership Institute, Quality Counts, United Way of Miami, University of Florida Mentoring and Coaching.

3.9 Staffing and Professional Development

Administrative Obligations - 21st Century Program Coordinator along with the Lead Counselors provide curriculum and instruction leadership and program administration. Shawna Pointville provides grant services and program oversight to include assisting in many different

capacities such as helping with proposals, budgets, and amendments. The Program Coordinator, selects the Lead Counselor (site coordinators). Both the Program Coordinator, Administrative Assistant and Lead Counselors offer support through weekly visits. They also monitor fidelity and progress toward objectives. They archive all reporting data on deliverables and work with the third-party evaluator for timely reports to the state. This process has produced complete and on-time reports and deliverables.

Adequate and Appropriate Staff - The Lead Counselors manage the staff, student enrollment, site scheduling, program promotion, attendance monitoring, transportation, snacks, and student discipline. They work closely with school-based administrators to maintain a continuum of goals, procedures, and expectations between the regular school day and the after-school program. Lead Counselors will work five days at three hours per day. Lead Counselors will arrive during the school day and remain available after hours until the last student leaves. They make classroom visits and manage transitions. Their extra hours allow them to prepare attendance and food service documents, handle transportation issues, communicate with daytime teachers, extend marketing, plan parent outreach activities, and support the Program Coordinator.

Lead Counselors are level 2 background screened, CPR and First Aid Certified, and trained in food service guidelines for snack distribution, accounting, and management. These trainings are provided at no cost. The Program Coordinator recruits applicants and screens them.

Staffing Provided in Budget Administrative Assistant helps families seeking information about the program and students needing additional support. Assistant helps the Lead Counselors meet the needs of the staff by providing breaks if necessary, assisting with intake and dismissal, and providing extra supervision on site. We expect for Administrative Assistant to be able to communicate effectively and professionally, orally, and in writing. Bilingual is preferred.

The Program Coordinator procures, prepares, and delivers curricular and instructional materials at all centers. This individual helps secure substitutes for certified teachers who provide small group instruction, interventions, and supervises Family Literacy events with Lead Counselors. The expectations for the Program Coordinator are: a Bachelor's degree preferred, a background in youth development, experience in contractual negotiations, budgeting/payroll, and public speaking. Grant writing experience is highly desirable.

Certified teachers lead the PBL/MEA lessons and facilitate academic interventions. The program budgeted for three to four academic teacher positions per site to keep staff-to-student ratios low. Enrichment staff provides supervision during physical activity time and assist with enrichment and homework. Enrichment staff may be certified teachers, paraprofessionals, substitute teachers, or others with experience working with elementary school students. The uploaded sample site schedules demonstrate the team-teaching model. Using the two-member team format keeps staff-to-student ratios at 1:15. Teachers and staff members will work five days at three hours per day.

We will hire teachers first from the host schools, and then reach out to fill vacancies with teachers from nearby schools. We have also attracted staff from targeted schools and by referral from partnering non-profit groups. Principals recommend substitutes who express interest. All staff are level 2 background screened by FDLE or school district.

Professional Development – All staff will receive copies of and be trained in the EKA. This details safety plans, confidentiality, attendance documentation, payroll documentation, student and parent communications, student behavior management, and site-specific schedules and procedures. Academic teaching staff will be trained in MEAs and lesson extension in differentiated, hands-on PBL activities. Enrichment staff will be trained in the SPARKS, Positive Action, Afterschool Kidzlit, Reader's Theatre (Playhouse), CATCH PE, and DOLE 5 A Day programs. Training will include how to supervise activities and procedures for administering surveys.

3.9.a. Staffing Plan

EKA team of professionals is representative of the community that it serves. Staff is comprised of paid persons who are African American, Haitian and Hispanic. Language barriers are addressed through its employment of bilingual Certified Teachers who are available to implement proposed program. Languages include English, Spanish and Creole. Such qualified staff will implement proposed program. Proposed staff currently are affiliated or employed with EKA. Additional staff will be recruited during the summer to meet the participant ration due to the scheduled increase in students' enrollment. A combination of staff and subcontractors will be used to implement EKA program. A description of each position is below.

PROGRAM POSITIONS

Program Coordinator (PC) identifies, creates and implements high quality programming and curriculum for EKA after school program, built on best practices in the field, innovation, and

sharing of resources. PC supervises EKA youth program team. Program is managed and/ or coordinated by PC who supervises the day to day operations. PC will train staff, troubleshoot, participate in ratio as substitute, attend trainings and meetings, reviews and analyzes reports as well ensures the fidelity of proposed program. All staff reports to PC.

Lead Counselor (LC) provides general oversight of program at his or her location. LC implements program with fidelity and ensure a seamless process. LC ensures compliance with all requirements of funders, including grant reporting: maintaining files, tracking data, report cards, and enrollment numbers. LC ensures effective systems to track youth development and outcomes; regularly evaluates program components to ensure that the requirements of funders are met and that outcomes measurements are produced that can be effectively communicated to the board, funders, and other stakeholders and that can be used to drive program improvement. LC identifies and reach out to community partners to create programming opportunities; builds partnerships with volunteers, community members, and other organizations that provide services to the children and families; formalize these partnerships with MOUs. LC maintains a functioning, safe, positive physical space for the youth, including: ensuring that all needed supplies are available and maintained, furniture and equipment is maintained, maintenance requests are sent, facility is cleaned regularly, and needed resources are identified and obtained. LC reports to PC. **Counselor** is responsible for leading his/her assigned group in various planned activities to support the overall goals of the program; reports to LC; makes all decisions guided by program's policy/procedures and expected deliverables/ practices; provides direct supervision to assigned groups; take daily attendance; coordinates supply request with LC; establishes open lines of communication with parents; assist in planning and implementing the program; attends training/ meetings; consults with LC on concerns related to student(s) development or behavior before speaking with the parent and performs other duties as directed by LC. **Program Assistant (PA)** transfers information on paper into designated electronic data systems such as SAMIS. PA will oversee the entire conversion process, working closely with counselors, program director, subcontractors to ensure compiled data from pre and post-tests, enrollment forms, parent surveys and any other gathered information is accurate and accessible. PA researches data sources to verify validity of information. PA also assist PC in administrative functions such as timely submittal of reports, responses to emails, fidelity of program operations, implementation of program, follow ups and interfaces with subcontractors,

funders and community as appropriate. PA also trains staff on completing required documents; use of any database or software system; maintains databases; and answers any questions users might have regarding the system. PA reports to PC.

Subcontractors enhance program deliverables by performing services outlined in MOU or contracts. Reports to Lead Counselor and may interface with PA.

3.10 Facilities

Environments and Facilities – EKA' off-school sites are equipped with classrooms, media equipment, computer labs, outside fields, designated eating area, and administration offices. Each cluster of grades, (Pre-K, K-1st, 2nd-3rd; 4th-5th), will have its own standard classroom large enough to accommodate up to 25 students. Each site coordinator (Lead Counselor) will have dedicated office space, telephone access, and a laptop computer.

Safety and Accessibility – Each off-school site is completely fenced and accessible only through the front office. All classrooms are equipped with emergency escape windows, maps of exit routes, and EKA's emergency procedure plans. They have regular fire inspections and routinely serviced fire extinguishers. Food storage and service adhere to USDA guidelines. All facilities meet ADA standards for disabilities accommodations. Lead Counselors confer with guidance counselors when enrolling students to insure the program meets special education IEP, 504, or behavior intervention plans. Each site has a familiar and readily accessible venue to co-locate partner services.

3.11 Safety and Student Transportation

Safety Concerns and Supervision – The Lead Counselors keep records of student schedules and location throughout the program hours and have student emergency cards with contact information for adults authorized to access students. Students learn classroom emergency procedures and escape routes on their first day, with monthly refreshers. Classroom doors are locked during program hours. Students are not allowed out of class without a "buddy" and this should only occur in cases of students being escorted to the office for early check-out. Early check-outs should be limited to appointments and family emergencies.

Processes and Transportation – All staff wear EKA or vendor-issued photo ID badges. Volunteers must be registered with EKA and approved after fingerprinting. Valid state ID is required for all campus visitors at the front office. Each student has a backpack tag designating the assigned car number. Car riders are released only to cars with corresponding number tags issued to authorized adults. Both off-school sites are in a predominantly walkable program site.

Parents without vehicles are required to sign their child out or a designated person based on written consent in child's file. No child will be permitted to be dismissed to walk home alone. All students will either be signed out by parent or authorized adult as well as released to cars with corresponding tag number on file.

3.12 Partnership, Collaboration, Sustainability

3.12.a. Partnership

Partnerships – EKA will partner with Miami Children's Museum for S.T.E.A.M. programming, Miami Children's Initiative for Family nutrition and connecting families to community services, Teeny Violini and Inner City Dance Club for performing arts enrichment, Concerned African American Women for parent life skills workshops, School for after school snacks and lunches during full days. FIU Reading Explorers offers Summer Reading Explorers Program (SREP) to help rising kindergarten, first, and second graders improve their reading skills. Students reading at or below reading level receive small-group reading tutoring services provided by certified teachers. The program is tailored to each child's reading ability, is both structured and interactive, and follows an evidence-based reading curriculum. SREP works directly with Children's Trust funded summer programs. Families are required to enroll in one of its participating programs in order to receive SREP services. Tinkerbelle Enterprises provides financial literacy to parents bi-weekly during the school year and monthly during the summer. Carol City Onestop Center provides a slur of services to families. These services include GED/ABE, employment, food assistance, re-engaging high school dropouts back in school, stay in school program for youth at risk of dropping out and training. EKA benefits from a strong community support from local organizations including emergency supports that offer financial assistance, a food pantry and thrift store, educational, and social services.

Partner letters and the descriptive form are attached.

Miami Children's Museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages students of all ages to play, learn, imagine, and create together through S.T.E.A.M. programming
Teeny Violini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching performing arts music – violin is the instrument
Carol City One Stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABE, GED, and ESOL instruction, job placement and support services for family members ages 16+ of EKA participants at no cost to participant, including materials and online support. These

	<p>are ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-stop resource information center for parents
Tinkerbelle Enterprises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials to promote financial literacy • Age appropriate lessons on money management “Money Matters” • Financial literacy classes for families
Concerned African American Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parenting classes • Parent education & advocacy • Monthly workshops for strengthening families may include healthy eating, understand child's IEP, childhood obesity, communicating effectively with teachers and/ or school officials, and more
FIU Reading Explorer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Summer Reading Explorers Program (SREP) helps rising kindergarten, first, and second graders improve their reading skills. Students reading at or below reading level receive small-group reading tutoring services provided by certified teachers. The program is tailored to each child's reading ability, is both structured and interactive, and follows an evidence-based reading curriculum. SREP works directly with selected Children's Trust funded summer programs and Early Childhood Quality Counts Centers.
School Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA Childcare/ After School Meals Program • Daily nutritious snacks
Inner City Dance Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides dance once a week

3.12.b. Collaboration

Consultation with the Schools – Conversations with the school principals began during the onset of this application. Multiple means of communication took place to include emails and on site visit to converse with Principals and key staff. The principals were asked to provide the needs of their students and families, program plans, scheduling, and community partnerships. It was determined to go with personal enrichment activities that match the needs and interests of their respective students as well as academic support. The principals or key staff at each

school will assist with recruiting and selecting students and staff may serve on the Advisory Board.

Continued Collaboration – Communication with participating students’ daytime teachers (including private schools) is written on students’ agendas to record assignments and send messages between home and school. Conversations about homework, behavior, progress, and celebrations are shared via email. Lead Counselors communicate with school-based administrators via email and orally to keep all parties up on program changes or issues. The Program Coordinator includes school-based administrators in emails to after-school staff for a clear line of communication between the day school staff and after-school staff. All staff members involved are working together for the improvement of the school and ensuring that the program aligns with the School Improvement Plan.

3.12.c. Sustainability

During years three to five of the grant, EKA will continue using non-consumable materials and equipment purchased during the first two years. It will benefit from staff training in years one and two of the grant and continue community-based education adapted and provided by our partnerships. At the end of the project, we plan to maintain counselors payroll with TCT, private funds (savings) generated from retail activities or other funding opportunities through local, state and federal grants.