

Full Report will be passed out at the EOC Meeting, October 10, 2016.



## South Carolina Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Programs: Year 1 Report *Executive Summary*

The South Carolina General Assembly created the South Carolina Community Block Grant for Education Pilot Program by Proviso 1.94 in the 2014-15 General Appropriation Act. The purpose of the proviso was to encourage and sustain partnerships between a community and its public school district for the implementation of innovative, state-of-the-art education initiatives and models to improve learning. Any public school, including a charter school, was eligible to submit a grant application. The proviso asserts that the success of the grant program is best served when there is vigorous community support, which is integral to the development and implementation on innovative initiatives for young people. Through this proviso, one million dollars was allocated for the block grants with direct allocations to school districts. Grants awarded were to be implemented for a period of one year beginning July 1, 2015 until June 30, 2016.

Per the proviso, the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) was charged with reviewing the grant reports submitted upon completion of the grant period and examining of the implementation initiatives/models. The EOC is also responsible for highlighting the accomplishments and identifying common challenges of the initiatives in order to share the lessons learned with the state’s public education community.

### 2015-16 Community Block Grants Recipients

District	Beaufort	Charleston	Clarendon 1	Colleton	Jasper
Project Topic	Beaufort Community Learning Program- Extended learning day	Charleston Promise Neighborhood Learning Community – Extended learning day through STEAM	STEM, Project-based Learning and AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination)	Robotics with First Lego League	STEM 5E Model
School(s) Poverty Rating	82.5%	99.5%	98.2%	89.3%	87.9%
Number of Schools involved in the Project	(1) Beaufort Elementary	(2) Chicora Elementary (Partial magnet in communications); Sanders Clyde Elementary	(1) Scotts Branch Middle and St Paul Elementary	(5) All elementary schools in district: Bells, Cottageville Forest Hills, Henderson, Northside	(1) Hardeeville-Ridgeland Middle

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		(Arts magnet)			
Grade Level	K-5	CD-5	6, 7, 8	4, 5	6, 7, 8
# Expected Students	100	1060	193	150	150
# Actual Students	52	264	187	93	94
% Actual vs. Expected Students Served	52%	25%	97%	62%	63%
Grant Amount Awarded	\$163,500	\$249,595	\$242,237	\$144,668	\$200,000
Matching Funds as self-reported	\$67,400	\$370,559	\$37,000	\$77,000	\$61,000

### Highlights of 2015-16 Community Block Grants

District	Highlights
<b>Beaufort</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Students in the program showed gains in math and reading and greater gains than students not in the program.</li> <li>➤ The relationship and communication among the families/students in the housing apartment community, the NOC and the school has greatly increased.</li> <li>➤ The NOC has broadened its influence in the community and continues to make strides with the lowest performing students in the high poverty area in the city of Beaufort.</li> </ul>
<b>Clarendon</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The partnerships created in the district were numerous and should be sustained for future work in the district.</li> <li>➤ Sixth and seventh grade science scores show the most promise for student achievement and interest</li> <li>➤ Based on the Gallup Poll Student Survey, Clarendon 1 students show slightly more positive perceptions on engagement, hope, entrepreneurial aspiration and career/financial literacy.</li> </ul>
<b>Colleton</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The First League Lego (FLL) robotics curriculum was implemented with fidelity.</li> <li>➤ Student scores in math as measured by MAP showed 93% of students saw gains.</li> <li>➤ In its first year of operation, the district was able to host a regional FLL event and three teams progressed to the state finals.</li> </ul>
<b>Charleston</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A quality assessment program was implemented to assist the partners in implementing a high quality program for after school programs and will be used in future grant implementations.</li> <li>➤ The partnership initiated in Charleston has created a greater awareness of the need and increased the communication among partners for extended learning programs.</li> <li>➤ Academic results were mixed however increased focus on alignment between in-school and extended learning should show more promising results.</li> </ul>

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<b>Jasper</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ The instructional model and curriculum used in the project were of high quality and research based.</li><li>➤ Mixed results were shown on the student however over 90 percent indicated they would recommend the program.</li><li>➤ Academic results were mixed but scores in 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade math showed a potential for student growth in math.</li></ul>
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### **Conclusions/Recommendations**

Overall, the recommendations for future community block grant initiatives are summarized below.

1. School districts served as the fiscal agents for the grant funds allocated from the Education Oversight Committee for the purpose of implementing the grants as described in the grant proposal. School district superintendents and financial officers signed an Assurance of Award form to comply with state financial regulations. One hundred percent of the funds were dispersed to districts at the beginning of the grant period. In order to ensure data requested of districts is complete and submitted on a timely basis, future grant opportunities should require school districts to submit final expenditure requests at the conclusion of the grant period for some portion of the remaining funds or allocate funds to districts on an incremental basis throughout the grant period.
2. A recommendation for further discussion is to consider a 2 to 3 year grant program to ensure that school districts/community partnerships have built a strong foundation to sustain the grant program. In addition, data from a single year most likely will not provide the long-term gains regarding goals outlined in the grant. However, with multi-year implementation of the programs described for this grant, broader implications with greater defined results could be obtained.
3. In future grant opportunities, the evaluation component of the grant should be reviewed and appropriate changes be made by the district as to the measurable goals and corresponding data needed to measure the goals before a grant is awarded.
4. The proviso in place that initiated this grant opportunity for schools and community partners had as its primary purpose to encourage and sustain partnerships between a community and its local public school district or school for the implementation of innovative, state-of-the-art education initiatives and models to improve student learning. While the goal is laudable, it may be too broad and general to provide specific recommendations and conclusions for a set of grants. Considerations for future grant opportunities to promote innovativeness and community partnerships may need to take a more focused approach offering districts flexibility but with specific, strategic and targeted initiative.
5. A pattern seen in the five projects was a need for a closer alignment of the content/skills in the extended learning school to the in-school lessons. The content and skills outlined in the academic standards for a grade level could be better articulated in the extended learning programs. This would provide opportunities for greater practice and/or remediation in a specific skill for a content area as well as a practical application of the skill/content.