

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# ASAS EVALUATION REPORT 2022-2023

## OVERVIEW

This presentation serves as After-School All-Stars' (ASAS) external evaluation report for the final year of its three-year 21st Century Community Learning Center (21CCLC) grant (2020-21 through 2022-23) from the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). ASAS served a total of 297 participants in 21CCLC-funded programs at four locations during the 2022-23 school year.

The evaluation uses a mixed-methods approach, using quantitative and qualitative data sources. Findings and recommendations are based on primary data collection from the staff and students participating in ASAS's afterschool program and secondary data analysis of student-level information collected by ASAS and DC Public Schools (DCPS) throughout the 2022-23 school year. Where data are available for all three years of the grant, we compare findings across years.

## PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- A. What are the characteristics of students participating in ASAS during the 2022-23 school year and what are their participation patterns?
- B. To what extent has ASAS met its grant objectives?
- C. What feedback do staff have on job satisfaction and their social and emotional well-being?
- D. What are ASAS's programmatic and administrative strengths?
- E. What are the barriers to program implementation and how are they addressed by staff?

## KEY FINDINGS

### ENROLLMENT & ATTENDANCE

All four schools are "Title I" with large at-risk populations. Additional student demographics varied from site to site. Overall, students were in grades 5-8, 51% female, 97% African-American, 18% enrolled in special education, and 65% qualified as "at-risk" per OSSE.

Attendance in 2022-23 varied from 1 to 153 days during the school year, with an average of attending 62 days and with 62% considered "regularly attending participants" by OSSE definition. Across the three years of the grant, ASAS was able to increase the total number of students served from 84 students in Year 1 (a fully virtual program year) to 297 students in Year 3, nearly meeting pre-COVID numbers. Student retention challenges during the school day and other factors still continue to affect regular participation rates.

### STAFF PERSPECTIVES

UCC administered an online survey to ASAS and partner staff in April-May 2023. The survey included questions on staff best practices as well as staff's social and emotional well-being, sense of belonging, job satisfaction, and perspectives on resources and supports provided by ASAS. We received 17 completed surveys, for a response rate of 59%. Staff best practices and recommendations included creating safe spaces for students and colleagues; prioritizing SEL learning throughout the program;

intentionally building positive, trusting relationships with students and colleagues; and engaging students through hands-on activities, relationships, and staff participation.

When asked about their own roles and job satisfaction, staff reported generally favorable experiences. All staff agreed or strongly agreed that they have opportunities for professional growth and that leadership facilitates activities for staff help build relationships with each other. Less staff agreed they had a sufficient variety of activities or sufficient staff for the program. Additionally, there was high agreement that staff and partners have timely access to materials, sufficient training and planning time, and receive the support they need from ASAS.

ASAS staff also reflected on lessons learned to share advice they would give to other programs, including increasing partner integration into the program with a group check-in meeting at each site between ASAS and partner staff.

### ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Following national trends post-COVID, this program has continued to move away from a prescriptive "academic power hour" devoted to homework help and academic support. This may affect this program's impact on academic indicators. Still, regular participants in 2022-23 far exceeded the grant objective to improve their course grades in math and ELA from fall to spring.

## KEY FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

### SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT & BEHAVIOR

School records revealed regularly attending participants in ASAS had significantly higher school attendance rates and lower suspension rates than those attending at low levels. When we asked school day teachers to evaluate their regularly attending ASAS students, they reported 74% of improved (or didn't need to improve) in the area of homework completion from the beginning to end of the school year. They were slightly less positive about participants' progress in the areas of classroom behavior and attentiveness. Notably, teacher survey response rates were low and likely due to the collection of unnecessary duplicate surveys. The grant objectives for homework completion, attentiveness, and behavior were not met.

### PARENT ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

ASAS hosted several events for students and families to participate and some parents volunteered their time to help make them a success. Additional events for students were executed in partnership with community partners.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- I** > **Continue to offer staff opportunities** for team-building, opportunities for cross-site collaboration and sharing of best practices, and opportunities for reward and recognition. Include partner staff in these opportunities whenever possible.
- II** > **Include new partner staff in site-level meetings** prior to each term so that staff know each other and their roles, know the rules and protocols of the site, and can start out with a strong foundation as a team..
- III** > **Include more varied and focused academic enrichment activities** to align with OSSE's new grant rules on required academic components, GPRA measures, and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- IV** > **Consider the feasibility of collecting program attendance data** in terms of actual hours attended (i.e., time in/time out) rather than daily present/absent tracking to comply with OSSE's new requirements for hourly attendance thresholds.
- V** > **Work with evaluator to develop evaluation plan** for new grant cycle that includes the tracking of "within school year" goals and objectives aligned to GPRAs and KPIs, so that progress can be measured for all program participants and not just those who meet specific prior-year criteria.

## GRANT OBJECTIVES

### COURSE GRADES

- 1** **45%** of regularly attending participants will improve course grades from fall to spring.

ASAS met and exceeded the goal set for Grant Objective 1 for at least 45 percent of regularly attending participants to improve their course grades from fall to spring. They did so in all three years of the grant. In some years, regularly attending participants exceeded the goal by about 20 percentage points.

### CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

- 2** **80%** of regularly attending participants will improve homework completion from fall to spring.
- 3** **75%** of regularly attending participants will improve classroom behavior and attentiveness from fall to spring.

ASAS met and exceeded Objectives 2 and 3 related to improved homework completion, classroom behavior and attentiveness in Year 2.

ASAS came close to meeting these objectives in Year 3, but was short by a few percentage points.

Surveys were not administered to teachers in Year 1 due to it being a fully virtual year.

### PARENT EVENTS & COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- 4** **AT LEAST TWO** family members of program participants will serve on a program planning and/or advisory committee.
- 5** ASAS will recruit and engage **AT LEAST TWO** community partners to provide expanded capacity for program offerings.

ASAS was able to engage parents in program planning/advisory roles in Years 1 and 2, but failed to do so in Year 3.

They met and exceeded Objective 5 to recruit at least two community partners in all three years.