



# 21st Century Community Learning Centers

## Lessons From the Field: Serving All Students, Including Students With Disabilities



# Glossary

**21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program:** a program established by Congress and administered by the U.S. Department of Education that “supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. The program helps students meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math; offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs; and offers literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children” (U.S. Department of Education, <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html>).

**4 C’s of 21st century learning:** critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity. These learning and innovation skills are included in the “Framework for 21st Century Learning,” developed by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. See <http://www.nea.org/tools/52217.htm> and <http://www.p21.org/our-work/p21-framework>.

## A

**accommodation:** a term often used in education to describe a modification in a policy, practice or procedure made for the purpose of supporting the participation of students with disabilities. Accommodations promote access to learning, recreation, leisure or work. See “reasonable modification.”

***Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA):*** This law describes “a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities.” The *ADA* requires that people with disabilities have access to public activities and sites so that they have equal opportunities to participate in daily life. All federal, state and local government premises and activities must be accessible to everyone, regardless of ability. Likewise, any program that receives federal funds must meet *ADA* requirements, and programs that receive state funds must meet any additional state requirements for including persons with disabilities.



YOU FOR YOUTH

All *Lessons From the Field* guides on inclusion, as well as other professional learning and technical assistance tools for 21st CCLCs, are available on the U.S. Department of Education’s You for Youth (Y4Y) website at <https://y4y.ed.gov>.

## C

**communication access:** Under *Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act*, programs receiving federal funding must, without charge, ensure that communication with students and adults with disabilities is as effective as communication with others. This includes providing “auxiliary aides and services” to support communication when needed, such as accessible signage, sign language interpreters and augmentative communication systems.

**communication system:** methods used to support speech and/or language (oral or written) production. This includes gestures, sign language, paper and pencil, communication boards or books, speech generating devices, and electronic communication aids.

**community of practice (CoP):** a group of people who agree to interact regularly; they share a common desire to improve the ways they learn about and implement evidence-based practices to solve a persistent problem or improve practice in an area that is important to them.

**Coordination of Services Team (COST):** a model of support that enables afterschool program leaders to participate in a comprehensive partnership of school administrators, special education staff, teachers, families, community partners and agency staff who regularly meet to discuss individual student needs. A COST can provide 21st CCLC leaders with information that helps them support students with special needs who are already in their programs, or refer students with special needs into their programs to enhance their development and success.

## D

**developmental assets:** a set of skills, experiences, relationships, and behaviors that enable young people to develop into successful and contributing adults.

**developmental delay:** as defined by the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*, “delays defined by the state and as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures in one or more of the following areas: physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, or adaptive development.”

**differentiated environment:** in the context of 21st CCLC programs, differences between program and school-day settings that reflect the purposes of each as students move from one set of expectations to another.

**differentiated support:** in the context of 21st CCLC programs, intentional changes to activities or environments for the purpose of ensuring that a particular student can participate. Support can be differentiated according to context (e.g., a student might need an aide during the school day but not in a 21st CCLC program) or individual need (e.g., a student who is overwhelmed by group activities might be able to participate if there’s an option of doing all or part of the activity alone or in a smaller group).

**disability:** a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. The *Americans with Disabilities Act* defines a person with a disability as “any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment.”

**disability culture:** a set of artifacts, beliefs, and expressions created by people with disabilities to describe their life experiences (Brown, 2002).<sup>1</sup>

## E

**eligible entity:** a local educational agency; community-based organization; another public or private entity; or a consortium of two or more such agencies, organizations or entities.

## F

**facility:** all or any portion of buildings, structures, sites, complexes, equipment, rolling stock or other conveyances, roads, walks, passageways, parking lots, or other real or personal property, including the site where the building, property, structure, or equipment is located, according to the *Americans with Disabilities Act*.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):** federal legislation that protects a student's education records and other personally identifiable information. The law applies to all educational agencies and institutions that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. *FERPA* gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level.

**family engagement:** building relationships through activities such as helping parents and caregivers develop their own skills, offering educational activities for families and students together, bringing family members into leadership positions with the 21st CCLC program, and connecting families with schools and resources in the community.

**free appropriate public education (FAPE):** Under Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act* and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, all students with disabilities who need special education and related services will receive a free and appropriate public education. Free means that all eligible students with disabilities will be educated at public expense. Appropriate means that children with disabilities are entitled to an education that is tailored and planned to their needs. Public refers to the public school system. Education must be provided to every eligible school-age child with a disability to prepare for future education, employment and independent living.

**fundamental alteration:** a change so significant that it alters the essential nature of the services or program offered.

## I

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** federal legislation that requires public schools to provide a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment to all children with disabilities through an individualized education program (IEP). *IDEA* governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.

**inclusion:** attitudes and practices that support students with disabilities, even significant disabilities, and give all an opportunity to participate. It is based on the belief that people have the right to be included with their peers in age-appropriate activities throughout life. The defining features of inclusion are access, participation and supports. The desired result is to provide students with a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and opportunities to develop skills and knowledge that will help them reach their full potential.

**individualized assessment:** a requirement of the *Americans with Disabilities Act* and Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act* in which programs make a determination about whether the program can meet the needs of a specific student with a disability without fundamentally altering the nature of the program or incurring significant difficulty or expense. The assessment must be based on the individual student, the program environment and available resources.

**individualized education program (IEP):** a written plan that is developed, reviewed and revised in accordance with the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* to meet the unique educational needs of a child with a disability. An IEP includes the following: a statement of the child’s present levels of academic achievement and functional performance; a statement of measureable annual goals; a description of how the child’s progress toward goals will be measured and when periodic reports of the child’s progress will be provided; a statement of the special education services and supplementary aides to be provided to the child; an explanation of the extent to which, if any, the child will not participate with peers in general education settings; and the projected date services will begin and the anticipated frequency, duration, and location of the services.

## L

**least restrictive environment:** a requirement in the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* in which students with disabilities receive educational services with their peers without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate.

## M

**multiple means of representation:** a guiding principle of universal design for learning that states students perceive and comprehend information in different ways and therefore information should be presented in varying ways. When material is presented in multiple ways, students are better able to make connections among various concepts.

## O

**Office for Civil Rights (OCR):** an agency within the U.S. Department of Education whose mission is “to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation through vigorous enforcement of civil rights” by enforcing anti-discrimination laws, such as the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, in programs that receive funding from the Department. <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>

**Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS):** the office within the U.S. Department of Education whose mission is “to provide leadership to achieve full integration and participation in society of people with disabilities by ensuring equal opportunity and access to, and excellence in, education, employment and community living.”

**out-of-school time (OST):** hours outside of the regular school day, often used for student recreation and enrichment activities that augment regular school-time instruction. Out-of-school time can occur before or after school, or in the summer. OST programs include traditional programs that operate during afternoon hours and comprehensive efforts that respond to the needs of children, youth, and parents during evenings, weekends, summers, and holidays by offering activities that help students grow, learn and develop. The National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) defines out-of-school time as encompassing “a wide range of program offerings for young people that take place before school, after school, on weekends, and during the summer and other school breaks.”

## P

**parent:** a person who is legally responsible for the child’s welfare [*ESEA*, Section 910 (31)].

**project-based learning (PBL):** a student-directed learning strategy by which young learners explore community-related topics of high interest to them through in-depth learning experiences lasting more than three days. This approach enables youth to tackle authentic problems and create solutions; the process gives students increased control over their learning.

## R

**reasonable modification:** a modification in a policy, practice or procedure that is necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability but does not fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or activity. Under a regulatory provision implementing *Title II* of the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, public entities are required to make such modifications unless they can demonstrate that the modifications would constitute a fundamental alteration. Note: Definitions provided on the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) website (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>) state that the term “reasonable accommodation” is sometimes used incorrectly in place of “reasonable modification.” According to OCR, “reasonable accommodation” is “a term used in the employment context to refer to modifications or adjustments employers make to a job application process, the work environment, the manner or circumstances under which the position held or desired is customarily performed, or that enable a covered entity’s employee with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment.” See “accommodations” and “individualized assessment.”

**Rehabilitation Act of 1973:** legislation that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in federally funded programs, including nonprofit and for-profit agencies, public schools, and extracurricular or religious programs. See “Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*.”

## S

**Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*:** a section of the law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in federally funded programs, including nonprofit and for-profit agencies, public schools, and extracurricular or religious programs. Section 504 requires that the needs of students with disabilities be met as adequately as the needs of students without disabilities. It covers all students with disabilities, regardless of whether they qualify for special education services.

**Section 504 plan:** a plan designed to remove barriers to learning. The plan describes specific modifications, supports or services provided in general education settings to students who have disabilities that limit their ability to learn and participate in general education classrooms but do not qualify for an individualized education program (IEP). Section 504 plans also describe services and changes to the learning environment that can help meet the needs of the child as adequately as other students. Each school district develops its own format for Section 504 plans, which generally include descriptions of specific modifications, accommodations, supports or services; names of the professionals who will provide each service; and the name of the person responsible for ensuring that the Section 504 plan is implemented.

**self-regulation:** the ability to identify and manage our emotions and behavior in response to situations, including coping with difficult situations.

**social-emotional development:** an individual's ability to interact and establish positive relationships with others and understand their experiences.

**social-emotional learning:** the process through which people of all ages gain life skills that support their social-emotional development; these skills help people manage emotions, resolve conflicts, make responsible decisions, set goals, feel and show empathy, and build and maintain positive relationships. <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/>

## T

**transition services:** a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability, based on the individual child's needs. These services take into account a child's strengths, preferences and interests.

## U

**undue burden:** a significant difficulty or expense to the program.

**universal design for learning (UDL):** an approach to creating curriculum and materials that can be accessed by all students, with and without disabilities. Its key features are (1) a variety of presentation methods; (2) multiple means of engaging, challenging and motivating students; and (3) flexible ways for students with differing abilities to demonstrate their learning.

## W

**whole child:** the combined aspects of a child, including the intellectual, social, emotional and physical attributes that contribute to a child’s well-being and healthy development. In education, the whole child concept focuses on long-term development and success for young people and requires integration between schools, families and communities.

## Y

**You for Youth (Y4Y):** the U.S. Department of Education’s online professional learning and technical assistance portal for 21st Century Community Learning Centers programs, available at <https://y4y.ed.gov>.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> S. E. Brown, “What Is Disability Culture?,” *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 22, no. 2 (2002): 34-50  
<http://dsq-sds.org/article/view/343/433>.



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**Interested in more information on inclusion?**  
*Lessons From the Field* topical guides on inclusion are available at <https://y4y.ed.gov>.

This publication was produced under U.S. Department of Education Contract No. ED-ESE-13-C-0071 with Leed Management Consulting, Inc. (LMCi). The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any product, commodity, service or enterprise mentioned in this publication is intended or should be inferred.

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### Suggested Citation

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Academic Improvement, “Glossary,” *Lessons From the Field: Serving All Students, Including Students With Disabilities*, Washington, D.C., 2016. Available at <https://y4y.ed.gov>.