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The Completely KIDS Liberty Project 2014-2015 Evaluation Results

Nebraska Center for Justice Research, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Completely KIDS

Category One Consulting

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The Completely KIDS Liberty Project

2014-2015 Evaluation Results



In contract with the Nebraska Center of Justice Research at the University of Nebraska – Omaha

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Completely KIDS (CK) program at Liberty Elementary was evaluated to determine its relationship with youth program outcomes. The data were analyzed and the report was compiled by Category One Consulting.

- On average students attended Completely KIDS 142 days, which is substantially higher than the previous two years.
- Students and parents rated the program very highly, both in terms of satisfaction and student outcomes.
- Students who attended more days of CK attended more days of school compared to students who attended less days of CK.
- Pre-K through second grade students who attended more days of CK tended to have better math and reading grades.
- Parents who attended more hours of CK classes tended to have students with higher math grades.
- Small changes to the program evaluation could significantly improve the evaluation itself and its ability to find impact.

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Completely KIDS (CK) is a nonprofit, youth-serving organization with the mission to educate and empower kids and families to create a safe, healthy, successful and connected community. CK operates a school-based program at Liberty Elementary School in the Omaha Public School District (OPS). The program has both student and family components.

CK programming was offered for a total of 200 days during the 2014-15 school year, including both school and non-school days. Student programming included academic lessons and activities (i.e., STEM, literacy) and enriching activities (i.e., field trips). Students received a hot meal every day of the program and weekend food bags. In addition, the program hosts numerous family nights throughout the year and provides education, career development, and health and wellness class to parents.

This report provides an overview of findings from the 2014-15 evaluation. Numerous measures were used to evaluate the impact of CK. Table 1 provides an overview of these measures.

Table 1. Student and parent measures used to evaluation the impact of the program

STUDENTS	PARENTS
CK Attendance (days)	CK Attendance (hours)
Student Survey (3rd – 6th grade only)	Parent Survey (one completed per child in CK)
School Attendance	
Tardies	
Reading Grade	
Math Grade	

PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

This report will first describe each of the program variables. Specifically, this section will review the student population in terms of their demographic characteristics and school outcomes (e.g., absences, grades). Next, we will examine both student and parent program attendance in terms of attendance frequency and mean number of days attended. Finally, we will explore the student and parent surveys for underlying constructs and examine how each group rates each of the constructs.

STUDENTS IN THE PROGRAM

One hundred eighty-one students were recorded as having attended 30 or more days of CK throughout the 2014-15 school year¹. There were slightly more boys (54%) in the program compared to girls (46%).

¹ To be consistent with state and federal policies for Out-of-School Time programming, we exclude students who attended CK for less than 30 days of programming.

The ethnicities of students in CK programming were represented in the following way: 66% Hispanic, 16% Black or African American, 12% White, 3% two or more races, 1% American Indian or Alaskan Native, and less than 1% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

Students were fairly evenly distributed across grades, however, Pre-K students were the least represented and second graders were the most represented among the program participants (see Table 2). For subsequent analyses, students will be categorized as younger (Pre-K to 2nd grade) or older (3rd to 6th grade) due to differences in grading structure. Pre-K through 2nd grade students are graded on a Beginning to Advanced scale while 3rd through 6th grade students are graded on an A to F scale. All grades were quantified (i.e., converted to a number scale²) to allow relational analyses to be conducted between variables. Students' school-related descriptive statistics broken down by grade group are provided in Table 3.

Table 2. Breakdown of student CK attendance by grade level

Grade	# Attendees
Pre-K	7
Kindergarten	13
First	25
Second	40
Third	32
Fourth	21
Fifth	25
Sixth	18
Other/Missing	7
TOTAL	181

The two grade groups were similar in their number of school absences, both missing about 6 days during the school year. Grades varied widely among the students. Most commonly PreK-2nd grade students were graded as proficient in both math and reading. Most commonly 3rd through 6th grade students were graded with a B in math and a C in reading.

² Pre-K-2nd: A = 4.0, B = 3.0, C = 2.0, D = 1.0, F = 0.0; 3rd-6th: Advanced = 4.0, Proficient = 3.0, Basic = 2.0, Below Basic = 1.0, Beginning = 0.0.

Table 3. School-related descriptive statistics by grade group

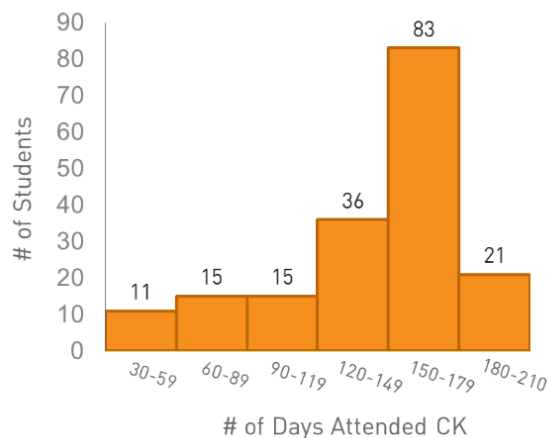
	N	Mean	Mode	
Grade Group		School Absences	Math Grade	Reading Grade
Pre-K to 2nd	81	6.69	Proficient	Proficient
3rd to 6th	100	6.12	B	C

Note: Only two students in the data had recorded tardies, thus, tardies were not able to be analyzed further.

STUDENT CK ATTENDANCE

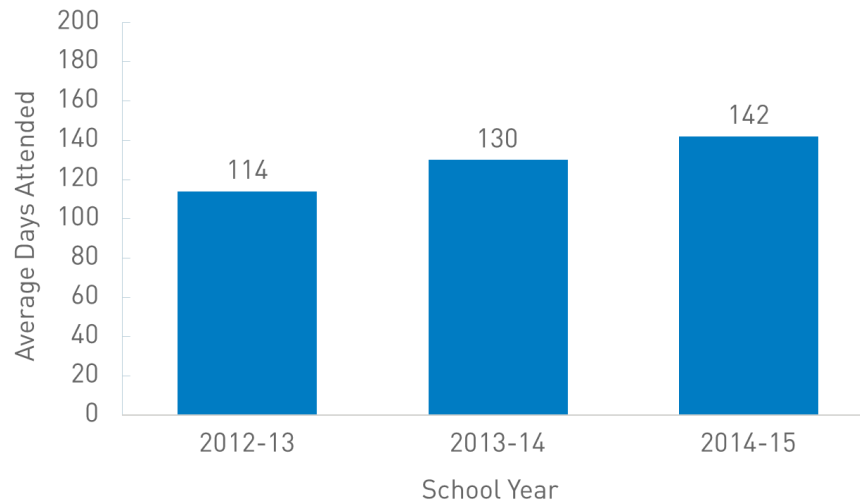
On average the 181 students attended CK 142 days throughout the course of the 2014-15 school year. The frequencies of student CK attendance are provided in Figure 1. The majority of students attended CK 150 or more days throughout the school year. Female students (152 days on average) were found to attend at somewhat higher rates compared to male students (143 days on average). The number of days students attended CK did not differ according to their ethnicity.

Figure 1. Frequency of student CK attendance



Attendance days in the Liberty CK program have steadily increased over the past three years, with attendance at 130 days in 2013-14 and 114 days in 2012-13 (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Increase in CK attendance over time

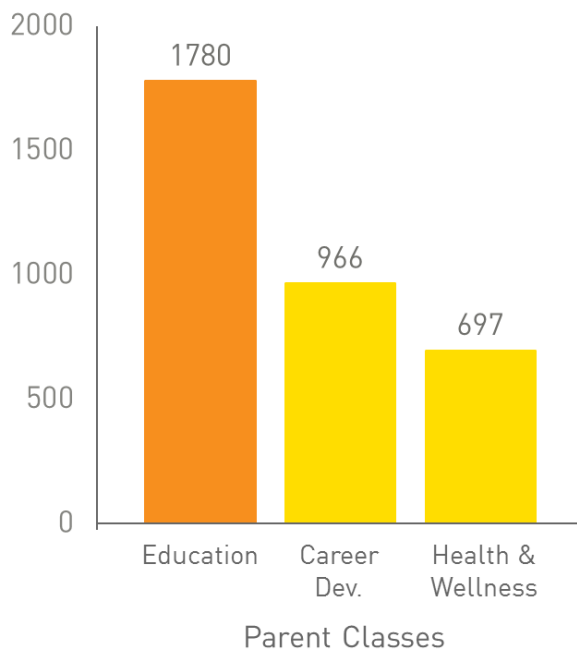


PARENT CK ATTENDANCE

Parents had the opportunity to participate in three different types of classes at CK: education, career development, and health and wellness. Eighty parents attended CK classes throughout the school year. On average they participated in 36 hours of classes, which is lower than last year, 2013-14 (45 hours).

Figure 3 depicts the number of hours parents participated in each type of class. As the figure illustrates, education classes were the most attended by parents. In fact, they were attended nearly twice as much as any other class type.

Figure 3. Parent CK Attendance by class type



STUDENT AND PARENT SURVEYS

Survey Overview. Third through sixth grade students and parents completed surveys assessing their attitudes and perceptions of the CK program. Pre-K to 2nd grade students were not surveyed due to the gap between their reading capabilities and the complexity of survey items.

Students completed a survey composed of 23 questions. Response categories for the student survey were: 'yes' = 2, 'sometimes' = 1, and 'no' = 0. The parent survey was composed of 20 questions. The items were rated on a Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The surveys asked students and parents about their satisfaction with CK and their perceptions of student outcomes (i.e., "my child" in the parent survey and "me" in the student survey).

Factor Analysis. Two factor analyses using Promax rotation confirmed the existence of two factors (i.e., constructs) in each of the surveys: one measuring satisfaction with CK and one measuring perceived student outcomes. The surveys constructs were highly correlated with each other such that students who rated CK high also rated their outcomes high, $r(79) = .39, p < .05$ and parents who rated CK high rated their child's outcomes high, $r(157) = .87, p < .05$.

See Table 4 for example items in each construct for both the student and parent surveys.

Table 4. Example items in the CK and student constructs in the student and parent surveys

SURVEY CONSTRUCTS		
	CK Satisfaction Satisfaction with the CK program	Student Outcomes Perceptions of students outlook, capabilities, and resources
Student 0 = no 1 = sometimes 2 = yes	- CK teaches me how to make good decisions. - I feel like I matter at CKs.	- I take responsibility for my actions. - I set goals for myself.
Parent 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree)	- CKs promotes academic success. - CKs teaches my child to care about others' feelings.	- My child thinks it is important to help other people. - My child feels good about his/her future.

Outcomes. Figures 4 and 5 depict the mean scores of CK satisfaction and student outcome perceptions for both students and parents respectively. As can be seen in the graph, both students and parents rated CK satisfaction and student outcomes very high. In fact, 25% of students and 53% of parents answered all of the survey items as positively as possible, with all yeses or strongly agrees.

In both cases, scores were slightly higher for items asking about CK satisfaction compared to student outcomes, however, the differences were not statistically significant ($ps. >.40$) These findings are highly

similar to 2013-14 when the survey also came back very positively. Inconsistently with 2013-14, however, older students did not respond more negatively on the survey compared to younger students.

Figure 4. Student mean scores of CK Satisfaction and Student Outcomes

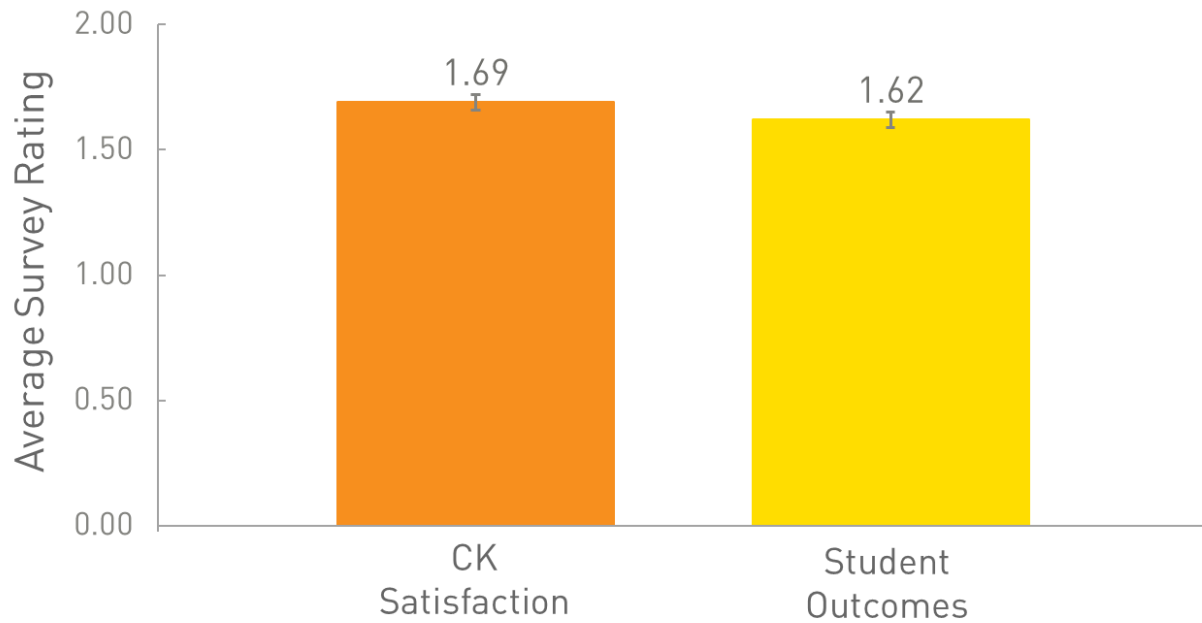
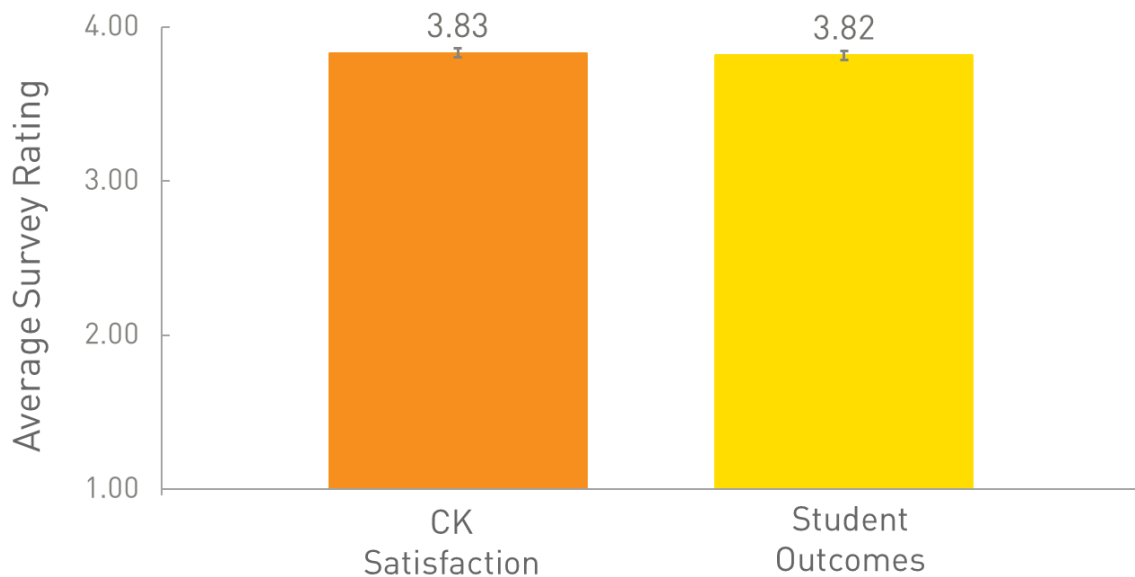


Figure 5. Parent mean scores of CK Satisfaction and Student Outcomes

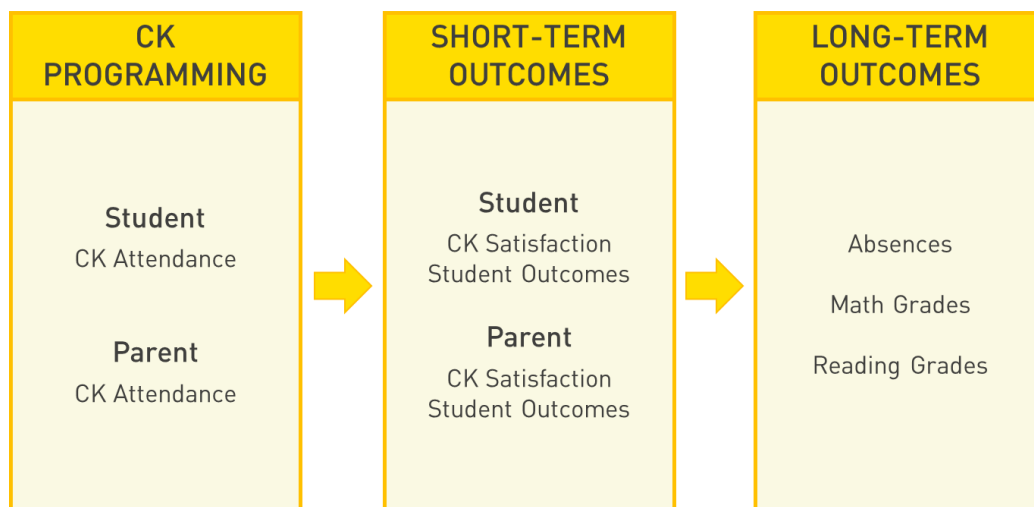


PROGRAM IMPACT

MEASUREMENT MODEL

Using the results from the factor analysis as well as the other program variables, an analysis model was constructed to frame up the analyses examining the relationships between CK programming and student outcomes. The model is provided in Figure 6. As the figure depicts, student and parent CK attendance were analyzed to determine their relationships with short- and long-term outcomes. Short-term outcomes included the two measures extracted from the program survey: satisfaction with CK programming and perceptions of student outcomes. The long-term outcomes were all school-related and included school absences, math grades, and reading grades.

Figure 6. Model for examining relationships between CK Programming and Short-/Long-term Outcomes



In order to examine these relationships, data from multiple sources (i.e., Student OPS data, student and parent CK attendance data, student and parent survey data) were merged using Student ID as the unique identifier. This data merge resulted in a large amount of missing data. Thus, in the following analyses examining relationships between CK programming and short- and long-term outcomes, the sample size was often quite small, inhibiting the ability to find significant differences if they existed.









In order to maximize the meaningful insights that could be drawn from the data, the analyzed relationships were categorized into one of three groups according to their level of significance. Specifically, relationships that were statistically significant ($ps < .05$), approaching significance (ps between .06 and .20), and non-significant ($ps > .21$).




In order to more fully examine the effect of CK programming on student outcomes, data collection should be optimized to maximize the number of matches between student and parent CK attendance and student outcomes in the data utilizing a valid unique identifier (i.e., Student ID). This will increase the sample size for relational analyses which will increase the likelihood of finding significant results and showing impact.

STUDENT CK ATTENDANCE AND OUTCOMES

Overall Findings. First, the relationship between student CK attendance and program short-and long term outcomes will be examined. Student CK attendance was examined as a dichotomous variable by grouping all students who attended less than 130 days and all students who attended 130 days or more to achieve low attendance and high attendance student groups³. Table 5 depicts a high level visual of the findings where colored dots indicate the strength of the relationship (i.e., significant, approaching significance, and non-significant) between the short- and long-term outcomes and student CK attendance. More specific information including group means is provided in Table 6.

Table 5. The effect of low versus high student CK attendance on outcomes

Outcomes		Effect of Student CK Attendance
Short-term	CK satisfaction	
	Student outcome perceptions	
	Parent outcome perceptions	
Long-term	School absences	
	Math grade	
	Pre-K-2nd	
	3rd-6th	
	Reading grade	
	Pre-K-2nd	
	3rd-6th	

 Sig. ($p < .05$)
  Approaching sig. (ps between .06 and .20)
  Non-sig. ($p > .21$)

Short-Term Outcomes. In regard to short-term outcomes, the number of days that students attended CK did not significantly affect their satisfaction with CK, parents' perceptions of outcomes, or their own perceptions of outcomes. As noted above, both constructs of the student and parent surveys had very little variability, with the vast majority of respondents answering the items very positively. This lack of variability makes it much less likely that significant relationships will be found.

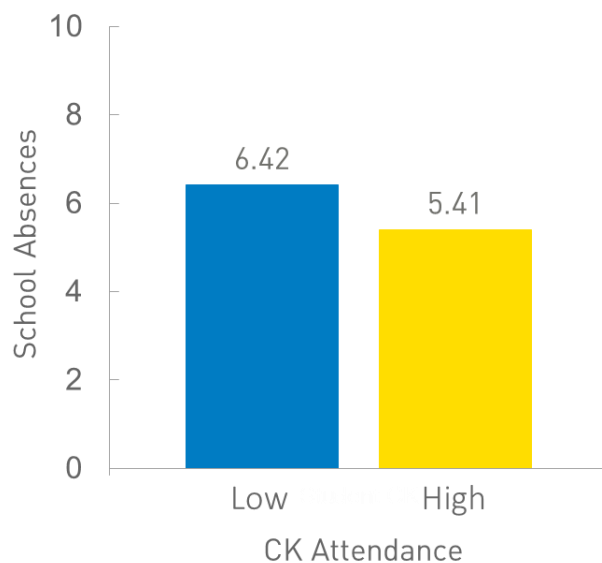
Future evaluations should consider revising the surveys to achieve greater variability in responses. For example, implementing a 10-point rating scale would help to further distribute the responses and increase the likelihood of finding meaningful relationships that are informative about program impact.

³ Student CK attendance was also examined as a continuous variable (i.e., number of days). Results did not vary by variable type, therefore, results using the dichotomized variables are reported for ease of interpretation.

Table 6. Mean differences in short- and long-term outcomes by student CK attendance

Outcomes		Low student CK attendance	High student CK attendance
Short-term	CK satisfaction	1.75	1.65
	Student outcome perceptions	1.61	1.62
	Parent outcome perceptions	3.89	3.77
Long-term	School absences	6.42	5.41
	Math grade		
	Pre-K-2nd	2.07	2.33
	3rd-6th	2.56	2.39
	Reading grade		
	Pre-K-2nd	1.41	1.93
	3rd-6th	2.39	2.35

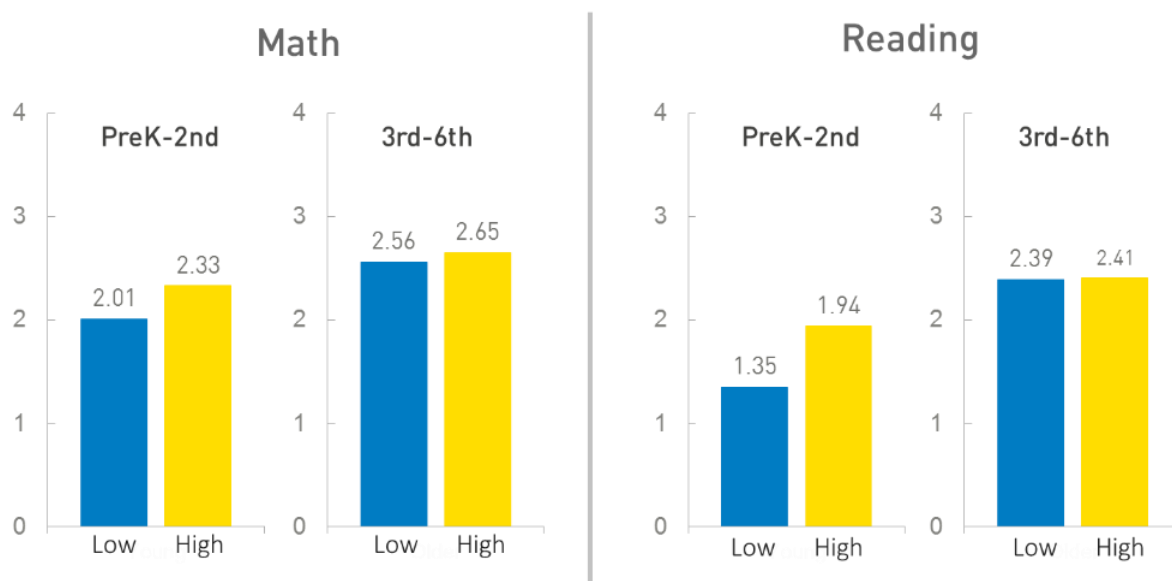
Figure 7. Relationship between student CK attendance and school absences



Long-Term Outcomes. An examination of the effect of student CK attendance on long-term outcomes revealed that students who attended more days of CKs also had less school absences, compared to students who attended less days of CKs. Students who attended less than 130 days missed an average of 6.4 days of school while students who attended 130 or more days only missed 5.4 days of school (see Figure 7). This relationship is similar to what was found in the 2013-14 evaluation.

An examination of the effect of CK attendance on grades revealed that, younger students who participated in more days of CKs tended to have higher reading and math grades, although these relationships did not reach statistical significance. This finding is consistent with what was found in the 2013-14 evaluation. For older students, CK attendance did not have an effect on their math or reading grades (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Relationship between student CK attendance and math and reading grades



PARENT CK ATTENDANCE AND OUTCOMES

Overall Findings. Next, the relationships between parent CK attendance and program short-and long term outcomes were examined. Parent CK attendance was examined as a dichotomous variable by grouping all parents who attended zero classes and all parents who attended one or more classes to achieve low attendance and high attendance groups⁴. This is consistent with the way parental attendance was dichotomized for the 2013-14 analyses⁵.




See Table 7 for a high-level visual of the findings. More specific information including group means on the outcome variables are included in Table 8.

⁴ Analyses were also conducted with each parent class type separately. The results were highly similar thus the overall results are presented.

⁵ Parent CK attendance was also examined as a continuous variable (i.e., number of hours). Results did not vary by variable type, therefore, the dichotomized results are reported for ease of interpretation.

Table 7. The effect of low versus high parent CK attendance on outcomes

Outcomes		Effect of Parent CK Attendance
Short-term	CK satisfaction	●
	Student outcome perceptions	●
	Parent outcome perceptions	●
Long-term	School absences	●
	Math grade	●
	Reading grade	●

 Sig. ($p < .05$)
  Approaching sig. (ps between .06 and .20)
  Non-sig. ($p > .21$)

Short-Term Outcomes. In regard to short-term outcomes, the number of hours that parents attended CK classes did not significantly affect their satisfaction with CK, their perceptions of outcomes, or their child's perceptions of outcomes. As mentioned above, parent responses to the survey items were low in variability, with the vast majority rating the program very highly. In addition to the lack of variability in responses, the sample size for these analyses was very low ($ns < 15$) due to a low match between parent CK attendance and the outcomes. The two factors together make it unlikely that significant differences would be found even if they exist.

Table 8. Mean differences in short- and long-term outcomes by parent CK attendance

Outcomes		Low parent CK attendance	High parent CK attendance
Short-term	CK satisfaction	3.83	3.79
	Student outcome perceptions	1.61	1.97
	Parent outcome perceptions	3.81	3.89
Long-term	School absences		
	Math grade	2.61	2.87
	Reading grade	2.25	2.16

Long-Term Outcomes. Next, the effect of parental CK attendance was examined in relation to the long-term outcomes. Parental attendance was not found to have an effect on student school absences. That is, parents who attended CK programming did not have children with lower school absentee rates. Next the

effect of parent attendance on students' reading and math grades was examined⁶. Although not statistically significant, results suggested that parents who attended CK programming had children with slightly higher math grades compared to parents who did not attend CK programming.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

Finally, we examined the relationship between the short-term outcomes and the long-term outcomes to determine if they were related to each other. Specifically, a correlation analysis was conducted (see Table 9 for the correlation matrix). No statistically significant relationships were found, however, the majority of relationships were in the expected direction. Specifically, high levels of the short-term variables (i.e., student and parent CK satisfaction and perceptions of student outcomes) were associated with lower levels of absences and higher math and reading grades. Lack of variability in the survey data along with a large amount of missing data were likely large contributors to the non-significant relationships.

Table 9. Correlations between short-term and long-term outcome variables

Short-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes		
	School absences	Math grade	Reading grade
Student CK satisfaction	-.14	.08	.09
Student outcome perceptions	-.01	.08	.03
Parent CK satisfaction	.10	.03	.10
Parent outcome perceptions	-.04	.10	.04

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE EVALUATIONS

In order to more fully show the impact of the CK Liberty Program on student outcomes, it is recommended that several steps be taken to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of the program evaluation. Several specific recommendations are made below.

Identifiability. Currently a great deal of data is being collected by CK. Unfortunately, the majority of this data cannot be connected due to the lack of a valid unique identifier associated with each case. Simple

⁶ Due to a low sample size, we were unable to breakdown the effect by grade level (Pre-K-2nd vs. 3rd-6th). Analyses were run using both the mean scores of the numeric grades (i.e., 1-5 scales) and standardized grade values. Results were highly similar, thus, for ease of interpretation, the numeric grades are reported.

steps can be taken in the data collection phase to better associate data with a unique identifier (e.g., use “barcode” stickers to associate parent surveys with Student IDs).

Scale optimization. Due to students and parents rating the CK program very highly on the program surveys, little variability exists in the data. While the high scores are certainly indicative of program satisfaction, the lack of variability makes it difficult to find meaningful relationships in the data that can show impact and drive program improvements. This lack of variability is at least in part due to the small scale on which students and parents answered the survey questions. Lengthening the survey scales will help to increase variability and draw out meaningful program insights from the survey data.

Short-term outcomes. Currently, the majority of outcomes being measured for the CK Liberty Program are long-term. Measuring more short-term outcomes will more fully assess the program and increase the likelihood of finding program impact, as long-term outcomes are typically more difficult to measure and are affected by many other factors.

SUMMARY

Completely KIDS serves a diverse group of students and parents at Liberty Elementary through an after school program and family programming. Both students and parents report a high degree of satisfaction with the program and have positive perceptions of student outcomes.

The relationships between student and parent CK attendance and outcomes were examined. Students who attended CKs more missed less days of school. Additionally, although not statistically significant patterns in the data revealed that Pre-K to 2nd grade students who attended more days of CK scored higher in math. Student CK attendance was not associated with any of the other outcomes. The effect of parent CK attendance was also examined, although hindered somewhat by the lack of matched data. Although not statistically significant, parent CK attendance was associated with higher math grades.

As evidenced by high attendance rates and high levels of satisfaction, the CKs Liberty program obviously has a large impact on children and their families’ lives. Small improvements to the CK evaluation of the program could vastly improve our ability to show the impact it is having.