

SFY 2024 Boys and Girls Club of Central Minnesota - Direct Appropriation

Progress Report

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Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development  
Employment and Training Programs Division

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## Contents

[Contents 3](#_Toc188434127)

[Introduction 4](#_Toc188434128)

[Allowable Use of Funds 4](#_Toc188434129)

[Program Overview 4](#_Toc188434130)

[Program Activities and Performance Metrics 5](#_Toc188434131)

[Program Data 6](#_Toc188434132)

[Expenditure Data 8](#_Toc188434133)

[Success Stories 8](#_Toc188434134)

## Introduction

The Minnesota State Legislature appropriated a onetime allotment of $463,000in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024 to the Boys and Girls Club of Central Minnesota. This direct appropriation is to firstly fund one year of full-service programming for a new program in Waite Park. Secondly it is for the planning and design for a new multiuse facility for the Boys and Girls Club of Wait Park and other community partners. ([Minnesota Session Laws – 2023, Chapter 53, S.F. 3035, Article 20, Section 2, Subdivision 3 (u)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2023/0/Session+Law/Chapter/53/)). The enacted legislation permits the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to retain five percent of these funds for administration and monitoring, making the total grant amount available equal to $439,850.

## Allowable Use of Funds

In accordance with the language of this direct appropriation, funds must be used as follows:

$297,350 is to fund one year of free full-service programming for a new program in Waite Park that will employ part-time youth development staff and provide community volunteer opportunities for people of all ages. Career exploration and life skills programming will be a significant dimension of programming at this new site; and

$142,500 is for planning and design for a new multiuse facility for the Boys and Girls Club of Waite Park and other community partners, including the Waite Park Police Department and the Whitney Senior Center.

## Program Overview

#### Programming

The Boys and Girls Club of Central Minnesota worked to provide a free workforce development and academic success programming through CareerSTART and Project Learn Academic Success. Services were offered weekdays, throughout the school year and summer, to at-risk youth ages 5 – graduating high school students, through a variety of programs and partnership. CareerSTART was created to provide exploration, development and application of career paths for youth in grades K-12, to develop employability skills & apply core competencies. The program’s goal is to empower its participants to discover themselves in the possibilities of their futures. The program serves the counties of Sterns, Benton, Sherburne, Morrison & Wright.

#### Planning and Design

The planning and design for a new multiuse facility is being undertaken by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Minnesota, in partnership with the City of Waite Park, Waite Park Police Department, Waite Park Senior Citizen Community, and the Greater St. Cloud Public Safety Foundation along with many additional program partners. The goal is to build or purchase and renovate an approximately 30,000 sq. ft. facility to serve youth, seniors and the greater Waite Park community that is designed to enhance community engagement and prevent crime through a philosophy of collaboration in a multi-jurisdictional, multi-disciplinary, multi-ethnic, and multi-generational environment.

## Program Activities and Performance Metrics

#### Programming

The primary goal of the program is to prepare youth, age 8-18, for their future careers through workforce programs in career exploration, skill development. Described below are the stages in which the program was designed to guide students through career exploration, professional development and academic growth.

Boys & Girls Club partners with numerous community organizations to provide the three stages of CareerSTART.

**Stage 1 – EXPLORE: Career Exploration Club -** Clubs and KIDSTOP sites provide age-appropriate exposure to career opportunities in the six cluster areas on a bi-monthly basis. Careers are featured in programming, appear on bulletin boards and staff reinforce a career-focused strategy across our programs.

**Stage 2 – DEVELOP: Career Development Club -** Middle school and high school students have the opportunity to develop career readiness skills, with programs like Career Launch that teach youth how to create a resume, fill out job applications and perform mock interviews. Money Matters teaches youth financial literacy, how to open a bank account, what credit is and why it’s important, and the financial aid process. Youth can explore careers in human services with our Junior Staff Career Development Program. The Club also offers a culinary trades program and the construction trades.

**Stage 3 - Career Apprentice Club -** Once youth enter high school, they meet with Club mentors to apply for work outside the Club, internships, and post-secondary education. They finish the financial aid process. Youth who complete all CareerSTART components are eligible for a scholarship to attend St. Cloud Technical and Community College.

**CareerACHIEVE -** Upon high school graduation, Club staff continue to mentor CareerSTART scholars to ensure successful post-secondary graduation and career satisfaction. The program developed a partnership agreement with St. Cloud Technical and Community College (SCTCC) to create a continuum of support for CareerSTART scholars throughout college. This program is called Career ACHIEVE and creates a holistic student wrap around support program designed to close achievement gaps and aid successful program completion at SCTCC.

**CareerPROMISE -** CareerSTART scholars who complete all components of the CareerSTART program are eligible to receive a CareerPROMISE scholarship to attend St. Cloud Technical and Community College, after all financial aid has been applied. This scholarship effectively removes the financial barriers many of youth see to achieving success.

The performance goal for SFY 2024 is for 100 youth to participate in the CareerSTART program. The program started serving less than 20 youth per day during the summer. Now the program is serving over 86 youth per day during the school year and 25 per day during the summer. All members (224 registered members in total) are getting education and workforce readiness activities.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Contract Performance Data** | **Total Planned** | **Total Achieved** | **Percentage Achieved** |
| Participants in CareerSTART Workforce Development Program | 100 | 224 | 224% |
| Participants in Project Learn Academic Success Program | 100 | 224 | 224% |
| **Total Participants Enrolled** | **100** | **224** | **224%** |

#### Planning and Design

The planning and design for a new multiuse facility is ongoing. Boys & Girls of Central Minnesota staff are working with an architect firm on preliminary plans and design concepts for a Boys & Girls Club addition on Discovery Elementary as well as continuing to host community meetings and donor meetings, events and tours. A local commercial builder is providing rough estimates of the cost of the build.

## Program Data

The participant demographic, activity, and outcome data included in this report reflects the total from the start of the grant contract on July 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024. Program data is still preliminary, as the grant contract was extended though June 30, 2025.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Demographic Data** | | **Total** | **Percentage** |
| Total Participants Served | | **224** | |
| **Gender** | Female | 116 | 51.8% |
| Male | 108 | 48.2% |
| Other | 0 | 0.0% |
| Prefer not to answer | 0 | 0.0% |
| **Age** | 13 and under | 221 | 98.7% |
| 14 – 15 | 2 | 0.9% |
| 16 – 17 | 0 | 0.0% |
| 18 – 19 | 1 | 0.4% |
| 20 – 21 | 0 | 0.0% |
| 22 – 24 | 0 | 0.0% |
| **Ethnicity /Race** | Hispanic/Latino | 66 | 29.5% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 4 | 1.8% |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 0 | 0.0% |
| Black or African American | 76 | 33.9% |
| White | 100 | 44.6% |
| Multi-race | 25 | 11.2% |
| Other or Not Available | 19 | 8.5% |
| **Education Level** | 8th Grade and Under | 221 | 98.7% |
| 9th to 12th Grade | 3 | 1.3% |
| High School graduate or equivalent | 0 | 0.0% |
| Post-Secondary Education | 0 | 0.0% |
| **Other Demographics** | Limited English Proficient | 48 | 21.4% |
| Receiving Public Assistance | 200 | 89.3% |
| Foster Youth (or aged out of foster care) | 6 | 2.7% |
| With a Disability | 9 | 4.0% |
| HS Dropout | 0 | 0.0% |
| Offender (previous criminal/juvenile justice involvement) | 0 | 0.0% |
| Pregnant or Parenting | 0 | 0.0% |
| Basic Skills Deficient | 13 | 5.8% |
| Homeless or Runaway | 14 | 6.3% |
| Not Employed at Program Enrollment | 224 | 100.0% |
| Veteran | 0 | 0.0% |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 224 | 100.0% |
| **Program Services and Activities Data** | | **Total** | **Percentage** |
| Received Education or Job Training Activities | | 224 | 100.0% |
| Received Work Experience Activities | | 0 | 0.0% |
| Received Community Involvement and Leadership Development Activities | | 224 | 100.0% |
| Received Post-Secondary Exploration, Career Guidance and Planning Activities | | 224 | 100.0% |
| Received Mentoring Activities | | 224 | 100.0% |
| Received Support Services | | 0 | 0.0% |
| **Participant Satisfaction Data** | | **Total** | **Percentage  (of responses)** |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Excellent” | | 75 | 37.3% |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Very Good” | | 124 | 61.7% |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Average” | | 2 | 1.0% |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Below Average” | | 0 | 0.0% |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Poor” | | 0 | 0.0% |
| Total Number of Surveys Completed | | 201 | 89.7% |

## Expenditure Data

The SFY 24 grant contract started on July 1, 2023, and has been extended to June 30, 2025. The SFY 24 grant funds are planned to be fully expended by the extended end date, June 30, 2025. The cost category breakdown of expenditures through September 20, 2024, is reported below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Budget Category | Expenditures |
| Direct services to Youth | $284,531.55 |
| Facility Planning/Design | $70,578.71 |
| **Total** | **$355,110.26** |

## Success Stories

At the start of the school year, the Discovery Community School reached out to us at the Boys & Girls Club about this 4th grader who was not attending school. The school informed us that the student was living with her guardians and that they were homeless. They wanted her to attend school, but the family dynamics just didn’t allow for her to have a ride to or from school. The school arranged for her to get to school and asked us if we could help. We were more than willing to help, and it was decided that she would attend the club after school. This enabled her guardians to work jobs that would improve their living situation. Since she has joined the club, they have found a place to live. She has also excelled in the programs that we have offered. She was the only winner from Discovery Boys & Girls Club that won the MLK art contest. While also at the Discovery BGC, we are able to ensure that she is able to have meals for the week, while her family is working to improve their financial and living situations.

Three young siblings are from a single-income family. They also have an older brother living with them and their mother. Two of the members are in 1st grade and are the readers of the family. Another is in 2nd grade is the more adventurous of the three. However, since they have been coming to the Discovery Boys & Girls Club all three have excelled in the programs that we offer. The 2nd grader has taken to reading and is now as good as his sisters. He has also taken to working on his mathematics with the education programs we have. As for the girls, they continued to read, but they have branched out to more “critical” thinking areas. They love working on problems and trying to figure out how something works. This family has been separated from their father for the past 8 months. We are able to ensure that they have a safe place to spend time after school and continue to grow with the programs that we are able to offer them. It has been a tremendous relief for their mother. We have been able to help emotionally, physically, educationally, and nutritionally with all that we are.