

NJDOE News

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DOE Announces 21st Century After-school Science Project

A new science project for children in 21st Century Community Learning Centers statewide was unveiled this week by Department of Education officials.

The program, sponsored by the DOE's federal funding in collaboration with the Liberty Science Center in Jersey City and the New Jersey School-Age Coalition in Westfield, gives students in grades 4 through 8 hands-on experiences with science projects in their after-school programs that will reinforce what they learn during the school day and spark their interest in the field of science.

"After-school programs play an increasingly important role in the lives of New Jersey's families," said Education Commissioner Lucille E. Davy. "This new program enables students to use their language arts and math skills as they experiment, question and learn new information about the world around them. We are excited to provide children with this opportunity and hope to cultivate young scientists. "

The model, called the 21st Century After-school Science Project, is two years in the making. It includes a facilitator guide, 21 lesson plans and student field journals. The lessons focus on the properties of water, the vital role water plays in our lives, and how vulnerable Earth's aquatic ecosystems are to human impact. It was unveiled Monday at a regional demonstration session for 21st Century Community Learning Center program staff at the R.W.J. Health and Wellness Conference Center in Hamilton.

21st Century Community Learning Centers are federally-funded programs supported by the New Jersey Department of Education for out-of-school time programs in New Jersey, which include before-school, after-school or summer.

The centers serve children with four key services: academic remediation and enrichment, cultural and artistic enrichment, health, nutrition, recreation and physical activities, and parental involvement and educational activities. There are presently 55 centers in the state that serve approximately 15,000 children.

DOE will host two additional training sessions: Friday, Feb. 8 at the Essex County Environmental Center in Roseland and on Friday, Feb. 29 at Ocean County College in Toms River.

All after-school programs will be able to access the materials free of charge through the 21st CCLC Web site (<http://www.state.nj.us/education/21cclc>) and Liberty Science Center Web site (www.LSC.org) by the end of February.

For more information about the science project, please contact the Department of Education Public Information Office at (609) 292-1126.