

## Success Story

# Connecticut Afterschool Grant Programs Turn to Cayen Systems for Accurate State and Federal Reporting

How can federal grant recipients easily comply with stringent state and federal reporting requirements? How can a hundred afterschool program coordinators, scattered around the state, track the activities and students in their programs?

A Regional Education Service Center (RESA) in Connecticut answered these questions long ago: they use Cayen Systems.



Cayen has been serving Connecticut's federal-grant funded afterschool programs since 2003 when it was chosen to implement its *AfterSchool 21* (AS21) system for Connecticut's 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC). Since then the Cayen system has expanded to manage Connecticut's Family Resource Centers and state-funded after school programs. Cayen is also used to track and report data on the federal-grant funded Support for Pregnant and Parenting Teens. In all, the Cayen System is the repository for information on over 25,000 students and parents.



**Gerald Barrett**  
Grant Coordinator  
Capitol Region Education Council

The Connecticut State Department of Education contracts with the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) to administer the Cayen System. The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC system administrator is Gerald Barrett, Grants Coordinator at CREC.

Barrett says, "The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program manager at the Connecticut State Department of Education relies on CREC to provide database training and overall data management for all 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs statewide."

The data tracked is detailed and extensive, and without Cayen, would be overwhelming. The federal government requires information to be reported on districts, sites, agencies, partners, schools, funding sources, staff, activities, attendance, grades and more.

There's quite a bit of demographic information required for each student, but Cayen provides an easy way to enter the information. Student data can be downloaded from the many districts' School Information Systems and loaded into the Cayen system. According to Barrett, "This eliminates countless hours that staff would need to enter registration records manually."

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On a monthly basis the CREC staff runs monthly reports and submits them to the state's 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program manager for review. The Monthly Attendance Summary Report, a stock report in Cayen AS21 system, provides a quick snapshot of what's going on in every program and contains much of the information required by the state.

Barrett says, "The best part is that local administrators have the ability to run reports before submission so they can make sure that they have entered everything accurately and correctly. They know exactly what we're looking at and what is being reported to the state. There are never any surprises. Instead, there is total transparency."

An annual requirement is reporting to the U.S. Department of Education. Barrett asserts that "Cayen provides fabulous support and assistance with that process. I know that other states manually enter information school by school, program by program into the federal database. Cayen makes sure that the information that the federal DOE needs matches up with our system. Cayen connects the dots and when they upload the information our state program manager is able to quickly certify the data. Cayen makes the federal reporting process simple and straightforward."

Upwards of 300 people, scattered all around the state, use the Cayen system daily making it imperative that the system be simple to use. While Barrett has produced a short Connecticut-specific user manual, he affirms that "the Cayen system is extremely user-friendly. From a visual perspective it's

very logical and straightforward. The ease-of-use makes it possible for users with all levels of computer skills to quickly learn and effectively use the system."

Barrett likes working with the Cayen people too. "I find them very easy to contact and extremely responsive. They are very thorough. When any issue is resolved or if there are follow-up questions, they make it a point to call me personally. By speaking with me they ensure that there isn't any information that's being assumed or incorrectly misinterpreted. I appreciate person-to-person contact."

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- Gerald Barrett

For example, Cayen was able to tailor the system to implement the Support for Pregnant and Parenting Teens program. Barrett says, "That's a small program that serves about 250 students statewide. We worked with our installed Family Resource Center platform and created a new system to support

the teen parent program. Cayen was able to meet the need of this new program by customizing our existing platform."

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Barrett concludes, "I see Cayen as an ongoing relationship. We've continued to grow and we continue to build off of current systems and to build new systems. I see us continuing down the road with Cayen. They are certainly a valued partner for the State of Connecticut."