

New Mexico Quality Afterschool Standards

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Contents

Summary	2
Using the Standards.....	4
STANDARD 1: Environmental Safety, Health, Nutrition and Physical Activity	6
STANDARD 2: Staff and Youth Relationships.....	11
STANDARD 3: Youth Participation, Learning, and Engagement	12
STANDARD 4: Family and Community Partnerships	15
STANDARD 5: Programming.....	17
STANDARD 6: Administration and Organizational Development.....	20
STANDARD 7: Staffing and Professional Development	21
STANDARD 8: Evaluation for Continuous Quality Improvement	23
CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS.....	25

Summary

Since the drafting of the 2005 New Mexico Out-of-School Time Essential Elements of Quality under the guidance of the New Mexico Forum for Youth in Community Afterschool Director, quality standards for the state have been part of a long held vision by practitioners and policymakers alike. Prior to the Out-of-School Time Essential Elements of Quality, school-age care standards were first drafted and adopted in New Mexico through the New Mexico Public Education Department with support from Children's Choice, setting the stage for licensed school-aged care and afterschool programming. In 2012, the New Mexico Afterschool Alliance, under the auspices of the New Mexico Public Education Department, formed a quality committee to begin the process of developing a broader set of afterschool standards to address the diversity of out-of-school time programs in the state. This committee began with a review of the National Afterschool Association's (NAA) Core Knowledge and Competencies for Afterschool and the Elev8 New Mexico Extended Learning Self-Assessment Tool.

Afterschool encompasses a range of youth development programs K-12 that occur beyond the traditional school day, including before school, after school, holidays, weekends and summers. Quality afterschool programs provide safe places for students; promote academic achievement tied to classroom learning; address child and youth developmental needs; and support working families. The comprehensiveness of a program, depending on its location and organizational supports, will vary in focus and structure. Regardless of comprehensiveness, safeguards and quality elements should be in place to achieve intended outcomes.

Purpose

The purpose of the New Mexico Quality Afterschool Standards is to create a pathway that supports planning which leads to quality program design and implementation. The standards are based on research and best practice in the education and youth development fields. As such, they have the potential to inspire innovation and coordination among adults that support young people. These standards are not about compliance or judgment of programs, but about high yield practices that result in positive outcomes for youth.

The New Mexico Quality Afterschool Standards outline the principles and indicators that form the foundation for a quality afterschool program in any setting, regardless of size or context. They are meant to promote program planning and design, collective decision-making, broad policy development, inclusive professional development, and positive youth outcomes. To achieve broad buy-in and interconnected supports, NMASA suggests that afterschool practitioners work with organizational and community leaders, as well as families, to determine how best to use the standards. In doing so, a broad swath of stakeholders will be better informed on what constitutes a quality afterschool program in New Mexico.

Who might use the NM Quality Afterschool Standards?

Purpose of NMASA Standards	
User	Use
Afterschool Providers and Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Design of new programs o Program planning o As a foundation for continuous quality improvement activities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal setting • Targeting professional development • Self-evaluation
Funders and Policy Makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Advocacy tool to develop policy and funding o Tool to link funding and accountability to research-based, measurable outcomes
Parents and Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Inform expectations of afterschool programs o Ensure confidence in program quality o Assist in selecting high quality programming
Schools and Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Advance academic achievement through school-linked afterschool supports o Recognize complimentary knowledge resulting in increased collaboration o Create a framework for career development for out of school professionals

Using the Standards

The conceptualization and development of New Mexico's after school program standards, has been based on our State's array of programs. A commitment was made to develop a **flexible set** of quality afterschool standards that is designed to foster their utilization by programs of differing focus, setting, community context, size and capacity.

The standards are voluntary and recommended for use with other research-based assessment tools for program monitoring and self-assessment [i.e., NM-Extended Learning Self-Assessment Tool (ELSA), Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA), and the Quality Assurance System (QAS)]. They are not meant to be achieved all at once, knowing that continuous quality improvement occurs over time. The standards are meant instead to be used for multi-year planning.

The standards are organized in eight subject categories: 1) environmental safety, health, nutrition and physical activity; 2) staff and youth relationships; 3) youth participation, learning and engagement; 4) family and community partnerships; 5) programming; 6) administration and organizational development; 7) staff and professional development; and 8) evaluation for continuous improvement. Each standard corresponds to the following research-based quality conditions:

- Developmentally appropriate
- Culturally competent and relevant
- Positive youth development focused
- Locally and national informed
- Aligned with civic and community development strategies
- Relatable to any size or type of program

Each standard has identified concepts that represent the key elements that are essential to that standard. The concepts align with quality principles and best practice for the subject area of the standard and are organized into themed content areas, such as "culture." At the end of this document you will find concepts and definitions that will lay a foundation for the standards. It is highly recommended that you review this section prior to the rest of the document.

In order to provide the flexibility to meet New Mexico's array of afterschool programs, the indicators that support each standard are laid out in strands. The strands support program growth by identifying and generalizing the varying capacity of each individual program into three indicator sets. The **Foundational Practice Indicator Set** defines a minimum standard that **all** programs should meet, regardless of their size or capacity. As well, these indicators focus on elements that staff should be aware of and implementing in their programs. The **Comprehensive Program Indicator Set** defines elements that may generally be seen in medium sized programs which have more capacity than those in the prior grouping. Here, the focus is around more comprehensive strategies for meeting standards at a wider programmatic level, such as staff training. The **Organizational Practice Indicator Set** defines systems at the organizational, programmatic and staff levels that will support and sustain quality over the long term.

Unlike most documents of this sort, which move the reader from a baseline through a progression which leads to an “exemplary” level, the New Mexico Afterschool Alliance’s standards focus programs to evaluate their status based on their own capacity and priorities. Programs may find themselves meeting the indicators of one indicator set, but it is much more likely that they will see their programs functioning in multiple indicator sets based on each unique concept. The intent is for programs to review each indicator individually, based on their program’s current priorities and capacity. Programs are encouraged to identify and meet more than one indicator within each concept strand. This snapshot in time of program quality will provide a basis for developing a plan for building of program capacity to meet the next indicator set and to increase program quality.

The term “capacity” is a conceptual approach to program and/or organizational development that focuses on understanding the resources, priorities and obstacles that support or inhibit the realization of their developmental goals, results or outcomes. In afterschool programs, capacity is usually observed as reflected in the grid below.

TABLE A—Capacity Grid

Indicator Range	Small Capacity	Mid-Level Capacity	Large Capacity
People/ Participants	Small number of students and staff. Staff focused on a single theme. Less training/knowledge required due to limited focus.	More students and staff, with staff expertise needed in more areas (perhaps).	Many students and staff. Staff involved in professional development to support expertise in many areas. Some staff may be content specialists.
Program	Single/small number of programmatic elements and theme. Complexity of programming is targeted.	More program elements and responsibilities for managing and engaging participants. Increased complexity of programming	Many program elements, each of which is connected to program goals, staff professional development, research, school priorities, etc. High complexity of programming due varied focus areas, requirements, elements, etc.
Organization	Very limited organizational capacity (policies, funding, PD, etc.). Required organizational operations are minimal.	Increased policies and requirements. More organizational capacity and operations.	Policies/Procedures, Vision/Mission, Outcomes, Partnerships, etc. are in place. Program is supported at the organizational level around best practices, research, and evaluation.

The structure lays the foundation for staff, program and organizational growth by scaffolding a set of expectations for baseline program quality, while helping program providers decide where they will concentrate their efforts and resources along a continuum. The structure also pinpoints the capacity of each program to: support participants and staff; deliver varied programmatic elements; build systems, policies and collaborative; and engage the operational support of host organizations. The indicator strands support program growth in the following ways: 1) link skills and knowledge to quality programming; 2) provide guidelines for evolving program complexity and; 3) define characteristics of organizations that support and sustain quality over time

STANDARD 1: Environmental Safety, Health, Nutrition and Physical Activity

A quality afterschool program maintains the physical and emotional safety of the youth and staff supervision protocols are also in place. Emergency procedures are in place and understood by staff so they can effectively respond to injuries and other health and wellbeing issues. The physical space is kept clear of any safety hazards, and supports a variety of learning activities and needs. Nutritious snacks and meals are consistently provided to meet the hunger needs of the youth served. Physical activity is intentionally incorporated into daily programming to encourage movement. The culture of the youth, families and communities served is reflected in programming.

Supervision			
<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Foundational Practice Indicator Set</i>	<i>Comprehensive Program Indicator Set</i>	<i>Organizational Practice Indicators Set</i>
1 <i>Account for youth at all times</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in and check-out system is in place for authorized-only pick-up and sign-out of youth. • Staff account for youth at all times, whether inside, outside, or during transition periods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program implements written procedures for check-in and check-out system and participant location system. • Supervisors monitor staff compliance with procedures and provide training as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization trains staff on written procedures for check-in and check-out system and participant location system. • Supervisors monitor staff compliance with procedures and provide additional coaching as needed. • Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about safety rules and check-in/check-out transition processes.
2 <i>Maintain acceptable staff to student ratio based on research and best practice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate number of staff is on-site at all times to maintain safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program provides an adequate staff-to-student ratio to provide optimal supervision for safety. • Program provides an adequate staff-to-student ratio to provide optimal learning experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization provides ideal staff-to-student ratio to provide optimal supervision and learning experiences for both on and off-site activities.
3 <i>Address risky behaviors through preventative measures and positive discipline structures</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff is aware of how to identify, manage and report risky behaviors and activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program activities inspire positive behavior, cooperative learning, and positive peer-to-peer interactions. • Staff are trained and monitored in identifying, managing and reporting risky behaviors and activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization implements a positive behavior policy. • Supervisors monitor staff compliance with procedures and provide additional coaching as needed. • Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families and staff about the behavior policy.

Health and Well-Being			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Protect youth from spreading illness and disease</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is aware of how to identify when a youth is ill. Ill youth are removed from other youth and monitored until they are collected by family. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program implements procedures to protect youth from communicable disease that include isolation of ill students until families can collect them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization provides for, or negotiates separate space, for ailing youth in a comfortable and supervised room or partitioned off space until picked-up. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the illness policy.
2 <i>Promote hygiene precautions and practices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hygiene supplies are available. Youth are encouraged to wash their hands, cover their coughs and disinfect areas. Staff serve as role models for washing their hands, covering their coughs and disinfecting areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program prominently posts hygiene best practice instructions. Staff instructs and model hygiene best practices. Program provides families with written information about hygiene best practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a policy for blood borne pathogen universal precautions. Organization trains staff annually on blood borne pathogen universal precautions (OSHA). Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the hygiene policy.
3 <i>First Aid and CPR are made available</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid kits are available. First Aid procedures are accessible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is provided with training opportunities to receive first aid certification, including CPR. Program provides at least one person on site is First Aid and CPR certified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization requires all staff are certified in First Aid and CPR.
4 <i>Communicate and document emergencies and accidents appropriately</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth medical conditions and emergency contacts are documented during registration. Youth medical conditions and emergency contacts are readily available during program hours. Families are told of any medical incident. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program implements written procedures for communicating accidents and emergencies to families and emergency personnel (as needed). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a policy that defines how emergencies are handled and documented including procedures about communicating emergencies in a timely manner. Staff are trained and monitored in identifying, managing and reporting the emergency. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the emergency policy.
Emergencies			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Establish a site-specific emergency management plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site-specific emergency management plan is available. Documentation exists showing staff have reviewed the plan and agree to comply with plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program implements site-specific emergency management plan. Staff are trained on the plan and can identify their roles in an emergency. Documentation is kept confirming staff training and agreement to comply with the plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization annually reviews and updates a site-specific emergency management plan that is relevant to afterschool program locations, personnel and management structure. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the site-specific emergency management plan including

			the evacuation routes and parent pick-up procedures.
2 <i>Practice emergency responses</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is aware of how to respond to evacuation, shelter-in-place and lockdown responses. Youth are instructed in both evacuation and shelter-in-place responses. Staff is designated to assist handicapped students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program provides periodic fire and emergency drills. Documentation is kept confirming that drills are conducted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements an emergency response drill schedule and policy that requires drills are conducted for staff and youth in a variety of settings. Organization reviews each drill performance and makes corrections.
3 <i>Secure emergency supplies and equipment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency supplies for shelter-in place are available. Staff knows the location of emergency supplies and equipment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are trained annually on the location of emergency supplies and equipment and their use. Documentation is kept confirming staff training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements and inspects emergency supplies and equipment. Staff are trained annually on the location and use of the supplies and equipment.
Program Space			
Concepts	<i>Foundational Practice Indicator Set</i>	<i>Comprehensive Program Indicator Set</i>	<i>Organizational Practice Indicators Set</i>
1 <i>Provide safe and appropriate outdoor spaces</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor spaces are clean and meet or exceed local health and safety codes. Outdoor spaces are adequate for planned activities. Staff inspect outdoor spaces to see that they are free of observable safety hazards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program implements procedures for periodic safety checks and appropriate maintenance of outdoor space and equipment. Documentation is kept confirming that safety checks are conducted and remedies are made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization provides and secures outdoor space and equipment that are appropriate and safe for the ages and abilities of youth.
2 <i>Provide safe and appropriate indoor spaces</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor spaces are clean and meet or exceed local health and safety codes. Indoor spaces are adequate for planned activities. Staff inspect indoor spaces to see that they are free of observable safety hazards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ample and dedicated space is available for small group activities, large play areas, reading and reflection, and open conversation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization provides and secures resources to create separate activity spaces that have comfortable furniture in which youth can be active, or reflect, read, and relax.
3 <i>Manage environmental hazards appropriately</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is aware of any potential hazards. Staff take action to protect youth from existing or potential hazards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program implements procedures for products that may pose an environmental hazard. Documentation is kept confirming what is stored and that scheduled checks occur to ascertain stores are current and remain safe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a policy for handling environmental hazards. Appropriate local environmental agency contact information is current. Staff are trained and monitored in identifying, managing and reporting the environmental hazard. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the environmental hazards policy.

Nutrition And Hunger			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Provide healthy and adequate food and beverages to youth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth have access to healthy and adequate food and beverages. Youth have access to drinking water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program plans and implements activities that allow youth opportunities to select and prepare food and beverages served in the program, using preparation as a teachable moment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization successfully meets the federal and state requirements to reimburse food service. The type and amount of food offered is appropriate for the ages and sizes of the youth, addressing their level of hunger.
2 <i>Address food restrictions appropriately</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth food restrictions, including allergies, are documented during registration. Youth food restrictions, including allergies, and emergency contacts are readily available during program hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program provides food and beverage alternatives to address allergies and food restrictions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization provides resources needed to involve youth and families in planning with staff for healthy and appropriate food and beverage alternatives that are needed, including an education component.
3 <i>Prepare and store food properly</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food and beverage storage and preparation meet or exceed local health and safety codes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is trained in food storage and preparation that meet or exceed local health and safety codes. Written procedures for food storage and preparation are posted. Appropriate equipment and supplies are available to support procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization uses appropriate equipment to properly prepare and store food.
4 <i>Expose youth to nutrition activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nutrition information is available for youth. Staff serves as role models for nutrition best practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programming includes a nutrition education component. Nutrition activities and materials provided meet the needs, interests, abilities and talents of youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization promotes nutrition as an organizational value that is demonstrated through programming and in written materials.
5 <i>Engage families in nutrition activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nutrition information is available for families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops are provided to families on nutrition topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization integrates nutrition education activities as a regular part of their outreach to families.
Physical Activity			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Provide opportunities for physical activity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth have access to opportunities for movement. Staff serves as role models for participation in physical activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program plans and implements activities that allow youth opportunities to select and participate in a variety of physical activities, using the activity as a teachable moment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization integrates physical activity across programming to achieve maximum impact.

2 <i>Address physical activity restrictions appropriately</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth physical activity restrictions are documented during registration. Youth physical activity restrictions are readily available during program hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program provides physical activity alternatives to meet the capacity of all youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization provides resources needed to involve youth and families in planning with staff for appropriate physical activity alternatives that are needed, including an education component.
3 <i>Encourage youth to be physically active</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff encourage youth to participate in a variety of physical activities daily. Staff serve as role models for physical activity best practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programming includes a physical activity component. Activities and equipment provided meet the needs, interests, abilities and talents of youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization promotes physical activity as an organizational value.
4 <i>Engage families in physical activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff encourages families to participate in physical activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops are provided to families on physical activity topics (i.e. easy and inexpensive family activities, encouraging activity during TV commercial breaks, kid friendly isometrics). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization integrates physical activity education programs as a regular part of their outreach to families.
Culture			
Concepts	<i>Foundational Practice Indicator Set</i>	<i>Comprehensive Program Indicator Set</i>	<i>Organizational Practice Indicators Set</i>
1 <i>Practice culturally responsive practices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programming does not show disrespect for the identified cultural backgrounds, languages, and cultural practices of each youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The identified cultures and primary languages of youth served are integral components of the daily program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization monitors all programming for providing culturally responsive practices.
2 <i>Acknowledge youth backgrounds, language, and values</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signs and resources are provided in the youths' home language(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program provides activities that encourage youth to affirm their identified cultural backgrounds and language. Program provides activities that encourage youth to recognize and honor the identified culture of others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements policy that requires activities honoring diversity will be included in programming and special events. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the diversity policy.

STANDARD 2: Staff and Youth Relationships

A quality afterschool program incorporates positive youth development principles to inspire cooperation, respect and other indicators of effective relationships between youth participants and afterschool staff. A quality program consistently communicates and reinforces expectations. Youth feel welcome and supported as the program addresses their interests, abilities, talents and learning styles. Practices are targeted towards encouraging positive behavior, building confidence, and engaging youth as partners in the program. Staff composition and relationships among staff and with youth reflect sensitivity to diversity and gender equity. In a quality afterschool program, afterschool staff is expected to demonstrate commitment to children, youth, families, and communities through a high level of ethical conduct and positive interaction.

Youth Support			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Welcome and support youth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff helps youth feel welcomed, appreciated, and comfortable. All youth are greeted by name upon arrival. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are trained in active listening and positive youth development strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements policies that support youth-centered practices. Staff is monitored for providing active listening and positive youth development strategies and coaching is provided as needed. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the youth-centered policy.
2 <i>Practice Positive interactions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and youth interact with each other in positive ways. Staff and youth treat each other with respect. Staff do not belittle youth. Staff do not interrupt youth. Staff are kind and fair to youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program plans and implements activities that promote cooperation and respect, including cooperative learning. Staff is trained in conflict resolution and bullying prevention. Staff and youth together develop rules for positive interaction and respect for self and others that are reviewed regularly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements policies for anti-bullying that includes escalating consequences for bullying. Staff is monitored for providing conflict resolution and bullying prevention and coaching is provided as needed. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the anti-bullying policy.
3 <i>Communicate and reinforce participation expectations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff sets and communicates behavior limits and reasonable expectations for youth. Staff use no harsh discipline methods. Guidance is positive and includes redirection that encourages youth to become self-disciplined. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff engages youth in the development of program participation expectations. Program regularly communicates expectations for participation to youth both verbally and in written form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements policies for communicating and reinforcing participation expectations. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the participation policy.
4 <i>Address youth interests, abilities, talents and learning styles</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is aware of each youth's interests, abilities and talents. Activities reflect youth interests, abilities, and talents. Activities address a variety of learning styles and abilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program plans and implements a range of activities tailored to the interests, abilities, talents, and learning styles of youth. Staff is trained in learning style differences. Youth are regularly surveyed on their interests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization actively seeks partnerships to enhance the delivery of activities that meet the interests, abilities, and talents of youth. Staff is monitored for providing support to learning style differences and coaching is provided as needed.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are given opportunities to be involved in creating program activities and events. 	
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Culture			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Practice culturally responsive practices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff acknowledges and respects the cultural background, languages, and community practices of each youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The identified cultures and primary languages of youth served are integral components of the daily program. Program provides cultural competency training for all staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization monitors its practices to ensure strategic alignment between programming and the cultures of the youth and families it serves.
2 <i>Acknowledge youth backgrounds, language, and values</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff demonstrates interest in the backgrounds of each youth. Signs and resources are provided in the youths' home language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program provides activities that encourage youth to affirm their identified cultural backgrounds and language. Program provides activities that encourage youth to recognize and honor the identified culture of others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements policy that encourages hiring staff that share the languages and identified cultures of the families they serve and the communities they live in. Organization implements policy that requires activities honoring diversity will be included in programming and special events. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the policy.

STANDARD 3: Youth Participation, Learning, and Engagement

A quality afterschool program employs staff with knowledge in positive youth development strategies, academic enrichment, classroom management and community engagement leading to youth leadership and voice in the program. Quality programs provide high quality staff performance by providing staff coaching and mentoring. In a quality afterschool program, afterschool staff demonstrates commitment to children, youth, families and communities through cultural sensitivity, ethical behavior, and positive interaction. A quality afterschool program ensures that participants feel a sense of ownership in the program by engaging them on a consistent basis in program activities they have an opportunity to inform (e.g. "voice and choice")

Positive Youth Development			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Provide strengths-based programming</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities and opportunities are designed to build on existing youth strengths rather than "fix" a deficit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program is designed to provide a variety of strengths-based activities. Activities support self-direction, resilience, goal-setting, and leadership development. Staff are trained in a strengths-based approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a policy for adoption of a positive youth development framework. Supervisors monitor staff compliance with providing a strengths-based approach and provide coaching as needed. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the framework.

2 <i>Build new skills through experiential learning activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities are provided for youth to develop new interests, abilities and talents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program design provides multiple, diverse opportunities for youth that are project-based, support experiential learning, and relate to real-world experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization engages the community to provide service learning and opportunities for youth to experience career pathways.
3 <i>Celebrate and showcase participant strengths, talents and accomplishments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth demonstrate and celebrate what they have learned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program events celebrate and showcase youth strengths and talents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization supports opportunities for youth to demonstrate learning and celebrate talents at community events.
4 <i>Support older youth skill-building and career orientation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older youth are encouraged to participate. Older youth are engaged as volunteers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program design for older youth connects new learning and skill-building to service learning and career pathways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a policy that supports older youth engagement. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the policy.
5 <i>Honor youth choice and input</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth choice is built into activity design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program design allows for youth input and encourages youth to make choices suited to their interests, abilities and talents. Staff is trained to support and guide youth choices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisors monitor staff compliance with providing youth choice and input and provide coaching as needed.

Supportive Learning

Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Use learning reflection</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth acknowledge and reflect on what they have learned and their progress within the afterschool program regularly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is trained on how to ask questions that inspire deep reflection of what was studied. All activities include reflection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational practice incorporates experiential and reflective learning for staff as well as youth.
2 <i>Respond to different learning styles</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff recognizes different learning styles and the range of youth abilities. Staff responds appropriately to the individual learning needs of participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program activities reflect varying learning approaches and materials to meet the different learning styles of youth. Staff are trained on learning styles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisors monitor staff compliance with supporting different learning styles and provide coaching as needed.
3 <i>Coordinate grade level learning goals</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student school day learning goals are embedded in activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and classroom teachers work together to coordinate grade-level expectations into afterschool activities. Youth are aware of their learning goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization strives to maintain a working partnership with schools. Program staff and school staff collaborate on communicating with families about student learning goals and challenges.
4 <i>Build a supportive learning environment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program staff demonstrates valuing respect for others, self-improvement, and learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group skills are explicitly taught for collaborative projects, which occur regularly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization strives to build a learning community among the staff, youth and families.

Youth Leadership and Voice			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Engage the input of youth in program activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are encouraged to express their ideas and opinions regarding activities. Staff helps youth develop communication and advocacy skills through frequent conversations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program incorporates the ideas of youth into activities Staff acknowledges youth for providing their input. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a policy for youth input into program design and provides opportunities for youth to serve on decision-making boards. Supervisors monitor staff compliance with supporting youth input into program design and provide coaching as needed. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the policy.
2 <i>Strengthen confidence of youth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff offer support in a way that supports the participant's initiative. Staff assists participants without taking control. Staff encourages participants to take on leadership roles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programming supports youth initiative and ownership. Staff are trained to strengthen confidence of youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing leadership opportunities are cultivated to link youth to other organizations and community efforts.
Culture			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Practice culturally responsive practices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are respected for their identified cultural backgrounds, languages, and cultural practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The identified cultures and primary languages of youth served are integral components of the daily program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization monitors all programming for providing culturally responsive practices.
2 <i>Acknowledge youth backgrounds, language, and values</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are encouraged to share their identified culture and language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program provides activities that encourage youth to affirm their identified cultural backgrounds and languages. Program provides activities that encourage youth to recognize and honor the identified culture of others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements policy that requires activities honoring diversity will be included in programming and special events. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the policy.

STANDARD 4: Family and Community Partnerships

A quality afterschool program actively engages families and fosters meaningful collaboration between families, program staff, the school, and the broader community. Quality programs acknowledge community culture by aligning program philosophy and practices with that of the community. Quality programs seek to increase the effectiveness of family members in navigating the school system and working with school staff to support school goals and student achievement. The program connects to needed community resources and in turn helps participants and families' connect to the array of supports that exist in the community.

Family Engagement			
<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Foundational Practice Indicator Set</i>	<i>Comprehensive Program Indicator Set</i>	<i>Organizational Practice Indicators Set</i>
1 <i>Relate respectfully to families</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff has experience in relating to diverse families in respectful and positive ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program implements written procedures to ensure that the staff/family interactions are positive and respectful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization recruits program staff from within the community to best reflect the identified cultures and languages of families.
2 <i>Create a family welcoming environment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff creates a welcoming and comfortable place for families. Staff is approachable and communicates to families that they are welcome to visit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program structure allows for parents to observe activities. Parent volunteers are recruited. Families receive information and educational resources on a regular basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a policy that allows family members to visit unannounced anytime during program hours. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the policy. A centralized place for program and community information sharing is provided.
3 <i>Engage family input and participation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing occurs between staff and families. Staff sees families as valuable contributors to the program, asking them how they might want to support the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program provides an avenue for feedback that includes identifying their child's interests, abilities, and talents. Feedback from families is acknowledged and addressed. Families are invited to contribute their expertise and talents to program support and activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization supports staff and families joining together to communicate and work with the schools. Families are offered opportunities to serve in organization leadership roles.
4 <i>Develop a linguistically and culturally appropriate outreach plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication is distributed to families about activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family activities are planned and implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a family engagement outreach plan that dedicates financial and staff resources.

Culture			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Utilize and value identified cultural backgrounds of families as a resource.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff has experience in working with the diverse identified cultures of families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff uses identified cultural backgrounds and talents of families to enhance activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources are dedicated to support family members serving in leadership roles that advance cultural understanding and respect within the organization.
2 <i>Provide an inclusive and accessible program</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration practices are culturally and linguistically inclusive. (Including students with special needs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff talks with culturally diverse families on how to better include them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a policy for culturally responsive family engagement. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about family engagement policies. Organization collects demographic data on the community to assess for possible gaps in service, needed outreach, and barriers to participation; it recruits youth based on this assessment.
3 <i>Communicate in appropriate ways</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff respectfully responds to non-English speaking families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff members share the languages and identified cultures of the families they serve and the communities they live in. Program materials are disseminated in English and home languages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources are dedicated to provide staff with cultural competency training and can support or deliver bi-lingual programs for families. Mechanisms are in place to ensure linguistically and culturally appropriate two-way communication strategies with families.
Family Support			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Provide a family friendly program schedule</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hours of operation take into consideration the working hours of families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program planning, program events and celebrations occur when families can reasonably attend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization provides that a program calendar and schedule is disseminated to families to support connection between program and family schedules.
2 <i>Provide families with tools to support student learning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff communicates the link between program activities and school day education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program supports families in navigating the school system. Program provides tools to families to support student learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization dedicates staff and financial resources to provided workshops for families on how they can support student learning.
3 <i>Connect families to services and supports</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff provides information about community resources to meet the needs of families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program provides a directory of family services and supports in the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization dedicates staff and financial resources to support families in connecting to family services and supports.

Community Partnerships			
<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Foundational Practice Indicator Set</i>	<i>Comprehensive Program Indicator Set</i>	<i>Organizational Practice Indicators Set</i>
1 <i>Cultivate community-based supports</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff identify what supports are needed for program activities. A list of community resources is maintained. The staff draw from these resources to expand program offerings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local community-based organizations and businesses are consistently invited to program events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a partnership development plan that identifies and engages community-based organizations and businesses on a regular basis.
2 <i>Link program activities to existing community events</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and youth participate in community events, festivals, and cultural activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program seeks opportunities to showcase youth activities at community events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a partnership development plan that identifies opportunities to link program activities to community events and identifies community service options for youth.
3 <i>Acknowledge community-based organizational support</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff formally thanks supporters in person or through a written thank you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program engages youth in designing and implementing activities that result in a public recognition of community support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization provides resources to publicly or formally recognize organizations that have provided significant support to the program and its families.

STANDARD 5: Programming

A quality program is both structured and flexible. The program inspires active and life-long learning through project-based activities that address developmental learning, academic progress, and future orientation to the real world. A range of well supplied activities allow for choice and contribution by youth. A quality program is well planned by staff with stakeholders so that activities are relevant, linked to the school day, engaging and varied. The culture of the youth, families and communities served is reflected in programming.

Program Structure			
<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Foundational Practice Indicator Set</i>	<i>Comprehensive Program Indicator Set</i>	<i>Organizational Practice Indicators Set</i>
1 <i>Include youth with special needs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities are accessible to students with special needs. Accommodations are made to support participation of students with special needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff talk with families of special needs students on how to better include them. Program seeks expertise of school-day personnel who interact with the student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a policy for inclusion of youth with special needs. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the policy. Organization collects demographic data on the community to assess for possible gaps in service, needed outreach, and barriers to participation and recruits youth based on this assessment.

<p>2 <i>Support youth choice and needs</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth have some choice within some activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The range of activities is designed based on data about youth such as academic need, interests, abilities, and talents. Most activities are structured to include an opportunity for youth choice. Staff help children make informed and responsible activity choices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements policies that support data driven programming and youth choice. Staff are monitored for supporting youth-informed and responsible choices, coaching is provided as needed. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the policy.
<p>3 <i>Align activities to program mission</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities reflect the mission/philosophy of the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff can articulate the program's mission/philosophy. Staff are able to explain how the program activities align with the mission/philosophy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a formal written mission that informs all aspects of the program. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the mission.
<p>4 <i>Infuse both academic and life skills into activities</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities promote academic achievement and skills such as speaking, listening, reading, writing, and higher-level thinking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are trained to incorporate learning concepts that support both academic and life skills in program activities, creating a balanced program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization reviews the program structure regularly so that programming is balanced between providing academic and life skill activities.
<p>5 <i>Implement best or promising practices</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is aware of best and promising practice research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is trained on a regular basis on best practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization actively researches best practices and programming is changed as appropriate. Staff is monitored for implementing best practices and coaching is provided as needed.

Materials and Supplies

Concepts	<i>Foundational Practice Indicator Set</i>	<i>Comprehensive Program Indicator Set</i>	<i>Organizational Practice Indicators Set</i>
<p>1 <i>Provide and maintain sufficient program supplies</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate materials and supplies are provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials and supplies have a specific storage place. A system is in place for check-in/check-out process to avoid loss and neglect of supplies and materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization uses a system that provides appropriate supplies; they are available in a timely manner, and an adequate amount for each program activity. Organization monitors use of supplies on a regular basis, and replaces or makes repairs as needed.
<p>2 <i>Align materials with program design and youth needs</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff secures materials that support delivery of the activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program materials are selected to meet youth's age range, learning styles, interests, abilities, and talents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization researches and secures a variety of evidence-based materials as part of its inventory. Program monitors the effectiveness of the materials used and makes changes as needed.

School Day Linkages			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Link afterschool activities to the school day curriculum</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities are different from school-day activities, but complement school day learning. Activities challenge children intellectually, creatively, and/or physically. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program monitors the school day curricula to identify and increase links with program activities. School achievement data is shared with program to inform activity design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization forms a partnership with schools to facilitate regular conversations that support linking school day and afterschool learning practices and outcomes. Afterschool program staff is included in school meetings and discussions that monitor student academic progress and behavior.
2 <i>Engage school day teachers and principal support</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program that provide school day personnel are aware of the activities of the afterschool program. Program encourages input from school day personnel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program administers surveys to gather school day personnel input. School day teachers are in regular communication with afterschool staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leaders play an active advisory role in organization governance. Organization arranges for shared professional development opportunities that link school day and afterschool learning practices.
Culturally Sensitive			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Apply culturally responsive practices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities do not show disrespect for the identified cultural backgrounds, languages, and cultural practices of each youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The identified cultures and primary languages of youth served are integral components of the daily program. Program provides cultural competency training for all staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are monitored for providing culturally-responsive practices; coaching is provided as needed.
2 <i>Acknowledge youth backgrounds, language, and values</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities reflect the backgrounds of each youth. Signs and resources are provided in the youths' home language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program provides activities that encourage youth to affirm their identified cultural backgrounds and language. Program provides activities that encourage youth to recognize and honor the identified culture of others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements policy that encourages hiring staff that share the languages and identified cultures of the families they serve and the communities they live in. Organization implements policy that requires activities honoring diversity will be included in programming and special events. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the policy.

STANDARD 6: Administration and Organizational Development

A quality afterschool program has effective administrative practices, detailed organizational processes, sound financial management, mission marketing, resource development, policy development, and strategic planning. The program encourages its administrators to monitor for effectiveness and efficiency throughout its organizational structure, while also building the capacity of the organization to support collaboration and advocacy among stakeholders. The program provides outreach to community and school partners and consistently informs its stakeholders of its operations, policies, and funding priorities.

Operations and Management			
<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Foundational Practice Indicator Set</i>	<i>Comprehensive Program Indicator Set</i>	<i>Organizational Practice Indicators Set</i>
1 <i>Provide program management and oversight</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program manager is identified and an oversight process is in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program managers are trained to follow protocols, align program vision/mission to program delivery, and work toward achieving program outcomes. Management oversees the recruitment and retention of program staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization adheres to state laws and regulations for program delivery. Organization implements continuous quality improvement processes, aiming for improvement in all areas of the program.
2 <i>Develop a recordkeeping system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic recordkeeping is utilized by staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records are kept in accordance with program requirements, following program and confidentiality protocols. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization recordkeeping system is aligned to partner agency recordkeeping systems for data sharing.
3 <i>Share established program policies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program policy handbooks guide program operations and management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program policies are reviewed and refined on a consistent basis by management and staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization provides communication that supports youth, families, and staff knowing and understanding the policies. Program policies are made available to community stakeholders.
Sustainability and Resource Development			
<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Foundational Practice Indicator Set</i>	<i>Comprehensive Program Indicator Set</i>	<i>Organizational Practice Indicators Set</i>
1 <i>Develop community partnerships</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A plan is in place to target and build partnerships that will support the program goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community partnerships exist to support enhanced or continued services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization establishes a broad array of partners who support long-term sustainability. Organization partners meet regularly and share decision-making power.
2 <i>Develop school-linked resources</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff communicates with school administration on resource needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School administration helps secure or identify resources that secure continued school-linked afterschool activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements agreements that identify roles and responsibilities of a collaborative school/afterschool partnership.

Communication and Marketing			
<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Foundational Practice Indicator Set</i>	<i>Comprehensive Program Indicator Set</i>	<i>Organizational Practice Indicators Set</i>
1 <i>Market the program</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An informational flyer or brochure exists that includes a description of the program, key personnel, and contact information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and management seek opportunities to convey basic program information, including the schedule, location, scope of activities, philosophy, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization provides resources for the development of a website, use of social media, and marketing materials.
Financial Management			
<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Foundational Practice Indicator Set</i>	<i>Comprehensive Program Indicator Set</i>	<i>Organizational Practice Indicators Set</i>
1 <i>Be fiscally responsible</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A basic fiscal management system tracks income and expenses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management follows identified best practice fiscal processes and procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization conducts regular budget reviews. The bookkeeping system used supplies a systems-generated accounting report capable of meeting the requirements of funders.

STANDARD 7: Staffing and Professional Development

A quality afterschool program attracts and employs staff equipped with knowledge of positive youth development strategies, academic enrichment, classroom management, and community engagement. Quality programs reach beyond mandatory training requirements to provide staff with additional tools, professional practice, coaching, and an environment of cooperation and learning. In a quality afterschool program afterschool, staff is expected to demonstrate commitment to contributing to a professional working environment through a high level of ethical conduct and positive interaction.

Staff Qualifications			
<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Foundational Practice Indicator Set</i>	<i>Comprehensive Program Indicator Set</i>	<i>Organizational Practice Indicators Set</i>
1 <i>Secure staff that possess knowledge of working with youth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff has education and experience in working with youth, ideally in an afterschool program environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are trained in research and best practice related to working with youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization offers staff opportunities to keep up with the professional standards and innovations in working with youth. Supervisors monitor staff compliance with the professional standards required to work with youth, and provide additional coaching as needed.
2 <i>Obtain staff that possess knowledge of the afterschool field</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is educated and experienced in working in in an afterschool program environment. Staff is provided with materials and information on best practice in the afterschool field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are trained in research and best practice related to the afterschool field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization offers staff opportunities to transfer and share the most current knowledge of the afterschool field.
3 <i>Provide background checks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and volunteers are fingerprinted and receive a background check clearance prior to working with youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation is maintained of background check clearance for all staff and volunteers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements policy that requires background checks for all staff. Organization provides communication that supports youth, families, and staff knowing and

			understanding the policy.
Orientation			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Orient staff to essential program elements</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program staff and substitutes are provided with a basic orientation to the program. Staff handbook is distributed to all staff. Documentation exists that staff have reviewed and agree to comply with handbook. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and substitutes are scheduled for an in-depth orientation training. Program maintains a written staff handbook that is reviewed and updated annually, using staff input. Documentation is kept confirming staff training and agreement to comply with the handbook. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a policy that requires all new staff receive an in-depth orientation, with an annual reviews of essential policies. Organization annually maintains a staff handbook with input from staff and families. Organization annually reviews the staff handbook for legal compliance with state law.
2 <i>Support staff in understanding its roles and responsibilities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each staff member understands his or her scope of work including responsibilities to the program, its youth, and family members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal written job descriptions are developed and provided for each program position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization supports all staff members in understanding their roles and how they interrelate with other program roles and responsibilities.
3 <i>Support staff in understanding program policies and procedures</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures and expectations are clearly and consistently communicated to staff, substitutes, and volunteers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff annually confirms its review and knowledge of program policies, procedures, and expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization provides staff opportunities to make recommendations to the program policies, procedures, and expectations based on field experience.
Professional Development			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Support staff in understanding and demonstrating core competencies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is aware of the National Afterschool Alliance Core Competencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is trained in the National Afterschool Alliance Core Competencies. There is a written plan for on-going professional development for each staff member, including the director. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization dedicates resources to build and align core competencies consistent with broader program goals.
2 <i>Support staff in understanding quality program aspects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff receives a handbook that outlines the multiple aspects of program quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are trained to increase their competency in critical aspects of quality programming. Program leaders receive training in program management and staff supervision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements policies that support staff understanding of multiple aspects of program quality. Staff are monitored for understanding quality program aspects and coaching is provided as needed. Organization communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the policy.

Intra-Staff Relationships			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Build a cohesive team</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff works as a team, building on individual strengths and demonstrating cooperation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is trained in team building and encouraged to demonstrate positive team interaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization conducts regular staff retreats to deepen cooperation and respect.
2 <i>Encourage positive communication</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff maintains open, positive, and respectful lines of communication. Staff-to-staff relationships are professional and do not interfere with their responsibilities in caring for and interacting with youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program incorporates structured opportunities for staff to reflect on and plan effective communication practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisors monitor staff compliance with positive inter-staff relationships and provide additional coaching as needed.
Retention Indicators			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Provide equitable compensation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff is offered the best possible wages and working conditions in an effort to reduce staff turnover. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If staff is paid, program pays for planning or prep time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If program has paid staff, full-time staff receive equitable wages, benefits and health insurance.
2 <i>Establish a positive, rewarding work environment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff experiences a safe, respectful, and rewarding work environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff receives consistent, public recognition for its contribution to the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization provides a structure and a process for staff to express concerns and make recommendations. Management is responsive to staff concerns and recommendations.
3 <i>Supervise staff through effective and positive practices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff receives on-going supervision and feedback throughout the program year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff participates in an annual self-evaluation process based on an objective observation tool, which includes discussion with supervisor on performance goals and the development of an improvement plan. Supervisors are trained in staff supervision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements an annual needs assessment with all staff to identify professional development needs; organization provides resources to the meet the needs. Organization implements a policy for regular staff reviews that assess knowledge of supervisory role (if appropriate) and quality of team contribution. Exit interviews with all staff members who terminate are conducted and the feedback is addressed by management.

STANDARD 8: Evaluation for Continuous Quality Improvement

A quality afterschool program has a clearly defined mission with aligned goals and specific outcomes. Programs align their mission and goals with those of the school and community that they serve. The program establishes a continuous, internal evaluation process to assess the efficacy of their progress towards program goals. Through various methods and measures such as focus groups, surveys, observation, self-monitoring, student and program assessments, etc, programs gather information from youth, families, teachers, school administrators, staff, volunteers, and community stakeholders to make improvements.

Continuous Quality Improvement Indicators			
Concepts	Foundational Practice Indicator Set	Comprehensive Program Indicator Set	Organizational Practice Indicators Set
1 <i>Establish program mission, goals and objectives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program mission is defined and is supported by current, measurable program goals and objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program mission, goals, and objectives align with the identified needs of participants. Participant needs are identified through existing data, document review, key informant interviews, surveys, most significant change stories, concept mapping, or other means. Program leadership develops and reviews evaluation questions at least once per year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization collaborates with school and community members to derive program mission, goals, and objectives that are aligned with school and community goals as well as the identified needs of participants. Organization collaborates with staff, school personnel, community stakeholders, and/or family members to derive evaluation questions at least once per year.
2 <i>Collect data for continuous improvement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A record is kept of youth participation and retention levels. (Registration, attendance, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program identifies and sustains data collection processes from various stakeholders that inform continuous program improvement Program regularly collects measures of program goals and objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization regularly collects multiple measures of program goals and objectives from a variety of different stakeholder groups and uses the data to build the case for investment in the program Data are shared with stakeholders.
3 <i>Collect stories that exemplify quality practice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff shares success stories on a regular basis amongst themselves and with families they serve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program has a process in place to collect and archive success stories. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stories connected to data snapshots are posted/distributed to showcase program and youth accomplishments on a regular basis. Organization uses success stories to promote the program with stakeholders, policymakers, funders, and the greater community.
4 <i>Enlist family input on the value of the program</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff discusses the value of the program with families on a regular basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program conducts family surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization solicits input from families and includes them in the program planning process.
5 <i>Use of self-assessment data for program improvement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff participates in a self-assessment of the program. Staff understands how program assessment correlates with personnel core competencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program utilizes staff input to adopt a standard self-assessment instrument that is used to assess overall program effectiveness. Program utilizes self-assessment to develop and implement a continuous quality improvement action plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization implements a policy for regular assessment through a written Continuous Quality Improvement Plan. Organization invests fiscal and staff resources for an assessment and continuous quality improvement process.
6 <i>Use of program data for quality improvement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff reviews program participation and retention data at least once per year and identifies best-practices for improvement. Staff is aware that some program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program utilizes participation and retention data, as well as measures of program goals and objectives to inform continuous program improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization develops an annual summary of data and continuous quality improvement activities. Organization collaborates with staff, school

	measures of effectiveness have been defined and data are being tracked	planning.	personnel, family members and community stakeholders to review results of and help plan any changes to the Continuous Quality Improvement Plan.
7 <i>Share evidence of best or promising practice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff regularly reviews and reflects on progress reports, program data, evaluation findings as well as research / literature reviews and other professional development information to confirm evidence of best or promising practices in the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program documents evidence of best or promising practice in program materials and shares them with staff and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization facilitates staff participation in events that allow them to share and learn about best and promising practices with stakeholders and other afterschool providers.

CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

Afterschool Academic Support

Afterschool academic support augments and reinforces classroom learning methods, as informed and supported by classroom teachers. Afterschool academic supports include homework help, tutoring, and study skills development to name a few. For some programs afterschool academic supports include preparing for standardized tests and student mastery assessments that are supported by education content specialists. Research has also shown that academic support inclusion builds reading and math competency, study skills, decreases disciplinary action, ensures on-time promotion, improves homework completion, and sustains engagement in learning. Research has also pointed to improved attitudes and beliefs toward school, positive learning behavior, and higher school attendance. Many afterschool practitioners tie classroom learning concepts to the afterschool curriculum through Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) activities that can be attached to the arts, cultural programming, civic engagement, and other skill-building activities.

Afterschool Life Skills Support

Life skill supports in afterschool address young people’s social and developmental needs with a focus on improving social skills, self-esteem, initiative, and leadership skills. According to the Harvard Graduate School of Education, research has shown that participation in these programs is associated with decreased behavioral problems, improved social and communication skills, better relationships with peers and teachers, increased self-confidence, self-esteem and self-efficiency, lower levels of depression and anxiety, development of initiative, and improved feelings and attitudes toward self and school. Non-academic learning activities are those that are experiential, fun, informed by youth, and support mastery of skills for school and life. Research-based methods inspire creative expression through the arts, cooking clubs, and gardening projects as examples. They build socio-emotional skills such as problem-solving, anger management, and empathy. They also help young people understand issues faced in the community and the world through service learning opportunities and project learning or “real world” experiential activities.

Assets / Asset Orientation

Assets are generally defined as the critical factors and benchmarks for young people’s growth and development. Developmental assets are grounded in extensive research in youth development, resilience, and prevention. Developmental assets represent the relationships, opportunities, and personal qualities that young people need to avoid risks and to thrive. An asset orientation focuses all activities and ways of thinking on assets instead of the deficits of participants, families, schools and communities.

Behavior Management

Established rules and behavioral expectations are clearly communicated to all youth. Natural and logical consequences, positive reinforcements, praise, time out, earned privileges, and other behavior management techniques help maintain a safe, predictable and orderly program.

Best and Promising Practice

Best and promising practices are a continuum of practices and programs that are based on guidelines, standards and research that have been proven to lead to effective outcomes for youth and programs. Promising practices have qualitative data that supports implementation, but no extensive quantitative data to support it. Best practices have been reviewed and substantiated through research.

Capacity

A conceptual approach to program and/or organizational development that focuses on understanding the resources, priorities and obstacles that support or inhibit the realization of their developmental goals, results or outcomes.

Capacity Building

A process of identifying the needs and priorities of the program and/or organization that drives a planning process to strengthen procedures, programming, skills and competencies. This increases the ability of the organization and/or to meet goals and outcomes.

Caring Adult

Caring adults model and foster interpersonal skills that contribute to child-centered practice such as active listening, showing genuine concern and positive regard for the children in the program, building trusting, affirming relationships, having an asset-orientation (as opposed to deficit orientation), and positive guidance techniques. Caring adults build on student strengths and communicate these strengths to others.

Communication Tools

An effective communications strategy will include a set of tools that will advance the program's message and engage identified target audiences. Tools can include the internet, social media, publications and other print materials, public service broadcasts, radio spots, videos, media relations, spokespersons, events, and presentations. Selected tools will depend on the organization/program's strategic goals and the profile of the target audience, as well as available budget. Whatever the selection of tools used, consistency of message and style is paramount, which often times is guided by an established brand.

Community Engagement

Community engagement is about members of a community participating in the decisions and actions that help to shape their community. (Fraser Basin Council, 2003). Community engagement is the process of engaging community members and groups in collaboratively addressing issues of mutual importance and concern. Community engagement many times leads to community development activities that involve a shared responsibility among community members. Community engagement intentionally takes into account diverse community assets, capacities, and needs.

Core Competencies

Core Competencies define what professionals / staff need to know to deliver and promote quality school-age/afterschool activities and interactions. They are the foundation for decisions and practices carried out by afterschool and youth development professionals in variety of settings.

Culture

Culture is a set of practices and beliefs associated with a particular group. Many think of culture as race and ethnicity. We define culture broadly to include all characteristics of human description. This may include age, gender, geography, ancestry, language, history, sexual orientation, faith, physical ability as well as occupation and affiliations. An organization, school community or program may have its own culture. In afterschool programs, you may observe this if you interact with a variety of sites and organizations.

Cultural Competency

Culturally competent programs respect participant, family, staff, and community cultural norms, language, abilities and learning styles. Culturally proficient programs include activities that are fully inclusive of all youth backgrounds, using curricula that support and value diverse perspectives, histories, and community practices.

Developmentally Appropriate

Developmentally appropriate commonly refers to program methods and goals that respond to ages, developmental stages, and individual differences of children and youth. Activities reflect appropriate behavioral and academic expectations for children and youth of various ages and developmental levels. Activities are modified based on the responses of youth. Differences are assessed, and lessons accommodated to varying developmental levels. NMASA intent is for providers to ensure the delivery of adaptations and accommodations based on developmental levels of their youth.

Disguised or Covert Learning

Learning (of various types) that is intentionally embedded into engaging and enjoyable after school activities.

Diversity

A diverse program is fully inclusive. Diversity strategies are in place to eliminate stereotyping and discrimination. Program activities respect and respond to multiple learning styles, cultural traditions, family and community practices, diverse perspectives and values and individual physical and mental abilities.

Experiential Learning

Often referred to a project-based learning, experiential learning involves a series of activities with a sustained focus over time that results in a performance, a product, or service learning project. The afterschool space is an excellent setting for this type of accomplishment. Experiential learning generally involves group effort that can occur beyond the walls of the afterschool program space into the community for research, internships, and showcase presentations. Experiential learning has clear learning goals that often embrace academic, social, and meta-cognitive dimensions simultaneously. In this type of learning, youth receive and provide feedback as projects are developed; often including reflection and review from peers, program staff, community members, and families. Experiential learning can also ensure that literacy and numeracy are essential elements of an integrated learning strategy that links fun and serious effort to a self-awareness on the part of youth as being capable learners.

Family

Family is defined differently for individual children and youth. Staff and administration need to be aware of the diverse family arrangements represented in their program. Families may include: children and adults living in the home, adults who are responsible for the care and well-being of the child, parents who may not live in the same household as the child, and the child's legal guardian.

Family Engagement

Family engagement is a shared responsibility in which schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to reaching out to engage families in meaningful ways and in which families are committed to actively supporting their children's learning and development. Family engagement is continuous across a child's life and entails enduring commitment but changing parent roles as children mature into young adulthood. Family engagement cuts across and reinforces learning in the multiple settings where children learn— at home, in prekindergarten programs, in school, in afterschool programs, in faith-based institutions, and in the community. (Dr. Heather Weiss, Harvard Family Research Project, 2009)

Learning

Learning is the act of acquiring new information or modifying existing knowledge. It impacts skills, competencies, and behavior. It can be based on any part of holistic development (social-emotional, physical, intellectual, etc.) All experiences impact learning, and it can occur in any setting or context, consciously or without conscious awareness. In order to have the most impact on learning, afterschool programs must be intentional about the strategies used.

Learning Styles

Learning styles take into account the way that individuals gain knowledge and their unique approach to learning based on their strengths and preferences. Learning style can also be described as a set of factors, behaviors, and attitudes that facilitate learning for an individual in a given situation. Styles influence the ways that students learn, how adults support learning, and guide how the two interact. Styles have "contextual" variables given that learners bring who they are from their context to all learning environments. In this regard, it is understood that each learner has distinct and consistent preferred ways of perceiving, organizing, and retaining information.

Marketing

Marketing is a set of organizational processes for creating, communicating and delivering a message of value to customers. In afterschool, marketing promotes buy-in and sustainability of programming.

Nationally and Locally Informed

The review and utilization of state and national standards, like the National After School Association and Commission On Accreditation. The process of relevant standards through statewide input processes.

Youth

Program youth, also referred to as students, are school-age children and youth enrolled in afterschool programs.

Positive Youth Development

Positive youth development focuses on young people's strengths to ensure their success. There is a commitment to the following promises: caring adults; safe places; healthy development; an effective education; and, opportunities to help others through volunteer service activities.

Quality Standard

Purposely describes the conditions of quality for the program, its youth, and all stakeholders in a specific category.

Quality Indicator

Is a specific measure that quantifies the attainment of a quality standard. In this document, they are grouped by foundational practice indicators, comprehensive program indicators, and organizational indicators.

Quality Concept

Is one of several necessary key elements that support a quality standard. Concepts can be used to identify the common theme across indicator types.

Risky Behaviors

Behaviors that put an individual's health or safety at risk; regarding children, typically includes but is not limited to: alcohol, tobacco and drug use, sexual behaviors, bullying and injury to self or others.

School-Age Care

School-age care involves structured and generally licensed care for children provided outside of normal school hours. Services associated with school-age care include a range of organized, age-appropriate, structured programs, clubs, and activities for school-age children and youth within supervised environments and during the times that they are not in school.

Service Learning

A teaching and learning strategy in which youth are engaged in addressing real world issues, problems, and needs in their school and community through research, reflection, and either direct service/volunteerism or advocacy.

Self-Assessment Alignment

New Mexico has adopted the Elev8 Extended Learning Self-Assessment (ELSA) Tool, which includes 10 elements of quality, action plan tools and ideas, and a professional development planning tool. NMASA also intends to develop additional tools that support staff core competencies.

Volunteers

Individuals who participate in carrying out the activities and goals of the program or organization but are not paid employees.