Program Quality



Self-Assessment Tool



What is Afterschool?

The term "Afterschool" is often used interchangeably with "Out-of-school" time (OST). Out-of-school time refers to youth development programming that occurs beyond the traditional school day, including before school, after school, holidays, weekends and summers. Programs are structured and offer a wide range of learning and enrichment activities that promote the academic, physical, emotional and social development of all children and youth.

What is the South Dakota Afterschool Network (SDAN)?

The South Dakota Afterschool Network works to better our state and its communities by connecting providers, parents and policymakers with proven tools and resources to increase the quality of and access to out-of-school time programming for K-12 children and youth. With a mission to support and sustain quality out of school time programs, South Dakota Afterschool Network envisions a state where all children have access to high-quality, safe and affordable programming that supports successful academic and positive social outcomes for students, parents, schools and communities.

South Dakota Afterschool Quality Committees

In 2023, the South Dakota Afterschool Network undertook the responsibility of developing a comprehensive set of quality areas and program self-assessment tools designed to support OST programs across the state. The original draft was developed by the Utah Afterschool Network. From there, Child & Family Resource Network adapted the language to align with South Dakota's local context. SDAN convened a Quality Committee and Stakeholder Quality Workgroup, which included youth development experts, educators, and others to review best practices and research-based guidelines, as well as reviewed the tools line by line to refine it further. It was subsequently piloted through the Path2Impact Leadership Pathway to gather field insights. After approximately 12 months of development and testing, this is the final version we see today.



Purpose

The purpose of the South Dakota Afterschool Program Quality Standards and Program Self-Assessment is to outline the path and steps that lead to high quality afterschool and summer learning programs that take place outside the school day. The Afterschool Standards are based on national research and best practices in the youth development and education fields.

The South Dakota Afterschool Standards and Self-Assessment are voluntary statewide standards and processes that may serve as:

- A framework of clear expectations for all stakeholders.
- A guide to inform statewide decision-making, for example, professional development focus areas, funding, support and advocacy.
- A guide for program providers to assess their own program site and organizations to help determine what they are doing well and what needs improvement.
- A guide for parents and youth to identify quality programming.
- A guide for school principals and district superintendents to reinforce and advance educational priorities.

Definitions

1. Quality Element

Priority areas that helps organize all standards

2. Focus Area / Domain

Broad researched-based best practices in quality out-of-school program

3. Areas of Quality

Specific and detailed descriptions of the standard or best practice in quality out-of-school programs

4. How it Looks in Practice/Standards-based Practices

Evidence that can be observed in a high quality out-of-school program

Getting Started

The program self-assessment is an ongoing process that must be consistently revisited after the assessment has been completed. Optimally, programs will conduct an assessment at least twice per year to get a gauge on areas of strength and those that need improvement. The South Dakota Afterschool Network hopes that this technique will provide you with insight, tools, and inspiration to advance program quality improvement efforts to the next level.

Assessing a program can be a daunting process without taking time to thoroughly prepare. Here are some tips to guide the process:

- Establish a team. This could include program staff and administration, host personnel (building principal and school teachers), agency staff, families, and business leaders.
- Create a timeline of meetings (include agendas and minutes) pre- and postself-assessment.
- Participate in training regarding the purpose and use of the tool facilitated by the South Dakota Afterschool Network.
- Each team member conducts their own assessment of the program.
 - As a team, prioritize those areas that should be assessed first.
 - Children and youth should be included as assessors. The team should determine how best to accomplish this by taking into consideration the age and maturity of program participants.
- Plan a debriefing meeting to share findings. It is through this step that important discussions about quality standards will occur. Consensus about what was assessed and how it was interpreted is built through this process.
- Plan to celebrate program strengths. This will sustain a positive approach to the enhancement process while working to create an action plan. Implement realistic action plans starting with two to three program goals.
- Repeat assessments to determine increases in performance evals and sustain continuous improvement.

A quality program provides a safe, healthy, and stimulating learning environment that promotes physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth and development for all youth. Activities allow for choice, discovery, and progression.



Creating A Quality Improvement Team

Successful implementation of this tool requires a team approach. This is an ongoing process involving staff, youth participants, families, and other stakeholders including school teachers and administrators, as well as other community partners/agencies. An important part of the self-assessment process is reflection and dialogue. No one individual can initiate or maintain quality improvements without the conversations and "buy-in" that need to occur regarding quality standards.

To keep the momentum moving:



Build staff experience in quality standards who can share their knowledge with new staff. The message is strengthened by delivery and modeling from both colleagues and administration.



Educate parents and board members about quality standards who will share the message over and over with neighbors and community partners. This greatly enhances the advocacy efforts of program administration.



Encourage children and youth participation in a process that is inclusive of their voice. They will market the program to peers thus supporting attendance and sustainability.

The site directors and staff will be the ones implementing the action plan. Evaluate staff members' skills to determine what skill sets they presently have and what they need in order to make improvements. Professional development can be delivered in a variety of ways.

Keep in mind that professional development isn't just about workshops that present "new skills." It allows for everyone to get on the same page, provides tools and resources for achieving program goals, examples of promising practices and supports, and builds a community of learners. Research is clear: A skilled, stable, trained, and motivated workforce is a key determinant of quality programming.



Rating System

The South Dakota Program Self-Quality Assessment Tool uses the following fourpoint frequency based rating scale. The scale is designed to answer the question "how true is it that these statements describe what I assessed?"

4 = Very True

The desired practices were observed consistently and/or during all expected situations and times and for all or almost all of the youth present.

3 = Mostly True

The desired practices were observed most of the time and for a good proportion of the youth but not at all expected times or perhaps not for all youth (i.e., there were some missed opportunities).

2 = Somewhat True

The desired practices are observed infrequently or only partially met (i.e., one or some of the indicators are observed but not all of the indicators are present). Or, there is some minor evidence of negative expressions of the behaviors/practices, as indicated by a "1" rating.

1 = Not True

The desired practices were expected, but not observed. Or, the observed practices were a poor approximation of the desired practices, or represented a negative expression of the desired practices, as indicated by the definition of a "1" rating. Non-Applicable / Don't Know The observer is not familiar enough with this aspect of the program to rate the performance on this standard or is not sure how to rate it at this time. Or, this standard and/or indicators do not apply to our site or program.

Category/Quality Element



Health & Safety



Relationships & Interactions



Activities & Experiences



Program Management

Health & Safety

This refers to the promotion of health, nutrition, physical activity, and safety of children, staff members and families. These include standards, procedures, and resources to support the cleanliness and safety of the facility which includes eliminating hazards, promoting hand washing, ensuring ongoing and daily sanitizing to prevent illness, snack/meal communication and sanitation, completion of safety checklists, etc.

All staff are professionally qualified to work with youth.

•	,	
Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
All staff meet minimum age requirements and position qualifications.	 All staff who are responsible for the direct supervision of youth are 18 years of age or older and meet position qualifications of the hiring organization. All staff under the age of 18 work under the direct physical supervision of staff 18 years of age or older. Staff working with high school age youth are at least 3 years older than the youth they serve. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
2) Criminal background checks are conducted on all staff and volunteers who work alone with youth.	 The program conducts background checks on staff and volunteers who work alone with youth at a minimum of every five years. Direct physical supervision is provided for all staff and volunteers until background checks are cleared. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

All staff are professionally qualified to work with youth.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
3) All staff are required to read and sign an	"Code of Conduct" outlines staff expectations and confidentiality requirements (may be included in staff)	4
organization's "Code of Conduct" or similar	requirements (may be included in staff handbook). • Procedures are in place to enforce the	2
document and adhere to confidentiality requirements.	organization's "Code of Conduct." • Signed documents are maintained on file.	1
Notes		
4) All staff are required to read and document their	 Signed documents are maintained on file. 	4 3
understanding of program policies and procedures.	3	2 1
Notes		
5) A minimum number of 10		4
hours of needs-based in- service training is made	 Training documentation, including training organization, date, training topic and total 	3
available to all staff annually based on state requirements.	training hours, is maintained on file.	1
Notes		

All staff are professionally qualified to work with youth.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
6) CPR certification and First Aid training are provided and documentation of both is maintained.	 Minimum of at least one staff is onsite who is certified in CPR and trained in First Aid. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

7) Staff has knowledge of child abuse and neglect reporting requirements and procedures.

- The program provides training on child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and procedures annually, and staff are aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Staff are able to demonstrate their knowledge of child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and procedures.
- Staff, volunteers, youth, and families are provided with information on mandatory reporting with the Department of Social Services, Child Protective Services.

Notes

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Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
8) Staff are familiar with Youth Suicide Warning Signs and have access to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.	Resources: www.youthsuicidewarningsigns.org www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org 1-800-273-8255 (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a free and confidential service that is available 24/7 for people in distress, with prevention and crisis resources. 988 (state suicide prevention line) Mental Health First Aid • Staff receive training to recognize warning signs and how to appropriately respond when there is concern for the wellbeing of youth served. • Staff are aware of appropriate channels to communicate concerns about youth and suicide. • Staff are prepared to share information about Youth Suicide Warning Signs with students and families.	4 3 2 1
Notes		
9) A hierarchy of leadership is established within the program.	 At least one staff in a supervisory role is on site at all times. A staffing emergency plan is in place. An organization chart has been established and is reviewed with all staff. It is best practice to have two staff onsite and with youth until all youth have left the program 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
Program implements a regular schedule that is communicated to all staff, families, and participants.	 A detailed activity/daily schedule is posted, visible and accessible to all. Families are notified prior to changes to the schedule. Program follows a daily schedule, as appropriate. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

• Participant information is accessible to staff on and off site as needed (field trips, emergencies, etc.) 2) Participant registration 4 • A hard copy of participants' emergency information is accessible and includes emergency contact information and special needs is 3 contact/release numbers, always available. photo and social media • Program maintains documentation on 2 releases, allergies, youth photo and social media releases. • Program has access to a release for schools medications, and other 1 needs. and/or organizations to share information about individual health and safety plans for youth.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
3) Special health needs of participants are documented and staff is informed, as appropriate.	 Documentation (confidential list) is maintained on special health needs of participants. Staff is informed of special health needs of participants, as appropriate. The list is updated regularly and accessible. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
4) Procedures/policies are in place to address the administration of medication to youth.	 The parent handbook states medication administration policy and staff handbook clearly states medication administration policies and procedures. Staff are identified and trained, as appropriate, to administer all medication including emergency medication (i.e. Epipen, asthma inhaler). 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
5) Youth with communicable diseases (symptoms that include a high fever) are not permitted in the program and participants' families are notified of SD DOH Reportable Diseases.	 Communicable diseases policies/procedures are outlined in the parent and staff handbooks. Policies/procedures include guidelines regarding separating youth who become ill during program hours from other participants according to the SD DOH guidelines (https://doh.sd.gov/media/lulnnepx/temporary-exclusion-school.pdf) Personal Protective Equipment such as masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer are available if needed. Staff are responsible for meeting SD DOH state health reporting requirements. https://doh.sd.gov/media/sjlbund5/reportable-disease-list-poster.pdf 	4 3 2 1

Notes

- 6) Healthy practices and hand washing procedures are implemented especially after using the toilet or before handling food.
- Healthy practice policies/procedures are outlined in the staff handbook.
- Staff are trained on best practices for hand washing.
- Healthy practices and procedures include routine hand washing procedures, sanitizing food prep and eating areas, providing tissues, providing organized space for personal items, etc.
- Hand sanitizer is readily available to supplement hand washing when access to running water is unavailable.

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outh.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
7) Snacks (if provided) are served in accordance with Federal Nutrition guidelines. (If answering "no" or question is not applicable, please explain in the narrative).	 Healthy food choices are made available in two of the recommended food groups. Federal Snack Guidelines 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
9) Program implements a written computer use and internet safety policy. (If computer or electronic devices are available to use for youth)	 Staff are trained on the program's computer use and internet safety policy. All computers accessed by youth are equipped with appropriate internet filters. The computer use and internet safety policy is communicated to participating youth and families (time limits, acceptable use policy, etc.) 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
10) Families are notified regarding urgent issues that could impact the health and safety of participants.	 A notification process has been established to alert families as needs arise. Policy on failure to arrive at the program. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
II) Program adheres to the school or organization's safety protocols and licensing standards.	 Program follows school or organization's emergency plans and drill schedule. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
12) Program has a written policy to ensure secure facility access.	 Ensure entrances remain secured and/or monitored Limit and monitor access points. Manage visitor access. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

Youth are carefully supervised to maintain safety.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
1) Staff supervise youth according to youths' ages and abilities.	 The program provides minimum of one adult for every ten to fifteen participants, ages 5-12. The program provides minimum of one adult for every fifteen to twenty participants, ages 13+. 	4 3 2 1

Youth are carefully supervised to maintain safety.

How It Looks in Practice	Rating
A process is in place to increase supervision according to the special needs of youth and/or risk involved in activities such as field trips, woodworking, swimming, etc.	4 3 2 1
 A check in and checkout procedure is in place to document youth arrival and the time they leave. In elementary age programs, if youth are picked up, the staff record with whom they leave. 	4 3 2 1
 The registration form lists individuals authorized to pick up youth from the program (elementary). Identification checks are required as appropriate. 	4 3 2 1
	 A process is in place to increase supervision according to the special needs of youth and/or risk involved in activities such as field trips, woodworking, swimming, etc. A check in and checkout procedure is in place to document youth arrival and the time they leave. In elementary age programs, if youth are picked up, the staff record with whom they leave. The registration form lists individuals authorized to pick up youth from the program (elementary). Identification checks are required as

Youth are carefully supervised to maintain safety.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
5) Program ensures safe arrival of all youth to the program site.	 A process is in place to ensure safe transition for youth from school to the program. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
6) A participant release policy/process is in place to ensure safe departure for all youth.	 The registration form indicates departure options, e.g., ride bus, walk home, parent pick up, sibling pick up, etc. A process is in place to ensure youth departure options are followed. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
7) A written policy/process is in place to address injuries, accidents, and incidents.	 The policy/process includes appropriate forms and parent/guardian notification. Documentation is maintained on file. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Youth are carefully supervised to maintain safety.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
8) Families are provided opportunities to be introduced and get to know the staff members in the program.	 Program offers a parent orientation. Program provides a staff meet and greet. Staff are available during parent pick up. New program staff are introduced in program newsletters and/or via social media. Program sends home a newsletter or information packet at the beginning of the program year or when a student is enrolled. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

A transportation policy is in place and communicated to staff and families of participants. - if applicable

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
The program complies with all legal requirements for vehicles and drivers.	 All vehicles meet legal safety requirements. All drivers have obtained and maintained the necessary license(s) required to operate program vehicles. 	4 3 2 1

A transportation policy is in place and communicated to staff and families of participants. - if applicable

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
2) The program provides written policies and procedures to transport youth safely to and from offsite activities.	 Parental/guardian consent and transportation/release forms are required for all participating youth and maintained on file. 	4 3 2 1

Responsive teaching practices are key for all youth environments. They foster trust and emotional security; are communicative and enriching; and promote critical thinking and problem-solving. They also support social, emotional, behavioral, and language development; provide supportive feedback for learning; and motivate continued effort. Teaching practices and interactions are responsive to and build on each youth's pattern of development and learning. This also refers to the positive relationships and interactions between families and providers, and between members of the program team.

Staff know, respect, and support youth. Youth know and respect staff.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
Staff promote a respectful and welcoming environment for all youth.	 Staff greet youth by name. Staff refrain from using sarcasm with children. Staff engage youth in friendly conversation. Staff maintain positive and friendly body language and tone of voice. Staff have mutual respect for boundaries. 	4 3 2 1

How It Looks in Practice	Rating
 Staff actively and consistently interact with youth. Staff are on task (attentive to program). Staff are attentive to youth needs. When possible, staff participate in activities alongside youth to encourage and model. 	4 3 2 1
 Staff communicate with one another in a professional manner to address youth and program needs as they arise. Staff work cooperatively together to ensure problems are handled smoothly. Staff members share responsibilities by fulfilling multiple roles and responsibilities to meet the needs of participants. 	4 3 2 1
	 Staff actively and consistently interact with youth. Staff are on task (attentive to program). Staff are attentive to youth needs. When possible, staff participate in activities alongside youth to encourage and model. Staff communicate with one another in a professional manner to address youth and program needs as they arise. Staff work cooperatively together to ensure problems are handled smoothly. Staff members share responsibilities by

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
4) Staff respect, actively listen to, and appropriately respond to the needs and feelings of youth.	 Staff use open-ended questions to encourage responses from youth. Staff encourage youth to ask questions for understanding and actively listen to responses. Staff crouch or kneel if necessary to address youth at their eye level as needed. Staff address youth needs with respect and confidentiality in alignment with mandatory reporting requirements. Staff circulate and interact with all youth throughout activity. Staff hold youth accountable for adhering to program rules and expectations. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

- 5) Staff promote and demonstrate respect for all cultural backgrounds and ability levels.
- Staff encourage and model appreciation for and understanding of diversity in backgrounds and ability levels of participating youth.
- Staff guide youth to respect the cultural, physical, emotional, academic differences, and abilities of their peers.
- Staff members reflect the diversity, languages, and cultures of the community served.

4 3 2

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Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
6) Staff communicate with each other during program hours about youth and program needs as they arise.	 Staff communicate with one another in a professional manner to address youth and program needs as they arise. Staff work cooperatively together to ensure problems are handled smoothly. Staff duties are shared such that staff members fulfill multiple roles and responsibilities to meet the needs of participants. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

7) Staff encourage and guide youth to resolve their own conflicts.

- Staff help youth recognize responsibility in conflict resolution.
- Staff teach youth to work through conflicts in an appropriate manner and intervene when necessary.
- Staff encourage youth to suggest solutions.

4 3 2

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Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
8) Youth understand and actively participate in the creation and implementation of expectations regarding respect and support for other youth and staff.	 Youth know the staff members by name. Youth have mutual respect for boundaries. Youth have visual access to established rules and expectations. Youth participate in creating and establishing the program rules and expectations. Youth hold each other accountable for adhering to program rules and expectations. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

Program staff and administration (Program) communicates and collaborates with schools and the community.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
1) Program engages in school collaborations to plan and implements intentionally designed activities and services based on youth needs and interests.	 Program connects with the school to provide services that are responsive to youth academics and social needs. Program intentionally coordinates with the partnering school to ensure consistency by aligning relationships, policies, expectations, shared resources, students needs, and academics. Program establishes effective and ongoing communication strategies with the partnering organization or school. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Program staff and administration (Program) communicates and collaborates with schools and the community.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
2) Program builds relationships with arts, culture, service learning, and other organizations to expand and enhance program offerings.	 Partners provide activities or services to build on youth talents, skills, and strengths. Program clearly communicates with community partners whether they are included in the program staff to youth ratio. Staff remain actively engaged while community partners are facilitating activities and programming. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

3) Program develops and maintains positive working relationships with partners.	 Program intentionally develops partnerships with community organizations to address program goals and respond to student needs and interests. Program works with partnering organizations to establish program goals and develop plans for implementation. Program establishes mechanisms to address issues, problems, or potential opportunities with partnering organizations Program establishes effective and ongoing communication strategies with the partnering organizations. Program clarifies roles and expectations with partnering organizations. 	4 3 2 1
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• Program intentionally develops partnerships

Program staff and administration (Program) foster family engagement to support program goals.

Program encourages family engagement and maintains ongoing outreach efforts with families.	 Program connects with families to provide services that are responsive to youth academic and social needs. Program encourages families to actively participate in the program (i.e., planning, decision making, meetings, advocacy opportunities, and volunteering). Program incorporates input from families as part of ongoing planning and improvement efforts. Program provides community building and networking opportunities among families. Program is aware of families that are engaged. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

- 2) Program makes community resource information available to families.
- Program provides information regarding relevant community resources to families on a regular basis.
- Programs ensures community resources are accessible to families (i.e. materials are appropriately translated, program aligns parent events with parent schedules, program staff are readily available to answer questions, etc.)

4 3

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Program staff and administration (Program) foster family engagement to support program goals.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
3) Staff interact with appropriate the family member(s) regarding matters concerning the well-being of their youth.	 Staff communicate with appropriate family member(s) in formal and informal ways, on matters both positive and negative concerning their youth. Staff interact with families in a culturally-appropriate, respectful, and welcoming manner. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

- 4) Program communicates with families and families of potential program youth.
- Program intentionally and regularly communicates with families in multiple and timely ways.
 Program shares their activity schedule and
- Program shares their activity schedule and program goals with families.
 Program enrollment information and
- opportunities are shared publicly.
 Program staff are readily available and equipped to answer questions.

Program staff and administration (Staff) implement a consistent and responsive behavior management plan.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
1) Staff use positive and consistent techniques to guide the behavior of youth.	 Staff are trained on the program's behavior management plan. Staff implement consistent benefits and consequences for all participants. Staff interact with youth in a respectful, encouraging, and supportive manner. Staff ensure youth are aware of and have visual access to the behavior standards and expectations. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

- 2) Staff are aware of the individual behavioral needs of youth and respond appropriately.
- Staff are made aware of how to respond to the specific behavioral needs of youth (i.e. personal circumstance/crisis, ADD/ADHD, autism, behavior disorders, etc.)
- Staff are responsive to behavioral changes in individual youth and report concerns to the appropriate individual, as needed.
- When appropriate, staff communicate with school day teachers on the behavioral plan of individual youth.

4 3 2

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Program staff and administration (Staff) implement a consistent and responsive behavior management plan.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
3) Staff training needs are assessed and relevant behavior management and well-being training and support are provided (developmentally appropriate activities, culturally responsive, positive behavior management, etc.).	 Staff have the opportunity to regularly indicate training needs. Required staff development and needs-based training are offered regularly throughout the year. 	4 3 2 1

Activities & Relationships

A high-quality, research-based curriculum (of activities and experiences) promotes measurable progress toward youth development. The content and learning outcomes of the activities and experiences align with state education standards which guides learning experiences and teaching practices. Content is drawn from current youth interests and ideas, including family input, and the values of the community. A curriculum also provides ways to create interactions and environments that foster trust and emotional security and supports family engagement. Programs offer a space with accessible materials in which youth can feel safe and inspired by their surroundings.

Cognitive / Academic

Youth are actively engaged in learning activities that promote critical/creative thinking skills and build on individual interests/strengths.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
1) Program offers a balance of intentionally designed academic and enrichment activities that are age and skill level appropriate.	 Program offers activities in a variety of areas, including core academics, arts, science, technology, engineering, math (STEM), recreation, global learning, culture, and health, etc. Program activities are developed in response to and build upon youth interests, needs and strengths. Program incorporates youth voice and choice. Activities and materials reflect the language, art, music, stories, and games from the youth's cultural traditions. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Youth are actively engaged in learning activities that promote critical/creative thinking skills and build on individual interests/strengths.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
2) Program offers enrichment activities that allow youth to explore new ideas, build skills and demonstrate their knowledge in a variety of learning environments.	 Program offers a variety of interest-based enrichment activities in art, music, dance, film, cooking, technology, physical activities, etc. Staff encourage youth to try new activities. Youth are engaged in youth-centered, project-based, and experiential learning activities every day and overtime. Program provides opportunities for youth to demonstrate their knowledge and showcase their work (performances, projects, etc). 	4 3 2 1

Notes

Academic support/interventions are aligned with school day content and address student learning needs.

dudiess student learning needs.		
Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
1) Program offers needs-based academic support and access to tutoring and/or homework help.	 Academic support, including tutoring and/or homework help, is provided on a regular schedule. Staff has access to resources, training and supports to provide needs-based academic assistance. Program offers academic infused enrichment activities that are aligned with academic standards. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		•

Academic support/interventions are aligned with school day content and address student learning needs.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
2) Program establishes communication with school day administration and staff regarding academic and behavioral progress of youth.	 Mechanisms for regular communication are established with school administration to address needs and share resources to best support learning and success (e.g. meetings, phone calls, notes, home visits, emails, etc.) Program staff, school staff, and/or families communicate regularly to share the academic and behavioral strengths, progress and needs of youth. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

Healthy Behaviors/Lifestyles
Program offers a variety of life skill activities and needs-based support that

promote personal growth and responsible behaviors toward self and others.			
Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating	
1) Program provides opportunities for youth to develop the skills needed to make positive choices and promote self-responsibility.	 Activities include opportunities to develop intrapersonal skills (self-discipline, integrity, honesty, self-awareness and self-efficacy). Program activities are designed to teach essential life skills (decision-making, problem solving, negotiation, communication, etc.). 	4 3 2 1	
Notes			

Program offers a variety of life skill activities and needs-based support that promote personal growth and responsible behaviors toward self and others.

3	owth and responsible behaviors toward self and t	
Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
2) Program provides opportunities for youth to develop the interpersonal skills needed to interact appropriately with others.	 Activities include opportunities for youth to work with others in a team setting to develop interpersonal skills such as compromise, setting goals, dividing up tasks, etc. Additional opportunities are provided to develop interpersonal skills which include empathy, encouragement, acceptance, and communication. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
3) Program offers evidence-based prevention/intervent ion education to build skills and knowledge that promote social success of youth.	 Curriculum and activities address a variety of age appropriate topics that reflect the needs of the youth served (e.g. healthy relationships, substance abuse, cyber safety, anti-bullying, mental health/suicide prevention, emotional regulation/anger management, etc). 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Program offers a variety of life skill activities and needs-based support that promote personal growth and responsible behaviors toward self and others.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
4) Program staff and administration address the needs of youth requiring individualized attention and support.	 A plan is in place to provide individualized support for youth exhibiting concerning behaviors (e.g., referral process, Individualized Education Plan, Youth Mentors, etc). 	4 3 2 1

Notes

Practices are in place to ensure that youth have opportunities to practice, participate in, and learn about healthy eating and physical activity.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
1) Program offers developmentally appropriate, inclusive physical activities, games, and sports that provide youth with the knowledge and skills necessary to enjoy being physically active throughout their lives.	 Program ensures staff have access to physical activity resources. Staff understand how to implement the daily physical activities and how to engage youth. Activities are connected to or integrated into existing programming, such as tutoring, homework, STEM, creative arts, and other enrichment activities. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Practices are in place to ensure that youth have opportunities to practice, participate in, and learn about healthy eating and physical activity.

participate in, and is	earn about healthy eating and physical activity.	
Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
2) Staff plan and provide time for physical activity.	 Youth are provided physical activity opportunities every day that emphasizes moderate to vigorous activities for at least half of physical activity time. Outdoor physical activities are offered daily (weather permitting). Staff refrain from using or eliminating physical activity as a form of guidance and behavior management. Staff are dressed appropriately for physical activity which may be indoors or outdoors. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
3) Program offers a variety of physical activities aimed at engaging youth in fun aerobic and cardio-respiratory and ageappropriate fitness activities.	 Youth have opportunities for swimming, jogging, dancing, jump rope, push-ups, etc. Activities are adaptable, accessible, and inclusive of youth with all abilities. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Practices are in place to ensure that youth have opportunities to practice, participate in, and learn about healthy eating and physical activity.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
4) Digital devices are used for homework, research, or digital learning that is active rather than passive.	 Passive screen time, which could include television, movies, and computer games are reserved for special occasions unless intentionally incorporated into activities. Daily total screen time is limited to: 20 minutes for 1-2 hr programs (program that occurs before or after school) 60 minutes for 3 hr+ programs (programs that occurs on extended - half or full days - non school days) 	4 3 2 1

Practices are in place to ensure that youth have opportunities to practice, participate in, and learn about healthy eating and physical activity.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
5) All staff members participate in ongoing professional development on healthy eating and physical activity.	 Staff have access to healthy eating, nutrition, and physical activity resources. Staff are regularly setting goals on the role that healthy eating, physical activity, and social supports play in supporting healthy youth behaviors. Staff are aware of and encouraged to utilize set of healthy eating and physical activity standards, which may include the: National Afterschool Association HEPA Standards, Move Your Way Campaign Resources for Kids & Teens (which are modeled after the 2nd edition of Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans SHAPE America Society of Health and Physical Educators CDC Overweight & Obesity State Licensing Scorecard 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Program Management

This refers to written and implemented policies in the school age program, including policies on healthy eating and physical activity, staff professional development, and communication with youth, families and community. Strong program management policies ensure the sustainability of the program. These practices include Human Resources Development, Personnel Cost and allocation, Center Operations, Child Assessment, Fiscal Management, Program Planning and Evaluation, Family Partnerships, Marketing and Public Relationships, Technology, and Staff Qualifications.

Program Leadership, Management, and Finance

The program has a plan for increasing capacity, ensuring program quality, and promoting sustainability.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
Program has developed a clear mission statement and goals that promote youth success.	 Program has a clearly defined written mission statement shared with parents, staff, and community. Services reflect the program goals to promote youth success. 	4 3 2 1

and promoting sustainability.			
Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating	
2) Program involves key stakeholders (staff, families, youth, community organizations, etc.) in long-term planning, decision-making, and evaluation.	 A plan for involving key stakeholders is in place like a partnership council/board or parent/community advisory council to provide program guidance. Program staff and administration involve key stakeholders in the needs assessment, planning, implementation and assessment/evaluation process. An ongoing communication plan has been established to promote continued involvement of staff, board, families, and youth (e.g., meeting agendas/schedules, surveys, email communications, newsletters, etc.). 	4 3 2 1	
Notes			
3) Program engages in intentional school and community collaborations and partnerships that support its mission and goals and promote program quality.	 Program staff and administration plan for collaborating and communicating with schools, other youth organizations, and community agencies are in place to address the needs of participating youth. 	4 3 2 1	
Notes			

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
4) Program fosters relationships with community leaders and stakeholders to build advocacy and program support.	 Efforts are made by program staff and administration to contact community leaders and stakeholders like elected officials, business leaders, city council, and school board members to build awareness and support. Community advocates are invited to participate in "program sponsored events" like Lights On Afterschool, Summer Learning Week, parent activity nights, family engagement events, and performances. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
5) Program utilizes multiple funding and in-kind resources to promote sustainability.	 Program administration regularly seeks and secures funding and in-kind resources to address program goals and needs of youth being served, as well as for sustainability planning efforts. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
6) Program administration participates in periodic program evaluation, assessment, and ongoing improvement.	 Administration participates in periodic program evaluation efforts and seeks stakeholder input from students, families, staff members, teachers, etc. (i.e., large scale evaluations - minimum every 3 years, pulse checks/Informal evaluations performed more frequently, etc.) Administration utilize assessment results in program improvement efforts throughout the year. Administration share out results with stakeholders. *Link to assessment tools and resources 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
7) Program utilizes multiple data sources for program design, enhancement, and evaluation.	 Program accesses and utilizes school and community data like school day attendance and behavior records, academic achievement, neighborhood crime rates, income levels, and demographics to further impact program design. Program modifications are driven by data and are intentional. 	4 3 2 1

and promoting sustainability.		
Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
8) Program reports progress, impacts, and achievements to the community at large (families, local businesses, schools, etc.) and community partners/boards.	 Program has established systems to report progress to the community and collaborating agencies including Lights On Afterschool events, newsletters, email communications, a website, an active social media presence, open house events, fact sheets, annual report cards, board reports, press release, media contacts, etc. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
9) Program develops and implements a marketing plan to increase awareness, involvement, and support and revises strategies as needed.	 Program implements multiple and varied marketing strategies appropriate to the community served such as flyers, an up-to-date website, active social media engagement, community events, family nights, and Lights On Afterschool events. Families are given choices, options for donations, and options on how to engage and support community and family events. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
Program makes written organizational policies and procedures accessible to staff, families, and the community for review.	 Staff are aware and trained on the organizational policies and procedures. Program policies and procedures are consistent with both the governing and hosting organizations, as applicable. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

- 2) Program utilizes an employee handbook outlining staff expectations and policies and procedures.
- The employee handbook is reviewed regularly and updated, as needed.
- All employees are trained on the employee handbook prior to providing supervised care to youth.
- Program maintains documentation that staff have received the employee handbook.
- A process is in place for employees to express concerns and seek resolution, which is communicated in writing -- this could include updates to the employee handbook, professional development, and communicating expectations to staff, etc.

Notes

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program operates	under clearly defined policies and procedures.	
Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
3) Program provides a parent handbook that includes information about program policies, procedures, and expectations for youth, families and staff.	 A parent handbook is provided for all families and staff. The parent handbook is reviewed regularly and updated, as needed. Program maintains documentation that parents/guardians and staff have received the parent handbook. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
4) Program administration maintains staff files.	 A secure and confidential personnel file is maintained for all staff. Program maintains appropriate staff documentation (i.e. CPR/First Aid, Policies/Procedures Sign Off, Training Hours, etc.). 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
5) Program provides for a written youth and parent/guardian grievance process.	 A process for parents/guardians and youth to express concerns and seek resolution is communicated in writing, which could include updates to the parent handbook, professional development, and communicating expectations to staff, etc. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
6) Program volunteers must be defined and communicated with properly.	 If applicable, program has a clearly outlined volunteer program, which differentiates between regular volunteers (i.e., art instructors or interns who counts toward ratio) and one-time volunteers (i.e., guest speakers, presenters, etc. who do not count toward ratio). All ongoing volunteers must complete the necessary requirements as required by their organization or school, including the required paperwork and trainings aligned with being an employee. Volunteers who do not assume care, custody, or control of youth participants, such as a guest speakers, presenters, etc. will be presented with clear expectations. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Indicator of		
Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
7) Program has a clearly defined student attendance policy.	 A student attendance policy is implemented and outlined in the parent and staff handbooks to ensure the safety of youth. Attendance policies include age-appropriate procedures for addressing student safety and absence during program time (e.g., procedures for failure to arrive, staff accountability for student attendance, etc.). As appropriate, a communication procedure is in place with school, parents, and the afterschool program to address after school attendance of students who did not attend the regular school day. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
8) Program is aware of and complies with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.	 Organization and program leadership is aware of all federal, state, and local mandates and provides staff training on actions and/or documentation required to ensure compliance (e.g., child abuse reporting, emergency preparedness, transportation regulations, etc.). 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

The administration provides sound fiscal management of the program.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
1) Program expenditures are aligned with the program budget and reflect the mission and goals	 Program expenses are within the budget allocations. The budget for planned activities, staff, and purchased supplies is in alignment with the program's mission and goals. Program budget and mission/goals are reviewed annually and adjusted, as needed, to ensure continued alignment. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

- 2) Program
 administration
 implements financial
 procedures in
 accordance with the
 organization's financial
 policies and generally
 accepted accounting
 practices.
- The program follows generally accepted accounting practices, procedures, and policies.
- Program maintains accurate records of funds received and disbursed.

2

4

3

The administration provides sound fiscal management of the program.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
3) Program meets state and other reporting fiscal requirements.	 The program completes required fiscal reports and submits them in a timely manner. The program understands fiscal reporting requirements and a plan is in place to meet deadlines. An annual financial audit is completed. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

Notes

Program Leadership, Management, and Finance

Program recruits, hires, and trains qualified staff members to value and nurture all youth.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
1) Program implements a standard hiring process that ensures all staff have the ability to learn needed skills, and professional qualifications appropriate for their position.	 A standardized selection and hiring process is in place and implemented. A written job description is available for each position and includes position title, required qualifications, job duties, and salary/benefit range. The plan for staff selection should include checking references. 	4 3 2 1

Program recruits, hires, and trains qualified staff members to value and nurture all youth.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
2) Program recruits, hires and develops staff who reflect the diversity, languages, and cultures of the community served.	 Staff are recruited and hired with consideration to the diversity of cultures and languages spoken within the community served. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

• Staff and volunteers (if assuming care, custody or control of youth participants) participate in an orientation for all staff (including volunteers).

• Staff and volunteers (if assuming care, custody or control of youth participants) participate in an orientation outlining the job description/expectations, state regulations, program policies/procedures, chain of command, reporting procedures, and quality standards.

Program recruits, hires, and trains qualified staff members to value and nurture all youth.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
4) Staff participate in regularly scheduled staff meetings.	 Staff receive sufficient notice about staff meetings to ensure their ability to participate. Staff are given the opportunity to share concerns, trends, and challenges during the staff meeting. Regular staff meetings are scheduled and all staff are required to participate. Meeting notes are taken as a source of history and communication for staff and future staff. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

- 5) Program administration sets aside time for staff communication and planning around youth and program needs.
- Time is provided for staff to prepare for program activities, program updates, and discussion regarding daily logistics.

 The staff to prepare for program activities, program updates, and discussion regarding daily logistics.

 The staff to prepare for program activities are staff to prepare for program activities, program updates, and discussion regarding daily logistics.
- Time is set aside for staff to collaborate and discuss individual needs of participating youth.

2

4

3

Program recruits, hires, and trains qualified staff members to value and nurture all youth.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
6) Responsibilities and duties are shared among staff so that activities are effectively implemented and potential problems are handled smoothly.	 Duties are well defined, but roles are flexible enough so that staff may take initiative to help one another complete tasks. Staff duties are shared and cross-training is provided so all staff are able to help one another complete tasks or responsibilities if needed. 	4 3 2 1

Notes

7) Program staff receive regular supervision and support and at least one annual formal performance review as well as ongoing informal reviews.

- Program supervisor provides ongoing feedback and support for staff as they work to improve performance.
- All staff receive at least one annual performance review, a physical copy is available to staff, and documentation is maintained on file.
- Informal reviews could include real time feedback and modeling of expectations.

1

4

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2

Professional development and training opportunities are planned for and implemented to enhance staff job performance.

mplemented to enhan	ce staff job performance.	
Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
1) Program assesses staff training needs and provides relevant training and support	 Program has a regular or routine way for staff to communicate training needs (i.e. during staff meetings, staff surveys, 1:1 meetings, etc.). Staff are informed of upcoming professional development opportunities and encouraged to attend to build skills and competencies. Annual staff development and trainings are offered regularly and throughout the year for staff, volunteers, high school students, etc. Program offers opportunities for staff to learn about local, state, and national best practices. Program offers content learning in areas such as curriculum planning, STEM, tutoring best practices, effective methods in reading and math, physical activity, healthy behaviors, youth development, etc. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
2) Program promotes and encourages career development pathways for all staff.	 Staff are encouraged to participate in job related professional development, education and training. Staff are encouraged to participate in the Department of Social Services Pathways to Professional Development Career Lattice including the OST Credential and Certificate. Staff who are ready for higher-level work are supported by the administration as they transition. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Professional development and training opportunities are planned for and implemented to enhance staff job performance.

implemented to enhan	ce staff job performance.	
Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
3) Program implements a professional development plan that promotes best practices working with youth, families and community.	 The program promotes an individualized professional development plan for each staff. Staff participate in training on best practices for youth development and working effectively with families and community. Staff demonstrate best practices in communicating with youth and families (focused on the youth's strengths, growth and challenges). Program has dedicated funds for professional development. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		
4) Program cultivates the well-being of staff.	 Program ensures equal treatment of all staff. Program creates environments that promote feelings of belonging, respect, value, and trust for both staff and students. Staff have opportunities to develop professional networks that enable them to learn from one another and connect during times of celebration and challenges. Staff have opportunities to participate in decision making to support their professional growth and connections to the learning environment. 	4 3 2 1
Notes		

Professional development and training opportunities are planned for and implemented to enhance staff job performance.

Indicator of Quality	How It Looks in Practice	Rating
5) Program offers support and resources for staff members under 18 years old (if applicable).	 Young staff members are oriented to ages and stages of youth development. Program offers resources for young staff members regarding their role facilitating groups and behavior management. Young staff members are equipped with program facilitation resources (i.e. teen teacher program training). 	4 3 2 1

Action Planning

Standards within each element include a time frame to help prioritize how quickly that item needs to be addressed.

→ **Right Now** Area will be addressed immediately.

→ 6 months Area will be addressed during the program year.

→ 12 months Area will be re-evaluated prior to the start of the next program year.

The **Action Plan Template** on page 57 will help in developing a manageable plan that is realistic yet specific enough to ensure success. This tool will also help you stay on track. Program evaluation is an on-going process. Revisit, re-evaluate, and reflect frequently throughout the program year. Once you have identified goals for your program using the South Dakota Program Quality Self-Assessment, use this form to map out what steps you need to take to achieve them.



Two tools that may be helpful to utilize:

- Utah Education Policy Center's <u>Guidance On Creating SMART Outcomes</u> worksheet to help establish strong goals. Use one form for each of your goals.
- <u>The Management Center's SMARTIE Goals Worksheet</u> Goals are a concrete way
 to drive results, but without an explicit equity and inclusion component, goals
 won't produce better outcomes for marginalized communities, address
 disparities, or create belonging.



Action Plan Template

Relevant, and Time-bound (SM	e sure your goal is Specific, Measurable, At MART).	tainable,
We will know we have achieve been successfully implemente	ed this when: Describe how this goal will lo	ook when it has
, .		
Steps to achieve this goal	Resources and staff support needed	By when
Steps to achieve this goal	Resources and staff support needed	By when Right Now
Steps to achieve this goal	Resources and staff support needed	_
Steps to achieve this goal	Resources and staff support needed	Right Now
		Right Now 6 Months 12 Months
	Resources and staff support needed ew your goal and determine your progres	Right Now 6 Months 12 Months
Review Date: A set time to revi	ew your goal and determine your progres	Right Now 6 Months 12 Months s and next steps
Review Date: A set time to revi We achieved this go- achievement statem	ew your goal and determine your progres	Right Now 6 Months 12 Months s and next steps

Adapted from the Utah Afterschool Network.

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Resources

- Mott Foundation 50-State Network
- Utah Afterschool Network
- Indiana Afterschool Network
- Connecticut Afterschool Network
- Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network
- Kentucky Out-of-School Alliance
- Afterschool Alliance
- Child & Family Resource (Brookings ECE)



