



# NYSAN

NEW YORK STATE AFTERSCHOOL NETWORK

PROGRAM QUALITY  
Self-Assessment Tool

---

# ELEMENT 1 ENVIRONMENT/CLIMATE

A quality program provides a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment for all participants.

## A quality program:

1. \*Provides a stimulating, welcoming, and supportive environment for young people.
2. \*Uses program space that is safe and clean.
3. Has program space that is appropriately equipped and suitable for activities being conducted.
4. \*Develops, implements, and shares approved safety plans and procedures with staff and families.
5. \*Provides adequate security for program.
6. \*Develops and manages effective arrival and dismissal procedures and plans for safe travel home.
7. \*Provides healthy and nutritious snacks and/or supper.
8. \*Is aware of, records, and informs staff of special health needs of participants.
9. Conducts all required fire/safety drills.
10. Has a culture that allows participants to take initiative and explore their interests.
11. Establishes, maintains and communicates code of conduct to participants, staff, and their families.
12. Applies rewards and consequences for participant behavior appropriately and consistently.

Performance Level				Plan To Improve		
1	2	3	4	Right Now	This Year	Next Year

\*Denotes items to be assessed prior to program start-up.



# ELEMENT 3 RELATIONSHIPS

A quality program develops, nurtures, and maintains positive relationships and interactions among staff, participants, families, and communities.

## A quality program:

1. \*Has staff that respect and communicate with one another and are role models of positive adult relationships.
2. \*Interacts with families in a comfortable, respectful, welcoming way.
3. \*Treats participants with respect and listens to what they say.
4. Teaches participants to interact with one another in positive ways.
5. Teaches participants to make responsible choices and encourages positive outcomes.
6. Is sensitive to the culture and language of participants.
7. Establishes meaningful community collaborations.
8. Has scheduled meetings with its major stakeholders.
9. Encourages former participants to contribute as volunteers or staff.

Performance Level				Plan To Improve		
1	2	3	4	Right Now	This Year	Next Year

\*Denotes items to be assessed prior to program start-up.

# ELEMENT 4 STAFFING/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A quality program recruits, hires, and trains diverse staff members who value each participant, understand developmental needs, and form positive working relationships with youth, parents, co-workers, and other partners.

### A quality program:

1. \*Has a program director that is committed to his/her own professional development and attends and participates in training.
2. \*Recruits, hires and develops staff who reflect the diversity and culture(s) of the community.
3. Treats staff as professionals and provides opportunities for advancement.
4. \*Ensures staff has competence in core academic areas, where appropriate.
5. Provides ongoing staff development in order to engage and retain staff.
6. \*Maintains staff-to-participant ratio as per state regulations when applicable.
7. \*Provides positive working conditions for staff and appropriate supervision, support, and feedback.
8. Assesses professional development needs of staff and provides appropriate training.
9. Has program director and staff who comply with state training regulations where applicable.
10. Trains staff to plan suitable activities that correspond to the developmental needs of participants.
11. Has regular staff meetings.
12. Works with staff to achieve credentialing and accreditation where available.

Performance Level				Plan To Improve		
1	2	3	4	Right Now	This Year	Next Year

\*Denotes items to be assessed prior to program start-up.

# ELEMENT 5

## PROGRAMMING/ACTIVITIES

A quality program provides a well-rounded variety of activities and opportunities that support the physical, social, and cognitive growth and development of all participants.

### A quality program:

1. \*Provides activities that reflect the mission of the program.
2. Addresses academic, physical, social, and emotional needs of the participants.
3. \*Features activities that are commensurate with the age and skill level of the participants and enable participants to develop new skills during the program year.
4. \*Offers project-based, experiential activities that promote creativity and development of participant self-expression.
5. \*Offers high quality academic support, including tutoring and/or homework help.
6. \*Offers enrichment opportunities in core academic areas as well as in the arts, technology, recreation, and health.
7. \*Includes activities that take into account the language and culture of the participants.
8. \*Establishes and follows a schedule that is known to all staff, participants, and their families.
9. Provides a range of opportunities in which participants' work can be showcased.
10. Integrates opportunities for the development of personal responsibility, self-direction, and leadership throughout the program.

Performance Level				Plan To Improve		
1	2	3	4	Right Now	This Year	Next Year

\*Denotes items to be assessed prior to program start-up.

# ELEMENT 6

## LINKAGES BETWEEN DAY & AFTER SCHOOL

A quality program has its staff work closely with school staff to ensure that afterschool academic components and activities are aligned with and enrich school standards and curricula.

### A quality program:

1. \*Secures commitment of resources (e.g., classroom space, bulletin boards, storage space, computer facilities, and site coordinator's office) from school principal, when possible.
2. Maintains communication with school principal and administration.
3. Establishes strong links to the school day.
4. Incorporates programming that integrates and complements school day activities.
5. Collaborates regularly with school-day personnel regarding use of facilities and resources.
6. Supports state and local performance standards and benchmarks.
7. Communicates with school-day staff to monitor academic and behavioral progress of students.
8. Allocates sufficient program time for homework and homework help.
9. Is represented on the school's curriculum planning committee.

Performance Level				Plan To Improve		
1	2	3	4	Right Now	This Year	Next Year

\*Denotes items to be assessed prior to program start-up.

# ELEMENT 7 YOUTH PARTICIPATION/ENGAGEMENT

A quality program provides opportunities for youth to participate in planning, to exercise choice, and to engage in a rich variety of offerings.

## A quality program:

1. \*Engages participants with a variety of strategies.
2. Has participants who take ownership of program selection and development.
3. Enables participants to develop life skills, resiliency, and self-esteem via activities.
4. Affords participants opportunities to express their ideas, concerns, and opinions.
5. Enables participants to explore resources and issues in their community through projects and activities.
6. Promotes consistent and active participation.
7. Promotes teamwork and respect for others.
8. Involves participants in the development of disciplinary practices.
9. Encourages participants to recruit others into the program.

Performance Level				Plan To Improve		
1	2	3	4	Right Now	This Year	Next Year

\*Denotes items to be assessed prior to program start-up.



# ELEMENT 8

## PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

A quality program establishes a strong partnership with families and communities in order to achieve program goals.

### A quality program:

1. Involves families in decision making and planning.
2. Involves families and the community in program events.
3. Communicates with families on matters concerning the well-being of the child.
4. Seeks opportunities to share community resources with families.
5. Provides opportunities for literacy and related educational experiences for the families of the participants in the program.
6. Provides families with information about community resources to meet their needs.
7. Builds relationships with arts, cultural, and other community institutions to expand and enhance program offerings.
8. Coordinates staff development activities with those of school and community partners.

Performance Level				Plan To Improve		
1	2	3	4	Right Now	This Year	Next Year

\*Denotes items to be assessed prior to program start-up.

# ELEMENT 9

## PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY/GROWTH

A quality program has a coherent vision/mission and a plan for increasing capacity that supports continuing growth.

### A quality program:

1. \*Has a written statement of mission and goals.
2. \*Employs staff who understand and embrace the program’s mission and goals.
3. Involves participants, families, staff, and board members in long-term decision-making and planning efforts.
4. Develops a long-term plan for sustaining the afterschool program.
5. Accesses resources within the community by seeking support from and building relationships with local businesses and institutions.
6. Forges relationships with advocates for program quality and availability, such as community leaders, businesses, and elected officials.
7. Has an effective marketing strategy that publicizes the program and its achievement within the school and broader community.

Performance Level				Plan To Improve		
1	2	3	4	Right Now	This Year	Next Year

\*Denotes items to be assessed prior to program start-up.

# ELEMENT 10 MEASURING OUTCOMES/EVALUATION

A quality program has a system for measuring outcomes and using that information for ongoing program planning, improvement, and evaluation.

### A quality program:

1. Has measurable program goals and objectives that are aligned with the organizational mission and identified needs.
2. \*Develops and/or plans for program evaluation that includes gathering both qualitative and quantitative data.
3. Uses objective data to measure participants' academic progress.
4. Identifies and shares promising practices.
5. Makes evaluation summaries available to the general public.
6. Creates an internal method for assessing program activities.
7. Creates an internal method for assessing staff performance.
8. Creates an internal method for assessing student engagement levels.
9. Includes feedback from stakeholders in the program evaluation.
10. Uses evaluation findings for continuous program improvement.

Performance Level				Plan To Improve		
1	2	3	4	Right Now	This Year	Next Year

\*Denotes items to be assessed prior to program start-up.