



NYSAN PROGRAM QUALITY SELF-ASSESSMENT (QSA) TOOL, 2ND EDITION QUALITY INDICATOR DEFINITIONS

ELEMENT 9: PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY AND GROWTH

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

Program Sustainability and Growth, Indicator 1

*Has a written statement of mission and goals.

Performance Level 1

The program mission and goals are unclear or have not been written at all.

Performance Level 2

The program has a written statement of mission and goals. The statement is published or shared by request. Staff members and stakeholders are informed of the program's mission and goals on an ad hoc basis. Few staff members demonstrate awareness of the mission or goals.

Performance Level 3

The program has a clear, written statement of mission and goals. Staff members and stakeholders are informed of the program's mission and goals and reminded of them regularly; staff members generally demonstrate awareness of them. The program's mission and goals are posted at the program site.

Performance Level 4

The program has a clearly written mission statement with directly aligned goals to achieve it. Staff members and stakeholders are aware of the program mission and goals and align all activities and actions with the goals and mission. The program's mission and goals are posted at the program site, and are printed on all program materials such as posters and brochures.

Program Sustainability and Growth, Indicator 2

*Employs staff members who understand and embrace the program's mission and goals.

Performance Level 1

Staff members are not aware of the program's mission and goals or disagree with them.

Performance Level 2

Staff members are informed of the program's mission and goals during or following the hiring process. Staff members are asked to embrace the mission and goals.

Performance Level 3

Staff members clearly define and explain the program's mission and goals during the hiring and training process and provide a written copy with several examples of them in an employee handbook. Staff members are regularly reminded of the importance of understanding and embracing the mission and goals. Staff members are expected to incorporate the mission and goals into their work. Professional development, supervisor support, and employee performance goals are clearly communicated and linked to the program mission and goals.

Performance Level 4

The program's mission and goals guide the recruitment and hiring processes. Potential staff members are asked multiple questions regarding experience, qualities, and beliefs that are directly connected to the mission, values, and goals of the organization. Staff members are asked to sign a statement demonstrating their commitment to follow the mission and goals of the organization. Staff members receive a copy of the mission and goals in an employee handbook and they are posted throughout the program space. The site director regularly communicates the importance of understanding, embracing, and demonstrating awareness of the mission and goals. Staff members are expected to incorporate the mission and goals into their work, through daily performance, planned activities, and communications with youth, families, staff members, and supervisors. Staff members are asked to give feedback on the mission and goals and share related best practices on a regular basis.

Program Sustainability and Growth, Indicator 3

Involves participants, families, staff, and board members in long-term decision-making and planning efforts.

Performance Level 1

The site director or executive staff members conduct long-term decision-making and planning.

Performance Level 2

The site director and executive staff members conduct long-term decision-making and planning. The site director occasionally involves other stakeholders in informal conversations around program planning and decision-making.

Performance Level 3

The site director is committed to shared decision-making within a team approach. Training is provided to stakeholders to assist them with their shared decision-maker role. The program has clearly defined goals and objectives, and plans and makes decisions based on these goals, which are included in program literature. Staff members are encouraged to work collaboratively to plan, develop, and strengthen programs. Staff members, youth, families, and board members or executive staff members are viewed as resources and as instrumental to the sustainability of the program. Stakeholders are invited at different points to reflect, plan, and participate in the decision-making process.

Performance Level 4

The program goals and related decisions are collaboratively made by multiple stakeholders. Information on the importance and role of stakeholder involvement and shared decision-making is clearly communicated in all program materials, reviewed during staff meetings and program orientations for families and youth, and are posted at a central location at the site. Training and user-friendly information is provided to stakeholders to assist them with their shared decision-maker role. Stakeholders are invited at different points to reflect, plan, and participate in the decision-making process. Staff members can articulate how their activities and decisions support program goals and take initiative to identify areas of continuous improvement.

Program Sustainability and Growth, Indicator 4

Develops a long-term plan for sustaining the afterschool program.

Performance Level 1

Program funding is secured for one year at a time. The program relies primarily on one source of income, such as a government contract or private grant.

Performance Level 2

The program has a short-term sustainability plan, and uses a two-year funding plan. The program relies mostly on a few sources of income, such as a government contract or private grant. The site director has some personal relationships with staff from other organizations, but no partnership agreements are in place.

Performance Level 3

The program has a long-term sustainability plan, and uses a multi-year funding plan. The program secures income from multiple sources, such as government contracts, private grants, program fees, or funds raised. The site director has formal relationships with other organizations with partnership agreements to show mutual support between programs. The program also uses a marketing strategy to publicize the importance of the program in the community.

Performance Level 4

The program has a long-term sustainability plan, with a multi-year funding plan. The program relies on multiple large and small sources of income, such as government contracts, private grants, program fees, or funds raised. The site director regularly seeks and often secures unrestricted funds that can be used for general and/or specific purposes. The site director has formalized relationships with the staff from other organizations with partnership agreements to secure in-kind resources. The program uses a marketing strategy to publicize the importance of the program in the community, and an advocacy strategy to encourage public officials to support the program.

Program Sustainability and Growth, Indicator 5

Accesses resources within the community by seeking support from and building relationships with local businesses and institutions.

Performance Level 1

Relationships with local businesses and institutions are undefined or non-existent.

Performance Level 2

The site director tries to build or maintain relationships with one or more local businesses or institutions. Resources from these organizations are small, one time, or occasional.

Performance Level 3

The site director and some staff members build and maintain relationships with several local businesses and institutions. Resources and support from these organizations are occasionally offered to the program. In addition, the site director coordinates an annual campaign to ask these organizations for goods, services, support, and financial support.

Performance Level 4

The site director and other staff members maintain strong, ongoing relationships with most local businesses and institutions, clearly communicating the relationship between community support, afterschool programming, youth success, and workforce preparation. Resources from these organizations are targeted to specific agreed upon need areas with progress and results clearly communicated back to the provider. In addition, the site director coordinates several campaigns each year asking local organizations for goods, services, and financial support.

Program Sustainability and Growth, Indicator 6

Forges relationships with advocates for program quality and availability, such as community leaders, businesses, and elected officials.

Performance Level 1

The site director's relationship with potential afterschool advocates in the community is undefined or non-existent.

Performance Level 2

The program is connected with a few community leaders, businesses, elected officials, or other advocates. The site director knows the advocates and contacts them regarding program concerns. Local advocates know little about the program.

Performance Level 3

The program is connected with several community leaders, businesses, elected officials, and other advocates. The site director maintains regular relationships with, advocates, and communicates information on program strengths, achievements, needs, and concerns on a regular basis. Local advocates are aware of and support the program. The site director and several staff members belong to a local afterschool network of providers.

Performance Level 4

The program is closely connected with many community leaders, businesses, elected officials, and other advocates. The site director and other staff members maintain regular relationships with advocates and regularly communicate information on program strengths, achievements, needs, and concerns. One or more advocates from the community sit on the program advisory committee or board. Local advocates are aware of, informed about, and clearly support the program's mission, goals, objectives, and activities. The site director and several staff members are actively involved in the local or regional afterschool network of providers and belong to one or more statewide and national organizations. The site director collaborates with other community groups to advocate and to provide advocacy training to community members.

Program Sustainability and Growth, Indicator 7

Has an effective marketing strategy that publicizes the program and its achievement within the school and broader community.

Performance Level 1

The program advertises its services on an ad hoc basis. Most publicity is received through word of mouth. There is no public information about the program's achievements.

Performance Level 2

The program regularly advertises its services using a single strategy (i.e. newspaper or internet advertising). Publicity is received through word of mouth and a program website. There is some public information about the program's achievements, but it is not recent or updated information.

Performance Level 3

The site director has a strategic plan for how to publicize the program. The program regularly advertises its services using multiple strategies. Publicity is received through word of mouth, a program website, open houses, and in other ways. There is public information about the program's achievements which is shared with program stakeholders annually.

Performance Level 4

The site director uses a strategic plan for how to publicize the program that was created by staff members, participants, and other program stakeholders. The program regularly advertises its services using multiple strategies. Publicity is received through word of mouth, a program website, open houses, and in other ways. There is public information about the program's achievements which is shared throughout the year with program stakeholders and with the broader community.

*Indicator is critical to program start-up.