

# ELEMENT 6

## Establishes Strong Links to the School Day

*A quality program has its staff work closely with school staff to ensure that afterschool academic components and activities are aligned with learning standards and contribute to the overall positive development of program participants.*

### A QUALITY PROGRAM:

#### School-Based Programs and Center-Based Programs, When Appropriate

1. \*Meets regularly with principal(s), school administrator(s), and/or designated liaison(s), and teachers from the school(s) attended by program participants.
2. Incorporates programming that aligns with and/or complements learning standards for the different age groups served.
3. Communicates regularly with school day staff to remain informed of the academic and behavioral progress of participants.
4. Allocates sufficient time in the activity schedule for homework help, study hall, and/or tutoring, and has adequate resources, including knowledgeable, well-trained staff and a space that is conducive to a positive learning environment.
5. Is represented and actively participates in the schools' planning efforts.
6. Employs, or the school designates, an educational coordinator to serve as a "bridge" between the school day and the afterschool program.
7. In collaboration with the school administration, allocates time and resources for joint professional development that facilitates the participation of both community-based organization and school day staff.

PERFORMANCE LEVEL				PLAN TO IMPROVE		
1	2	3	4	RIGHT NOW	THIS YEAR	NEXT YEAR

#### School-Based Programs

8. \*Plans for and secures commitment of resources with school principal, when appropriate, and uses a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or School Partnership Agreement (SPA).
9. Communicates with the school and aligns around policies for working with participants with diverse abilities.
10. Works together to establish and follow a common behavioral code of conduct and language that support the social and emotional development of participants.


NOTES:

## Establishes Strong Links to the School Day

A quality program has its staff work closely with school staff to ensure that afterschool academic components and activities are aligned with learning standards and contribute to the overall positive development of program participants.

A quality school-based program works with the school to share information about program participants' needs and progress, to assign staff roles, and to coordinate use of space and other resources. A program that is linked to the school day allows program staff and school leaders to establish regular mechanisms for ongoing communication and coordination. In a true partnership, the school and afterschool program share the responsibility for participants' educational, social, and emotional development and work collaboratively to improve outcomes for participants.

A quality community-based program works with the school(s) attended by program participants to share information about their needs and progress. A program that is linked to the school day allows program staff and school leaders to establish regular mechanisms for ongoing communication and coordination, and ensures that the afterschool program's activities support participants' educational, social, and emotional development to improve outcomes for participants.

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### SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS AND CENTER-BASED PROGRAMS, WHEN APPROPRIATE:

#### **Establishes Strong Links to the School Day, Indicator 1**

\*Meets regularly with principal(s), school administrator(s), and/or designated liaison(s), and teachers from the school(s) attended by program participants.

##### **Performance Level 1**

The site director and principal(s), school administrator(s), and/or designated liaison(s), and teachers have not met or had a meaningful conversation.

##### **Performance Level 2**

The site director and principal(s), school administrator(s), and/or designated liaison(s), and teachers meet at the beginning of the year. Communication is random and mainly focuses on or occurs when there are problems.

##### **Performance Level 3**

The site director and principal(s), school administrator(s), and/or designated liaison(s), and teachers regularly communicate through conversations, meetings, and in writing to ensure the afterschool program runs smoothly and succeeds in meeting the established goals.

##### **Performance Level 4**

The site director and principal(s), school administrator(s), and/or designated liaison(s), and teachers of the schools attended by program participants develop a yearly plan for regular communication, which includes scheduled meetings throughout the program period to ensure that the afterschool program runs successfully. They work together as a team on program planning, goal setting, and decision-making to ensure the program meets individual and shared goals for participants and families.

## Establishes Strong Links to the School Day, Indicator 2

Incorporates programming that aligns with and/or complements learning standards for the different age groups served.

### Performance Level 1

The program has separate and independent goals and activities that do not complement learning standards for the different age groups served.

### Performance Level 2

The program has independent goals and activities that sometimes complement learning standards for the different age groups served.

### Performance Level 3

Program and school staff members work together to understand their missions, goals, and approaches to learning in an effort to integrate and complement learning for participants. Program and school staff members share data in compliance with FERPA to identify participant strengths and needs to support participants effectively. Program and school staff members work together to integrate state and local performance standards and benchmarks into afterschool program activities.

### Performance Level 4

Program and school staff members share curricula, resources, and data in compliance with FERPA. They work collaboratively to decide how instructional practices are effectively integrated to enhance both school day and afterschool learning. Examples of this partnership are evident because the program provides authentic opportunities for participants to learn and practice skills in real life situations. For example, embedding math skills into a cooking class, or improving language arts skills through writing advocacy letters about participants' areas of interest to newspapers or local officials.

## Establishes Strong Links to the School Day, Indicator 3

Communicates regularly with school day staff to remain informed of the academic and behavioral progress of participants.

### Performance Level 1

Program and school staff members operate independently and do not share participants' academic and behavioral progress information.

### Performance Level 2

Program staff members communicate individually with school staff members around participants who are having academic or behavioral problems.

### Performance Level 3

Program and school staff members regularly communicate to share the academic and behavioral strengths, growth, and challenges of participants. Discussions and information sharing focus on supporting participants' achievements and related positive behaviors. Communication highlights strategies that are promising and working, and aims to refine practices that need to be changed to assist the participants effectively.

### Performance Level 4

Formal and informal structures are in place for program and school staff to regularly communicate in multiple ways and share the academic and behavioral strengths, growth, and challenges of participants. Ongoing discussions and information

sharing focus on supporting participants' achievements and related positive behaviors. Communication highlights strategies that are promising and working, and aims to refine practices that need to be changed to assist the participants effectively. The participants and their family member(s) are often part of the conversations with all partners who are working together to support the participants' growth and success.

### **Establishes Strong Links to the School Day, Indicator 4**

Allocates sufficient time in the activity schedule for homework help, study hall, and/or tutoring, and has adequate resources, including knowledgeable, well-trained staff and a space that is conducive to a positive learning environment.

#### **Performance Level 1**

The program does not offer homework help, study hall, or tutoring as a regular part of the activity schedule. Homework help is only available if school administrators, teachers, parents, or participants ask for it. There is no dedicated space for studying; therefore, students who wish to complete their homework must do so in a multi-purpose space alongside other distracting activities.

#### **Performance Level 2**

The program offers homework help, study hall, and/or tutoring but not on a daily basis. Additional time for homework help is available if school administrators, teachers, parents, or participants ask for it. There is limited space(s) for studying.

#### **Performance Level 3**

A portion of the daily activity schedule is dedicated to homework help, study hall, and/or tutoring which is led by trained staff members and/or teachers. Additional time for homework help may be added if school administrators, teachers, parents, or participants ask for it. Appropriate space(s) for studying is available and conducive to a positive learning environment.

#### **Performance Level 4**

A portion of the daily activity schedule is dedicated to homework help, study hall, and/or tutoring which is led by trained staff members and/or teachers. Additional time for homework help may be added or based on staff's consultation with teachers or parents, or if participants ask for it. Space allocated for studying facilitates a positive learning environment, supported by access to reference materials, textbooks, and computers.

### **Establishes Strong Links to the School Day, Indicator 5**

Is represented and actively participates in the schools' planning efforts.

#### **Performance Level 1**

The afterschool program is not currently represented in school(s) planning efforts.

#### **Performance Level 2**

The afterschool program is not currently represented in school(s) planning efforts, but planning committee members from the school sometimes report back planning updates to afterschool program leadership.

#### **Performance Level 3**

The afterschool program is represented in the planning efforts of the school(s). An afterschool program representative shares information about afterschool curricula, teaching methods, and policies with the school(s) planning committee members.

**Performance Level 4**

The afterschool program has a regular representative who is part of the school(s) planning committee and shares information about afterschool curricula, teaching methods, and policies with the school(s). The program representative works with the school(s) to develop action steps to support participants' learning and needs. The school(s) values and encourages the sharing of information about both school curricula and afterschool curricula/program learning goals to ensure participants' achievement.

**Establishes Strong Links to the School Day, Indicator 6**

Employs, or the school designates, an educational coordinator to serve as a “bridge” between the school day and the afterschool program.

**Performance Level 1**

The program does not have an educational coordinator.

**Performance Level 2**

The program has an educational coordinator who is experienced working in afterschool but does not have the required experience in curriculum development, lesson planning, and staff training for the educational coordinator's role.

**Performance Level 3**

The program has an educational coordinator who is a certified teacher with some experience in curriculum development, lesson planning, and staff training. The coordinator observes afterschool activities for quality and provides staff with feedback for continuous improvement. The coordinator reviews most lesson plans to ensure they are age and/or developmentally appropriate for the participants served.

**Performance Level 4**

The program has an educational coordinator who is a certified teacher and a faculty member from the school. The coordinator is experienced in curriculum development, lesson planning, and staff training. The coordinator observes afterschool activities for quality and provides staff with feedback for continuous improvement at least monthly. The coordinator reviews all lesson plans to ensure they are age and/or developmentally appropriate for the participants served.

**Establishes Strong Links to the School Day, Indicator 7**

In collaboration with the school administration, allocates time and resources for joint professional development that facilitates the participation of both community-based organization and school day staff.

**Performance Level 1**

The program does not collaborate with the school administration on a joint professional development plan for teachers and program staff.

**Performance Level 2**

Both teachers and program staff are invited periodically and randomly to attend joint professional development training. These trainings are not part of a formal joint professional development plan between the school and the afterschool program.

**Performance Level 3**

School day and afterschool staff develop an annual joint professional development plan to ensure consistency of instructional and learning practices. The plan is implemented and joint professional development occurs periodically throughout the year.

**Performance Level 4**

School day and afterschool staff develop an annual joint professional development plan to ensure consistency of instructional and learning practices. Professional development is structured in a manner where school day and afterschool staff have opportunities to generate ideas for the program and share promising practices related to positive youth development, academic support and enrichment, behavior management, and individual participant goals and progress. The application of the knowledge and skills learned through the joint professional development opportunities is assessed through program activity observations and is aligned with continuous improvement plans to maximize overall staff performance.

**SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS:****Establishes Strong Links to the School Day, Indicator 8**

\*Plans for and secures commitment of resources with school principal, when appropriate, and uses a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or School Partnership Agreement (SPA).

**Performance Level 1**

Program and school staff members do not communicate about facility use and resources, and there is no MOU/SPA in effect.

**Performance Level 2**

Program and school staff members decide on use of facilities and resources at the beginning of the year and then communicate about problems when they arise. There is an MOU/SPA, in place but it is not reviewed regularly.

**Performance Level 3**

Program and school staff members communicate and plan together regarding facility use and resources at the beginning of the year. There is an MOU/SPA in place that is followed and revisited a few times throughout the year.

**Performance Level 4**

Program and school staff members communicate and plan together regarding facility use and resources as outlined in the MOU/SPA at the beginning of the year and at regular intervals throughout the year. Day to day communication occurs and all partners work together to ensure optimal use of facilities and resources as well as to identify needs to achieve both shared and unique goals.

**Establishes Strong Links to the School Day, Indicator 9**

Communicates with the school and aligns around policies for working with participants with diverse abilities.

**Performance Level 1**

The program does not work with the school to align policies for working with participants with diverse abilities. If the program and school have unique policies for working with participants with diverse abilities, the policies conflict.

**Performance Level 2**

The program works with the school to align policies for working with participants with diverse abilities. The program staff are aware of the policy, but are not equipped to respond to diversity in the program and ensure the effective inclusion of participants with diverse abilities.

**Performance Level 3**

Afterschool and school staff work together to identify and implement training, share information, and deploy resources that will equip all staff to build their capacity to effectively respond to diversity in the program and ensure the inclusion of participants with diverse abilities.

**Performance Level 4**

Afterschool and school staff work together to identify and implement training, share information, and deploy resources, including specialized school staff such as paraprofessionals, who support the program and build capacity to effectively respond to diversity and ensure the inclusion of participants with diverse abilities. The program ensures that accessible formats and adaptable instructional materials that are available during the school day are also available in the afterschool program.

**Establishes Strong Links to the School Day, Indicator 10**

Works together to establish and follow a common behavioral code of conduct and language that support the social and emotional development of participants.

**Performance Level 1**

The program does not work with the school administrators and the teachers to establish and follow a common behavioral code of conduct and language that support the social and emotional development of participants. These topics are only covered during staff orientation.

**Performance Level 2**

The program does not work with the school administrators and the teachers to establish and follow a common behavioral code of conduct and language. The code of conduct and language used in the afterschool program is not consistent with the code of conduct and language used during the school day. The training offered to program staff on behavior management strategies and techniques is not aligned with the school's behavioral code of conduct.

**Performance Level 3**

The afterschool program staff and school staff work together to develop shared practices for positive behavioral management approaches in order to implement consistent interventions and supports. Program staff training and professional development related to positive behavior management approaches are offered occasionally throughout the year.

**Performance Level 4**

The afterschool program staff and school staff work together to develop shared practices for positive behavioral management approaches in order to implement consistent interventions and supports. This includes program staff training and professional development that is offered regularly throughout the school year and aims to establish a common language among staff, accountability structures, rewards, incentives, and disciplinary protocols.