

ATTACHMENT A

Guidelines for Quality Enhancements in After-School and Out-of-School Time Programs

The following quality enhancement criteria have been established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) and the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) to guide collaborative statewide system-building efforts for after-school and out-of-school time services that will help children and youth in the Commonwealth to be productive and contributing citizens. Programs applying for funds must demonstrate their implementation of these quality criteria.

1. **Comprehensive academic and non-academic services** – Programs provide a balance of academic and non-academic services, with a focus on one or more of the Department's curriculum frameworks (including those on the Arts, Comprehensive Health, and English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes for English Language Learners). The combination of academic and non-academic services is coordinated through local partnerships that include the schools and the after-school and out-of-school time programs. The continuum provides meaningful and engaging connections for the student from school day to after-school and out-of-school time. Comprehensive academic and non-academic services include making the link between children's and youth's academic success and their overall development, including their healthy social-emotional development.
2. **Partnerships among school, community-based programs, and families** – Programs work collaboratively to build on community strengths to deliver effective services that provide continuity for students between the school-day and after-school programs. Local connections exist between programs supported by local, state, and federal funds that allow for collaboration, program coordination, and continuity of services. The local connections may include but are not limited to Memoranda of Understanding, agreements with the local schools, and use of the EEC school-age wait list when enrolling students.

In addition, programs in a community collaborate to provide families with choice and access to effective and affordable after-school and out-of-school time services that meet the needs of the student and the family. Community support for these efforts can be demonstrated in a number of ways, including but not limited to matching funds, donations, or volunteer services.

3. **Serving Special Populations**
 - a. *Students with Disabilities* – Programs serve and support students with disabilities so that they may participate in after-school and out-of-school time programs and activities with their same-aged non-disabled peers.
 - b. *English Language Learners* – Programs serve and support students who are English language learners in after-school and out-of-school time programs that provide them opportunities to practice and develop their English language skills with proficient English speaking peers while developing other skills and knowledge.
4. **Family Involvement** – Programs provide many and varied opportunities for families to be involved in their child's after-school program, regardless of program setting (school, community-based organization) and schedule, including but not limited to: parent orientation; new parent mentoring programs; communication systems where information and feedback are shared with families as well as received from families; parenting education; continuing education; ESL support; advisory committees; etc.
5. **Highly Qualified Staff** – Programs hire staff with high academic qualifications and experience. Programs have staff available with training or education that addresses working with English language learners and/or students with disabilities. Programs collaborate to provide professional development opportunities that include public school, non-public school, and community-based organization staff. Professional development plans address topics and issues related to strengthening the quality of after-school and out-of-school time programs, including but not limited to training on the Department's curriculum frameworks, leadership and partnership development, and working with a diverse student population.
6. **Evaluation System** – Programs have designed and implemented a comprehensive evaluation system that assesses the effect of all of its programs and services. Programmatic and student-level outcomes are realistic and aligned with the goals and structure of the program. Evaluation data collected through this system are used to inform program improvements.