

Performance Standards

cognia™

Extended Learning



In 2018, leading education nonprofits AdvancED® and Measured Progress® came together. With more than a century of experience in accreditation and school improvement and decades of leadership in student assessment solutions, the new organization—Cognia™—brings institutions around the world a new, holistic way to view school performance and student achievement.

Our name and look have changed, but the AdvancED Performance Standards in this document remain in effect.

Introduction

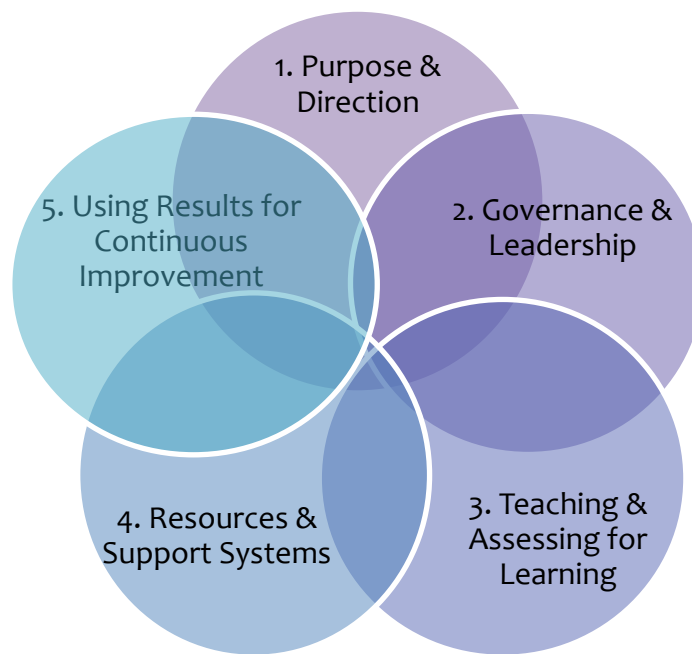
AdvancED is fervently committed to the learning, development, engagement, and care of children and youth in out-of-school-time and extended learning programs. These **Extended Learning Programs** are education and care programs that serve children and/or youth **outside** of a typical school day, such as in a before and/or after school program, summer program, during holidays, or for educational enrichment activities that complement and extend school-day learning. Children and youth in these programs are typically 5 years old or older.

AdvancED employs a research and performance-based protocol for extended learning programs that holds its accredited extended learning programs accountable to high quality educational and care standards and results supported by engagement in continuous improvement.

AdvancED is an education-first organization that works with educational programs, schools and systems covering the full continuum of high quality teaching and learning, organizational excellence and effective from early childhood education, through K-12 grades, and beyond the school day with extended learning and tutoring programs. Because AdvancED works with all of these institutions, a common set of processes, standards and high expectations is established across the local education continuum.

AdvancED Standards for Quality Extended Learning Programs

The *AdvancED Standards for Quality Extended Learning Programs* provide the foundation for the AdvancED Accreditation Process. The Standards also represent the continued evolution of accreditation as a powerful tool for driving effective practices in support of children and youth in out-of-school-time environments.



The *AdvancED Standards for Quality Extended Learning Programs* are comprised of **Standards, Indicators** and **Criteria**. The Standards are research-based, comprehensive quality statements that describe conditions that are necessary for extended learning programs to achieve organizational effectiveness and ensure children and youth learn and develop beyond the traditional school day.

These Standards support an education process that is truly visionary; characterizing how extended learning programs should operate to promote a culture of continuous learning that is fluid – engaging leaders, staff and families. The Indicators are operational definitions or descriptions of exemplary practices and processes, together providing a comprehensive picture of each Standard. The Indicators will be scored individually through a set of Criteria. These Criteria contain rich, detailed descriptors of what each Indicator looks like in practice. The performance of each extended learning program will be rated on each Criteria as “Met” or “Not Met” based on evidence.

Standard 1: Purpose and Direction

The extended learning program maintains and communicates a purpose and direction that commit to a sense of community and relationships among children, youth and adults; developmentally appropriate cognitive, emotional, social, creative and physical growth and development; as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching, learning, development and care for school aged children and youth.

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

The extended learning program operates under governance and leadership that promote and support learning, development and engagement in school aged children and youth; family, school and community involvement; and program effectiveness.

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

The extended learning program's curriculum, instructional design and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher and staff effectiveness and the developmentally appropriate cognitive, emotional, social, creative, and physical learning, development and engagement of school aged children and youth.

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

The extended learning program has resources and provides services that support its purpose and direction to ensure success for all school aged children and youth.

Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

The extended learning program uses data about the developmentally appropriate learning, development and engagement of school aged children and youth and overall program effectiveness to guide continuous improvement.

Development of the Standards

“We believe education can change the life of a child. We seek to serve extended learning programs that are dedicated to a standards-based approach to quality improvement for the ultimate benefit of their children and youth.”

Dr. Mark A. Elgart
President and CEO
AdvancED

Through our own commitment to improvement, AdvancED revises its Standards to ensure that they remain relevant and current as the foundation of the AdvancED Accreditation Process and develops new Standards as research indicates a need. There are very practical reasons to review the Standards – our knowledge of effective practices changes, and research reveals new information about factors that contribute to student achievement and the learning, development and engagement of children and youth in out-of-school-time programs.

This rich and deep development process produced a set of Standards that will challenge extended learning programs to commit to the education, engagement and care of children and youth; to reach higher; to examine closer; and to demonstrate the fidelity and integrity of best practices in out-of-school-time learning. The *Standards for Quality Extended Learning Programs* significantly focus on teaching and learning; incorporate 21st Century Skills related to child and youth development; embed high expectations for professional practice; and focus on developmentally appropriate cognitive, emotional, social, creative, and physical growth and development, as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching, learning, development and care for school aged children and youth.

Key Educational Concepts in Standards

1. All programs commit to rigor in academic support and enrichment, equity, and child and youth engagement.
2. All programs sustain a learning culture that promotes high levels of engagement, creativity, innovation and collaborative problem-solving.
3. All programs commit to developmentally appropriate cognitive, emotional, social, creative, and physical growth and development, as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching, learning, development and care for school aged children and youth.
4. The program's improvement plan requires identification of goals for improvement of learning and instruction.
5. The governing body operates consistent with established roles and responsibilities; must be ethical and free of conflict of interest.
6. Curriculum, instruction and assessment are adjusted in response to data about children's and youth's progress, needs, interests and strengths.
7. Staff are trained in evaluation, interpretation and use of data.
8. Programs must demonstrate, using data, growth in child and youth learning, and achievement of learning outcomes and program goals.
9. Programs demonstrate effective collaboration with children, youth, families, schools and the community.

AdvancED Accreditation Protocols: Performance-Based Models

All AdvancED Accreditation Protocols are systematic, systemic and sustainable approaches to improving student performance results over time based on meeting Standards, engaging in continuous improvement and implementing quality assurance.

AdvancED Extended Learning Protocol

The AdvancED Extended Learning Protocol is grounded in out-of-school time research, incorporates the AdvancED Standards for Quality Extended Learning Programs, and includes both an ongoing Improvement Journey process and an Accreditation Engagement Review.

Improvement Journey: The AdvancED Protocol employs diagnostic tools for extended learning programs to conduct and internal review. These reviews, or self-assessment, focus on evaluating performance related to the AdvancED Standards, Indicators, Criteria and stakeholder feedback. The process of internal reflection helps programs move forward in their ongoing improvement efforts. Extended learning programs have access to a variety of resources to assist the program in the accreditation process.

Each extended learning program is responsible for collecting and analyzing evidence, updating the program's demographics, and completing and submitting each of the following diagnostics:

- ✓ Assurances
- ✓ Self Assessment on Extended Learning Standards
- ✓ Improvement Plan
- ✓ Stakeholder Feedback

Evidence: As part of the Improvement Journey, programs will collect evidence that supports the self-assessment ratings on the Standards. Evidence helps program stakeholders to engage in discussions about how the program knows it is adhering to the Standards, Indicators and Criteria.

Engagement Review: Each extended learning program hosts an Engagement Review every five years. The Engagement Review involves observations of the learning environments, provides focused feedback, and includes evaluation and validation of the program's improvement efforts. During the Engagement Review, the Team reviews evidence relating to the program's adherence to the AdvancED Accreditation Standards, Indicators and Criteria; progress in improvement efforts; and stakeholder feedback from children, youth, staff and families.

Accreditation Term: Per AdvancED Policy, the final status of accreditation is granted by the AdvancED Global Accreditation and Certification Commission. The accreditation term is for five years.

Standard 1: Purpose and Direction

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INDICATOR 1.1

The program engages in a systematic, inclusive and comprehensive process to review, revise and communicate a purpose statement that defines beliefs about the developmentally appropriate teaching, learning, development and care of children and youth.

	CRITERIA
1.1.01	The program has a clearly defined purpose statement that guides and defines the philosophy, program and learning expectations for children, youth and families.
1.1.02	The program demonstrates actions to engage stakeholder groups to ensure the achievement of the program's purpose and desired outcomes for children and youth.
1.1.03 Required	The program engages in a continuous improvement process that produces evidence including measureable results of improving child and youth learning, professional practice, and the provision of high-quality services and long-term financial and resource management.

INDICATOR 1.2

Leadership and staff foster a culture consistent with the program's purpose and direction.

	CRITERIA
1.2.01	The program's administrator and leadership promote an inclusive organizational culture based on shared purpose, trust and collaboration.
1.2.02	The program provides experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness, such as through collaboration, shared leadership, modeling and coaching.
1.2.03	Program staff are encouraged to actively participate in professional and educational organizations that emphasize child and youth development and other local, regional and national events that focus on the education and care of children and youth in extended learning environments.

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

The extended learning program operates under governance and leadership that promote and support learning, development and engagement in school aged children and youth; family, school and community involvement; and program effectiveness.

INDICATOR 2.1

The program's policies, practices and agreements ensure effective administration of the program.

	CRITERIA
2.1.01	The program has written policies for all governing bodies, advisory groups or councils to define the roles, expectations and responsibilities for all members of those groups.
2.1.02	The program and facility meet all applicable national, state and/or local regulatory requirements and maintain documentation related to these requirements including certificates, licenses, and records of violations or deficiencies and appropriate resolution of these.
2.1.03	Program leaders remain current and knowledgeable in national, state and/or local statutes, laws, regulations and policies that affect the program's services and resources to children and their families.
2.1.04 Required	The program has policies and procedures to ensure sound financial management of the organization and a process to ensure that finances are monitored through an annual fiscal review or audit system by an external accounting firm.
2.1.05	The administrator and/or staff responsible for the implementation of the program are involved in the long-range fiscal planning, and budget process and management for the program.
2.1.06	The program has a technology infrastructure that includes information management systems that allow staff to gather and analyze data for the purposes of monitoring and adjusting the program.
2.1.07	The program provides a certificate of insurance coverage that includes both accident and liability coverage for children, youth and adults.
2.1.08	The program has policies and practices to ensure the recruitment, hiring and retention of qualified staff members.
2.1.09	The program documents and implements procedures to hire and retain staff members who reflect the culture, diversity, primary language(s) and community of the children, youth and families served.
2.1.10	The program has written personnel policies that define nondiscriminatory hiring and evaluation processes, roles and responsibilities within job descriptions, qualifications and specialized training requirements of all staff and volunteers. Personnel policies provide details on salary, benefits, qualifications, evaluation processes, professional development and training opportunities, termination and grievance procedures.

CRITERIA	
2.1.11 Required	The program implements policies and procedures to ensure that all employees who come into contact with children and youth in any capacity in the program have passed a background check, are free from criminal records and a history of child abuse and neglect, are at least 18 years old (21 for vehicle transport drivers), have completed high school, and have provided personal references and current health assessments relevant to the job description tasks. Program staff or work-study students who are under 18 years old and/or do not have a high school diploma or equivalent may work in the program but may not be counted in the adult-child ratio.
2.1.12	The program implements and monitors written policies for the ethical conduct of all staff.
2.1.13	The program has policies for providing a probationary period for new staff in which the administrator or other personnel evaluate the staff member's competence in working with children and youth.
2.1.14	The program has a written policy regarding benefits for full-time staff who have successfully completed their probationary period. Written policies are shared with the staff members and detail health insurance, employee sick leave, vacation, holiday and personal leave, education benefits and retirement plans. Benefits for part-time employees are addressed in policy and are available on a pro-rated basis.
2.1.15	The program has comprehensive policies that address staff responsibilities and planning time, training and professional development, and collaboration and engagement of families, school and community partners.
2.1.16	The program provides staff members with breaks of at least 15 minutes per four-hour period in which they are provided a place and time away from the children and youth. The program also provides temporary relief for staff when needed.
2.1.17	The program has policies to ensure that the needs of children and youth with disabilities or specialized behavior or learning needs are effectively met through the use of qualified specialized consultants or relationships with other agencies for children who are eligible for services.
2.1.18	The program has policies that assign consistent teaching staff for specific groups of children and youth to ensure the well-being of the children and youth through ongoing contact, supervision and care.
2.1.19	The program has written policies that ensure the health and safety of children, youth and adults and promote wellness. This includes policies to address occupational health hazards (physical, environmental and infectious diseases); management and reporting requirements for illness and injury; separation of children and youth from the group at the first sign of illness; medication administration; supervision of children and youth; adequate nutrition; sanitation and hygiene; appropriate food handling procedures; facility and equipment maintenance; prohibitions of smoking, weapons or other hazards; and referrals for staff to support wellness and stress management.
2.1.20	The program has written policies and procedures that meet governing authority health requirements and protect children, youth and adults from environmental hazards including lead, asbestos and pollution.

CRITERIA	
2.1.21	The program has comprehensive written emergency medical and dental procedures for children, youth and staff. The procedures include the identification of a primary hospital or care center, access to written consent forms and relevant health insurance information for emergency treatment or transportation, the presence of an adult with pediatric and adult first aid training in the program at all times and individual emergency care plans for children or youth with known medical or developmental concerns that may require regular medical support or care.
2.1.22	The program has written policies and procedures for reporting child abuse and/or neglect that are in compliance with applicable national, state and/or local laws. Policies require staff to report all suspected incidents by families, staff or others to the appropriate agencies, and policies protect staff reporting such incidents from any disciplinary actions unless the report is proven to be malicious in nature.
2.1.23	The program has written procedures that address accusations of abuse or neglect of a child or youth by a staff member and protect the rights of both parties.
2.1.24	The program has written policies and procedures, if applicable, to transport children and youth safely and complies with all legal requirements for vehicles and drivers.
2.1.25	The program has written procedures for health and safety, enrollment and other program information collected from families on all children and youth. Procedures ensure that files are maintained in one location, updated at least annually, and kept confidential with access available only to administrators or teaching staff who have consent to access the records from the parent, legal guardian or regulatory authorities. If participant files are located in a central office, site staff can access the files as necessary.
2.1.26	The program provides any information pertaining to a child or youth exclusively to the child's or youth's parent or legal guardian.
2.1.27	The program has procedures in place to allow families to access the facilities during program operation hours.
2.1.28	The program maintains all confidential personnel files, including applications, transcripts, evaluations and other personnel records in a secure location.
2.1.29	The program establishes conflict resolution and dispute mediation policies, paired with good communication, to ensure an open and healthy dialogue between all parties.

INDICATOR 2.2

Leadership engages defined stakeholder groups effectively through opportunities to provide feedback, collaborate and shape decisions in support of the program's purpose and direction.

	CRITERIA
2.2.01	Program staff ensure that families have continuous access to information about rules, routines and expectations within all learning environments.
2.2.02	Program leaders engage internal and external stakeholder groups in two-way communication and meaningful roles to support the achievement of the program's purpose and direction.
2.2.03	Staff and families are encouraged to work together on projects and/or through formal or informal community leadership opportunities that support advocacy for child and youth education, families, school and community relationships or other conditions of extended learning in general.
2.2.04	The program encourages leadership roles by including families as members and active participants in the program's governing or advisory groups and in planning events and activities.
2.2.05	The program involves staff, advisory groups, families, children and youth in the long-range program planning and daily decision-making.
2.2.06	Program staff are encouraged to seek out opportunities to participate on boards, councils or other service efforts that support a sense of community or further extended learning education.
2.2.07	The program builds connections with other community organizations and community members to increase the ability of the program to support and engage children and youth.
2.2.08	Program leaders' efforts result in mutual relationships, involvement of school and community partners in program activities, stakeholder feedback and participation, and program involvement in school, neighborhood and/or community priorities and needs.

INDICATOR 2.3

Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice and developmentally appropriate learning, development and engagement of children and youth.

	CRITERIA
2.3.01	All program staff engage in continuous professional development through participation in professional learning communities, self-reflection and feedback from formal evaluation and supervision, and personalized and documented annual goals for professional growth.
2.3.02	Staff members are supervised or mentored only by other staff that have been trained in adult supervision, mentoring or leadership development.
2.3.03	Instruction is monitored and adjusted in response to assessment results including staff interactions with children and youth and ongoing observations of children's and youth's learning, development and engagement.
2.3.04	The program provides, monitors and modifies coaching and modeling programs that address unique professional practices and organizational expectations for all staff through guidance, support, and feedback from peers and leaders.
2.3.05	The program has procedures that ensure all staff are evaluated at least annually by an appropriate supervisor and that the administrator is evaluated by the appropriate governing body or representative.

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

The extended learning program's curriculum, instructional design and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher and staff effectiveness and the developmentally appropriate cognitive, emotional, social, creative, and physical learning, development and engagement of school aged children and youth.

INDICATOR 3.1

The program's curriculum includes academic support and enrichment, and provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that address the social, emotional, developmental and academic needs of all children and youth.

	CRITERIA
3.1.01 Required	The curriculum is evidence-based, identifies a research-based developmentally appropriate philosophy, includes curriculum frameworks aligned with the identified philosophy and addresses the social, emotional, developmental and academic needs of all children and youth.
3.1.02	The program uses the curriculum framework to provide the foundation for planning, promoting and assessing learning. The curriculum includes the identification of the intent or outcome of the activities as well as content-driven learning priorities and provides opportunities for child/youth-centered teaching, child/youth-adult interactions and child/youth-child/youth interactions.
3.1.03	The curriculum provides the framework for planning varied and meaningful learning experiences in all content and developmental areas. The activities integrate content-focused academic support and enrichment opportunities. Staff adapt their learning strategies to meet the learning, development and engagement needs of the children and youth.
3.1.04	Program staff are knowledgeable of curriculum content and characteristics of developmental levels of the children and youth and apply this knowledge by providing appropriate learning activities to support children and youth in learning key curriculum concepts. Activities are well suited to the age range of children and youth in the program.
3.1.05	Program staff demonstrate knowledge of school day expectations, implement similar expectations, and are knowledgeable of homework and other school projects in order to partner with schools to strengthen the children's and youth's learning experience.
3.1.06	The curriculum guides staff to integrate children's and youth's engagement in intentional learning through academic support and enrichment activities within the curriculum topics.
3.1.07	The curriculum provides ongoing opportunities for children and youth to gain knowledge, skills and dispositions through self-chosen and self-directed activities and content integration in a stimulating and challenging environment aligned with the program's purpose and philosophy.
3.1.08	The curriculum includes guides that assist in the development of a schedule that provides a routine and predictable framework for program activities. It also provides flexibility to allow staff the time to respond to the individual social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs of children and youth. The schedule identifies transitions from one activity to another, allows for indoor and outdoor activities and provides a balance of time for children and youth to be active and to engage in quiet activities.

CRITERIA	
3.1.09	The curriculum includes practices related to the development of cultural competence and responsiveness to the background of children, youth and families. The curriculum and learning activities build on knowledge of the community and the families served by the program, and are influenced by information about the cultural backgrounds of children, youth and their families.
3.1.10	Program staff ensure that curriculum, materials and approaches are nondiscriminatory, free from bias and sensitive to race, gender, ethnicity, religion, class, ability, appearance, sexual orientation, family structure and/or culture.
3.1.11	Staff plan activities to enrich children's and youth's knowledge of and experience by participating in community or cultural events such as planning field trips, inviting guest speakers or representatives from community groups and encouraging child and youth participation in community groups or teams.
3.1.12	Staff intentionally plan activities for the outdoor environment, as an extension of the indoor environment and to facilitate organized group activities such as sports.

INDICATOR 3.2

Program staff engage children and youth through equitable opportunities to develop skills, explore interests and achieve the content and learning priorities established by the program.

CRITERIA	
3.2.01	Program staff work collaboratively to implement the curriculum and learning activities for all children and youth, including the learning activities related to individualized plans such as Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or Individualized Learning Plans.
3.2.02	Staff provide meaningful and varied learning activities that challenge children's and youth's current thinking and support new learning through both teacher-initiated and child/youth-initiated experiences.
3.2.03	Staff foster children's and youth's independence in exploring, selecting and using educational materials and resources that support learning activities and curriculum goals.
3.2.04	Staff are attuned to the variety of children's and youth's learning needs and provide purposeful learning activities during which children and youth practice skills. They extend purposeful learning so that children and youth can return to learning tasks, experiences and materials over time.
3.2.05	The schedule is both flexible and predictable, providing stability without being rigid. It includes large blocks of time for children and youth to engage in large and small group settings and to make authentic and open-ended choices within activities.
3.2.06	Staff provide appropriate opportunities for children and youth to work individually, in pairs, and to participate in group projects to support individual learning and learning from their peers.
3.2.07	Children and youth have regular opportunities for active, physical play, regardless of weather, for at least 30-60 minutes per day.
3.2.08	Children and youth have multiple and varied opportunities to engage in quiet activities and socializing.
3.2.09	Staff give children and youth multiple opportunities to make meaningful choices and decisions about what they will do, how they will do it and with whom.
3.2.10	Staff, children and youth have developed procedures for transitions, staff provide reminders as transition times near, and staff begin activities in a timely manner to limit wait time.
BUILDING COMMUNITY	
3.2.11	Staff closely observe and monitor children and youth while they engage in program activities. They are attentive to children and youth, listen to them as they work, ask guiding questions and are positioned at eye level.
3.2.12	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities that focus on developing their feeling of being an integral part of the program community. They feel accepted and develop a strong sense of belonging.
3.2.13	Staff guide and promote positive social skills for all children and youth, particularly those who are reserved, withdrawn or excluded, by providing structured opportunities to help children and youth get to know one another and develop a sense of belonging.
3.2.14	Staff provide numerous opportunities for children and youth to develop friendships, attain social skills, and cooperate and work well together toward common goals.

CRITERIA	
3.2.15	Staff model sensitivity to differences by treating all children and youth respectfully and valuing their different backgrounds, cultures and differences. They provide activities to help children and youth learn about themselves and others using a variety of strategies that include providing children and youth with explicit models (e.g., examples, pictures) of people from cultures, backgrounds and abilities different from their own and intervene if children and youth tease, bully or reject others based on differences.
3.2.16	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities focused on developing the capacity to show empathy and understand and consider the perspectives of others.
3.2.17	Staff encourage children and youth to make informed choices and become more responsible. Staff ask questions to help children and youth understand the consequences of their choices and talk with children and youth about how a decision might affect others.
3.2.18	Staff encourage children and youth to take leadership roles in the program, and provide assistance as needed. Staff incorporate routines that support children and youth in taking responsibility for the learning environment and materials.
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING	
3.2.19	Staff respond to the range of children's and youth's feelings and temperaments, recognizing that children and youth may express feelings and emotions differently and reinforcing appropriate ways for children and youth to express emotions.
3.2.20	Staff support children and youth in learning to self-regulate their emotions and behavior by modeling healthy strategies to express and manage emotions; helping children and youth recognize their own emotions and those of others; and helping children and youth express and manage emotions in appropriate and constructive ways.
3.2.21	Children and youth are involved in developing rules and behavioral expectations for the program. Rules and expectations encourage the development of a safe, caring, inclusive and respectful learning environment; are appropriate for the ages and developmental levels of the children and youth; are aligned with the program's purpose and goals; are posted in the learning environment; and are consistently and fairly implemented.
3.2.22	Staff fairly and consistently use program rules and routines to redirect children and youth who demonstrate inappropriate interactions such as bullying, isolation of or hurting other children and youth. Negative behaviors are mediated by staff, children and/or youth.
3.2.23	Staff use positive guidance techniques to guide the behavior of children and youth. Staff support and encourage positive behavior and choices by setting appropriate limits, maintaining high expectations, recognizing and reinforcing positive behavior and providing individual guidance and support to prevent problems.
3.2.24	Staff facilitate children's and youth's ability to resolve conflicts through identifying and labeling feelings, problems and finding alternate solutions. Staff encourage children and youth to resolve their own conflicts whenever possible, intervening only when necessary after observing the conflict to encourage collaborative resolution without imposing their own solution.
3.2.25	Staff model appropriate social behavior and treat all adults, children and youth with respect. They help children and youth to reflect upon behavior and what they might do differently in the future, and assist children and youth in taking responsibility for their actions in ways that are respectful, developmentally appropriate and relate to the behavior in question.

CRITERIA	
3.2.26	Staff model positive adult relationships and work well together by communicating with colleagues, having clearly defined roles and responsibilities to ensure the program flows smoothly, engaging in cooperation toward common goals, treating each other respectfully, collaborating and sharing workloads, and engaging in calm, professional interactions.
APPROACHES TO LEARNING	
3.2.27	Staff have high expectations regarding what children and youth can accomplish, emphasize that learning is a process, encourage children and youth to try new skills and persist through challenges, reframe failure as an opportunity for learning and improvement and emphasize that success is the result of hard work rather than innate ability.
3.2.28	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities focused on developing positive dispositions toward their own learning, including persistence, curiosity, reflection, creativity and innovation.
3.2.29	Staff pose problems and ask open-ended questions of children and youth that encourage and stimulate critical, creative and independent thinking. Staff help children and youth express their thinking and provide activities to extend their thinking and to develop meaning from their learning experiences.
3.2.30	Staff guide children and youth to use prior knowledge and collaborative inquiry when learning concepts and skills and provide meaningful learning activities that build on and extend their current levels of understanding.
3.2.31	Staff chunk concepts and learning tasks by breaking them into small and manageable parts to promote children's and youth's success in learning.
3.2.32	When providing academic support, staff ask questions to help guide children and youth towards the correct answer without directly providing the answer.
3.2.33	Staff, children and youth create program displays that promote children's and youth's reflection on their work, extend their learning and incorporate children's and youth's work in a manner that engages them in their own work and the work of their peers.
LITERACY	
3.2.34	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities focused on developing verbal and non-verbal communication skills, including oral and written skills reflective of the home language of their families.
3.2.35	Staff model appropriate vocabulary and academic language in conversations with other adults, children and youth to assist children and youth in developing academic writing and speaking skills.
3.2.36	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities focused on literacy experiences (e.g., reading for pleasure or school work, having stories read to them, reading scripts for upcoming performances, creative writing, journaling, language games).
3.2.37	Children and youth have consistent and ongoing opportunities to interact with and respond to a variety of fiction and non-fiction books and other reading materials at a variety of reading levels, and comfortable reading spaces are available for free reading.
3.2.38	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities focused on writing skills and vocabulary development. Writing materials are integrated into art, dramatic play and other interest areas as appropriate. Staff encourage children and youth to write about their experiences, feelings and opinions.

CRITERIA	
MATHEMATICS	
3.2.39	Children and youth have multiple and varied opportunities to participate in mathematical problem solving and apply mathematical knowledge.
3.2.40	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities that integrate written mathematical representations of their experiences.
3.2.41	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities that encourage them to appropriately use mathematical reasoning, link concrete examples to mathematical principles or formulas and use models, symbols or other non-verbal communication to convey mathematical concepts.
SCIENCE	
3.2.42	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities that focus on building an understanding of scientific concepts and key principles of science.
3.2.43	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities that focus on using the scientific processes of collecting data, observing scientific phenomena, and representing their findings using varied means such as the use of drawings or graphs.
3.2.44	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities that integrate the discussion of scientific concepts and terminology into everyday conversation with adults and other children and youth.
SOCIAL STUDIES	
3.2.45	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities that focus on developing a non-stereotypical understanding of people and culture while learning about the community, nation and world in which they live.
3.2.46	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities to make connections between learning in geography, history and social studies and their community, nation or their country of origin, and the world.
3.2.47	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities to develop chronological and spatial thinking, such as using historical time lines, making connections between past and present, and using map and globe skills.
EXPRESSIVE ARTS	
3.2.48	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities that focus on building an appreciation of art, music, drama and dance that occurs in an environment that reflects sensitivity to and appreciate of cultural diversity.
3.2.49	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities that focus on developing their range of abilities to express themselves artistically through music, drama, dance, and two- and three-dimensional art.
3.2.50	The program provides children and youth with experiences in visual and performing arts through ways such as inviting artists, musicians and/or performers to share their talents with the children and youth or visits to museums, exhibits and performances.
HEALTH, NUTRITION AND SAFETY	
3.2.51	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities focused on developing good health practices such as proper nutrition, exercise, handwashing and oral health.
3.2.52	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities focused on learning about nutrition; identifying where their food comes from; and recognizing, making, eating and appreciating the value of healthy foods.

CRITERIA	
3.2.53	Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities that focus on building awareness of safety rules and practices within the program, their homes and the community.
TECHNOLOGY	
3.2.54	Children and youth have limited access to the media of television, film, video games, and DVDs, and these media are used as developmentally appropriate learning tools to engage children and youth in their learning and to extend their understanding.
3.2.55	Children and youth have equitable access to developmentally appropriate digital and technology tools, and they use them independently, in collaboration with other children and youth, and under the supervision of the program staff or parents/guardians.
3.2.56	Technology is used as a developmentally appropriate learning tool to support and enrich learning.

INDICATOR 3.3

The learning culture promotes high levels of engagement, creativity, innovation and collaborative problem-solving.

	CRITERIA
3.3.01	Staff purposefully plan and implement learning experiences and activities to actively promote engagement, creativity, critical thinking, application of knowledge, innovation, collaborative problem-solving, and self-reflection.
3.3.02	Program activities include the completion of projects and inquiry-based activities that help children and youth make connections between their learning experiences and their outside knowledge, interests, experiences and goals.
3.3.03	Children and youth have opportunities to participate in activities and projects that involve multiple steps and take place over time; include an in-depth focus on a particular topic; include active roles in developing or implementing plans and evaluating progress towards goals; and culminate in a presentation or celebration to highlight learning accomplishments.
3.3.04	Staff vary the approaches they use to engage and support children and youth based on differing personalities, temperaments, learning styles and abilities. Staff share skills and resources to help children and youth gain information and solve problems.
3.3.05	Staff offer encouragement, assistance and coaching to support and extend children's and youth's participation and learning, and provide meaningful feedback designed to promote improvement.
3.3.06	Children and youth have multiple opportunities to communicate their thoughts and ideas; contribute to dialogue and discussion; present and showcase completed works; and evaluate their progress.
3.3.07	Staff provide formal and informal instruction that helps children and youth understand the goals to be accomplished, includes models to emulate, and clearly conveys information and instructions related to the activity.

INDICATOR 3.4

The program engages children and youth, families, programs and the community in meaningful ways.

	CRITERIA
3.4.01	Staff partner with families to create meaningful connections that establish and maintain systemic, ongoing, two-way communication that includes a variety of formal and informal strategies to keep families informed about curriculum, instructional practices, assessment, special needs of children and youth, and the program's mission, goals, activities and events.
3.4.02	The program promotes a family-friendly facility and environment by embracing, respecting and celebrating the diversity of the families it serves; posting daily schedules, events and activities; and organizing, labeling and displaying children's and youth's work.
3.4.03	Staff utilize information provided by families, children and youth about their culture, religion, home language, family structure, interests, needs and concerns to support the preferences of the family and guide planning for program learning experiences.
3.4.04	Staff anticipate and quickly resolve any family concerns that may arise due to differences in the professional values of the program and family values, in a manner that is focused on the best interest of the child or youth.
3.4.05	The program offers orientation for new families where children, youth and their families are informed of the program's mission, goals, activities and hours of operation; provided with a handbook that details program policies and procedures; informed about rules, responsibilities, expectations and any situations that can result in removes from the program; offered a tour of the facility; and introduced to program staff.
3.4.06	Staff are respectful of children's and youth's home languages and are supportive of the development and maintenance of this language as appropriate.
3.4.07	The program creates a multicultural environment by sharing and participating in customs, traditions and events of the family and community cultures.
3.4.08	The program engages families by planning regular events to bring families and program staff together for positive interaction and demonstrations of child and youth learning, taking into account parents'/guardians' schedules and availability.
3.4.09	The program offers a wide variety of opportunities to plan programs, events and activities that encourage family collaboration, participation and involvement fostering partnerships between home and the program.
3.4.10	The program establishes diverse mechanisms to foster dialogue with parents/guardians at the program and/or at home such as parent-teacher conferences, pick-up and drop-off times, program-wide events, emails, phone conferences or home visits.
3.4.11	Program information to families is provided and accessible in their language of understanding.
3.4.12	Staff facilitate the connection between home, school and the program by communicating regularly with families and school staff about children's and youth's needs, offering guidance regarding ways families can support the learning and development of their children and attending school and family meetings, when requested, to advocate for the interests of the child or youth.
3.4.13	Staff, families and schools work together as a team when necessary to set goals. Outside specialists are included as needed.

CRITERIA	
3.4.14	Program staff have a communication system with school-day staff to learn about children's and youth's school performance throughout the year and about current classroom instructional focus. The program partners with school day staff to ensure that program activities complement, extend and expand school day learning whenever possible.
3.4.15	The program has developed responsible, supportive and sensitive methods and materials to communicate, help and support staff, families and schools with the responsibility of recognizing children and youth with special needs and to share caregiving, learning progress and other information that affects the well-being and development of these children and youth. Staff consult with appropriate school personnel in order to make accommodations or adaptations for children and youth aligned with strategies used during the school day.
3.4.16	Staff ask children and youth to share their ideas for curriculum planning so that activities reflect children's and youth's interests and align with the program's purpose and direction.
3.4.17	Children and youth have multiple and varied opportunities to participate in projects or activities that encourage civic engagement, offer service-learning options, or connect children and youth to community based organizations.
3.4.18	The program includes the use of neighborhood, cultural, tribal, urban, and suburban or other community resources.

INDICATOR 3.5

Curriculum, instruction and assessment are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data about children's and youth's learning, development and engagement as well as examination of professional practice.

	CRITERIA
3.5.01	The program assesses child and youth progress based on curriculum goals and objectives and uses the results to develop learning goals for individual children and youth, modify instruction and monitor progress to ensure the attainment of learning goals and content. The assessment system measures child and youth outcomes in all areas of the program's learning curriculum using aligned tools that are valid, reliable and unbiased.
3.5.02	Program staff use multiple sources of information to assess children's and youth's progress physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively and engagement in the program. These include, but are not limited to, formalized assessments; observations of children's and youth's interaction in the learning environment; and children's and youth's level of understanding concepts, ability to perform skills and changing interests. Program staff respond by making appropriate adaptations to the curriculum and learning activities. If assessments indicate a need for further evaluation, the program refers children and youth for further developmental screening or further diagnostic testing.
3.5.03	The assessment system is fair, sensitive and consistent with children's and youth's experiences, abilities and needs as well as families' cultures and languages, and results in accurate and meaningful information.
3.5.04	Program staff use what they learning through assessments and observations to support and build on children's and youth's learning by modifying the schedule, intentionally arranging equipment and materials and making themselves available to children and youth.
3.5.05	Program staff plan and scaffold meaningful learning activities for individuals and groups of children and youth based on their assessment and understanding of children's and youth's interests, ideas, skill levels and social relationships. They monitor their progress and use the information to provide appropriate instructional support to meet their abilities and to ensure children and youth continue to grow and develop.
3.5.06	Program staff intentionally monitor each child's and youth's learning by observing them as they work, talking with them and listening to them.
3.5.07	The assessment system includes ways for families to have input into assessment methods appropriate to their child's needs, strengths and interests, and to share information with the program about their child's needs, strengths and interests.
3.5.08	The assessment system requires a minimum of semi-annual written reports to families that document their child's progress in their learning, development and engagement.

INDICATOR 3.6

All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning to support instructional improvement consistent with the program's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

	CRITERIA
3.6.01	The program's administrator demonstrates a commitment to the ongoing development of the program staff's professional learning and engages them in collaboration and teamwork to accomplish the program's purpose.
3.6.02	Program administrators have training relevant to their assignments. The training includes knowledge and skills related to program administration and management; staff supervision; and collaboration with community members and partners.
3.6.03	The program has a professional development plan that addresses the development of the knowledge and skills of all staff, including orientation for new staff. The plan is updated at least annually and is based on data from evaluations and other needs assessment to ensure staff have the appropriate knowledge and skills to meet the needs of children and youth.
3.6.04	The professional development plan is based on identified needs of staff from data such as staff evaluation, program evaluation and current best practice. The formal, written plan includes all staff and addresses training in procedures and policies, relationships and collaboration, curriculum and pedagogy, and working with families and community.
3.6.05	New staff receive specified training in program operations prior to working independently with children and youth. The training includes, at a minimum, purpose and direction of the program; values and goals related to curriculum, instruction and learning; program operations; program routines and activities; expectations for ethical behaviors; positive guidance and behavior management techniques for all learning environments; health, safety and emergency procedures; regulations for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect; and individual needs of all children and youth for which the staff will have responsibility. Ongoing training is provided for all staff following the initial orientation.
3.6.06	Substitute staff and adult volunteers who work with children and youth receive an orientation applicable to their responsibilities prior to working with children and youth. At a minimum, the orientation includes health, safety and emergency procedures; fundamental program operations, routines and activities; expectations for ethical behaviors; positive guidance and behavior management techniques for all learning environments; and regulations for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect. Substitute staff and adult volunteers only work with children and youth under the supervision of the program administration or teaching staff.
3.6.07	All staff have training relevant to their teaching assignments. The training includes knowledge and skills relevant to the age ranges and needs of children and youth they will teach; working with families; setting up a positive social environment; building relationships with children and youth; implementing curriculum and using engaging instructional techniques; effective group management; setting up program space and designing activities to support the program's goals; and collaborating with community partners. Training may include college courses or specialized professional development that covers the knowledge and skills for their assignments.

CRITERIA	
3.6.08	All staff participate in professional development to improve the knowledge, skills, behaviors, attitudes and values of the extended learning personnel to work with diverse families.
3.6.09	Teachers/group leaders and assistant teachers/assistant group leaders have training in diversity of races, cultures and languages. Training may be through professional development and/or college level courses that cover topics within the core courses or separately.
3.6.10	Teachers/group leaders and assistant teachers/assistant group leaders have training in the program's curriculum and in skills that support being an active member of a team. Such skills include communication, collaboration and teamwork.
3.6.11	Staff are trained in the evaluation, interpretation and use of data, and they meet on a regular basis to interpret assessment results to improve instructional practices, curriculum activities and the learning environment to meet children's and youth's needs.
3.6.12	All staff have training in working with children and youth who have special needs. The training may include college courses or specialized professional development that provides preparation in working with children and youth who have special needs; applicable laws relative to children and youth with special needs, including the rights of families, children and youth; roles and responsibilities related to all aspects of the IEP process; professional practice supporting inclusion; modifying and adapting curriculum, instruction, materials, schedules and the learning environment to meet individual needs; and referral and follow-up procedures for assessments and resources.
3.6.13	Staff are encouraged to participate in collaborative training activities or professional development opportunities with other extended learning programs, local school(s) and community agencies.

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

The extended learning program has resources and provides services that support its purpose and direction to ensure success for all school aged children and youth.

INDICATOR 4.1

The program employs qualified administrators for each administrative position to support the program's purpose, direction and educational program.

CRITERIA	
4.1.01 Required	The program administrator/director has the appropriate educational qualifications and professional commitment to lead the extended learning program. This includes a minimum of a) baccalaureate degree in a related field, with at least one year of related experience and six credits in administration and/or child and youth development; or b) a baccalaureate degree in an unrelated field, with at least two years of related experience and twelve credits in administration and/or child and youth development.
4.1.02	The site director/supervisor has the appropriate educational qualifications and professional commitment to lead the extended learning site. This includes a minimum of a) a baccalaureate degree in a related field, with six months of related experience and six credits in in administration and/or child and youth development; b) a baccalaureate degree in an unrelated field, with at least one year of related experience and nine credits in administration and/or child and youth development; c) an associate's degree or two years of college in a related field, with at least 18 months of experience and six credits in administration and/or youth development; or d) a recognized state or national school-age care or youth worker credential, with at least 18 months of related experience and six credits in administration and/or child and youth development.
4.1.03	The program has a designated, qualified full-time administrator/director if it has an enrollment of 160 or more full-time equivalent children and youth and employs eight or more staff. When a program has fewer FTE children, youth and staff, the administrator/director may be employed part-time or may prorate their time as a teacher/group leader and administrator/director.

INDICATOR 4.2

The program employs qualified teachers/group leaders for each teaching position to support the program's purpose, direction and educational program.

CRITERIA	
4.2.01	The program ensures a staffing pattern of at least the following: all lead teachers/group leaders have a minimum of a) a baccalaureate degree in a related field; b) a baccalaureate degree in an unrelated field, with at least three months of related experience and three credits in child and youth development or related areas; c) an associate's degree or two years of college in a related field, with at least six months of related experience; d) an associate's degree or two years of college in an unrelated field, with at least nine months of related experience and three credits in child and youth development or related areas; e) a recognized state or national school-age care or youth worker credential, with at least six months of related experience; or f) a high school diploma or GED, with at least 18 months of related experience and six credits in child and youth development or other areas. For international countries, governmental documentation showing the equivalency of credentials is acceptable.
4.2.02	Assistant teachers/assistant group leaders must have a high school diploma or GED and be at least 18 years old. For international countries, governmental documentation showing the equivalency of credentials is acceptable.

INDICATOR 4.3

The program ensures the safety of children and youth by providing sufficient and appropriate supervision at all times.

	CRITERIA
4.3.01	The program has sufficient staff that are assigned and organized to minimize the number of group, teaching staff and environment transitions for individual children and youth during the program hours and to maintain the relationship between both staff and children and youth and groups of children and youth.
4.3.02	The program maintains the staff-child/youth ratios within each group in all settings and hours of operation in the program. The ratios are based on the ages and abilities of children and youth, and are between 1:10 and 1:15 for groups when all children and youth are age six and older; and between 1:8 and 1:12 when the program includes children under age six.
4.3.03	Staff-child/youth group sizes vary according to type and complexity of the activity, but group sizes do not exceed 30.
4.3.04	There is a plan to provide adequate staff coverage in case of emergencies, when staff are absent and when staff leave the room to take a break or retrieve supplies. Appropriately qualified substitute staff are used to maintain ratios when regular staff are absent.
4.3.05	Staff provide supervision for children and youth by ensuring they are physically positioned to see as many children and youth as possible, and are well distributed across the program to provide optimum supervision and attention to all children and youth. Staff know where children and youth are and what they are doing at all times.
4.3.06	Staff supervise children and youth appropriately according to the children's and youth's ages, abilities and needs. Staff plan for different levels of supervision according to the level of risk involved in an activity (e.g., activities involving cooking or tools will have fewer children and youth with a staff member).
4.3.07	The program has written procedures that address and facilitate family, school and staff interaction as children and youth arrive and depart the program and ensure that all children and youth are transported safely and are accounted for before, during and after transportation.
4.3.08	The program has clearly defined procedures for staff to know when children and youth arrive, when they leave, and with whom they leave. Children and youth are released only to authorized persons designated by parents or legal guardians in writing.
4.3.09	The program has procedures for monitoring children and youth who have permission to be out of the staff's visual and auditory supervision for a short time (and when permitted by regulatory requirements), if they are monitored for prompt return and/or confirmation of arrive at the new location by an adult.
4.3.10	The program implements a supervision system that makes communication possible between different areas within the program site. Systems are in place to protect children and youth from harm, especially when they move from one location to another.
4.3.11	The program assesses its security needs and takes appropriate measures to protect the safety of children, youth and adults who are in the program's facilities and learning environments.

INDICATOR 4.4

Instructional time, material resources and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the program.

	CRITERIA
4.4.01	The program's administrator and other program leaders ensure that the program has sufficient resources to support the program's purpose and achievement of learning expectations and actively work to effectively generate and manage the necessary resources to support the program.
4.4.02	Staff incorporate appropriate materials in sufficient number and schedule adequate time daily for children and youth to engage in self-selected activities.
4.4.03	The program's facility is well maintained in order to prolong the life expectancy of the building, its furniture and equipment. Maintenance is a continuous, systematic and proactive operation to prevent the need for repairs and to keep the program's facility, furniture and equipment in the best form for normal and safe use and to ensure the use of the building as a shelter in case of an emergency caused by natural hazard events. The building has sufficient staff and budget for proper maintenance.

INDICATOR 4.05

The program maintains facilities, services and equipment to provide a safe, clean and healthy environment for all children, youth and staff.

	CRITERIA
4.5.01	Staff design and provide a safe and healthy environment for all children and youth in all program environments. The program meets all applicable laws, regulations, and codes, including those related to health and safety.
4.5.02	The program enforces a hazard-free and safe environment for children, youth and adults. The staff look for and mitigate possible hazards such as rugs that pose a trip hazard, broken equipment, and furniture with rough or sharp edges. The program also provides safety precautions that include secure windows, monitored or locked entrances and exits, working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers and first aid kits. Stairwells and corridors are well-lighted and include emergency lighting, with regular and emergency exits clearly marked.
4.5.03	The program's building and its facilities meet "barrier-free" accessibility requirements that can be approached, entered and used by persons with physical or sensory disabilities and are in compliance with applicable governmental regulations such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
4.5.04 Required	Staff provide a safe environment that is free from physical, emotional and sexual abuse; negative verbal interaction; or threats as a form of discipline. Staff use no harsh discipline methods.
4.5.05	Health records are confidential, updated annually and maintained for each child and youth. The individual record documents scheduled immunization records, physical examination reports and/or routine screening tests as required by health agencies; referrals to screening and health care as needed; a contact list of primary care provider, specialist, dentist, case worker (if applicable) and hospital in case of an emergency; the individual's health insurance information; a description of other important health-related information about the child or youth; and all prescription, over-the-counter and herbal medications the child or youth takes regularly.
4.5.06	The program implements a health and hygiene protocol based on guidelines from governmental or health authorities. The protocol includes procedures for toileting and changing soiled clothing; universal precautions for surfaces and objects that have been contaminated with bodily fluids; and cleaning and sanitizing guidelines and procedures.
4.5.07	Proper hand washing practices are in place for staff, children and youth upon arrival to the program, after any restroom visit, before each meal or snack or handling food, after coming inside from outdoor activities, and after handling pets and/or bodily fluids. Disposable gloves are used by staff when in contact with bodily fluids followed by proper hand washing procedures. Hand washing procedures include using liquid soap and tempered water; rubbing hands vigorously with soap and tempered water; washing all surfaces of the hands to include the backs of hands, palms, wrists, under fingernails and between fingers; rinsing well, drying hands with a paper towel or other hand-drying device; and turning off faucet with a paper towel or other method without re-contaminating hands.

CRITERIA	
4.5.08	Protocols for administering, handling and storing of medication for every child and youth are in place and a trained, consistent staff member or program health consultant is designated to administer, handle and store medications. All medications are kept out of the reach of children and youth or in locked storage, stored in a manner that does not contaminate food and, if refrigeration is required, kept separate from food. A written, signed and dated authorization to administer medication to a child or youth must be obtained from the child's or youth's parent or legal guardian; medications are in the original prescription container and are not out of date; medications are labeled with the child's or youth's name, specific dosage and times the medication is to be administered to the child or youth; and the parent/guardian has provided the program with instructions on the methods of administration. Documentation of administration is maintained in the child's or youth's file and a copy provided to the parent/guardian.
4.5.09 Required	At least one staff member on duty shall hold current certification in basic first aid and Pediatric/Adult Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) from a certifying organization recognized by governmental or health agencies. Program staff who teach swimming and wading for children and youth with special needs hold certification for that activity, such as ASA Teacher for Swimmers with Disabilities or Red Cross.
4.5.10	A fully stocked first aid kit with a sufficient quantity of supplies to meet the needs of the enrolled children and youth is available at all times. The program keeps an extra first aid kit (one per group of children and youth) available to accompany children, youth and staff on any field trip away from the facility. Each vehicle in which children and youth are transported also should be equipped with a complete first aid kit and emergency contact information for transported children and youth.
4.5.11	The program allows easy access to fresh drinking water by providing and maintaining water coolers and/or water fountains, serving water in pitchers at meals and snacks and encouraging the use of water bottles.
4.5.12	The program provides documentation that any water sources from wells or other private sources have been determined to be safe for human consumption by a local regulatory health authority.
4.5.13	The program creates an environment that supports health and wellness by ensuring staff model healthy eating and physical activity; displaying materials and conveying positive messages about health and wellness; and ensuring food and physical activity are not used as rewards or punishment. Information about the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle is provided to families to encourage healthy habits at home.
4.5.14	The program has food safety, handling, cleaning and sanitizing procedures in place to ensure that the food served to children and youth is safe to eat considering governmental or health agencies and other applicable food safety provisions, and provides documentation of compliance with food safety regulations.
4.5.15	Food provided to children and youth is purchased, stored, prepared and presented in a safe and hygienic environment in compliance with applicable provisions of governmental or health agencies.

CRITERIA	
4.5.16	The program has in place a food and nutrition policy based on government or other applicable recommendations for healthy eating and active lifestyles for children and youth. The program ensures that children and youth are receiving nourishing foods that are limited in sugars and concentrated sweets such as candy, sweetened drinks, fruit drinks (less than 100 percent real juice) and flavored milk. Information is shared with families about the types of food that may be brought to the program.
4.5.17	Monthly meals and snack menus are written, posted and available to families. Menus are stored on file every month for review by a health consultant, school nurse or registered dietician.
4.5.18	The program provides meals and snacks to children and youth at appropriate times; provides enough time to eat without being rushed; offers amounts of food that are appropriate to the ages and sizes of children and youth; and supports the self-regulation of the amount children and youth eat.
4.5.19	Staff participate in snack and meal times with children and youth. Staff sit with children and youth, listen to them and engage them in conversations with other adults, children and youth. Snacks and meals are served family-style and/or allow children and youth self-serve.
4.5.20	The program has procedures to ensure the routine cleaning and sanitizing of all surfaces and areas in the facility on a regular basis and rely on ventilation and sanitization, not chemicals and deodorizers, to control odors in all areas of the program environment.
4.5.21	The program implements basic protective measures for recently painted, carpeted, tiled or renovated areas including proper ventilation and paint selection and storage.
4.5.22	Staff protect children and youth from potential health and safety hazards such as caustic or toxic art materials and cleaning agents; medications; hot liquids; and overexposure to heat or cold.
4.5.23	A planned schedule for cleaning and disinfecting is established for program materials, food preparation and service areas (including tables and chairs used for meals or snacks), eating utensils and dishes, washable equipment and furniture, toilets, bathroom sinks and water fixtures, non-carpeted flooring, carpets, wastebaskets, walls and ceilings.
4.5.24	The program promotes a safe, clean environment during sand/water or other sensory material activities. Sanitary sensory activities involve the use of non-toxic hard-surface toys and props and the use of fresh potable water for each new group of children and youth. Sensory tables are durable, easy to clean, scratch-resistant, safe (no exposed screws or bolts), tip-resistant and an appropriate height for the age of the children and youth.
4.5.25	The program maintains facilities that are free from toxins such as pesticides, herbicides or other air pollutants.
4.5.26	The program establishes policies to manage exposure on high pollution days; implements individual management of exposure to outdoor air pollution for sensitive children and youth; raises awareness of air pollution effects and symptoms among program personnel, families, children and youth; and is prepared to respond to local situations other than smog and particle pollution that may affect air quality.
4.5.27	All program environments and building grounds are smoke-free. No smoking is allowed on the facility grounds or within sight of any children or youth.

CRITERIA	
4.5.28	The program environment is maintained or reasonably adapted for children and youth with special environmental allergies or other environmental health needs in accordance with recommendations from health professionals.
4.5.29	The indoor environment design promotes noise control levels by implementing noise control solutions such as using carpets and/or acoustical walls and panels. Quiet activity areas are separated from noisy/active activity areas whenever possible.
4.5.30	Outdoor sandboxes (if provided) allow for drainage, are covered when not in use and are cleaned on a regular basis.
4.5.31	The program provides work facilities to staff that contribute to a productive environment. If the program operations for more than four hours at a time, the facilities include a staff room where staff can have breaks and rest from their daily duties with adult-sized bathrooms and work desks. The program has a separate staff storage area for personal belongings.
4.5.32	The program implements digital technology and internet safety procedures to prevent access to inappropriate content and protect children and youth in the online environment. Children, youth and staff are trained on internet safety, cyberbullying prevention, and the program's internet usage policies.

INDICATOR 4.6

The indoor learning environment meets the needs of children and youth and support the program's purpose and goals.

	CRITERIA
4.6.01	Program learning environments are arranged by staff, children and youth in predictable ways so that children and youth can readily access materials and know how and where to put them away. Clear pathways between interest areas and clear boundaries around work areas facilitate play and work without interruptions.
4.6.02	The learning environment and materials are organized to stimulate learning focused on exploration, discovery, experimentation and experiential learning.
4.6.03	Staff intentionally and appropriately organize and reorganize the learning environment in order to adapt to children's and youth's needs as they explore new concepts, sustain activities and extend their learning. The indoor space reflects the work and interests of the children and youth.
4.6.04	The program designs positive learning environments with enough room for all activities and creates comfortable spaces for children, youth and adults to converse and interact, relax or rest, under continuous supervision by adults at all times. The space is arranged to be conducive for simultaneous social, recreational and educational activities.
4.6.05	The program divides indoor space into areas strategically arranged to accommodate children and youth individually, in small groups and in large groups. Program spaces are child- and youth-friendly; encourage autonomy and self-expression; are structured yet flexible; and are safe, secure and healthy. Staff can monitor, supervise and adapt spaces to support learning, development and engagement in all content areas.
4.6.06	Staff create an inclusive environment for children and youth with special needs by providing safe and durable equipment, furnishings and materials that can be adapted or expanded to accommodate the child's or youth's individual needs.
4.6.07	The program supports primary indoor activity areas through defined spaces that provide a minimum of 35 square feet per child or youth and support a diverse range of experiences for children and youth.
4.6.08	The program provides access to natural light in some indoor areas to support the positive effect on health and learning.
4.6.09	Materials and equipment used to support the delivery of the curriculum are age appropriate; support and challenge children's and youth's learning and exploration of concepts and ideas; provide opportunities for children and youth to talk with each other and adults about their ideas; promote self-directed use; reflect the current curriculum focus; encourage the development of new interests and skills; and meet the range of learning needs of children and youth, including children and youth with special needs. Staff rotate and adapt materials to promote and extend children's and youth's interests and learning opportunities.
4.6.10	Materials are provided in sufficient number and variety to foster each child's and youth's interests and development, and are complete and in good repair.
4.6.11	All furniture, equipment, educational materials, toys, resources and activities are age, group size and developmentally appropriate. Program spaces and their furnishings are scaled to the sizes of the children and youth enrolled in the program, such as age and height-appropriate tables, chairs, sinks and toilets.

	CRITERIA
4.6.12	The program provides a secure and individual location for each child's and youth's personal belongings.

INDICATOR 4.07

The outdoor learning environment meets the needs of children and youth and support the program's purpose and goals.

	CRITERIA
4.7.01	Developmentally appropriate outdoor play areas and equipment are used to cultivate a wide range of group and individual activities, active exploration, and physical development.
4.7.02	The outdoor learning environment is suitable for a wide variety of activities, such as open space to run and play without disrupting others; space for less active games and socialization; and space for games or activities involving a number of children and youth (e.g., basketball, kickball).
4.7.03	A wide variety of outdoor equipment and games are available for both active and quiet play. Equipment and materials are stored and secured in an area close to the outdoor learning environment, and the storage area is open and accessible to children and youth during outdoor activities. Equipment and materials are provided in sufficient number and variety to foster each child's and youth's interests and development, and are in good repair.
4.7.04	The program promotes safe and protected outdoor play areas by providing surface or ground under and around playground equipment that is soft enough to cushion a fall; surface is well-maintained, kept free of standing water and debris and is not allowed to become compacted; play equipment is free of protrusion and entanglement hazards with no exposed sharp edges or points that could cut the skin; no entrapment openings are present throughout the play space; and natural or artificial shade structures provide enough shade to accommodate the total number of children and youth in the group.
4.7.05	Outdoor play areas are safe, protected and secured by a fence for the children and youth who play there to be safe from any dangers or hazards.
4.7.06	Permanent playground equipment is suitable for the sizes, ages and abilities of all children and youth. Equipment is accessible to children and youth who have physical disabilities.
4.7.07	Outdoor play is arranged so that the adult must be able to hear children and youth at all times, must be able to see children and youth with a quick glance and must be able to physically respond immediately.
4.7.08	The program supports outside play and learning by providing defined spaces that support a diverse range of experiences for children and youth and provide a minimum of 75 square feet of area for each child or youth outside at any time.

INDICATOR 4.8

The program provides support services to meet the specialized social, emotional, developmental and academic needs of children and youth.

	CRITERIA
4.8.01	Staff address challenging behaviors of children and youth by assessing the function of the behavior and engaging families and other professionals to develop positive behavioral support strategies and/or individualized plans to address the behaviors.
4.8.02	Staff work collaboratively with support professionals, schools and families to ensure children and youth with serious behavior issues have an individual plan to provide the necessary support for successful integration and inclusion in program activities.
4.8.03	Staff meet the needs of children and youth with a history of trauma by recognizing when a child or youth may have experienced trauma, understanding the impact of trauma on learning and behavior, and balancing accountability for actions with an understanding of how past trauma may have contributed to those actions.
4.8.04	The program makes available to families a current listing of community-based resources that may assist in the well-being of their children and family. The listing is based on trends or patterns of needs as observed by program staff or as requested by families (e.g., health services, educational support, food pantries, etc.), and includes culturally and linguistically appropriate support services.
4.8.05	The program implements clearly defined procedures for appropriately communicating with schools, agencies or services about mutually desired outcomes or collaborative work on behalf of the children and youth served by both the program and the school, agency or service provider.
4.8.06	Staff encourage families to become advocates and make primary decisions regarding services needed by their children.
4.8.07	The program provides and/or works with the local school(s) to coordinate child- and youth-centered learning support and referral services that meet the unique learning and development needs of children and youth and are designed to support the educational goals and the families.
4.8.08	The program engages in regular communication with school day staff and leadership to encourage resource sharing and to work toward positive outcomes for children and youth. The program uses the school as a resource to address the needs of children and youth, communicates information about children's and youth's learning progress in the program and learns about the strengths, needs and progress of children and youth.
4.8.09	The program discloses information regarding a child or youth to other providers, agencies or schools only with the written consent of the child's or youth's parent or legal guardian.
4.8.10	The program advocates for its children, youth, families and activities by creating awareness of the program and needs to multiple community-based resources, organizations and agencies or other service agencies and entities.

INDICATOR 4.9

All children, youth and families experience an environment of reciprocal respect, trust and open communication in a fair and just way, respecting the needs and characteristics of each individual and promoting a sense of community, belonging, ownership and pride.

	CRITERIA
4.9.01	An established communication system that includes formal and informal strategies is established to create a warm, respectful and welcoming program environment to learn about and understand families; is flexible in accommodating parents/guardians and families; and provides a variety of resources for parents/guardians to support their child's learning, development and engagement.
4.9.02	Staff use a variety of techniques to mediate any difficulties in interactions with parents/guardians and address families in a language that the family understands.
4.9.03	Staff demonstrate caring, warm, supportive and approachable behaviors.
4.9.04	Staff provide recognition and encouragement of children's and youth's accomplishments and contributions, using specific, non-evaluative language.
4.9.05	Staff provide warm, positive and predictable environments where children, youth and families experience a sense of community and belonging that fosters mutual respect, responsibility and affection between and among children, youth, staff and families.
4.9.06	Staff demonstrate throughout their daily interactions their knowledge of the backgrounds, interests, families and cultural context of the children and youth in the program.
4.9.07	Staff create a differentiated learning environment in which children and youth of varying abilities receive assistance to progress toward increasing their personal autonomy, responsibility and social understanding and interactions.
4.9.08	Staff create an environment of trust by treating all children and youth without favoritism or discrimination and being consistent and dependable in their interactions.

Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

The extended learning program uses data about the developmentally appropriate learning, development and engagement of school aged children and youth and overall program effectiveness to guide continuous improvement.

INDICATOR 5.1

Program staff continuously collect, analyze and apply learning from multiple data sources, including comprehensive trend data about the learning, development and engagement of children and youth as well as instruction, program evaluation and organizational conditions.

	CRITERIA
5.1.01	The program establishes formal processes to collect, analyze and use data from multiple sources such as comparison and trend data, family and staff satisfaction data, child and youth learning data and program evaluation to evaluate learning and organizational effectiveness. The data analysis must occur at least annually and provide the direction for leadership to develop goals for improvement and communicate the results to families, schools and the community.
5.1.02	The program has a clear assessment system to collect, analyze and use data to ensure that all program goals and requirements are met and that these data drive the evaluation of the program and measurement of the achievement of the continuous improvement goals.
5.1.03	Administrators and staff use assessment results from a variety of valid, reliable and unbiased assessment methods to support children's and youth's learning, development and engagement; and to improve curriculum, instruction and the effectiveness of the program.
5.1.04	Assessment results are analyzed and interpreted to determine whether the program is achieving curriculum goals and learning outcomes for children and youth.
5.1.05	Information from stakeholder groups is included in the goals, plans and processes for continuous improvement and used in planning for stakeholder involvement and community support in the program.
5.1.06	The program implements a continuous improvement process that establishes clear goals that are based upon an analysis of data; have clear, measurable objectives; and are linked to strategies and activities that include professional development to improve the program and achievement of learning expectations.

About Cognia

Cognia™ is a global nonprofit that has the knowledge to help schools improve. Cognia offers accreditation and certification, assessment, professional learning, and improvement services. The result of the merger of AdvancED and Measured Progress, Cognia was formed to bridge the gap between school evaluation and student assessment. We are the largest education improvement organization in the world and an undeniable force for enhancing schools, engaging students, and driving better outcomes for all. In 2020, the entities that came together to form Cognia mark 125 years of service to education.

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