DOINGWHATW⌖RKS

SAMPLE MATERIAL

After-School Self-Assessment
Marshall Elementary School, California

Topic: Increased Learning Time: Beyond the Regular School Day

Practice: Evaluate Program

This *After-School Self-Assessment* was prepared by the Expanded Collaboratives for Excellence in Learning (ExCEL), a San Francisco Unified School District organization that partners with local agencies such as Mission Graduates to provide after-school programs at sites like Marshall Elementary School. The assessment tool can be used by other organizations running out-of-school programs as a guide for assessing quality and implementing improvement efforts.

The self-assessment tool includes three sections:

- Program Environment/Climate;
- Alignment/Linkages with the School Day; and
- Promoting Diversity, Access, Equity, and Inclusion.

Within each section, lead teachers or site coordinators are asked to complete a program observation, administer a survey of students participating in the program, and provide documentary evidence of important factors in each category. By completing this self-assessment and reviewing findings, programs can identify areas of need, design action plans, and create timelines for improvement.

**DRAFT
CALIFORNIA AFTER-SCHOOL SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL:
EXCEL PILOT**

Background Information:
This draft document is an attempt to utilize the California After-school Self-assessment Tool (QSA Tool) as a site visit protocol and a document collection tool for the purposes of continuous program improvement. The indicators have been informed by the following sources:

- ExCEL District Coordinators
- ExCEL's "Site Visit Suggestions from Expectations"
- DCYF's Quality Standards
- AFA TAC's Program Observation (based on DCYF's Quality Standards)
- CNYD's Youth Development Guide
- California Tomorrow's *Equity, Diversity and Youth Development, 2002*

Three program areas are the focus for the first round of site visits. They are: **Program Environment/Climate**, **Alignment and Linkages with the School Day**, and **Promoting Diversity, Access, Equity and Inclusion**.

QSA Tool:
There are three parts of the QSA Tool:

- Program Observation
- Questions for Youth
- Program Documentation

These three points of input are meant to provide a well-rounded picture of what is happening at the site.

Site Assessment Process:
Each Lead Teacher (or a team of staff and the site coordinator) will complete a program observation, questions for youth and program documentation for his or her site. For ease of use, all areas that require documentation have been pulled out of the observation tool. As part of the program observation, there are several questions at the end of each section to be asked of youth in the program. The information collected will be shared with the Site Coordinator and ExCEL. The Site Coordinator and the Lead Teacher will review their findings together, identify areas and timeline for improvement and resources to achieve those improvements using the Strategic After School Action Plan provided by ExCEL to Lead Teachers.

Program Observation:
The Program Observation has three categories (Seen, Heard, Felt) from which you can choose. Following the three categories there is a space for comments. For example, you may SEE that some of the physical spaces are decorated in an age and culturally appropriate manner. It would be important to note in the comments section that some of the spaces are decorated, but not all the spaces are decorated. Following the observation items is a section for comments and further reflections. This section should be used for things that you observed that are not listed in the observation items or ideas and reflections on what could make the spaces more respectful and welcoming.

Questions for Youth:
As you are observing program, it will be important to ask a group of young people the Questions for Youth. You can do this in an unobtrusive manner with a small group of young people.

Program Documentation:
Review the documentation that the site has provided you before you conduct your site assessment. This will give you an opportunity to raise questions with Site Coordinator before or after your site assessment.

Input into Document
As a draft document, input is welcome and necessary. As a pilot process, documenting what works and what doesn't is crucial to moving this work forward and contributing to the development of a tool that serves the after-school field.

SECTION 2: PROGRAM ENVIRONMENT/CLIMATE: Program Observation

A quality program provides a safe, healthy and nurturing environment for all youth. It ensures that young people are physically and emotionally secure, respected and accepted for who they are.

Physical Environment	Seen	Heard	Felt	Comments
1. Establishes a respectful and welcoming environment for all participants, families and staff in the program. **Look for:** • *Physical spaces decorated in an age- and culturally-appropriate manner that is welcoming to program participants and families*	yes			
• *Program materials in multiple languages*	yes			Program Registration Forms and all Parent Communication in English/Spanish
• *Staff providing assistance for limited English speakers, those with limited reading ability, and other limitations*	yes			
• *Evidence that the space reflects the interests of family*				
• *members and that family members have participated in program activities or celebrations*	yes	yes	yes	
• *Staff ensuring that the setting reflects the diverse background of participants*				
• *Staff showing positive affect towards all participants and their families*	yes			
• *Staff referring to participants and families by name*	yes			
Other Observations or Reflections				

Physical Environment	Seen	Heard	Felt	Comments (Seen, Heard, Felt)
2. Provides sufficient equipment and supplies to offer a variety of activities for participants of all ages. **Look for:** • *Youth in programs with supplies and equipment they need to accomplish the task at hand Enough computer terminals for each young person*	yes	yes	yes	
• *Art supplies in good order*	yes			Kept in office, carts used in classrooms
• *Books in multiple languages*	yes			
• *Equipment and supplies for multi-learning levels and stage*				
• *Enough sports equipment to outfit the entire team*	yes			Plenty of equipment for recess
Other Observations or Reflections				

Social Environment	Seen	Heard	Felt	Comments
5. Has site coordinators/leaders who model respectful interaction with staff, families, and participants. **Look for:** • *Staff greeting each other, families and youth warmly and by name*	yes	yes	yes	
• *Staff promoting a peaceful environment within the program by using strategies and interventions for addressing violence, negative comments, and/or physical or verbal harassment; including but not limited to a young's persons culture, language, ethnicity, national background, gender, or sexual orientation when it does occur*	yes			
• *Staff helping participants*	yes			
• *Youth helping staff*	yes			
• *Youth helping youth*	yes			
• *A feeling of warmth, kindness and caring emanating from participants and staff*	yes		yes	
Other Observations or Reflections				

Social Environment	Seen	Heard	Felt	Comments
7. Communicates expectations and rules to staff, participants, and families using appropriate, easy-to-understand language. **Look for:** • *Expectations/Rules/Ground Rules clearly posted in all program areas*	yes			Individual teachers have classroom rules posted that were created with the students. Whole program rules are distributed to families, but not visible in classrooms or elsewhere in the school.
Other Observations or Reflections				

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SECTION 4: ALIGNMENT AND LINKAGES WITH THE SCHOOL DAY: Program Observation
A quality program supports, complements, and expands the school day through intentionally designed enrichment activities and student-centered academic assistance.

Communication with Host School	Seen	Heard	Felt	Comments
7. **Communicates expectations and rules to staff, participants, and families using appropriate, easy-to-understand language.** **Look for:** • *A visible mailbox for the ASP in the Main Office*	yes			
• *School staff and ASP staff talk to each other when they see each other in the hall*	yes	yes		
Other Observations or Reflections				

High Quality Academic Support	Seen	Heard	Felt	Comments
6. Has a staff that uses a variety of age- and grade level-appropriate strategies in academically oriented activities. Look for:				
• *Staff asking youth open-ended questions*				
• *Staff engaging youth in project based learning*				
• *Staff directing youth to problem solve with each other*	yes			Tribes curriculum can be better utilized
• *Young people teaching, leading, reading, talking, creating and/or performing*	yes			Elective Showcase, Community Time -> needs to be a more integral part of all program, not just special events
• *Staff providing on-going feedback to youth about their progress*				
• *Youth receiving recognition for their accomplishments*	yes	yes		Star of the Week, Homework Completion Contest, Star Charts
• *Staff asking for youth feedback on the lesson*				
• *Staff using a debriefing methodology to connect learning to youth experience*				
• *Staff making learning relevant to participants lives*				
• *Staff choose from and use a mix of hands-on, visual, auditory, and kinesthetic approaches*	yes			
• *There is evidence that staff have specific strategies for youth with limited English ability and other challenges*				
Other Observations or Reflections				

High Quality Academic Support	Seen	Heard	Felt	Comments
7. Allocates sufficient program time for homework help. **Look for:** • *45 minutes to one hour of homework help per day*	yes	yes	yes	
Other Observations or Reflections				

ALIGNMENT AND LINKAGES WITH THE SCHOOL DAY: Questions for Youth

What are you doing right now? Is it fun? What's fun about it?

Do you get to do your homework here? Do you finish it all at this program? How do you think that helps you?

How is the afterschool different from regular school?

SECTION 4: ALIGNMENT AND LINKAGES WITH THE SCHOOL DAY: Program Documentation

A quality program supports, complements and expands the school day through intentionally designed enrichment activities and student-centered academic assistance.

1. **Communicates regularly with school day administrators, with teachers and with staff to plan activities that complement school day activities.**

   Please attach documentation of the following:
   - *Staff Meeting Agendas*
   - *Faculty Meeting Agendas*
   - *School Site Council Meeting Agendas*
   - *Leadership Team (Site Coordinator, Lead Teacher, Principal or other school administrator) Meeting Agendas*
   - *School Newsletters or other program communication about the ASP*

2. **Seeks input from school day teachers and from administrators on the impact the after-school program has on participants.**

   Please provide documentation of the following:
   - *Teacher Survey or other mechanism for teacher and administrator input*

3. **Ensures that the after school program is involved with the School Site Council (SSC) and is included in the Balanced Scorecard.**

   Please provide documentation of the Balanced Scorecard

4. **Ensures alignment between the after-school program activities and state content standards.**

   Please provide documentation of the following:
   - *Program Lesson Plans*
   - *Agendas of Lead Teacher professional development for staff*
   - *Communication with day-time teachers*

5. **Tracks the academic and behavioral progress of participants.**

   Please provide documentation/description of the following:
   - *The system used to monitor DFI students*

8. **Has access to indoor and outdoor spaces to support program goals, such as classrooms, library, computer labs, sports facilities, gym, fields, kitchen, and storage for program equipment and supplies.**

   Please provide documentation of the following:
   - *Facilities request form*
   - *Program schedule*

SECTION 9: PROMOTING DIVERSITY, ACCESS, EQUITY AND INCLUSION: Program Observation

Quality after-school programs embrace and value diversity, and have a conscious commitment to helping all young people thrive by providing inclusive, accessible, responsive, and engaging services. Quality programs understand, value, and respect the various backgrounds (i.e. cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, physical and developmental abilities) and experiences of youth and their families. This commitment is reflected in the vision and leadership, and is woven throughout all aspects of the program.

Promoting Diversity, Access, Equity and Inclusion	Seen	Heard	Felt	Comments
1. **Employs staff that reflects the racial, ethnic, linguistic, gender, family, and community characteristics of participants.** **Look for:** • *Staff that look like the participants*	yes	yes	yes	
• *Staff that speak the language of participants*	yes			
• *Staff encouraging youth to speak their home language*				
• *Staff openly and positively acknowledging culture and cultural difference*				
• *Staff encouraging youth to work and play with peers of different backgrounds*				
• *Staff providing opportunities for cultural sharing*	yes	yes		In Community building curriculum
Other Observations or Reflections				

Promoting Diversity, Access, Equity and Inclusion	Seen	Heard	Felt	Comments
3. Provides activities that are fully accessible to participants who are English language learners. **Look for:** • *Materials that reflect the young people's cultures and languages*	yes	yes		
• *Staff checking for understanding of instructions before moving into an activity*				
• *Staff actively pairing a stronger English speaker with a struggling English speaker*				
Other Observations or Reflections				

Promoting Diversity, Access, Equity and Inclusion	Seen	Heard	Felt	Comments
4. Provides activities that are fully accessible to participants from diverse cultural backgrounds. **Look for:** • *Staff using a variety of examples from multiple cultural backgrounds and histories*	yes	yes	yes	This is most apparent during the enrichment time of the program. Students have opportunities to participate in activities that are from different cultures (ie. capoiera, piñata making, mask making…)
• *Youth making connections to their traditions and histories*	yes	yes	yes	
Other Observations or Reflections				

Promoting Diversity, Access, Equity and Inclusion	Seen	Heard	Felt	Comments
7. Uses outreach and communication approaches that reflect a participant's home language and literacy level. **Look for:** • *Program information is translated*	yes			Documentation provided
• *Program utilizes Parent Liaison*	yes	yes	yes	
• *Program utilizes SFUSD Auto dialer*				
Other Observations or Reflections				

PROMOTING DIVERSITY, ACCESS, EQUITY AND INCLUSION: Questions for Youth

Do people here get treated fairly? How do you know?

When new kids come to the program, how do you make them feel welcome?

Do any of the staff members look like you? Speak the same language as you? What do you think of that?

Do you feel respected by staff here? By other youth? How do they show you respect?

Is there someone you could talk to here if you were upset or mad? How do they let you know that you can talk to them?

Do you get to decide things like what activities you participate in? How do you get to decide? Is that important to you? What makes it important?

Do the staff here expect that all students behave and get along with each other? What happens when you are not behaving or not getting along?

SECTION 9: PROMOTING DIVERSITY, ACCESS, EQUITY AND INCLUSION: Program Documentation

Quality after-school programs embrace and value diversity, and have a conscious commitment to helping all young people thrive by providing inclusive, accessible, responsive, and engaging services. Quality programs understand, value, and respect the various backgrounds (i.e. cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, physical and developmental abilities) and experiences of youth and their families. This commitment is reflected in the vision and leadership, and is woven throughout all aspects of the program.

2. **Provides activities that are fully accessible to participants with disabilities and special needs.**

   Please provide a description of your role in SST and how you accommodate youth with special needs.

6. **Actively recruits students from throughout the host school's student body.**

   Please provide a description of the program recruitment strategy that takes into consideration:
   - *Families socio-economic status*
   - *Student achievement*
   - *Referrals from teachers*
   - *Referrals from SST*
   - *How to reach "unlikely" participants*