GUIDING PRINCIPLES
for quality out-of-school time in New Mexico
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The development of the Guiding Principles has been based on our State's array of programs. A commitment was made to develop a flexible set of quality Out-of-School Time guidelines that is designed to foster their utilization by programs of differing focus, setting, community context, size and capacity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHY</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Out-of-School Time Providers and Professionals | Design of new programs  
Program planning  
Foundation for continuous quality Improvement  
activities such as:  
• Goal setting  
• Targeting Professional Development  
• Self-evaluation |
| Funders and Policy Makers        | Advocacy tool to develop policy and funding  
Tool to link funding and accountability to research-based, measurable outcomes |
| Parents and Families             | Inform expectations of out-of-school time programs  
Ensure confidence in program quality  
Assist in selecting high-quality programming |
| Schools and Educators            | Advance academic achievement through school-linked out-of-school time supports  
Recognize complimentary knowledge resulting in increased collaboration  
Create a framework for career development for out-of-school professionals |

To create a pathway that supports planning, which leads to quality program design and implementation. Based on research and best practice in the education and youth development fields, they have the potential to inspire innovation and coordination among adults who support young people.

These Guiding Principles are not about compliance or judgment of programs, but about practices that result in positive outcomes for youth.
There are 9 Guiding Principles along with Concepts that represent the key elements that are essential to each principle. The concepts align with quality values and best practice for the subject area and are organized into themed content areas.

Indicators help to focus programs to assess their status based on their own capacity and priorities. Programs are encouraged to identify and meet more than one indicator within each concept. This snapshot in time, of quality, will provide a basis for developing a plan for building program capacity to increase program quality.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1: Environmental Safety
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2: Health, Nutrition and Physical Activity
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3: Relationships
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4: Family and Community Partnerships
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5: Cultural Relevance
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 6: Programming
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 7: Administration and Organizational Development
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 8: Staffing and Professional Development
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 9: Evaluation for Continuous Quality Improvement

The Guiding Principles are voluntary and recommended for use with other research-based assessment tools for program monitoring and self-assessment [i.e., NM-Extended Learning Self-Assessment Tool (ELSA), Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA), and the Quality Assurance System (QAS)]. They are not meant to be achieved all at once, knowing that continuous quality improvement occurs over time. The Guiding Principles are meant instead to be used for multi-year planning.
PROGRAM CAPACITY INDICATORS

The Foundational Practice Indicators defines a minimum standard that all programs should meet, regardless of their size or capacity. As well, these indicators focus on elements that staff should be aware of when implementing into their programs.

The Comprehensive Program Indicators defines elements that may generally be seen in medium sized programs which have more capacity than those in the prior grouping. Here, the focus is around more comprehensive strategies for meeting standards at a wider programmatic level, such as staff training.

The Organizational Practice Indicators defines systems at the organizational, programmatic and staff levels that will support and sustain quality over the long term.
A quality out-of-school program maintains the physical and emotional safety of the youth while staff supervision protocols are also in place.

Emergency procedures are in place and understood by staff so they can effectively respond to injuries and other health and wellbeing issues.

The physical space is kept clear of any safety hazards and supports a variety of learning activities and needs.
## Supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Account for youth at all times</th>
<th>Maintain acceptable staff-to-student ratio based on best practice</th>
<th>Address risky behaviors through preventative measures and positive discipline structures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check-in and check-out system is in place for authorized-only pick-up and sign-out of youth. Staff account for youth at all times, whether inside, outside, or during transition periods.</td>
<td>Program provides an adequate staff-to-student ratio to provide optimal supervision for safety and learning experiences for both on and off-site activities.</td>
<td>Staff is aware of how to identify, manage and report risky behaviors and activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Program implements and trains on written procedures for check-in and check-out system and accounting for youth. Supervisors monitor staff compliance with procedures and provide additional coaching as needed. Staff communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about safety rules and check-in/check-out transition processes. | | Staff are trained and monitored in identifying, managing and reporting risky behaviors and activities. Program activities inspire positive behavior, cooperative learning, and positive peer-to-peer interactions. Supervisors monitor staff compliance with procedures and provide additional coaching as needed. Staff communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families and staff about the behavior policy. |

| Organization researches state and national retention policies for their program. | Organization aligns to state and national standards required for the program. | Organization implements a positive behavior policy. |

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GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1: Environmental Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F=Functional</th>
<th>C=Comprehensive</th>
<th>O=Organizational</th>
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## Health & Well Being

### Protect youth from spreading illness and disease
- Staff is aware of how to identify when a youth is ill.
- Ill youth are removed from other youth and monitored until they are collected by family.

### Promote hygiene precautions and practices
- Hygiene supplies are available.
- Youth are encouraged to wash their hands, cover their coughs and disinfect areas.
- Program prominently posts hygiene best practice instructions.
- Staff instructs and models hygiene best practices.
- Program provides families with written information about hygiene best practices.

### First aid and CPR are made available
- First Aid kits are available.
- First Aid procedures are accessible.
- Staff is provided with training opportunities to receive First Aid certification, including CPR.
- Program provides at least one person on site who is First Aid and CPR certified.

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**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1: Environmental Safety**

- **F** = Functional
- **C** = Comprehensive
- **O** = Organizational

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>O</th>
<th>Organization provides for, or negotiates separate space for, ill youth in a comfortable and supervised room or partitioned off space until picked-up.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organization researches local and state policy on handling communicable diseases.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>O</th>
<th>Organization requires all staff are certified in First Aid and CPR.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organization implements a policy for blood-borne pathogen universal precautions.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organization trains staff annually on blood-borne pathogen universal precautions (OSHA).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1: Environmental Safety**

### Emergencies

<table>
<thead>
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<th>F=Functional</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communicate and document emergencies and accidents appropriately</strong></td>
<td><strong>Establish a site-specific emergency management plan in which First Aid and CPR are made available</strong></td>
<td><strong>Practice emergency responses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth medical conditions and emergency contacts are documented during registration. Youth medical conditions and emergency contacts are readily available during program hours. Families are told of any medical incident.</td>
<td>Site-specific emergency management plan is available and complied with.</td>
<td>Staff is aware of how to respond to evacuation, shelter-in-place and lockdown responses. Youth are instructed in both evacuation and shelter-in-place responses. Staff assists handicapped students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Secure emergency supplies and equipment** | **Program implements written policy procedures for communicating accidents and emergencies to families and emergency personnel. Staff are trained and monitored in identifying, managing and reporting the emergency.** | **Program provides periodic fire and emergency drills.** Documentation exists showing staff have reviewed the plan and agree to comply with the plan. Staff are trained on the plan and can identify their roles in an emergency. Staff communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families and staff about the site-specific emergency management plan, including the evacuation routes and parent pick-up procedures. **
| **Organization annually reviews and updates a site-specific emergency management plan that is relevant to OST program locations, personnel (review and induction) and management structure. Documentation is kept confirming staff training and agreement to comply with the plan.** | **Organization implements an emergency response drill schedule and policy that requires drills are conducted for staff and youth in a variety of settings. Organization reviews each drill performance and makes corrections. Staff knows the location of emergency supplies and equipment.** | **Organization implements and inspects emergency supplies and equipment.** |
## GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1: Environmental Safety

### Program Space

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provide safe and appropriate indoor and outdoor spaces</th>
<th>Manage environmental hazards appropriately</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indoor and outdoor spaces, when available, are clean and meet or exceed safety codes.</td>
<td>Staff is aware and takes action regarding any potential hazards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff inspects indoor and outdoor spaces to see that they are free of observable safety hazards.</td>
<td>Staff are trained and monitored in identifying, managing and reporting the environmental hazard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ample and dedicated space is available for small group activities, large play areas, reading and reflection and open conversation.</td>
<td>Staff communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families and staff about the environmental hazards policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program implements procedures for periodic safety checks and appropriate maintenance of outdoor space and equipment.</td>
<td>Program implements procedures for products that may pose an environmental hazard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization provides and secures outdoor space and equipment that are appropriate and safe for the ages and abilities of youth.</td>
<td>Organization implements a policy for handling environmental hazards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation is kept confirming that safety checks are conducted and remedies are made.</td>
<td>Appropriate local environmental agency contact information is current.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization provides and secures resources to create separate activity spaces.</td>
<td>Documentation is kept confirming what is stored and that scheduled checks occur to ascertain inventory is current and remains safe.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F=Functional          C=Comprehensive          O=Organizational
Nutritious snacks and meals are consistently provided to meet the hunger needs of the youth served.

Physical activity is intentionally incorporated into daily programming to encourage movement.

The culture of the youth, families and communities served is reflected in programming.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2
Health, Nutrition & Physical Activity
**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2: Health, Nutrition & Physical Activity**

### Nutrition & Hunger

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provide healthy and adequate food and beverage to youth</th>
<th>Address food restrictions appropriately</th>
<th>Prepare and store food properly</th>
<th>Promote good nutrition practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth have access to healthy and adequate food and beverages. Youth have access to drinking water.</td>
<td>Youth food restrictions, including allergies, are documented during registration.</td>
<td>Food and beverage storage and preparation meet or exceed local health and safety codes. Staff is trained in food storage and preparation that meet or exceed local health and safety codes.</td>
<td>Staff models good nutrition practices within the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program provides a nutritious snack and regularly publishes a menu. Program plans and implements activities that allow youth opportunities to select and prepare food and beverages served in the program, using preparation as a teachable moment, while following food safety handling.</td>
<td>Youth food restrictions, including allergies, and emergency contacts are readily available during program hours. Program provides food and beverage alternatives to address allergies and food restrictions.</td>
<td>Written procedures for food storage and preparation are posted. Appropriate equipment and supplies are available to support procedures.</td>
<td>Nutrition information is available for youth. Programming includes a nutrition education component. Nutrition activities and materials provided meet the needs, interests, abilities and talents of youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization successfully meets the federal and state requirements to reimburse food service.</td>
<td>Organization provides resources needed to involve youth and families in planning with staff for healthy and appropriate food and beverage alternatives that are needed, including an education component.</td>
<td>Organization retains logs as required for food preparation and storage.</td>
<td>Organization promotes nutrition as an organizational value that is demonstrated through programming and in written materials.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**F=Functional**  **C=Comprehensive**  **O=Organizational**
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2: Health, Nutrition & Physical Activity

Physical Activity

Provide opportunities for physical activity

Youth have access to opportunities for movement.
Staff models and encourages participation in physical activities.

Address physical activity restrictions appropriately

Youth physical activity restrictions are documented during registration.
Youth physical activity restrictions are readily available during program hours.

Program plans and implements activities that allow youth opportunities to select and participate in a variety of physical activities, using the activity as a teachable moment.

Program provides physical activity alternatives to meet the capacity of all youth.
Activities and equipment provided meet youth needs, interests and abilities, including restrictions and talents of youth.

Organization promotes physical activities as an organizational value that is demonstrated through programming and in written materials.

Organization provides resources needed to involve youth and families in planning with staff for appropriate physical activity alternatives that are needed, including an education component.

F=Functional  C=Comprehensive  O=Organizational
A quality out-of-school program incorporates positive youth development principles to inspire cooperation, respect and other indicators of effective relationships between youth participants and program staff.

A quality program consistently communicates and reinforces expectations.

Youth feel welcome and supported as the program addresses their interests, abilities, talents and learning styles.

Practices are targeted towards encouraging positive behavior, building confidence, and engaging youth as partners in the program.

Staff composition and relationships among staff and with youth reflect sensitivity to diversity and gender equality.

In a quality program, staff is expected to demonstrate commitment to children, youth, families, and communities through a high level of ethical conduct and positive interaction.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3: Relationships

Supportive Learning

**Use learning reflection**
Youth acknowledge and reflect on what they have learned and their progress within the out-of-school time program regularly.

**Address youth interests, abilities, talents and learning styles**
Staff recognizes and responds appropriately to different learning styles and the range of youth abilities.

**Coordinate in-school and out-of-school time learning goals**
Student school-day learning goals are embedded in activities.

**Activities include opportunities for reflection and promote critical thinking and problem solving skills.**
Program activities reflect varying learning approaches and materials to meet the different learning styles of youth.
Provides opportunities for college, career readiness, vocational preparation and workforce development.

**Organizational practice incorporates experiential and reflective learning for staff as well as youth.**
Staff are trained on learning styles.
Supervisors monitor staff compliance with supporting different learning styles and provide coaching as needed.

Organization strives to maintain a working partnership with schools.

F=Functional  
C=Comprehensive  
O=Organizational
**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3: Relationships**

**Youth, Leadership & Voice**

**Engage the input of youth**
- Youth are encouraged to express their ideas and opinions regarding activities.
- Staff helps youth develop communication and advocacy skills through frequent conversations.
- Program incorporates the ideas of youth into activities.
- Staff acknowledges youth for providing their input.
- Organization implements a policy for youth input into program design and provides opportunities for youth to serve on decision-making boards.
- Supervisors monitor staff compliance with supporting youth input into program design and provide coaching as needed.

**Strengthen youth leadership skills**
- Staff encourages participants to take on leadership roles.
- Programming supports youth initiative and ownership.
- Staff are trained to strengthen confidence of youth.
- Ongoing leadership opportunities are cultivated to link youth to other organizations and community efforts.

*F=Functional    C=Comprehensive    O=Organizational*
A quality out-of-school program actively engages families and fosters meaningful collaboration between families, program staff, the school, and the broader community.

Quality programs acknowledge community culture by aligning program philosophy and practices with that of the community.

Quality programs seek to increase the effectiveness of family members in navigating the school system and working with school staff to support school goals and student achievement.

The program connects to needed community resources and, in turn, helps participants and families connect to the array of supports that exist in the community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4
Family & Community Partnerships
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4: Family & Community Partnerships

Family Engagement

Create a respectful environment that is welcoming to families

- Staff creates a welcoming and comfortable place for all families.
- Staff is approachable and communicates to families that they are welcome to visit.

Engage family input and participation

- Families are invited to contribute their expertise and talents to program support and activities.
- Program provides an avenue for feedback that includes identifying their child’s interests, abilities, and talents.

Program structure allows for parents to observe activities unannounced.

- Families receive information and educational resources on a regular basis. Programming supports youth initiative and ownership.
- Feedback from families is acknowledged and addressed.

Organization has written policy that promotes and implements family engagement and communicates clearly and regularly with youth, families, and staff about the policy.

- A centralized place for program and community information sharing is provided.
- Organization recruits program staff from within the community to best reflect the identified cultures and languages of families.

Organization supports staff and families joining together to communicate and work with the schools.

- Families are offered opportunities to serve in organization leadership roles.
- Organization implements a family engagement outreach plan that dedicates financial and staff resources.

F=Functional  C=Comprehensive  O=Organizational
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4: Family & Community Partnerships

Family Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provide a family friendly program schedule</th>
<th>Provide families with tools to support student learning</th>
<th>Connect families to services and supports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hours of operation take into consideration the working hours of families.</td>
<td>Staff communicates the link between program activities and learning and social goals.</td>
<td>Staff provides information about community resources to meet the needs of families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program planning, program events and celebrations occur when families can reasonably attend.</td>
<td>Program supports families in navigating the school system. Program provides tools to families to support student learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization provides a program calendar and schedule that is disseminated to families to support connection between program and family schedules.</td>
<td>Organization dedicates staff and financial resources to provided workshops for families on how they can support student learning.</td>
<td>Organization dedicates resources to support families in connecting to family services and supports, which may include a directory of services and supports in the community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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F=Functional  C=Comprehensive  O=Organizational
### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4: Family & Community Partnerships

#### Community Partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultivate community-based supports</th>
<th>Link program activities to existing community events</th>
<th>Acknowledge community-based organizational support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A list of community resources is maintained. The staff draw from these resources to expand program offerings.</td>
<td>Staff and youth participate in community events, festivals and cultural activities.</td>
<td>Staff formally thanks supporters in person or through a written thank you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local community-based organizations and businesses are consistently invited to program events.</td>
<td>Program seeks opportunities to showcase youth activities at community events.</td>
<td>Program engages youth in designing and implementing activities that result in a public recognition of community support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization implements a partnership development plan that identifies and engages community-based organizations and businesses on a regular basis. Resources for inclusive practices/support that the organization cannot provide.</td>
<td>Organization implements a partnership development plan that identifies opportunities to link program activities to community events and identifies community service options for youth.</td>
<td>Organization provides resources to publicly or formally recognize organizations that have provided significant support to the program and its families.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F=Functional C=Comprehensive O=Organizational
A quality out-of-school program appropriately reflects the diverse backgrounds, identities, and ways of learning of all youth in the program.

Culturally responsive practices connect program activities to the broad experience of youth, thereby supporting a link between lessons learned at home and in the community to intended program outcomes.

Achieving a culturally responsive environment requires the engagement of family and community members as experts and advisors in program planning and delivery.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5
Cultural Relevance
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5: Cultural Relevance

Supportive Practices

Create a respectful environment that is welcoming to families

Program activities respect youth cultural backgrounds and identities.

Activities reflect background, identities and cultural ways and norms of youth.
Staff learn about youth culture, language and learning styles from family and community members.
Program displays reflect the diversity of youth.

Organization implements policy that requires activities honoring diversity will be included in programming and special events.
Organization ensures there is a process for communicating to non-English speaking families.
Efforts are made to provide staff with cultural competency training.
Organization seeks to hire a diverse staff reflective of the youth participation.

F=Functional        C=Comprehensive        O=Organizational
A quality program is both structured and flexible.

The program inspires active and life-long learning through project-based activities that address developmental learning, academic progress, and future orientation to the real world.

A range of well supplied activities allow for choice and contribution by youth.

A quality program is well planned by staff with stakeholders so that activities are relevant, linked to the school day, engaging and varied.

The culture of the youth, families and communities served is reflected in programming.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 6: Programming

Program Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Include youth with special needs</th>
<th>Support youth choice and needs</th>
<th>Align activities to program mission</th>
<th>Support older youth skill building and career orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activities are accessible to students with special needs. Accommodations are made to support participation of students with special needs.</td>
<td>Youth have choice with some activities.</td>
<td>Activities reflect the mission/philosophy of the program.</td>
<td>Older youth are encouraged to participate. Older youth are engaged as volunteers. Program design for older youth connects new learning and skill-building to service learning and career pathways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff talk with families of special needs students on how to better include them within the program structure. Program seeks expertise of school-day personnel who interact with the student.</td>
<td>The range of activities is designed based on youth academic need, interests, abilities, and talents. Staff help youth make informed and responsible activity choices.</td>
<td>Staff explains how the program activities align with the mission/philosophy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization implements a policy for inclusion of youth with special needs. Organization collects demographic data of the community to assess possible gaps in service for special needs youth, such as needs related to outreach and barriers to participation, and recruits youth based on this assessment.</td>
<td>Organization implements policies that support youth choice. Staff is monitored for supporting youth-informed and responsible choices; coaching is provided as needed.</td>
<td>Organization implements a formal written mission that informs all aspects of the program.</td>
<td>Organization implements a policy that supports older youth engagement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F=Functional  C=Comprehensive  O=Organizational
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 6: Programming

Materials & Supplies

Provide and maintain sufficient program supplies

Adequate materials and supplies are provided and have a specific storage place.

A system is in place for check-in/check-out process to avoid loss and neglect of supplies and materials.

Program materials are selected to meet youth's age range, learning styles, interests, abilities, and talents.

Organization maintains an inventory system that provides appropriate supplies and equipment.

Organization researches and secures a variety of evidence-based materials as part of its inventory.

Program monitors the effectiveness of the materials used and makes changes as needed.

F=Functional  C=Comprehensive  O=Organizational
### School Day Linkages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Link out-of-school activities to the school day curriculum</th>
<th>Engage school day teachers and administrative support</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activities are different from school-day activities, but complement school day learning.</td>
<td>Staff encourages awareness of and input in out-of-school activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program reviews school day curriculum to identify and increase links with program activities.</td>
<td>Program administers surveys to gather school day personnel input.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff uses school achievement data as available to inform activity design.</td>
<td>Staff is in regular communication with school day teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization forms a partnership with schools to facilitate regular conversations that support linking school day and out-of-school learning practices and outcomes.</td>
<td>Organization engages the input and/or advisement of school leaders as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-of-school program staff is included in school meetings and discussions that monitor student academic progress and behavior.</td>
<td>Organization arranges for shared Professional Development opportunities that link school day and out-of-school time learning practices.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A quality out-of-school program has effective administrative practices, detailed organizational processes, sound financial management, mission marketing, resource development, policy development, and strategic planning.

The program encourages its administrators to monitor for effectiveness and efficiency throughout its organizational structure, while also building the capacity of the organization to support collaboration and advocacy among stakeholders.

The program provides outreach to community and school partners and consistently informs its stakeholders of its operations, policies, and funding priorities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 7
Administration & Organizational Development
**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 7: Administration & Organizational Development**

### Operations & Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provide program management and oversight</th>
<th>Develop a recordkeeping system</th>
<th>Share established program polices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program manager is identified and an oversight process is in place.</td>
<td>Basic recordkeeping is utilized by staff.</td>
<td>Program uses a policy guide for program operations and management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program managers are trained to follow protocols, align program vision / mission to program delivery and work. Management oversees the recruitment and retention of program staff.</td>
<td>Records are kept in accordance with program requirements, following program and confidentiality protocols.</td>
<td>Program policies are reviewed and refined on a consistent basis by management and staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization adheres to state laws and regulations for program delivery. Organization implements continuous quality improvement processes, aiming for improvement in all areas of the program.</td>
<td>Organization maintains a recordkeeping system that can be shared with partnering organizations for data sharing.</td>
<td>Program policies are made available to community stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F=Functional  C=Comprehensive  O=Organizational
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 7: Administration & Organizational Development

Sustainability & Resource Development

Develop school-linked resources

Staff communicates with school administration on resource needs.

School administration helps secure or identify resources that secure continued school-linked out-of-school activities.

Organization implements agreements that identify roles and responsibilities of a collaborative partnership between the school and out-of-school program. Organization looks at existing and potential leverage opportunities and develops a tracking system.

F=Functional   C=Comprehensive   O=Organizational
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 7: Administration & Organizational Development

Communication & Marketing

Market the program

- An informational flyer or brochure exists that includes a description of the program, key personnel and contact information.
- Staff and management seek opportunities to convey basic program information, including the schedule, location, scope of activities, philosophy, etc.
- Organization provides resources for the development of a website, use of social media and marketing materials.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 7: Administration & Organizational Development

Financial Management

Be fiscally responsible

A basic fiscal management system tracks income and expenses.

Management follows identified best practice fiscal processes and procedures.

Organization conducts regular budget reviews.
The bookkeeping system used supplies a systems-generated accounting report capable of meeting the requirements of funders.

F=Functional           C=Comprehensive          O=Organizational
A quality out-of-school program attracts and employs staff equipped with knowledge of positive youth development strategies, academic enrichment, classroom management, and community engagement.

Quality programs reach beyond mandatory training requirements to provide staff with additional tools, professional practice, coaching, and an environment of cooperation and learning.

In a quality program, staff is expected to demonstrate commitment to contributing to a professional working environment through a high level of ethical conduct and positive interaction.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 8

Staffing & Professional Development
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 8: Staffing & Professional Development

Staff Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secure staff that possess knowledge of working with youth</th>
<th>Provide background checks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff has experience in working with youth, ideally in an out-of-school program environment.</td>
<td>Staff and volunteers receive a background check clearance prior to working with youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff is trained in best practices related to working with youth. Program administers surveys to gather school day personnel input.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization offers staff opportunities to keep up with the professional standards and innovations in working with youth. Supervisors monitor staff compliance with the professional standards required to work with youth and provide additional coaching as needed.</td>
<td>Organization implements policy that requires background checks for all staff. Background check clearance documentation is maintained for all staff and volunteers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F=Functional C=Comprehensive O=Organizational
## GUIDING PRINCIPLE 8: Staffing & Professional Development

### Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orient staff to essential program elements</th>
<th>Support staff in understanding its roles and responsibilities</th>
<th>Support staff in understanding program policies and procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program staff are provided with an orientation to the program.</td>
<td>Each staff member understands his or her scope of work, including responsibilities to the program, its youth and family members.</td>
<td>Procedures and expectations are clearly and consistently communicated to staff and volunteers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff receives a handbook that is reviewed annually, using staff input. Documentation is kept confirming staff training and agreement to comply with the handbook.</td>
<td>Formal written job descriptions are developed and provided for each program position.</td>
<td>Staff annually confirms its review and knowledge of program policies, procedures and expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization implements a policy that requires all new staff to receive an orientation. Organization annually reviews the staff handbook for legal compliance with state law.</td>
<td>Organization supports all staff members in understanding their roles and how they interrelate with other program roles and responsibilities.</td>
<td>Organization provides staff opportunities to make recommendations to the program policies, procedures and expectations based on field experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F=Functional                  C=Comprehensive                  O=Organizational
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 8: Staffing & Professional Development

Professional Development

Support staff in understanding and demonstrating core competencies

Professional development is provided to all staff.

Staff is aware of the National Afterschool Alliance Core Competencies.

There is a written plan for on-going professional development for each staff member, including the director.

Organization dedicates resources to provide professional development to staff.

F=Functional    C=Comprehensive    O=Organizational
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 8: Staffing & Professional Development

Staff Relationships

Build a cohesive team encouraging positive communication

Staff works as a team, building on individual strengths and demonstrating cooperation.
Staff relationships are professional and do not interfere with caring for and interacting with youth.

Staff is trained in team building and encouraged to demonstrate positive team interaction.
Supervisors monitor staff compliance with positive inter-staff relationships and provide additional coaching as needed.
Program incorporates structured opportunities for staff to reflect on and plan effective communication practices.

Organization conducts regular staff retreats to deepen cooperation and respect.

F=Functional       C=Comprehensive       O=Organizational
## GUIDING PRINCIPLE 8: Staffing & Professional Development

### Retention Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provide equitable compensation</th>
<th>Establish a positive, rewarding work environment</th>
<th>Supervise staff through effective and positive practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff is offered the best possible wages and working conditions in an effort to reduce staff turnover.</td>
<td>Staff experiences a safe, respectful, and rewarding work environment.</td>
<td>Staff receives on-going supervision and feedback throughout the program year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If staff is paid, program pays for planning or prep time.</td>
<td>Staff and volunteers receive recognition for their contribution to the program.</td>
<td>Staff is evaluated annually. Supervisors are trained in staff supervision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If program has paid staff, full-time staff receive equitable wages, benefits and health insurance.</td>
<td>Organization provides a structure and a process for staff to express concerns and make recommendations. Management is responsive to staff concerns and recommendations.</td>
<td>Organization implements an annual needs assessment with all staff to identify professional development needs; organization provides resources to the meet the needs. Organization implements a policy for regular staff reviews that assesses knowledge of supervisory role (if appropriate) and quality of team contribution. Exit interviews with all staff members who terminate are conducted and the feedback is addressed by management.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F=Functional  C=Comprehensive  O=Organizational
A quality out-of-school program has a clearly defined mission with aligned goals and specific outcomes.

Programs align their mission and goals with those of the school and community that they serve.

The program establishes a continuous, internal evaluation process to assess the efficacy of their progress towards program goals.

Through various methods and measures such as focus groups, surveys, observation, self-monitoring, student and program assessments, etc., programs gather information from youth, families, teachers, school administrators, staff, volunteers, and community stakeholders to make improvements.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 9
Evaluation for Continuous Quality Improvement
### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 9: Evaluation for Continuous Quality Improvement

#### Continuous Quality Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Align program mission, goals and objectives with needs assessments and surveys</strong></th>
<th><strong>Collect data for continuous improvement</strong></th>
<th><strong>Collect stories that exemplify quality practice</strong></th>
<th><strong>Use and share self-assessment data for program improvement</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program goals and objectives are defined and measured.</td>
<td>A record is kept of youth participation and retention levels. (Registration, attendance, etc.)</td>
<td>Staff shares success stories on a regular basis amongst themselves and with families they serve.</td>
<td>Staff participates in a self-assessment of the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program mission, goals and objectives align with the identified needs of participants.</td>
<td>Program identifies and sustains data collection processes. Program regularly collects and measures data from program goals and objectives.</td>
<td>Program has a process in place to collect and archive success stories. Stories connected to data snapshots are posted/distributed to showcase program and youth accomplishments on a regular basis.</td>
<td>Staff adopts a self-assessment tool that is used to assess overall program effectiveness. Program utilizes self-assessment to develop and implement a continuous quality improvement action plan. Program documents evidence of best or promising practice in program materials and shares them with staff and stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular participant needs assessments and surveys are conducted.</td>
<td>Organization collaborates with community stakeholders on the development of program assessments and participant surveys.</td>
<td>Organization uses program data to build the case for investment in the program. Data is shared with stakeholders.</td>
<td>Organization uses success stories to promote the program with stakeholders, policymakers, funders and the greater community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F=Functional</strong></td>
<td><strong>C=Comprehensive</strong></td>
<td><strong>O=Organizational</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACADEMIC SUPPORT
Augments and reinforces classroom learning methods

Staff informed and supported by classroom teachers

Academic Support includes homework help, tutoring, study skills development and more

For some programs, Academic Support includes:
• preparing for standardized tests
• student mastery assessments, supported by education content specialists

Research has shown that Academic Support inclusion:
• builds reading and math competency and study skills
• decreases disciplinary action
• ensures on-time promotion
• improves homework completion
• sustains engagement in learning
• improves attitudes and beliefs toward school, positive learning behavior and higher school attendance

Many programs tie classroom learning concepts to the out-of-school time curriculum through Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) activities that can be attached to the arts, cultural programming, civic engagement and other skill-building activities

Harvard Graduate School of Education research has shown that program participation is associated with:
• decreased behavioral problems
• improved social and communication skills
• better relationships with peers and teachers
• increased self-confidence, self-esteem and self-efficiency
• lower levels of depression and anxiety
• development of initiative
• improved feelings and attitudes toward self and school

Non-academic learning activities are those that are experiential, fun, informed by youth, and support mastery of skills for school and life

Research-based methods:
• inspire creative expression though the arts, cooking clubs and gardening clubs, as examples
• build socio-emotional skills, such as problem solving, anger management and empathy
• help young people understand issues facing the community and the world through service learning opportunities and project learning or “real world” experiential activities
**CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS**

**ASSET / ASSET ORIENTATION**

The critical factors and benchmarks for young people’s growth and development

- Grounded in extensive research in youth development, resilience and prevention
- Represent the relationships, opportunities, and personal qualities that young people need to avoid risks and to thrive
- Focuses all activities and ways of thinking on assets instead of the deficits of participants, families, schools and communities

**BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

Established rules and behavioral expectations are clearly communicated to all youth and families

- Natural and logical consequences, positive reinforcements, praise, time out, earned privileges and other behavior management techniques help maintain a safe, predictable, and orderly program

**BEST AND PROMISING PRACTICES**

A continuum of practices and programs based on guidelines, standards and research proven to lead to effective outcomes for youth and programs

- Qualitative data supports implementation, but no extensive quantitative data to support it
- Best practices have been reviewed and substantiated through research
CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

CAPACITY
A conceptual approach to program and/or organizational development

CAPACITY BUILDING
A process of identifying the needs and priorities of the program and/or organization

CARING ADULT
Adult who models and fosters interpersonal skills that contribute to child-centered practices

Focuses on understanding the resources, priorities, and obstacles that support or inhibit the realization of developmental goals, results or outcomes

Drives a planning process to strengthen procedures, programming, skills, and competency

Increases ability of the program and/or organization to meet goals and outcomes

Practices include:
• active listening, showing genuine concern and positive regard for the youth in the program
• building trust and affirming relationships
• having an asset orientation (as opposed to deficit orientation)
• positive guidance techniques

Caring adults build on youth's strengths and communicate these strengths to others.
CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

COMMUNICATION TOOLS
An effective communications strategy will include a set of tools that will advance the program’s message and engage identified target audiences.

Tools can include the internet, social media, publications and other print materials, public service broadcasts, radio spots, videos, media relations, spokespersons, events, and presentations.

Selected tools will depend on the organization/program’s strategic goals, the profile of the target audience, and the budget.

Consistency of message and style is paramount, which often times is guided by an established brand.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Members of a community participating in the decisions and actions that help to shape their community (Fraser Basin Council, 2003).

The process of engaging community members and groups in collaboratively addressing issues of mutual importance and concern.

Often leads to community development activities that involve a shared responsibility among community members.

Intentionally takes into account diverse community assets, capacities, and needs.

CORE COMPETENCIES
Define what professionals/staff need to know in order to deliver and promote quality school-age/out-of-school time activities and interactions.

Serve as the foundation for decisions and practices carried out by out-of-school time and youth development professionals in a variety of settings.
Many think of culture as race and ethnicity. We define culture broadly to include all characteristics of human description, including age, gender, geography, ancestry, language, history, sexual orientation, faith and physical ability, as well as occupation and affiliations. An organization, school community, or program may have its own culture; in out-of-school time programs, you may observe this if you interact with a variety of sites and organizations.

Respect participant, family, staff and community cultural norms, language, abilities, and learning styles. Include activities that are fully inclusive of all youth backgrounds, using a curriculum that supports and values diverse perspectives, histories and community practices.

Activities reflect appropriate behavioral and academic expectations for children and youth of various ages and developmental levels. Activities are modified based on the responses of youth. Differences are assessed, and lessons accommodated to varying developmental levels. NMOST intent is for providers to ensure the delivery of adaptations and accommodations based on developmental levels of their youth.

Intentionally embedded into engaging and enjoyable out-of-school time activities.
CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

DIVERSITY
A fully-inclusive program
Strategies are in place to eliminate stereotyping and discrimination
Program activities respect and respond to multiple learning styles, cultural traditions, family and community practices, diverse perspectives and values, and individual physical and mental abilities

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING
(Project-Based Learning)
A series of activities with a sustained focus over time that results in a performance, a product, or a service-learning project
An out-of-school time program is an excellent setting for this type of accomplishment
Generally, involves group effort that can occur beyond the walls of the out-of-school time program space into the community for research, internships, and showcase presentations
Has clear learning goals that often embrace academic, social, and meta-cognitive dimensions simultaneously
Youth receive and provide feedback as projects are developed, often including reflection and review from peers, program staff, community members, and families
Experiential learning can also ensure that literacy and numeracy are essential elements of an integrated learning strategy that links fun and serious effort to a self-awareness on the part of youth as being capable learners

FAMILY
Defined differently for individual children and youth
Staff and administration need to be aware of the diverse family arrangements represented in their program
Families may include:
- children and adults living in the home
- adults who are responsible for the care and well-being of the child
- parents who may not live in the same household as the child
- the child's legal guardian
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Shared responsibility in which schools, other community agencies and organizations are committed to reaching out to engage families in meaningful ways, and in which families are committed to actively supporting their children’s learning and development

(Dr. Heather Weiss, Harvard Family Research Project, 2009)

LEARNING

The act of acquiring new information or modifying existing knowledge

LEARNING STYLES

A set of factors, behaviors, and attitudes that facilitate learning for an individual in a given situation

Engagement is continuous across a child’s life

Entails enduring commitment, but changing parent roles, as children mature into young adulthood

Cuts across and reinforces learning in the multiple settings where children learn:

• home
• prekindergarten programs
• school
• out-of-school time programs
• faith-based institutions
• community

Impacts skills, competencies, and behavior

Can be based on any part of holistic development (social-emotional, physical, intellectual, etc.)

All experiences impact learning and can occur:

• in any setting or context
• consciously or without conscious awareness

To have the most impact on learning, out-of-school time programs must be intentional about the strategies used

Take into account the way that individuals gain knowledge and their unique approach to learning based on their strengths and preferences

Influence the ways that students learn and how adults support learning, and guide how the two interact

Have “contextual” variables given that learners bring who they are from their context to all learning environments

Each learner has distinct and consistent preferred ways of perceiving, organizing, and retaining information
CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

MARKETING
A set of organizational processes for creating, communicating and delivering a message of value to customers.

Promotes buy-in and sustainability of programming.

NATIONALLY AND LOCALLY INFORMED
Familiarity with and application of state and national standards.

Review and utilization of state and national standards. Examples include:
• National After School Association
• Commission On Accreditation

The process of adopting relevant standards through statewide input processes.

YOUTH
Program youth (students)

School-age children enrolled in out-of-school time programs.

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
Focuses on young people’s strengths to ensure their success.

Commitment to the following promises:
• Caring adults
• Safe places
• Healthy development
• Effective education
• Opportunities to help others through volunteer service activities
CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

QUALITY GUIDING PRINCIPLE
Conditions for quality programs

QUALITY INDICATOR
Specific measure that quantifies the attainment of a quality guiding principle

QUALITY CONCEPT
One of several necessary key elements that support a quality guiding principle

RISKY BEHAVIORS
Behaviors that put an individual's health or safety at risk

Purposely describes the conditions of quality for the program, its youth, and all stakeholders in a specific category

Grouped by foundational practice indicators, comprehensive program indicators, and organizational indicators in this document

Concepts can be used to identify the common theme across indicator types

Regarding children, risky behaviors typically include, but are not limited to:
- alcohol
- tobacco and drug use
- sexual behaviors
- bullying
- injury to self or others
Includes a range of organized, age-appropriate, structured programs, clubs, and activities for school-age children and youth:
- within supervised environments
- during times that they are not in school

Youth are engaged in addressing real world issues, problems and needs in their school and community through:
- research
- reflection
- either direct service / volunteerism or advocacy

New Mexico has adopted the Elev8 Extended Learning Self-Assessment (ELSA) Tool, which includes:
- 10 elements of quality
- action plan tools and ideas
- professional development planning tool

NMOST intends to develop additional tools that support staff core competencies

Participate in carrying out the activities and goals of the program or organization
**Principle 1: Environmental Safety**
- Disaster Prevention Kits and Tips for OST Programs  [https://www.ready.gov/kids/maps](https://www.ready.gov/kids/maps)
- CPR Certification  [http://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/cpr](http://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/cpr)

**Principle 2: Health, Nutrition, and Physical Activity**
- Center for Disease Control-Physical Activity Resources  [www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity](http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity)
- Center for Disease Control-Nutrition Resources  [www.cdc.gov/nutrition](http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition)

**Principle 3: Relationships**
Principle 4: Family and Community Partnerships

- Family Literacy Night [http://www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/literacy/pr_family_literacy.html]
- NMPED. Working Together: School-Family-Community Partnerships: A Toolkit for New Mexico School Communities [http://www.ped.state.nm.us/Parents/familyToolkit.html]

Principle 5: Cultural Relevance

- SACNAS (Society for Advancing Chicanos and Native Americans in Science) (2015) [https://sacnas.org/]
- NMPED. (2017). Indian Education Department website [http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/IED_index.html]

Principle 6: Programming

**Principle 6: Programming (cont’d)**

**Principle 7: Administration and Organizational Development**

**Principle 8: Staffing and Professional Development**

**Principle 9: Evaluation for Continuous Quality Improvement**
- NY State Afterschool Network, NMOST, and Urban 4-H Bernalillo County. Elev8 NM Extended Learning Self-Assessment Toolkit [www.nmost.org](http://www.nmost.org)
- UNM and CYFD. (2016). FOCUS [https://www.newmexickids.org/FOCUS/](https://www.newmexickids.org/FOCUS/)