

A SNAPSHOT OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME QUALITY

The following is a resource to assist school administrators in engaging and supporting out-of-school time (OST) programs. Whether for an existing program or a new one, school-run or community-run program, administrators should make sure most of these quality elements are present. This document is derived from the *Roadmap to the 21st Century: Guidance for Family, School, and Community Collaborations*. For a full copy of the tool, please contact the Department of Extended Learning Time, Afterschool, and Services at (617) 635-1578.

Child and Youth Development

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO ASK YOUR OST PROGRAMMING PROVIDER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for social interaction between students • Opportunities for social interaction between students and adults • Staff engage students in a manner that is respectful and effective • Activities and services that promote the emotional well-being of students • Activities that promote the physical fitness, health, and nutrition of students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the program serve children of all abilities? • How does the program ensure staff effectively engage with students? • What are some ways the program supports social interaction between students? • What are your behavior management practices and are they consistent with the school's? • How will students access the program? • How will the needs of students and families be assessed?

Learning

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO ASK YOUR OST PROGRAMMING PROVIDER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities are age appropriate • The program seeks to intentionally achieve stated outcomes • The learning activities (i.e. homework, tutoring, academic enrichment) employ similar strategies, language, and practices as found during the school day • The program offers activity choices • The program builds skills in literacy, math, and/or the skills for the new economy (teamwork, adaptability, critical thinking, etc.) • The program is culturally sensitive/responsive to students and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the program support student learning? • Is the program staff trained on the developmental stages of children and youth? • Does the program have familiarity with local and state learning standards? • What academic and non-academic skills does the program build in students? • How does the program ensure that its activities are culturally appropriate and staff are culturally aware?

Partnerships

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO ASK YOUR OST PROGRAMMING PROVIDER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program and the school should have a shared vision • The program should be willing to send representatives to relevant school meetings and vice versa • The program and the school have a system to ensure communication and resource sharing • Adequate space is allotted to the program (most afterschool programs utilize classroom space in addition to the gym, art room, cafeteria, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the program goals, objectives, and outcomes? • How familiar is the program staff with the goals of the school? • Is a representative from the program able to attend school meetings? What time works best? • How will program staff inform school staff regarding student needs and vice versa? • How much space would be ideal for the program?

Family Engagement

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO ASK YOUR OST PROGRAMMING PROVIDER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A multilevel plan for family engagement is in place, including opportunities for: family engagement at home, family support of learning at home, family participation in site activities, family volunteer opportunities, family participation in decision-making, and family linking to the community-at-large (<i>based on the work of Joyce Epstein</i>) The program environment is welcoming of families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the program approach parent engagement? How are parents connected to the program? How are parents kept informed? How does the program reach hard-to-reach parents? How does the program capitalize on the assets parents bring? How are parents welcomed into the program environment?

Staff

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO ASK YOUR OST PROGRAMMING PROVIDER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All program staff should meet the guidelines articulated by the state licensing body At least the core program staff is fairly stable The program has adequate staff supervision Staff engage in regular professional development activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the program have at most a 1:13 staff to student ratio? What are the staff qualifications? Which staff provide academic enrichment/instruction and what are their qualifications? How long have key staff been in their positions? How are staff supervised? How are the skills of staff improved? Is there a regular staff meeting and/or staff planning time?

Administration

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO ASK YOUR OST PROGRAMMING PROVIDER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program meets all licensing regulations and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act The program has clear policies and procedures The program is affordable for most families in the school The program has the capacity to sustain itself financially The program evaluates itself to ensure its practices are of a high quality The program recruits and retains students that could most benefit from the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the program either licensed or exempt? Is the program open for students of <u>all</u> abilities? Does the program have written policies and procedures? If so, ask to see them. Is the program financially secure? How much does the program cost families? What is done for families that can not afford the fee? How will the program financially sustain itself? What data is used to inform programming and strategies? How is this data used to augment programming? How are students enrolled into the program?