Indiana Afterschool Specialty Standards

A Guide for High Quality Programs Serving Youth in Out-of-School Time

Summer Learning

INDIANA Afterschool NETWORK

IN Afterschool Standards and Specialty Standards

Purpose

The purpose of the Indiana Afterschool Standards is to outline the path and steps that lead to high quality youth programs that take place outside the school day. The afterschool standards are based on national research and best practices in the youth development and education fields. Standards revisions last occurred in 2021.

The IN Afterschool Standards and Specialty Standards are voluntary statewide standards that may serve as:

- A framework of clear expectations for all stakeholders.

- A guide to inform statewide decision-making, for example, professional development focus areas, funding support and advocacy.

- A guide for program providers to assess their own program site and organizations to help determine what they are doing well and what needs improvement.

- A guide for parents and youth to identify quality programming.

- A guide for school principals and district superintendents to reinforce and advance educational priorities.

Structure
1. Category
- Priority areas that helps organize all 38 standards
- Answers: What topics are needed for assessing program quality?

2. Standards
- Broad researched-based best practices in quality out-of-school programs
- Answers: What do we need to do?

3. Indicators
- Specific and detailed descriptions of the standard or best practice in quality out-of-school programs
- Answers: How do we do that?

4. Standards-based Practices
- Evidence that can be observed in a high quality out-of-school program
- Answers: What does it look, sound, and feel like?

About the Summer Learning Specialty Standards

This special Summer Learning addition to the Indiana Afterschool Standards outlines best practices and recommendations specific to high quality summer programming for K-12 youth. In order to develop these standards, the Indiana Afterschool Network and partners researched standards and best practices throughout the nation and compiled these standards from many sources (see Sources section).

Defining High Quality Summer Programming

High quality summer programs promote a wide range of academic achievement and positive youth development outcomes for youth. Summer learning programs help children catch up, keep up, and work ahead through hands-on learning, engaging programming, and creative projects.

Youth outcomes for summer learning programs include:

- Increased academic and education outcomes
- Increased positive youth development outcomes: social, emotional, physical development

Indiana Quality Program Self-Assessment (IN-QPSA)

Purpose

Indiana Quality Program Self-Assessment (IN-QPSA) is an online strengths-based self-assessment tool that enables youth programs to rate their performance based on the Indiana Afterschool Standards and Specialty Standards.

Function

- Choose which standards you want to assess.
- Rate how well your program meets each standard.
- Start the assessment and complete over time.
- Use online or print stakeholder surveys.
- Generate automated reports for organization and/or program site(s).
- Generate an automated action plan.
- Track your program results over time and compare progress.

Benefits

The IN-QPSA can help OST programs:

1. Identify and understand the factors that support or inhibit top performance.
2. Use data to drive decisions.
3. Take action and make positive changes.
4. Continue to grow, learn and improve.
5. Maximize positive impact for staff, youth, families and community partners.

Infrastructure

Online System Functionality

- 2 Self-Assessments
  - Indiana Afterschool Standards
  - Specialty Standards
    - College & Career Readiness
    - Healthy Eating and Physical Activity
    - STEM
    - Summer Learning
    - Family Engagement
    - Literacy
    - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- 4 Stakeholder Surveys and more to come!
  - Parent, Youth, Community Partner and Staff
- Multiple Automated Reports
  - Program Site & Organization Aggregate
  - Comparison Reports
- Program Quality Improvement Action Plan

Recognition of Pledge To Quality

Each program site and/or organization that successfully completes the Indiana Quality Program Self-Assessment (IN-QPSA) will receive:

1. Indiana Afterschool Quality Leader Digital Badge
2. Specialty Standards Badges, as applicable, which serve to recognize some learning or accomplishment. This is not a credential—it is a symbol of accomplishment that can be used for communicating or marketing quality efforts. These special badges communicate that your program/organization has aligned your practices and programs to the IN Afterschool Standards or Specialty Standards

Pledge to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

At the core of quality programs is the ability to effectively serve diverse children and youth. As such, the Indiana Quality Program Self-Assessment (IN-QPSA) includes elements to assess and help programs reflect on their ability to create environments where all children/youth and families feel valued and welcomed. For a deeper dive into assessing diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in your program, please refer to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Specialty Standards.

To Get Started: https://www.myian.indianaafterschool.org

Specialty
Standard Badge

The Rating Scale

The Indiana Quality Program Self-Assessment Tool uses the following rating scale to help you and your team assess the degree to which each quality indicator is evident in the program. The definitions outlined below are to help guide the reviewers' understanding of the numeric ratings.

4 = Excellent/ Exceeds Standard

EXCEEDS STANDARD means that the program is exceptional or outstanding in this area because it implements nearly all or all of the Standards-Based Practices for this indicator. The relevant Standards-Based Practices are demonstrated in clearly observable ways.

3 = Good/Meets Standards

MEETS STANDARD means that the program executes many of the Standards-Based Practices. The rater can generate examples of how and when the program executes these specific practices. This is an area the program executes well.

2 = Some Progress Made/Approaching Standard

APPROACHING STANDARD means that the program is working toward executing Standards-Based Practices, but is currently only implementing a few of them. The program may benefit from targeted assistance in order to implement more of the Standards-Based Practices.

1 = Must Address and Improve/Standard Not Met

STANDARD NOT MET means that the program is not currently implementing any of the Standards-Based Practices and requires significant support in this area. There is a need for significant support to get on track to address this indicator.

NA = Don't Know/Not Applicable

This rating indicates that the program is not familiar enough with this indicator to rate performance or is just not sure how to rate it at this time. This rating could also mean that the indicator simply does not apply to the site or program.

Rating	4	3	2	1	NA
Scale Description	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Standard Not Met	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Program might say:	*"We are a leader in this."*	*"We demon-strate this in observable ways."*	*"We could use some support here."*	*"We need significant support in this."*	*"We're not sure." or "This doesn't pertain to our program."*

PROGRAM CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
STANDARD 1: THE PROGRAM PROMOTES A UNIQUE SUMMER CULTURE AND FOSTERS A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

AVERAGE INDICATOR RATING

	INDICATOR RATING
1a. Core values and principles influence program culture and can be articulated by youth, staff and volunteers: • With input from stakeholders, the board and director have developed program values and guiding principles as part of the program's goals, mission, and philosophy • If it was decided that Summer Learning requires different or additional values and principles, those are also in writing in the program manual • Core values and principles are reviewed at the beginning of the year with all staff and as volunteers enter the program • Core values and principles are posted in the program and reviewed by staff with youth • The program principles are implemented through frequent communication of key ideals, strengths, and talents that describe youth and staff • Most staff and youth can articulate program principles • Activities, interactions between youth, interactions between staff and youth, and interactions between staff reflect the program's values and principles • The culture or "feel" of the summer program is different than the culture or "feel" of the school year program	
1b. The program creates a spirit of community and pride through activities such as shared traditions, cheers, competitions, team designations and awards for positive actions and attitudes: • At the outset of the summer program, staff meet with youth to talk about differences between summer and school year programs • Staff teach youth the program cheers, routines, reward systems, etc., that will be in place during summer • If traditions have not been previously established, or if youth have additional contrubtions, staff work with youth to develop a cheer or team names, etc.	

Rating	4	3	2	1	NA
Scale Description	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Standard Not Met	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Program might say:	*"We are a leader in this."*	*"We demonstrate this in observable ways."*	*"We could use some support here."*	*"We need significant support in this."*	*"We're not sure." or "This doesn't pertain to our program."*

PROGRAM CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT: STANDARD 1 continued

AVERAGE INDICATOR RATING

	INDICATOR RATING
• Youth engage in and appear to enjoy participating in routines, cheers, etc. • Interactions among staff and youth are positive, e.g., warm tone of voice, frequent eye contact, smiles, informal conversations • Youth work collaboratively in all situations/activities	
1c. The program sets expectations with families and youth regarding attendance: • There is a policy describing attendance of youth, including follow up and consequences • The policy is reviewed with staff • Staff review policy with youth at outset of program • Staff share copy of program's attendance policy with families • Daily attendance records are maintained and monitored • The importance of regular attendance as an important life skill is emphasized throughout the program	
1d. The program partners with schools and community organizations (e.g. libraries, museums, parks, pools, community centers): • Program administrators have established relations with community organizations to facilitate access for youth during summer program • Activities include trips to a variety of community sites • Trips are connected to projects or activities at the program site • Personnel from community organizations make presentations to youth at program site or at community site • Youth have opportunities to plan for and engage in service learning projects • Program administrators are familiar with community resources and have utilized resources such as "The Summer Youth Program Fund – Program Planning Guide" *http://indysummeryouthprograms.org//wp-content/uploads/2018/10/SYPF-Program-Planning-Guide.2018-final-Update.pdf*	

Rating	4	3	2	1	NA
Scale Description	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Standard Not Met	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Program might say:	*"We are a leader in this."*	*"We demonstrate this in observable ways."*	*"We could use some support here."*	*"We need significant support in this."*	*"We're not sure." or "This doesn't pertain to our program."*

PROGRAM CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT: STANDARD 1 continued	
AVERAGE INDICATOR RATING	
	INDICATOR RATING

1e. The program engages families in program activities and events:

- The family advisory group provides input regarding summer activities and events
- Staff communicate with families on a regular basis regarding program activities and events
- Activities, events, trips of interest, are posted on a weekly basis in the program
- Family friendly activities or trips are planned and advertised

1f. The program promotes healthy living (e.g. nutrition, wellness, exercise, etc.)

- Daily schedules include a designated time for activities that require moderate to vigorous physical activity for all youth
- Activities accommodate the skill and ability levels of all youth
- Staff are actively involved in the physical activities
- A healthy snack is provided
- Existing standards for food handling during the school year are followed during summer
- Some activities and/or snacks are focused on seasonal fruits and vegetables

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND EXPECTATIONS

STANDARD 2: FULL TIME AND SEASONAL STAFF RECEIVE SUPPORT AND TRAINING TO DELIVER HIGH QUALITY PROGRAMMING

2a. Staff are trained in best practices in youth development, learning, and summer programming:

- Program administrators have researched best practices and developed training specifically focused on summer programs

Rating	4	3	2	1	NA
Scale Description	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Standard Not Met	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Program might say:	*"We are a leader in this."*	*"We demon-strate this in observable ways."*	*"We could use some support here."*	*"We need significant support in this."*	*"We're not sure." or "This doesn't pertain to our program."*

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND EXPECTATIONS: STANDARD 2 continued

AVERAGE INDICATOR RATING	
	INDICATOR RATING
• New staff receive training based on best practices and research in child development and learning provided by trained, youth professionals (similar to training provided to school year staff) • All summer staff receive additional training focusing on the unique nature and focus of summer programming	
2b. All staff participate in summer program orientation: • Program administrators have developed an orientation session specifically for staff working in the summer program • All staff working in the summer program are required to attend an orientation session focused on the summer program • Similar to the school year program (see Standard 31 of the "Indiana Afterschool Standards"), all new staff are required to attend an orientation session presented by the Program Director before working with youth	
2c. Staff and youth are oriented to health and safety protocols. (See American Camp Association at www.aca.org for a detailed list of safety summer camp standards): • See Standards 19-24 of the "Indiana Afterschool Standards" for guidance for this standard • When planning and designing summer activities and programs, the site director and staff have reviewed the appropriate sections of the American Camp Association's standards *https://www.acacamps.org/accreditation-standards/accreditation-academy/toolkits* • Any health and safety protocols, in addition to those in Standards 19-24 and specific to summer activities, are reviewed with staff in advance of activities or programs • Any health and safety protocols, in addition to those in Standards 19-24, are reviewed with youth in advance of activities or programs	

	Rating	4	3	2	1	NA
	Scale Description	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Standard Not Met	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
	Program might say:	*"We are a leader in this."*	*"We demonstrate this in observable ways."*	*"We could use some support here."*	*"We need significant support in this."*	*"We're not sure." or "This doesn't pertain to our program."*

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND EXPECTATIONS: STANDARD 2 continued

AVERAGE INDICATOR RATING

	INDICATOR RATING

2d. Staff have experience and expertise that are consistent with the diverse needs of the summer program and participants:

- See Standard 30 of the "Indiana Afterschool Standards" for guidance for this standard
- School year afterschool staff are encouraged to apply for summer positions
- Program administrators maintain a list of former employees
- Former employees are contacted to apply for any additional openings for summer positions

2e. Staff have skills to adapt to changing conditions related to youth behavior, environmental settings, weather, and facility issues:

- The differences between school year and summer programming have been discussed with staff at orientation and training sessions
- Staff ensure that youth are interacting appropriately
- Interactions between staff and youth are relaxed and staff initiate one to one conversations with youth to help establish and strengthen relationships
- Staff have developed alternative schedules in order to smoothly alter an established schedule due to weather changes
- Staff teach and model behavioral expectations/standards for different environments or situations (museum, swimming pool, etc.) and review expectations before going off site

Rating	4	3	2	1	NA
Scale Description	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Standard Not Met	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Program might say:	*"We are a leader in this."*	*"We demonstrate this in observable ways."*	*"We could use some support here."*	*"We need significant support in this."*	*"We're not sure." or "This doesn't pertain to our program."*

PROGRAM FOCUS

STANDARD 3: THE SUMMER PROGRAM OFFERS A RANGE OF EXPERIENCES THAT REFLECT BEST PRACTICES IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

AVERAGE INDICATOR RATING

	INDICATOR RATING

3a. Research on summer learning loss guides and informs program development and implementation:

- Program administrators have explored research related to summer learning loss in all youth (e.g. Every Summer Counts: A Longitudinal Analysis of Outcomes from the National Summer Learning Project, RAND Education, *https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR3201.html)*

- Orientation and training of staff for summer learning includes research based information related to summer learning loss in all youth

- Staff can explain and discuss summer learning loss

- Summer activities and projects reflect best practices of summer learning as noted in the publications above

3b. There is alignment between the summer program and programming delivered during the school year (if applicable):

- Many summer staff are also staff during the school year

- When practical and possible, routines, procedures, team names etc., utilized during the school year are also in place during the summer learning program

- When practical and possible such things as student internships, job shadowing, clubs, etc. are continued into the summer learning program

3c. The program provides opportunities to learn and practice skills needed for success in school, college, careers and life:

- Outcome goals for summer learning are discussed and developed with staff at outset of the program

	Rating	4	3	2	1	NA
	Scale Description	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Standard Not Met	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
	Program might say:	*"We are a leader in this."*	*"We demon-strate this in observable ways."*	*"We could use some support here."*	*"We need significant support in this."*	*"We're not sure." or "This doesn't pertain to our program."*

PROGRAM FOCUS: STANDARD 3 continued

AVERAGE INDICATOR RATING

	INDICATOR RATING
• Goals focus on the development or strengthening of practical skills for youth • Indiana Afterschool Network Specialty Standards and summer goals are used to plan and develop activities for summer • Youth are aware of goals for activities and projects and the specific skills to be focused on during that time	
3d. Youth have opportunities to present and showcase their work and practice new skills with guests: • Products, pictures, videos, etc. of summer activities/projects are displayed throughout the program • Activities are designed to result in a final product • Activities and projects include opportunities for youth to practice skills at various times throughout the project or activity • Guests, (e.g. parents, stakeholders, school year teachers, interested or involved community members) participate in the summer program in a variety of ways: observers of presentations, mentors, providers of critiques of youth performances in such things as interviews, etc.	
3e. Activities are hands-on and promote critical thinking, exploration, and creative expression: • Youth are actively engaged in varied activities • Staff ask youth open ended questions, or questions that require more than a yes or no answer • Activities require multiple steps and require youth to collaborate and problem solve together • Youth are provided with a variety of options for activities/projects (ranging from individual to group work and from creative to problem solving) • Youth have varied options for explaining the process(es) they used in completing their activity or project • Youth are provided real world problems or situations to consider in their activities or projects (e.g., pollution, global warming)	

Rating	4	3	2	1	NA
Scale Description	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Standard Not Met	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Program might say:	*"We are a leader in this."*	*"We demonstrate this in observable ways."*	*"We could use some support here."*	*"We need significant support in this."*	*"We're not sure." or "This doesn't pertain to our program."*

PROGRAM FOCUS: STANDARD 3 continued

AVERAGE INDICATOR RATING

	INDICATOR RATING
• `The program is set up in a way that encourages creativity and is different than the school year set up	

3f. Youth have opportunities for service learning and/or community involvement:
- Service learning projects from the school year are continued into the summer whenever possible
- Program administrators are familiar with local, community based agencies and have established relationships with them
- Youth participate in activities or opportunities offered by community based agencies (e.g. school sponsored programs, Boys or Girls Club, Parks and Recreation, Department of Natural Resources)
- Youth help in suggesting and developing service learning projects
- Youth are informed of and encouraged to participate in programs offered by other agencies
- Staff monitor community events schedules, post them weekly, and highlight them to youth

3g. Youth experience the outdoors and the world around them through field trips and adventures:
- Field trips are a regular part of each week's schedule
- Youth provide input regarding field trip possibilities
- Field trips cover a wide range of interests
- Walking field trips (if possible) are offered to nearby points of interest (perhaps a scavenger hunt)

3h. Youth have opportunities for movement and exercise every day:
- Daily schedules include a minimum of one activity involving vigorous physical activity
- Activities are designed to enable youth of varying abilities to participate

Rating	4	3	2	1	NA
Scale Description	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Standard Not Met	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Program might say:	*"We are a leader in this."*	*"We demon- strate this in observable ways."*	*"We could use some support here."*	*"We need significant support in this."*	*"We're not sure." or "This doesn't pertain to our program."*

PROGRAM FOCUS: STANDARD 3 continued

AVERAGE INDICATOR RATING	
	INDICATOR RATING
• There is adequate indoor space available to enable youth to engage in vigorous physical activity in case of weather issues and/or to enable indoor and outdoor options • If possible, youth participate in vigorous physical activity at nearby community sites, or on field trips	

DATA COLLECTION AND IMPACT
STANDARD 4: THE SUMMER PROGRAM UTILIZES A VARIETY OF DATA TO MEASURE THE IMPACT OF ITS SUMMER PROGRAMMING

4a. The program has a written plan with established goals:
- The program's annual action plan includes a section devoted to summer learning
- Specific, annual goals for the summer program are include in the annual action plan
- Criteria for measurement of goal accomplishment are included in the plan
- Goals are shared with staff before start of summer program
- Staff can share and discuss summer program goals

4b. The program collects data from staff, students, families and community partners to demonstrate summer learning impact:
- Staff, youth, families, and other stakeholders complete a survey based on program goals and outcomes
- The Quality Community Self-Assessment Team has established a system for routinely collecting data in an efficient manner
- Data are maintained by staff and administrators throughout the summer program – data includes participant attendance, family perceptions, staff training needs, participant feedback, and any academic progress indicators measured through the program
- Staff understand the data collection systems in place
- Data are compiled, analyzed, and utilized by an outside evaluator to create an evaluation report of the summer program

Rating	4	3	2	1	NA
Scale Description	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Standard Not Met	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Program might say:	*"We are a leader in this."*	*"We demon-strate this in observable ways."*	*"We could use some support here."*	*"We need significant support in this."*	*"We're not sure." or "This doesn't pertain to our program."*

DATA COLLECTION AND IMPACT: STANDARD 4 continued

AVERAGE INDICATOR RATING

	INDICATOR RATING

4c. Programming is adjusted based on data findings:
- The evaluation report is reviewed by the board and the Quality Community Self-Assessment team
- When writing the annual action plan, the evaluation report for the summer program is reviewed to assist with writing goals for the upcoming year
- Goals for the summer program address areas in need of improvement as noted in the previous summer's evaluation report
- Program administrator/site director reviews evaluation report with summer staff at outset of program

4d. The program shares the progress and outcomes with key stakeholders:
- The evaluation report is annually shared with the board, site directors, and other staff
- A summary of the evaluation report is shared with families
- A summary of the evaluation report is shared with any agencies collaborating with the summer program
- A summary of the evaluation report is shared with any agency or business providing monetary support to the program

4e. The program maintains confidentiality of all student data and adheres to all federal, state, and local privacy laws:
- There are written policies and procedures regarding student data collection and recordkeeping
- The policies and procedures are based on the policies and procedures for the local school corporation
- The policies and procedures are reviewed with all staff members prior to the start of the summer program
- See Standard 35, of the "Indiana Afterschool Standards" for further details regarding this indicator

Rating	4	3	2	1	NA
Scale Description	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Standard Not Met	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Program might say:	*"We are a leader in this."*	*"We demonstrate this in observable ways."*	*"We could use some support here."*	*"We need significant support in this."*	*"We're not sure." or "This doesn't pertain to our program."*

ADMINISTRATION

STANDARD 5: THE PROGRAM PLANS SEVERAL MONTHS BEFORE THE SUMMER TO ALLOW SUFFICIENT TIME FOR:

AVERAGE INDICATOR RATING

	INDICATOR RATING

5a. Fund development:
- Administrators have established a calendar of important deadlines for planning throughout the year
- A list of potential financial supports is maintained by the director
- Contacts and requests for financial support, collaboration with community agencies or businesses, and other supports are made early in the school year
- Collaborations are confirmed by the beginning of April
- The director completes grant applications in a timely fashion
- The summer program is funded at a level that allows for all projected goals to be met, as well as full staffing and training of staff
- Funds are secured to insure that youth are provided breakfast, lunch and snacks at no cost

5b. Program Design and Implementation:
- Site director and administrators have developed an outline of the summer program prior to hiring staff
- The outline of the summer program is reviewed with all staff for input and modifications before the start of the program
- All needed materials are available beginning on the first day of the program
- All field trips to the community are scheduled and confirmed before the start of the program

5c. Staff recruitment and training:
- The director has a list of potential sources for recruiting summer staff, including specific strategies to recruit from the community being served by the summer program
- Summer staffing needs are determined early in order to provide time for advertising, recruitment, hiring, and training in advance of the summer program

	Rating	4	3	2	1	NA
	Scale Description	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Standard Not Met	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
	Program might say:	*"We are a leader in this."*	*"We demonstrate this in observable ways."*	*"We could use some support here."*	*"We need significant support in this."*	*"We're not sure." or "This doesn't pertain to our program."*

ADMINISTRATION: STANDARD 5 continued

AVERAGE INDICATOR RATING

	INDICATOR RATING
• All summer staff are hired and trained before the start of the program • Regular staff meetings are held during the program to reinforce previous training and/or provide additional training	

5d. Promotion and outreach to schools, families, youth and community partners:

- Fliers, brochures, etc. describing the summer program are posted in schools, on school and community websites and distributed to youth well in advance of summer in primary langues spoken within the community
- Building principals and teaching staff are made aware of the summer program
- Fliers, brochures, etc. are distributed to area churches, agencies, businesses
- Families of youth in the school year afterschool program are made aware of the program
- Youth in the school year afterschool program are informed of the summer program and encouraged to participate by staff
- Early enrollment for the summer program is sufficient enough for administrators to make final planning arrangements (e.g. hiring of staff, budgets, and activities) before the start of the program

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