



Expanded Learning 360°/365
Skills for Success in School, Work and Life



Measuring Quality:

**Assessment Tools to Evaluate Your
Social-Emotional Learning Practices**

May 2016

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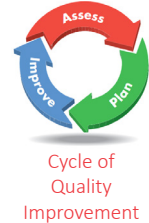
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About this Guide

This guide is designed to help school districts and their partner organizations identify tools to assess the quality of their practices in relation to social-emotional learning (SEL). Most of the tools in this guide were designed for expanded learning – after school and summer – programs, but could be implemented in school-day or other environments.

The goal is for people to measure how well they are implementing their practices as part of the process of quality improvement. Our hope is that programs will be able to choose a tool or tools from this guide to assess the quality of their practices. Then, they'll use the assessment to plan and implement changes to make their programs more effective over time. It's important to note that there is no "one right tool" for every situation. This guide allows district and program leaders to identify likely tools to meet their needs, and also gives them a big advantage over starting from scratch to create new tools.



This guide follows the Expanded Learning 360°/365 initiative's first publication, *Student Success Comes Full Circle*, which defines the specific social-emotional skills that high quality expanded learning programs are well-suited to support. *Full Circle* was developed by a group of evaluators, practitioners, and other experts in the expanded learning and education fields. The group identified six outcomes organized into three categories as follows:



These skills align with social-emotional frameworks developed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), and with the outcomes adopted by the collaborating districts in the California Office for Reforming Education (CORE).

Full Circle also identified the best practices of expanded learning programs that align well with the learning strategies and conditions needed for social-emotional skill development. As defined by the *Quality Standards for Expanded Learning in California*, these five practices include:

- **Safe and supportive environment**- The program provides a safe and nurturing environment that supports the developmental, social-emotional, and physical needs of all students.
- **Active and engaged learning**- Program design and activities reflect active, meaningful, and engaging learning methods that promote collaboration and expand student horizons.
- **Skill building**- The program maintains high expectations for all students, intentionally links program goals and curricula with 21st-century skills, and provides activities to help students achieve mastery.
- **Youth voice and leadership**- The program provides and supports intentional opportunities for students to play a meaningful role in program design and implementation, and provides ongoing access to authentic leadership roles.
- **Diversity, access, and equity** - The program creates an environment in which students experience values that embrace diversity and equity regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, income level, national origin, physical ability, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity and expression.

The complete *Full Circle* brief can be found at expandedlearning360-365.com.

What's Inside

This guide explores the extent to which ten commonly available program quality assessment tools are aligned with the five quality standards identified by Expanded Learning 360°/365 as critical practice areas for SEL. They are: safe and supportive environment; active and engaged learning; skill building; youth voice and leadership; and diversity, access, and equity.

Quality assessment tools were selected based on their alignment with the SEL-related standards, overall quality of the tool, and availability of training and support materials to support their use. This guide draws from the methods used to prepare *A Crosswalk Between the Quality Standards for Expanded Learning and Program Quality Assessment Tools*.¹ Additional detail about the methods used to identify and rate tools is in the Appendix.

Featured Assessment Tools

Self-Assessment Tools:

- California After School Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool (CAN-QSA; California Afterschool Network)
- California High School Program Quality Self-Assessment Rubric (CAN-QSAR; California Afterschool Network)
- Exemplary Practices in Afterschool Program Development: Rubrics for Tracking Internal Progress (Center for Collaborative Solutions and the Community Network for Youth Development)
- National AfterSchool Association Core Knowledge and Competencies Self-Assessment Tool (National AfterSchool Association)
- New York Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool (NYSAN-QSA; New York State Afterschool Network)
- Self-Assessing Social and Emotional Instruction and Competencies (Center on Great Teachers and Leaders at American Institutes of Research)
- SEL Strengths Builder (David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality at the Forum for Youth Investment)

Observation Tools, used by staff or external observers:

- Assessment of Program Practices Tool (APT; National Institute on Out-of-School Time)
- Program Quality Assessment (PQA; David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality at the Forum for Youth Investment)
- Quick CASP (National Summer Learning Association and ASAPconnect)

Levels of Alignment

The key below defines the levels of alignment we describe in the tables on page 5. These ratings are based on the number of items that correspond to the practices described in the *Student Success Comes Full Circle* brief.

Strong Alignment: Tool has multiple measures that strongly correspond to the SEL-related standard. Using the applicable section of the tool will provide a robust sense of the program's alignment with the standard.

Moderate Alignment: Tool has several measures that correspond to the SEL-related standard, though some elements are not covered. Programs may need more information about their activities to fully assess their alignment with the standard.

Minimal Alignment: Tool has few measures that correspond to the SEL-related standard; using this tool will offer minimal information about the program's alignment to the standard.

Not Addressed: Tool has no measures that correspond to the SEL-related standard; using this tool will not provide information about the program's alignment.

¹ See California Afterschool Network, *A Crosswalk Between The Quality Standards for Expanded Learning and Program Quality Assessment Tools* (2014).

Summary of Tool Alignment with SEL-related Quality Standards

SEL-Related Quality Standards				
Safe & Supportive Environment	Active & Engaged Learning	Skill Building	Youth Voice & Leadership	Diversity, Access, & Equity



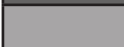

Self-Assessment Tools

California After School Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool	Strong	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Strong
California High School After School Program Quality Self-Assessment Rubric	Minimal	Strong	Moderate	Moderate	Strong
Exemplary Practices in Afterschool Program Development: Rubrics for Tracking Internal Progress	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong
National AfterSchool Association Core Knowledge and Competencies Self-Assessment Tool	Strong	Strong	Moderate	Strong	Moderate
New York Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool	Strong	Moderate	Minimal	Strong	Strong
Self-Assessing Social and Emotional Instruction and Competencies	Strong	Strong	Strong	Moderate	Not Addressed
The SEL Strengths Builder	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong

Observation Tools

Assessment of Program Practices Tool	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Moderate
The Quick CASP	Moderate	Moderate	Strong	Not Addressed	Not Addressed
Youth Program Quality Assessment	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Minimal

Key:

	Strong Alignment		Minimal Alignment
	Moderate Alignment		Not Addressed
















How do I know a tool is right for my community?

Choosing an assessment tool will depend on specific needs such as staff capacity, system-level structures for implementation, and overall goals.

Refer to the tool properties on page 7 to review basic features of each tool to assist with finding the right tool for you.

The tool descriptions starting on page 8 provide detailed information about each tool's intended use and a summary of its contents.



















Tool Properties

ASSESSMENT FEATURES	LEGEND
<p>Intended Users</p> <p>The individuals responsible for conducting the assessment (i.e., self-assessment by program staff and stakeholders or external assessors)</p>	<p> External observers</p> <p> Program staff</p>
<p>Data Sources</p> <p>The sources of data included in the assessment system</p>	<p> Observation of program activities</p> <p> Staff report (i.e., interview, questionnaire, reflective self-assessment)</p> <p> Document review (i.e., program procedures, newsletters, website, etc.)</p>
<p>Level of Analysis</p> <p>The level(s) at which the assessment takes place (i.e., programmatic level, site level, and activity level)</p>	<p> Activity level</p> <p> Site level</p> <p> Programmatic level</p>
<p>Program Target Age</p> <p>The program age range for which the tool can be used</p>	<p>K-12 Grade level will be listed</p>
<p>Technical Properties</p> <p>The extent to which the assessment tool has been field-tested and psychometric quality established²</p>	<p>n/a Assessment tool is meant for reflective self-assessment purposes only</p> <p> No evidence of technical properties available</p> <p> Moderate evidence of technical quality</p> <p> Strong evidence of technical quality</p>
<p>Training</p> <p>The types of training available to support assessment tool use</p>	<p> Fee associated with one or more trainings</p> <p> Online or video</p> <p> Live in-person training</p> <p> Guidebook</p>










2. For additional information about the psychometric properties of some of the tools, consult *Measuring Youth Program Quality: A Guide to Assessment Tools*, 2nd Ed. (Forum for Youth Investment, 2009).

Tool Properties					
Intended Users	Data Sources	Level of Analysis	Program Target Age	Technical Properties	Training

Self-Assessment Tools

California After School Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool	❖			K-12	n/a	
California High School After School Program Quality Self-Assessment Rubric	❖			9-12	n/a	
Exemplary Practices in Afterschool Program Development: Rubrics for Tracking Internal Progress	❖			K-12	n/a	
National AfterSchool Association Core Knowledge and Competencies Self-Assessment Tool	❖			K-12	✓	
New York Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool	❖			K-12	n/a	
Self-Assessing Social and Emotional Instruction and Competencies	❖			K-12	n/a	
The SEL Strengths Builder	❖			K-12	n/a ³	

Observation Tools

Assessment of Program Practices Tool ⁴	□ ❖			K-12	✓✓ ⁵	
The Quick CASP	❖			K-12	n/a	
Youth Program Quality Assessment	□ ❖			K-12	✓✓✓	

³ A technical report will be available in March 2016, which may provide more information about the technical properties of this tool.

⁴ Although the APT tool is free, programs must complete NIOST training for a fee before accessing the tool.

⁵ Evidence of technical properties is limited to the observational tool (APT-O).

Detailed Descriptions⁶

Self-Assessment Tools

California After-School Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool (CAN-QSA)

Overview: The California After-School Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool (CAN-QSA) was developed by the California Afterschool Network and the California Department of Education with input from a broad range of after school program stakeholders. This self-assessment tool is designed for use in after school programs serving youth in grades K-12 in either school or community-based settings. It can be used to engage a range of program stakeholders (i.e., staff, school administrators, youth, families) in a reflective process regarding program quality, and to generate a concrete action plan to enhance program quality. The tool can be used both at the site level and programmatic level. Guidance for using the tool is provided in a comprehensive user manual.

Developer's Website: www.afterschoolnetwork.org

Tool Description: The CAN-QSA examines a wide range of program quality indicators at both the point-of-service and programmatic levels. The reflective assessment tool can be completed as a survey by individuals or through a discussion-based reflection process. Programs can utilize the tools in different ways (i.e., to focus on single components or assess the program as a whole) depending on time available and the developmental stage of the program.

The CAN-QSA has 11 program quality domains. Each domain contains items that focus on specific elements of best practice. The CAN-QSA asks assessors to reflect on different indicators of program quality, ranging from very specific (i.e., program attendance) to broad (i.e., positive relationships).

- I. Program Design & Assessment
 - a. Vision & Planning
 - b. Attendance
 - c. Evaluation & Assessment
- II. Program Administration & Finance
 - a. Administration
 - b. Finance
- III. Community Partnerships & Collaboration
- IV. Alignment and Linkages with the School Day
- V. Program Environment & Safety
 - a. Physical Environment
 - b. Social Environment
- VI. Youth Development
 - a. Supportive Environment
 - b. Interaction
 - c. Engagement
- VII. Staff Recruitment & Professional Development
 - a. General
 - b. Program Leadership
- VIII. Family Involvement
- IX. Nutrition & Physical Activity
 - a. Food & Nutrition
 - b. Physical Activity
- X. Promoting Diversity, Access, Equity, & Inclusion
- XI. Effectively Supporting English Learners

⁶ Tool descriptions drawn from *A Crosswalk Between the Quality Standards for Expanded Learning and Program Quality Assessment Tools*, and re-printed with the permission of the California Afterschool Network.

Summary of Alignment Ratings: The CAN-QSA will provide programs with information on each of the five standards prioritized by Expanded Learning 360°/365. This tool also contains several domains that are not specifically linked to SEL supports and provides coverage of program quality areas more broadly.

The tool is designed for reflective assessment at the site or programmatic level. It will not provide a robust assessment of quality at the individual activity level. The degree to which the tool will provide comprehensive assessment of a program's SEL quality depends on the assessors' familiarity with the program activities and structure.

This tool can be used for self-assessment and program improvement purposes. It is not appropriate for use by external assessors or for formal program evaluation. As with any self-assessment tool, programs should consider using observational evidence to confirm staff members' perceptions of their practice.

California High School After School Program Quality Self-Assessment Rubric (CAN-QSAR)

Overview: The California High School After School Program Quality Self-Assessment Rubric (CAN-QSAR) was developed by the California Afterschool Network and the After School Technical Assistance Unit of the Los Angeles County Office of Education. This tool can be used for self-assessment and program improvement purposes. It is designed for use specifically in after school programs serving youth in grades 9-12 in either school or community-based settings. It can be used to engage a range of program stakeholders (i.e., program staff, participants, and school administration) in a reflective process regarding program quality and to generate a concrete action plan to enhance program quality, and guide professional development. This tool can be used both at the individual site and programmatic level. A user's manual is available for the CAN-QSAR.

Developer's Website: www.afterschoolnetwork.org

Tool Description: The CAN-QSAR examines a wide range of program quality indicators at both the point-of-service and program management levels. The tool developers suggest forming a self-assessment team to complete the assessment and form an action plan for program improvement based on assessment results. Programs can utilize the tools in different ways (i.e., focus on single components or assess the program as a whole) depending on time available and the developmental stage of the program.

The CAN-QSAR has nine program quality domains. Each domain contains items that focus on specific elements of best practice and allows programs to assess the degree to which these elements are present in their program. The CAN-QSAR asks assessors to reflect on different indicators of program quality, ranging from very specific (i.e., ASSEST grant requirements) to broad (i.e., participant engagement).

- I. School Partnership
 - a. School Administration Support
 - b. School Staff Support
 - c. Sharing of School Resources
 - d. School Integration
 - e. Academic Alignment with Instructional Day
- II. Student Achievement
 - a. Program Environment
 - b. Academics & Supports
 - c. English Learners Inclusion
 - d. Students with Special Needs Inclusion
- III. Youth Development & Partnering with Youth
 - a. Youth Input & Decision Making
 - b. Meaningful Youth Engagement
 - c. Supportive Peer-to-Peer Relationships
 - d. Youth Voice & Community Involvement
- IV. Program Operations & Staffing
 - a. Shared Vision
 - b. Understanding Youth Development
 - c. Understanding Older Youth Programming
 - d. Youth & Adult Relationships
 - e. Staff Recruitment, Hiring, & Training
- V. Data Collection & Program Evaluation
 - a. Data Collection
 - b. Program Evaluation
 - c. Data to Inform Practice
 - d. Data Exchange

- VI. Program Administration & Fiscal Management
 - a. Understanding the Grant (ASSETs only)
 - b. Formal Agreements & Documents
 - c. Program Sustainability
 - d. Program Monitoring
- VII. Program Offerings
 - a. Required Compliance Program Activities of 21st CCLC ASSETs Programs
 - b. Cultural Awareness & Relevance
 - c. Opportunities for Experiential Learning
 - d. Challenge & Mastery
 - e. 21st Century Knowledge and Skills Development
 - f. College Preparedness
 - g. Workforce Preparedness
- VIII. Program Attendance
 - a. Targeted Student Outreach
 - b. Overall Attendance
 - c. Frequency & Duration of Attending Participants
- IX. Collaboration & Community Engagement
 - a. After School & Community Partnerships

Summary of Alignment Ratings: The CAN-QSAR will provide programs with information on a majority of the five standards prioritized by Expanded Learning 360°/365. However, the tool includes minimal coverage of the Safe and Supportive Environment Standard. The CAN-QSAR also includes domains that are not directly linked to SEL supports.

The tool is designed for reflective assessment at the site or programmatic level. It will not provide a robust assessment of quality at the individual activity level. The degree to which the CAN-QSAR will provide comprehensive assessment of a program's SEL quality depends on the assessors' familiarity with the program activities and structure.

This tool can be used for self-assessment and program improvement purposes. It is not appropriate for use by external assessors or for formal program evaluation. As with any self-assessment tool, programs should consider using observational evidence to confirm staff members' perceptions of their practice.

Exemplary Practices in Afterschool Program Development: Rubrics for Tracking Internal Progress

Overview: The Exemplary Practices in Afterschool Program Development was developed by the Center for Collaborative Solutions (CCS) and the Community Network for Youth Development (CNYD). This tool is designed to determine a baseline assessment of high quality, sustainable practices that support after school programs to achieve their goals. Designed for program leadership staff, this tool can be used for self-assessment on a quarterly basis to track and document progress. Practices included in the tool are applicable in a variety of after school settings including multi-site, school-based, and school-linked programs. The tool broadly addresses common exemplary after school practices and can be used alongside other internal/external assessments. Instructions and expanded definitions of each practice are embedded in each section of the tool alongside scoring rubrics.

Developer’s Website: www.ccscenter.org

Tool Description: The Exemplary Practices in Afterschool Program Development is a workbook style tool to examine program-wide practices. Each section of the tool provides a framework for approaching the development of high quality, sustainable programs. The tool developers advise quarterly tracking of progress complemented by ongoing dialogue with senior program and site staff, stakeholders, partners, students, and parents.

The Exemplary Practices in Afterschool Program Development has 13 program quality domains. Each domain contains program indicators that make up exemplary practices. Program staff may add additional indicators to each domain. Staff self-assess their program’s progress along a five-point scale on each indicator organized by the following domains:

- I. Vision
- II. Leadership, Mentorship, and Management
- III. Staff Development
- IV. Youth Development
- V. Academic Alignment
- VI. Diversity, Access, Inclusion, and Equity
- VII. Physical and Emotional Safety
- VIII. Supportive Relationships
- IX. Challenging and Engaging Learning Experiences
- X. Youth Participation
- XI. Neighborhood and Community Connections
- XII. Attendance
- XIII. Measuring and Managing Outcomes

Summary of Alignment Ratings: The Exemplary Practices in Afterschool Program Development is a robust self-assessment with an emphasis on staff training and work environment throughout the tool. The tool is strongly aligned with the five standards prioritized by Expanded Learning 360°/365. It also contains several domains that are not specifically linked to the SEL supports.

This tool can be used for self-assessment and program improvement purposes. It is not appropriate for use by external assessors or for formal program evaluation. As with any self-assessment tool, programs should consider using observational evidence to confirm staff members’ perceptions of their practice.

National AfterSchool Association Core Knowledge and Competencies Self-Assessment Tool

Overview: The Core Knowledge and Competencies Self-Assessment Tool was developed by the National AfterSchool Association to enable after school and youth development practitioners to assess their expertise in youth development principles. The tool is intended for program staff to develop professional development plans through the Assess-Reflect-Plan process detailed in the tool. Staff working in a variety of youth-serving settings may use this workbook-style tool to develop an action plan for improving their skills and competencies. The self-assessment tool may also be used by administrators/supervisors to inform professional development needs and assess the skills of their staff members.

Developer's Website: naaweb.org/resources/core-compentencies

Tool Description: The Core Knowledge and Competencies Self-Assessment was designed to support formal and informal pathways of training and education. The Core Competencies are grouped from levels one through five, sequenced so that each level is the prerequisite to the next. The five competency levels are:

- Level 1 – Entry-level
- Level 2 – Developing
- Level 3 – Proficient
- Level 4 – Advanced
- Level 5 – Mastery

There are five separate assessment tools to address each level; assessment booklets are organized into ten program quality domains:

1. Child and Youth Growth and Development
2. Learning Environment and Curriculum
3. Child/Youth Observation and Assessment
4. Interactions with Children and Youth
5. Youth Engagement
6. Cultural Competency and Responsiveness
7. Family, School, and Community Relationships
8. Safety and Wellness
9. Program Planning and Development
10. Professional Development and Leadership

This tool is a self-paced workbook-style format. In January 2016, NAA began developing regional and online trainings.

Summary of Alignment Ratings: The Core Knowledge and Competencies Assessment is strongly aligned to three of the five standards prioritized by Expanded Learning 360°/365: Safe and Supportive Environment, Active and Engaged Learning, and Youth Voice and Leadership. This tool provides moderate coverage of Skill Building and Diversity, Access, and Equity. It also contains several domains that are not specifically linked to the SEL supports.

The five-level scaffolding of the core competencies makes this a user-friendly tool, especially for entry-level staff.

This tool can be used for self-assessment and staff professional development purposes. It is not appropriate for use by external assessors or for formal program evaluation. As with any self-assessment tool, programs should consider using observational evidence to confirm staff members' perceptions of their practice.

New York State Afterschool Network Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool (NYSAN-QSA)

Overview: The Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool (NYSAN-QSA) was developed by the New York State Afterschool Network through a two-year collaborative process led by a quality assurance committee with input from a broad range of after school program stakeholders. This tool can be used for self-assessment and program improvement purposes only. Programs are encouraged to use the tool in conjunction with external evaluation to provide more rigorous evaluation of program quality and youth outcomes. The tool is designed for use specifically in after school programs serving youth in grades K-12 in either school or community-based settings. The intended use of the tool is to promote program quality and engage staff, youth, and other stakeholders in discussions about how to continuously improve their program. The tool can be used both at the individual site level and the programmatic level. Guidance for using the tool is provided in a comprehensive user manual and NYSAN offers an online webinar and in-person training on the quality dimensions reflected in the assessment.

Developer's Website: www.nysan.org

Tool Description: The NYSAN-QSA examines a wide range of program quality indicators at both the point-of-service and program management levels. The self-assessment is intended to be based on observation of program activities, review of program documents and materials, and input from a range of program stakeholders including program administrators, staff, and youth participants. Programs can utilize the tools in different ways (i.e., focus on single components or assess the program as a whole) depending on time available and the developmental stage of the program.

The NYSAN-QSA has ten program quality domains. Each domain contains items that focus on specific elements of best practices.

- I. Environment & Climate
- II. Administration/Organization
- III. Relationships
- IV. Staffing/Professional Development
- V. Programming/Activities
- VI. Linkages Between School Day and After School
- VII. Youth Participation/Engagement
- VIII. Parent/Family/Community Partnerships
- IX. Program Sustainability/Growth
- X. Measuring Outcomes/Evaluation

Summary of Alignment Ratings: The NYSAN-QSA will provide programs with information on a majority of the five standards prioritized by Expanded Learning 360°/365, with an exception. It provides minimal coverage of practices in Skill Building. The NYSAN-QSA includes domains that broadly cover programmatic areas not directly linked to SEL supports.

The tool is designed for reflective assessment at the site or programmatic level. It will not provide a robust assessment of quality at the individual activity level. The degree to which the NYSAN-QSA will provide comprehensive assessment of a program's SEL quality depends on the assessors' familiarity with the program activities and structure.

This tool can be used for self-assessment and program improvement purposes. It is not appropriate for use by external assessors or for formal program evaluation. As with any self-assessment tool, programs should consider using observational evidence to confirm staff members' perceptions of their practice.

Self-Assessing Social and Emotional Instruction and Competencies: A Tool for Teachers

Overview: This self-assessment was developed by the Center for Great Teachers and Leaders at the American Institutes of Research. It is part of a larger suite of training on the integration of SEL skills into the classroom. This self-assessment tool is designed to help educators reflect upon (1) their current teaching practices that impact student SEL, and (2) their own SEL competencies to implement those teaching practices. The aims of this tool are:

- To enable teachers to reflect and self-assess on SEL as an integral part of high-quality teaching and learning
- To provide a broad measure of the teacher’s ability to promote student SEL through instructional practices
- To provide a mechanism for teachers to reflect on their own SEL competencies and to consider what impact their capabilities have on the implementation of practices that support SEL
- To provide teachers with self-reflective feedback that can be used as part of their professional development plans or educator evaluations

Developer’s Website: www.gtlcenter.org/technical-assistance/professional-learning-modules/social-and-emotional-learning-daily-life-classrooms

Tool Description: Self-Assessing Social and Emotional Instruction and Competencies allow users to document their use of SEL teaching practices (student-centered discipline, teacher language, responsibility and choice, and warmth and support) and instructional teaching practices (cooperative learning, classroom discussions, self-assessment and self-reflection, balanced instruction, academic press, and expectations and competence building).

The tool is divided into the following three sections, with Section 1 and Section 2 each divided into two parts:

Section 1. Social Interaction Assessment

- Part A. Self-assess implementation of teaching practices
- Part B. Self-assess teachers’ own SEL competencies

Section 2. Instructional Interaction Assessment

- Part A. Self-assess implementation of teaching practices
- Part B. Self-assess teachers’ own SEL competencies

Section 3. Culminating Activities and Action Planning

Summary of Alignment Ratings: Self-Assessing Social and Emotional Instruction and Competencies provides a robust assessment of three of the five standards: Safe and Supportive Environment; Active and Engaged Learning; and Skill Building. It provides a sufficient assessment of Youth Voice and Leadership, and does not address Diversity, Access, and Equity.

One interesting feature of this tool is its emphasis on staff members’ self-reflection. For all of the practices listed, users also rate their ability to respond to children appropriately, monitor their emotions, and rely on other staff members for support. This is a unique feature among the tools highlighted in this guide.

This tool can be used for self-assessment and program improvement purposes. It is not appropriate for use by external assessors or for formal program evaluation. As with any self-assessment tool, programs should consider using observational evidence to confirm staff members’ perceptions of their practice.

Social and Emotional Learning Practices: A Self-Reflection Tool for Afterschool Staff

The tool above was developed to help teachers and school staff self-reflect on their social and emotional competencies. A very similar tool for after school staff (Social and Emotional Learning Practices: A Self-Reflection Tool for Afterschool Staff) has also been developed by Beyond the Bell at American Institutes of Research. The two tools are so alike, only one has been rated for SEL alignment here. However, the alignment ratings given apply to both tools.

You can find the related after school tool here:

www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Social-Emotional-Learning-Afterschool-Toolkit-Sept-2015.pdf

The SEL Strengths Builder

Overview: This self-assessment was developed by the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality (CYPQ) at the Forum for Youth Investment, in partnership with the Susan Crown Exchange. The tool developers created the Strengths Builder method as part of the SEL Challenge, which identified promising practices for building SEL skills with youth. This method provides a three-tier frame for programs to reflect on: (1) the program design, (2) staff practices, and (3) youths' experiences in the program. The Strengths Builder is an extension of CYPQ's Assess-Plan-Improve cycle of continuous program improvement.

This flexible self-assessment tool is designed for groups of four to five staff that design, plan, facilitate, or are otherwise involved in a particular program offering. The developers of this method advise users to focus on one SEL growth area at a time to allow for deep exploration of its practices.

Developer's Website: www.selpractices.org

Tool Description: SEL Standards are organized into six skill growth areas. Each growth area includes practice indicators of the standards.

- I. Emotion Management — Abilities to be aware of and constructively handle both positive and challenging emotions.
- II. Empathy — Relating to others with acceptance, understanding, and sensitivity to their diverse perspectives and experiences.
- III. Teamwork — Abilities to collaborate and coordinate action with others.
- IV. Responsibility — Dispositions and abilities to reliably meet commitments and fulfill obligations of challenging roles.
- V. Initiative — Capacities to take action, sustain motivation, and persevere through challenge toward an identified goal.
- VI. Problem Solving — Abilities to plan, strategize, and implement complex tasks.

CYPQ offers multiple pathways to engage with the SEL Strengths Builder process, ranging from their Open Access pathway using free downloadable materials to a robust System Designs, a more formalized process of making SEL a part of a program quality improvement system.

Summary of Alignment Ratings: The SEL Strengths Builder allows users to prioritize the importance of each SEL practice to their program, reflect on the degree to which each practice is part of the design of the program, and determine how many youth have access to each experience. This method of gathering multiple perspectives provides a well-rounded assessment of each standard. The SEL Strengths Builder is strongly aligned to the five standards prioritized by Expanded Learning 360°/365.

This tool can be used for self-assessment and program improvement purposes. It is not appropriate for use by external assessors or for formal program evaluation. As with any self-assessment tool, programs should consider using observational evidence to confirm staff members' perceptions of their practice.

Observation Tools

Assessment of Program Practices Tool (APT)

Overview: The Assessment of Afterschool Program Practices Tool (APT) was developed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST), and the Massachusetts After-school Research Study (MARS) to examine those program practices that research suggests contribute to positive youth outcomes. The tool can be used by program staff for self-assessment or by external observers for program improvement purposes. The tool can also be used by trained external observers for program evaluation and accountability. The APT can be used in both structured and unstructured youth programs in a range of settings that serve youth in grades K-12. The program quality assessment tools are one component of NIOST's program assessment system (APAS), a flexible system designed to help programs measure and link their program quality and youth outcomes. NIOST provides training services and tools to support use of their quality improvement system (the ASQ) and their APAS system.

Developer's Website: www.niost.org

Tool Description: The APT includes two tools: the APT Observation tool (APT-O or APT-O Teen for youth in grades 9-12), which focuses on program practices at the activity and site level, and the APT Program Questionnaire (APT-Q), a self-assessment tool that examines unobservable elements of program quality and site and program level components such as program planning and collaborative partnerships with families and schools. Although the APT tool is free for use, programs must first receive training to gain access to the tool. On-site NIOST training ranges from \$4,600 to \$10,000. NIOST offers an online training option as well.

The APT-O is organized by time of day, including informal program times, homework, planned activities, and the overall program. It measures 15 elements, each measured by multiple indicators, organized in four broad domains.

- I. Supportive Social Environment
 - a. Welcoming & Inclusive Environment
 - b. Supportive Staff-Youth Relations
 - c. Positive Peer Relationships
 - d. Relationships with Families
- II. Program Organization & Structure
 - a. Space Conducive to Learning
 - b. Positive Behavior Guidance
 - c. High Program/Activity Organization
 - d. Varied & Flexible Programming
 - e. Program Promotes Youth Autonomy & Leadership
- III. Opportunities for Engagement in Learning & Skill Building
 - a. Quality of Activities
 - b. Quality of Homework Support
 - c. Youth Engagement/Participation
 - d. Staff Practices That Promote Engagement & Thinking
- IV. Targeted Academic Skill-Building in English Language Arts and Literacy, Mathematics, Science & Technology/Engineering, History & Social Studies, and Career/Vocational; Technical Educational Skill Building (Teen version only)⁷
 - a. Staff promote and engage the skills
 - b. Youth build and practice the skills

⁷ This is a supplementary component that can be customized to a program's focus and activities.

APT Program Questionnaire:

- I. Plan & Design of Program Offerings
- II. Program Offerings
- III. Promotion of Youth Responsibility, Autonomy, & Leadership
- IV. Welcoming & Inclusive Environment
- V. Support for Youth as Individuals
- VI. Connection with Families
- VII. Partnerships with Schools
- VIII. Support for Staff

Summary of Alignment Ratings: The APT-O will provide programs with a robust assessment of four of five standards prioritized by Expanded Learning 360°/365. Additional assessment of Diversity, Access, and Equity may be required due to the moderate-level coverage of that area.

Program Quality Assessment (PQA)

Overview: The Program Quality Assessment (PQA) was developed by the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation to assess the quality of structured youth programs, identify the training needs of staff, and guide program improvement efforts. There are versions for both elementary and secondary-aged youth. The PQA can be used by program staff for self-assessment or by external observers. The tools are designed for use in a range of settings including schools, community organizations, and camps. PQA supplements are available for camps, health and wellness, STEM, academic, and arts programs.

The PQA was developed to be rigorous enough for external evaluation and accountability, while remaining user-friendly enough for internal self-assessment. The PQA is to be used within a larger continuous quality improvement system. The David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality provides a range of training options and services to support this purpose, as well as customized assessment tools and online systems for data tracking and reporting.

Developer's Website: www.cypq.org

Tool Description: The primary focus of the PQA is evaluating the quality of youth experiences as they participate in program activities. This is accomplished through observation using either the Youth version (Y-PQA) for grades 4-12 or the School-Age version (SA-PQA) for grades K-6. The PQA also addresses programmatic indicators of quality (i.e., program resources and organization) using a separate tool that can be used as a guided interview or survey (PQA Form B). Training resources include self-paced webinars and in-person trainings. Costs for in-person trainings vary, but are usually in the range of \$100-\$250/person for groups of 20-40, exclusive of travel and food costs.

The PQA instruments address four program quality domains. Each domain contains items that focus on specific elements of best practice.

Youth PQA & School-Age PQA Observation Instruments:

- I. Safe Environment
 - a. Emotional Safety
 - b. Healthy Environment
 - c. Emergency Preparedness
 - d. Accommodating Environment
 - e. Nourishment
- II. Supportive Environment
 - a. Warm Welcome
 - b. Session Flow
 - c. Active Engagement
 - d. Skill-Building
 - e. Encouragement
 - f. Reframing Conflict (Y-PQA only)
 - g. Child-Centered Space (SA-PQA only)
- III. Interaction
 - a. Belonging
 - b. Collaboration (Y-PQA only)
 - c. Leadership
 - d. Adult Interactions/Partners
 - e. Managing Feelings (SA-PQA only)

- IV. Engagement
 - a. Planning
 - b. Choice
 - c. Reflection
 - d. Responsibility (SA-PQA only)

PQA Form B Interview/Survey Instrument:

- I. Youth Centered Policies & Practices
 - a. Staff Qualifications
 - b. Program Offerings
 - c. Youth Influence on Setting and Activities
 - d. Youth Influence on Structure and Organizational Policies
- II. Access
 - a. Staff Availability and Longevity
 - b. Program Schedules
 - c. Participation Policies
 - d. Communication with Families, Schools, and Community
- III. High Expectations
 - a. Staff Development
 - b. Supportive Social Norms
 - c. Expectations for Youth
 - d. Program Improvement

Summary of Alignment Ratings: The PQA observation tools will provide programs with a robust assessment of the majority of the five standards prioritized by Expanded Learning 360°/365⁸, except for Diversity, Access, and Equity. The Center for Youth Program Quality offers a comprehensive program improvement process that addresses SEL supports, though they are not necessarily addressed in the PQA Form B itself.

⁸ The CYPQ is developing a method of adapting the PQA observation tool for use in assessing SEL. Guidance for this method was not available at the time this document was prepared.

ASAPconnect / National Summer Learning Association Quick CASP

Overview: The Quick CASP was developed by ASAPconnect and the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) as a way for summer learning programs to continuously improve their program quality. The tool is drawn from the Comprehensive Assessment of Summer Programs (CASP), a more in-depth assessment tool. The Quick CASP includes 36 of the full 80 indicators⁹, chosen because ASAPconnect and NSLA identified them as critical levers in improving summer program quality. The Quick CASP does not require training and it may be conducted as a program self-assessment or with the assistance of an external technical assistance provider. The tool is designed for use in a cycle of quality improvement for programs to plan, train, assess, and reflect.

Developer's Website: www.asapconnect.org/summer-learning

Tool Description: The Quick CASP focuses on two types of summer program assessment: Planning and Management, and Observation. The Planning and Management portion should be completed prior to programming. The Observation portion is conducted during summer programming. Both assessments are structured into domains containing rubric-based indicators.

Planning and Management includes the following domains:

- Purpose
- Planning
- Staff
- Partnerships
- Individualized
- Integrated

Observation includes the following domains:

- Planning
- Staff
- Intentional
- Program Culture
- Individualized
- Integrated

ASAPconnect provides a number of online resources for planning and implementing the Quick CASP into summer learning programs.

Summary of Alignment Ratings: The Quick CASP will provide programs with information on three of the five standards prioritized by Expanded Learning 360°/365. It provides minimal coverage of practices in the Youth Voice and Leadership, and Diversity, Access, and Equity areas. One unique feature of this tool is its intended use as an assessment of summer learning programs.

⁹ Details on the technical properties of the Quick CASP are not available; however, technical properties of the full version of the CASP are available.

Appendix: Crosswalk Development

The process of selecting the tools contained in this guide was drawn from prior work in identifying tool alignments to the *Quality Standards for Expanded Learning in California* more broadly; the unique contribution of this guide is our review of the tools' alignment with SEL supports. For this, we first compared each SEL-related quality standard with the broader statewide standard. Next, we conducted an extensive review of each tool by assessing the tool's effectiveness in capturing important elements of SEL-related program quality.

We prioritized tools that:

- Apply to a broad range of ages, ideally grades K-12.
- Are rooted in positive youth development, the framework informing SEL-related quality standards.
- Cover most of the topics in the SEL-related quality standards.
- Use rubric-based ratings, which promote consistent use among users (i.e., tools that are designed with inter-rater reliability in mind).
- Have supporting manuals or trainings for users.

To rate the featured tools, we examined the content of each tool in detail to determine (1) the breadth of coverage for each SEL-related quality standard (i.e., the degree to which each element was covered) and (2) the depth of coverage for each SEL-related quality standard (i.e., the degree to which the tool contained detailed and specific content for each element of the standard).

Two raters worked independently to assign ratings to each assessment tool, and discussed any areas where their ratings differed.

The information presented in the tool descriptions and tool property table is from tool manuals, developer websites, and previous reports on quality assessment tools.

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We are especially grateful to the California Afterschool Network for allowing us to build from the methods used in the Crosswalk Between the Quality Standards for Expanded Learning and Program Quality Assessment Tools. Select tool summaries are drawn verbatim from the Crosswalk prepared for the California Afterschool Network, as cited in the text.

About Expanded Learning 360°/365

Expanded Learning 360°/365 is a collaborative project dedicated to promoting the development of critical skills beyond academics that research has identified as essential to young people’s success in school, work, and life.

The project is based on two strongly held beliefs:

- 360° – In order for children to grow into healthy and productive citizens, they must learn and practice a wide variety of inter-related skills – social-emotional and character, as well as academic;
- 365 – Children learn in a variety of settings and year-round. This includes formal settings, such as school, and informal settings, such as after school, extracurricular, and summer youth programs.

Expanded Learning 360°/365 is helping policymakers, district and school leaders, and expanded learning providers better identify and integrate social-emotional skills into their work with young people. To this end, Expanded Learning 360°/365 is working to clearly define the role that expanded learning plays in social-emotional skill development while promoting that school and expanded learning leaders work together to integrate teaching strategies around these skills across the school day and into expanded learning time.

Partner organizations include ASAPconnect, California School-Age Consortium (CaSAC), the Partnership for Children & Youth, and Temescal Associates.

For more information, please visit the Expanded Learning 360°/365 website at expandedlearning360-365.com.



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