

EXPANDED LEARNING (AFTERSCHOOL) LEADERS' PERCEPTIONS
REGARDING MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS FOR PROGRAM
QUALITY AND USE OF SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOLS FOR
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

by

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Abstract

California allocates \$550 million to expanded learning through After School Education and Safety (ASES) state grants, and \$140 million of federal money in 21st Century Community Learning Center grants each year, more than all other states combined. Much variability exists in program quality, and research has identified mixed results as to the value of these programs.

The purpose of this study was to identify (a) Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSAT) elements and Learning in Afterschool and Summer (LIAS) principles frontline implementers and technical assistance providers perceive as most important or essential to developing, executing, and sustaining a high quality program and (b) explore the value and impact of using the QSAT and LIAS principles tool to improve and sustain program quality.

A mixed methods design included both quantitative and qualitative data. Fifty Q-sorts, using Q Methodology, explored participants' perceived level of importance regarding statement elements related to developing and sustaining a high quality afterschool program. Findings revealed that participants consistently ranked four statements derived from the LIAS principles as most important for developing a high quality afterschool program. These statements described programs that engaged students in active, collaborative, meaningful learning activities that expanded horizons. Participants indicated four elements as critical to

operating an afterschool program of quality: well defined, hands-on, student-centered activities incorporating academics, youth development and recreation; students and staff with a strong sense of ownership and belonging; active learning experiences; and meaningful learning experiences

Twelve individual interviews with frontline afterschool program implementers explored the use of self-assessment, most specifically the use of the QSAT and LIAS principles tool, to improve and sustain program quality. Six themes emerged relative to what participants identified as a need to move their programs to highest quality: money, training, staff, leadership, systems for continuous improvement, and support from stakeholders. Four themes emerged as facilitators to improving and sustaining an afterschool program of quality: leadership, establishing a vision and setting goals, staffing - recruiting, hiring, training and retaining quality staff who develop positive relationships, and support, while money or level of funding was the primary theme perceived as a barrier.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

At a time when families and communities are struggling financially and students are academically underperforming, afterschool programs are working to provide additional services to children living in high-poverty areas and attending low-performing schools (Afterschool Alliance, 2013). Afterschool programs operate in collaboration with community partners to provide academic support, enrichment opportunities, and nutrition and physical fitness education as well as a safe environment from the time school is released until at least 6 PM each day that school is in session.

Afterschool programs, as they exist today, are the result of multiple transformations and growth. In their earliest beginnings, during the latter part of the 19th century, afterschool programs emerged as the result of changes in child labor laws, increased women in the workforce, increased education requirements, and the need to keep children safe and provide supervision. Beginning as boys clubs and eventually growing to serve boys and girls, a variety of organizations operate afterschool programs such as faith based organizations, non-profit groups, community based organizations, and parks and recreation centers (Mahoney, Parente, & Zigler, 2009).

Over the past 15 years, schools have experienced increased pressure and accountability to ensure every student performs academically. Afterschool programs have been identified as a potential opportunity to increase student achievement. Coupled with a growing financial commitment from both the state and the federal government and the increased need to demonstrate effectiveness, afterschool programs are challenged to evidence their quality and effectiveness.

Multiple studies focusing on afterschool programs have been conducted in recent years (Bender et al., 2011; Durlak & Weissberg, 2007; Gottfredson, Cross, Wilson, Rorie, & Connell, 2010; Hall, Williams, & Daniel, 2010; Mahoney, Parente, & Lord, 2007), and while some have revealed findings evidencing positive outcomes for students, other studies have shown little or no growth in student academic performance. These inconsistent results have provoked additional dialogue and the need for continued examination of the conditions necessary to provide effective programming that improves educational outcomes and also increases positive results in the areas of health and wellness, mental health, nutrition, physical fitness, enrichment opportunities and youth development.

Multiple terms are used to describe learning that takes place outside of the normal school day including afterschool, expanded learning, and out-of-school time. This study uses these terms interchangeably to refer to programs operating in collaboration with local education agencies and their collaborative partners.

The two largest funding sources for afterschool programs in California are the 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) federal grants and the After School Education and Safety (ASES) state grants. Nationally, afterschool programs are serving 8.4 million school-age children, including 1.6 million children who attend 21st CCLCs. According to the Afterschool Alliance (2012), 24% (1,653,108) of K-12 California youth are responsible for taking care of themselves after school and 19% (1,284,233) of California's K-12 children participate in afterschool programs, including 132,000 children supported by the U.S. Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative, the only federal program dedicated to afterschool (Afterschool Alliance, 2012). Approximately 4,500 schools in California offer afterschool and summer

programs using available ASES and 21st CCLC funding (Torlakson & Peck, 2013).

In the United States, billions of dollars are spent on afterschool programs. Annually, California invests millions of dollars to support afterschool programs. Government officials have demonstrated strong support for expanded learning; however research to this point shows mixed results relative to program success. A major contributing factor to the discrepancy in results is the vast difference among the quality of programs provided. California has allocated \$550 million to expanded learning through After School Education and Safety (ASES) grants. In addition, \$140 million of federal money has been allocated to expanded learning in the form of 21st Century Community Learning Center grants. California's level of funding is more than all other states combined in the commitment to serving students through an expanded learning model; therefore it is essential that programs are assessed for their effect on student success. Commonly held criteria for determining quality of afterschool programs must be identified, and barriers to developing and sustaining a program of quality must be understood (California Department of Education, 2012b).

Since election in 2010, Tom Torlakson, California State Superintendent of public education, has worked with a committee of educational leaders to develop and implement a plan to improve the education system as well as set goals for the State. The completed plan, published in a Blueprint for Great Schools, emphasized the important role expanded learning time can play to support student learning. One of the first steps taken to improve the current practices in the field of expanded learning was the creation of a new division at the California Department of Education, the After School Division (ASD), focused on expanded learning. The After School Division instituted a strategic initiative to develop

clear systems of implementation for afterschool programs. The Division executed a strategic planning process, including both After School Division staff and field representatives participating in strategic initiative teams, for the purposes of developing support systems, communication systems, a system for grant management and policy development, and deploying a systematic approach for integration with the K-12 education system. The strategic initiative also included examining past and current practices to develop a streamlined, consistent process to ensure accountability structures are aligned to program goals (California Department of Education, 2012b).

According to Michael Funk, Director of the Afterschool Division (ASD) at the California Department of Education,

California's Expanded Learning programs are an integral part of young people's education, engaging them in year-round learning opportunities that prepare them for college, career, and life. To help realize this vision, the ASD launched a strategic planning process with four strategic initiatives. The first initiative relates to and will be informed by this dissertation. The ASD will provide a comprehensive and coordinated system of support and accountability to maintain and improve program quality while encouraging creativity and innovation in the field. While a large number of the state's nearly 4,500 programs funded by the ASD are of high quality, there are pockets in the state where quality needs to be improved. The work in 2014 will be to understand the practices that high quality programs execute that result in a culture of continuous quality improvement. The ASD needs to set up the system of support to bring those practices into low performing programs by providing technical assistance at the point of service. The ASD has completed the work of developing Expanded Learning Quality Standards for California. At the core of these standards are the five Learning In Afterschool and Summer Programs initiative. (personal communication, November 14, 2013)

A goal of this research is to help inform the work currently underway in California to develop, implement, support and sustain *quality* afterschool

programs statewide and across the nation as well. This study focuses on publicly funded programs receiving ASES or 21st CCLC funding or both.

Context of the Study

This study centered on publicly funded California afterschool programs supported primarily through state and federal grant funding; state funding includes After School Education and Safety (ASES) grants and federal funding, administered through the state, includes 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) grants. Grant assurances require that programs are developed and operated in collaboration with community partners and local education agencies (LEA). Community partnerships may include, but are not limited to, organizations that provide support to students participating in afterschool programs in the form of monetary, space, staff, volunteers or other resources.

California is comprised of 11 regions, organized and structured to provide technical assistance to publically funded programs throughout the state. Regional Leads, representing each region, work collaboratively with the California Department of Education to implement training opportunities and activities uniquely designed to fit the needs of local before and afterschool program grantees. Each Regional Lead works with local grantees to offer program specific assistance and workshops as well as facilitate increased communication and networking among program leadership, school districts, and community partners (CDE, 2012d). This study involved afterschool program participants from across the state of California who work directly with students in afterschool programs as frontline implementers or as technical assistance providers, offering support and assistance to afterschool programs.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in total quality philosophy and total quality management philosophy including the use of data for system development and continuous system improvement. Total quality philosophy provides a means for measuring quality in settings such as business, the medical field, and education. Total quality philosophy supports the processes involved in total quality management and embraces the attitude of continuous improvement and using data to evaluate the work underway to determine areas of refinement for system improvement (Detert & Jenni, 2000). Total quality philosophy is based on the belief that the requirements of a program or project will be fully met based on established quality policies and procedures with established goals and a purpose guiding the effort. The total quality philosophy provides a lens for establishing systems to promote and sustain quality (Juran, 1992).

Total Quality Management (TQM) is an integrative philosophy of management for continuously improving the quality of products and processes (Westcott, 2006). Juran (1992) contended that implementation of Total Quality Management allows an organization's system to maintain stable internal processes through adaptation to new customer demands while delivering superior products and services in an ever-changing market. Based on the work of W.E. Deming and others, the three major tenets behind TQM are satisfy the customer, satisfy the supplier, and continuously improve. Deming emphasizes a process for continuous improvement and contends that management should frequently assess and use data to improve the system of production and service (Crosby, 1979; Deming, 2000; Feigenbaum, 1991; Juran, 1992; Shewhart, 1980). The concept of ongoing improvement is illustrated in Shewhart's cycle or Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle (Saurez, 1992); later adopted by Deming and transformed into the Plan-Do-

Study-Act cycle (Westcott, 2006). In order for schools and programs to use the concepts of total quality philosophy that result in improvement, data must be gathered, documented accurately, and include valid measures, and then used to drive next best decisions for improvement (Detert & Jenni, 2000).

Applying TQM to the field of education provides a framework for developing a system that identifies and defines quality; sets priorities for critical implementation elements; builds capacity; and designs, implements, and sustains quality programs. The application of total quality management principles involves a long-term commitment to excellence, including a commitment to goal setting, problem solving and working together as a team. In order to produce long lasting improvements, all parties must feel ownership in the stated goals and a commitment to achieving positive results (Scott & Palmer, 1994).

The total quality philosophy provides a framework for using data to create a continuous cycle of improvement for afterschool programs. As the nation continues to restructure the ways that students are evaluated, afterschool programs need to be a part of this change. Current evaluation methods must be redesigned and alternative forms of assessment used. Leaders in the field must be involved in the creation and analysis of these approaches and instruments. Hard statistical data based on the principles of total quality management, containing a wider array of variables, will help bring about much needed proactive change (McElroy & Ulmer, 2013).

Significance

Annually, billions of federal, state, and private dollars fund local education initiatives designed to make a difference in the lives of children, adults and families. When state and federal funding is combined, California's investment in afterschool programs is nearly \$700 million per year (Torlakson & Peck, 2013).

The public has a right to know if the programs they are funding are actually producing the intended effect. Impacts of these major investments must be known. Lawmakers and educators have a responsibility to fully understand the benefits, liabilities and implications of policy and funding decisions. Tom Torlakson, California State Superintendent of Public Instruction, stated, “California leaders have been keenly aware that we need to become a state recognized for the quality of our out-of-school time investments and not just for being the state spending the most money on these important programs” (Torlakson & Peck, 2013, p. 376).

Practitioners concerned with the development and delivery of afterschool programs devote countless hours of their time to the nuts and bolts of program implementation. They provide direct services to participants, facilitate discussions with program partners, and address unanticipated issues that arise. Frontline implementers and technical assistance providers spend precious time, energy and other resources on afterschool program implementation, yet inevitably many program questions often remain unanswered. What’s working and what’s not? Are we making a difference? Are the participants benefiting? How can we demonstrate that this program should be re-funded? Are our guesses good about the best direction of our program and has the program proven to be successful?

Currently, there is no commonly held understanding of what constitutes a quality afterschool program and no systematic assessment or ongoing evaluation of the quality of afterschool programs, which makes answers to these questions difficult, therefore making regular monitoring essential. A common understanding of what constitutes quality and evidences program effectiveness is essential for regular monitoring of program quality and data collection and analysis to inform program improvements. Without quality indicators and data

relative to these indicators, programs and policies may often proceed in unproductive directions, wasting precious time, money, energy and resources.

Providing quality, meaningful and high impact afterschool learning experiences for children that support school success is no simple task. Past practice has demonstrated that many expanded learning programs working in isolation from their schools are not optimizing their potential impact at improving student outcomes. Although educators may be challenged to find the time and motivation to collaborate in a meaningful way with community partners, schools and afterschool partners who develop a shared vision for student success, pool human and financial resources, and fully take advantage of the resources that the state provides for expanding learning time produce more successful outcomes for students (Torlakson & Peck, 2013).

Research indicates a number of elements most often present in afterschool programs viewed as quality: a strong vision; management and collaboration; sufficient and quality staff; attention to safety, health and nutrition issues; effective family and community partnerships; enriching learning opportunities that complement the school day; links between school-day and after school staff; and evaluation of program progress and effectiveness (Afterschool Alliance, 2012; Bodilly & Beckett, 2005; David, 2011; Jordan, Parker, Donelly, & Rudo, 2009). However, no clear criteria and consistent methods are used to evaluate quality in afterschool programs, nor is there a requirement to demonstrate quality to ensure continued funding (Bodilly & Beckett, 2005; Piha, 2006). Each program has the autonomy to set individual goals and create independent measurement outcomes and indicators of success, therefore there is significant discrepancy regarding what parents, school district administrators, and community members can expect children to experience in an afterschool program. Without a common

understanding of what constitutes a quality program, there is little hope of developing adequate and effective tools for measuring quality and supporting program improvement. This research fills a void in the body of knowledge needed on the topic.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify and examine afterschool program elements considered most important or essential to developing, executing, and sustaining a high quality program. Specifically, this study (a) identified the Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSAT) elements and Learning in Afterschool and Summer (LIAS) principles frontline implementers and technical assistance providers perceive as most important and highest leverage in creating and sustaining a program of high quality and (b) explored the value and impact of using the QSAT and LIAS principles tool to improve and sustain program quality.

Research Questions

The following questions were used to guide the study and inform the research:

1. What QSAT elements and LIAS principles do leaders in the field of expanded learning (frontline implementers and technical assistance providers of elementary and middle school site-based afterschool programs) identify as most important and highest leverage for program improvement and sustaining a program of high quality?
2. What are frontline implementers' perceptions regarding the use and impact of the QSAT and LIAS principles tool on program quality?

Definition of Terms

Afterschool programs: Programs that operate with public funding and are the result of collaboration between community partnerships and local education agencies (LEA).

Community partners: Community organizations that provide support to students participating in afterschool programs in the form of monetary, space, staff, volunteers or other resources.

Compliance: Establishing practices or policies in accordance with requirements from external authorities.

Cycle of continuous improvement: An ongoing effort to improve program quality through a systems approach of planning actions, implementing actions, frequently collecting data and measuring effectiveness of actions, and using data to inform next step plans or actions for program improvement.

Expanded learning: Learning that takes place outside of traditional classroom time that provides unique opportunities to meet the academic, social, emotional and physical needs and interests of students through individualized and engaging learning.

Evaluation: To judge or determine the significance, worth, or quality of (“Evaluation,” 2013).

Frontline implementers: Individuals working either at the district or site level to support and operate afterschool programs on elementary and middle school campuses.

Learning in Afterschool and Summer (LIAS) principles: A self-assessment tool to help examine the level of youth engagement in afterschool programs through five defined principles of learning: active, collaborative, meaningful, supports mastery, and expands horizons. The five principles or

indicators of learning are identified and described as an integral part of this tool to help promote young people's learning and their development after the school day (Temescal Associates, 2012).

Publicly funded: Programs funded primarily through state and federal dollars in the form of After School Education and Safety (ASES) state grants and 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) federal grants.

Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSAT): Tool designed in collaboration between the California Afterschool Network and the California Department of Education to engage stakeholders in meaningful, focused conversations about afterschool program quality. The tool facilitates support and program improvement through a self-directed process, in which self-assessment findings inform action plan development and the immediate, mid-range, and long-term professional development and technical support needed to enhance program quality and set goals. The QSAT is not intended for use as an external evaluation tool, and each individual program determines how the QSAT is used (California Afterschool Network, 2009).

Technical assistance providers: Individuals funded by state and federal grants who develop and provide resources supporting safe and educationally enriching environments for children and youth in before and afterschool programs throughout California (CDE, 2012d). Technical assistance providers may also be supported through private organizations, non-profit foundations, or educational institutions.

Total Quality Management (TQM): An integrative philosophy of management for continuously improving the quality of products and processes (Westcott, 2006).

Delimitations

This study was delimited to publicly funded afterschool programs operating in California serving elementary and middle school students. High school programs were not included in this study. In addition, participants were delimited to individuals personally involved in the operation of an afterschool program as a frontline implementer (district level program leader or site level leader) or as a technical assistance provider.

Summary

Schools and districts across America are scrambling to meet ever-changing student needs. Increased performance demands are creating a renewed focus on shared accountability; requiring schools to explore multiple options to provide a culture that supports student success. States, districts and schools are making key decisions about the best use and allocation of resources during unprecedented economic times and ever-changing demographics. Since afterschool programs provide increased opportunities to provide support to students, it is important to understand what defines quality and how it can be measured and supported. Developing a system to assess program quality and engage in a cycle of continuous improvement is critical to long-term success. The purpose of this study was to: (a) identify the QSAT elements and LIAS principles frontline implementers and technical assistance providers perceive as most important and highest leverage in creating and sustaining a program of high quality and (b) explore the value and impact of the use of the QSAT and LIAS principles tool to improve and sustain program quality.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature focused on three relevant areas that provide a foundation for this study. First, a historical perspective of afterschool programs is provided including the origins and descriptions of funding

sources. Next, the topic of quality, specifically defining and assessing quality, quality in education and afterschool programs, and tools for assessing quality in afterschool programs are discussed. Lastly, research relative to the evaluation, assessment, and use of data to develop systems for continuous improvement is reviewed.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology used for this study including the research design and questions, purpose of the study, participant sample, instrumentation and pilot study, and data collection and analysis procedures. The limitations of the study are also discussed. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study and analysis of the data in relation to the research questions. Chapter 5 presents a summary of findings and conclusions, discussion of the literature in relation to study findings, and implications for practice and future research.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Overview

The review of the literature focuses on three relevant areas that provide a foundation for this study. First, a historical perspective of afterschool programs is provided including the origins and descriptions of funding sources. Next, the topic of quality, specifically defining and assessing quality, quality in education and afterschool programs, and tools for assessing quality in afterschool programs are discussed. Lastly, research relative to the evaluation, assessment, and use of data to develop systems for continuous improvement is reviewed.

Historical Perspective

Emergence of Programs

Afterschool programs emerged as the result of changes in child labor laws – a reduction of children in the workforce, an increase of women in the workforce, the compulsory education requirement initiated in the late 1800s, and the need to keep children safe and provide supervision. Historical and political changes have contributed to increased expectations regarding the use of afterschool time (Halpern, 2002). The recent and rapid expansion of extended learning opportunities can be linked to two significant developments; the increase in parents working full-time, outside of the home, and the rise of the standards-based reform movement. This reform effort created the need to provide additional time and opportunity for students to meet challenging academic standards. Educators, policymakers, and youth-serving organizations have come to view afterschool programs as a promising strategy to promote intentional learning out-of-school time in a safe and supervised environment (Fortune, Padgett, & Fickel, 2005).

Afterschool programs emerged in the United States in the latter part of the 19th century. Over the past 15 years, increased attention has been given to expanded learning or lengthening the school day, resulting in enormous interest in afterschool programs. Afterschool programs experienced modest beginnings in church basements, storefronts, and settlement houses. Over time, afterschool care increased and developed into major national organizations such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, 4-H clubs, and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)/Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). Currently, the 40 largest national youth organizations have an estimated total membership of approximately 40 million youth (Hirsch, 2011). These Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) now work as collaborative partners with school districts to provide support in a number of ways: financial contributions, space sharing, personnel, and time (National Association of Elementary School Principals [NAESP], 2009b). Many major cities such as Chicago (After School Matters), Los Angeles (LA's Best), and New York (The After School Corporation) have relentlessly worked to expand afterschool programs and integrate these programs as part of their education and youth services' infrastructure (Hirsch, 2011). Several models currently operate across the state of California ranging from on school site and off site programs to programs staffed with a variety of employees including district certificated teaching staff, classified staff, and employees from community based organizations (NAESP, 2009a).

Afterschool programs began with one basic goal, to provide a safe place for children and keep youth off the streets in order to protect them from crime and delinquency. Over time this goal expanded to include everything from prevention of teenage pregnancy and providing children the opportunity for play to offering enrichment experiences and youth development. Many programs have taken on

the role of serving as academic support to school districts (Halpern, 2002; Hirsh, 2011; Mahoney et al., 2007; Stedron, 2007).

Afterschool programs have been defined in terms of protection, care, and opportunity for enrichment and play while simultaneously defined in terms such as socialization, acculturation, and problem remediation. Afterschool providers believe that children's interests and preferences should direct the type of program developed. Individuals unfamiliar with afterschool program goals have at times defined afterschool programs by what they are not - *not* family, *not* school, and *not* the streets (Halpern, 2002).

Support and Funding

Political and social factors influence support and funding for afterschool programs. Early funding, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which began in 1974 and reauthorized with revisions, was used to support caring for children after school (United States Housing and Urban Development, 2013). The first substantial financial federal support for afterschool programs was provided in the form of the 1990 Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), now called the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF). This federal program assists low-income families in obtaining childcare so that parents can work or attend training or school. Developed originally to provide cash welfare to poor families with children since 1935, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) was replaced with the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, which provides funding through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant. Under TANF, the federal government provides block grants to states that use these funds to operate their own programs to support childcare, education and support for parents to attend work or work readiness training. In order to receive federal funds, states must also

spend some of their own dollars on programs for needy families. This state-spending requirement, known as the *maintenance of effort* (MOE) requirement, replaced the state match requirement of AFDC. States can use federal TANF and state MOE dollars to meet any of the four goals established in the *Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996*:

- (1) provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives; (2) end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage; (3) prevent and reduce the incidence of out of wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies; and (4) encourage the formation and maintenance of two parent families. (Schott, 2012, p. 1)

States have used TANF funds for a variety of services and supports including income assistance (i.e., wage supplements for working-poor families), childcare, education and job training, transportation, aid to children at risk of abuse and neglect, and a variety of other services to help low-income families. Since the four TANF goals are extremely general, states allocate TANF funds for a broad and wide range of uses. The 1996 law authorized TANF funding through the 2002 federal fiscal year. After several short-term extensions, Congress reauthorized TANF for another five years in the *Deficit Reduction Act of 2005* and made some modifications to the program. Since October 2010, Congress has extended TANF several times and recently authorized it through March 27, 2013 (Schott, 2012).

In 1995 the federal government began allocating funds in the form of Twenty-First (21st) Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) grants, which was the first federal funding solely for the purpose of supporting afterschool programs. The 21st CCLC program provides 5-year grant funding to establish or expand afterschool programs designed to serve kindergarten through grade 12

students, specifically students attending program improvement schools. During the Clinton Administration (1998-2000), funding specifically for afterschool programs was dedicated in the federal budget under the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Act, with an initial \$40 million allocation increasing to \$435 million by the year 2000. With the advent of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) in 2001, the amount of federal 21st CCLC funding increased significantly; \$40 million in 1998, \$846 million in 2001, and in 2002 \$1 billion was appropriated. Funding remained fairly steady from 2003 to 2007, ranging from \$993.5 to \$981 million. Between 2008 and 2011, funding increased every year with \$1.154 billion allocated in 2011. The actual 2012 allocation of \$1.152 billion was a slight reduction from the 2011 allocation of \$1.154 billion, and less than the \$2.5 billion authorized in the *No Child Left Behind Act* (Afterschool Alliance, 2013). Even with this level of financial commitment and support, more than 15 million school-aged children are without supervision during after school hours (Afterschool Alliance, 2009).

Additionally, NCLB of 2001 made significant changes to the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, mandating the transition of 21st CCLC from federal to state administration and institutionalizing the management of extended learning programs as part of the work of state education agencies (Fortune et al., 2005). NCLB authorized the California Department of Education (CDE) to administer these federal funds under Education Code 8484.7-8484.9, which further defines the program (CDE, 2012c).

According to the Afterschool Alliance (2011), 21st CCLC federal grants support afterschool programs by providing a variety of services to students who attend high-poverty, low-performing schools:

- Academic enrichment activities that support students to meet state and local achievement standards.
- A broad array of additional services designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program such as drug and violence prevention programs; counseling programs; art, music, and recreation programs; technology education programs; and character education programs.
- Literacy and related educational development services to the families of children who are served in the program.

With the approval of Proposition 49 (2002), a California voter approved initiative, California Education Code (ED) 8482 was amended, which resulted in renaming and expanding the former Before and After School Learning and Safe Neighborhood Partnership Program to the After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program. The ASES Program supports afterschool education and enrichment programs that are formed between local schools and community resource partners. The purpose of the program is to provide literacy, academic enrichment, and safe constructive afterschool alternatives for students attending kindergarten through grade nine (CDE, 2012c).

Afterschool programs vary due to reflecting local needs and interests, however, ASES and 21st CCLC programs share common purposes: (a) provide a safe, positive environment for children and youth during the hours when they are most at risk, (b) raise student academic performance and strengthen social skills, and (c) build community partnerships that strengthen program quality and improve prospects for sustainability (Fletcher & Padover, 2003). The goals of 21st CCLC programs include establishing community learning centers that help students in high-poverty, low-performing schools meet academic achievement standards;

offering a broad array of additional services designed to complement the regular program; and offering families and students opportunities for educational development (Chappell, 2006). The intent of ASES program legislation was to encourage schools and school districts to provide safe and educationally enriching alternatives for children and youth during non-school hours. The goal of the funding is to create incentives for local communities to work with school districts to support and provide before and after school education and enrichment programs (CDE, 2012c).

Although financial support for afterschool programs has grown significantly over the past 15 years, balanced and diversified funding are required to build program sustainability (Fletcher & Padover, 2003). Sustainable funding requires a combination of multiple sources such as public funds from state and federal grants, private funding from education and civic organizations, foundations, state and community based organizations, youth-serving organizations, cities, school districts, and private donations (NAESP, 2009a). States may also use a certain portion of the Elementary and Secondary Education (ESEA) Title 1 funding to subsidize childcare including afterschool care (Mahoney et al., 2009; National Education Association, 2008; Sandel, 2007). *The No Child Left Behind Act* (2001) explicitly articulated expanded learning opportunities as a strategy for turning around low-performing schools, providing sources other than 21st CCLC funding to be used to support afterschool programs (Fortune et al., 2005).

ASES and 21st CCLC funding are similar in almost every aspect, with a few exceptions. Approval for ASES funding, which comes from the state, requires that 50% or more of students attending the qualified Local Education Agency (LEA) receive free and reduced priced meals, while 21st CCLC federal

funding requires 40% of students to qualify for free and reduced priced meals.

Additionally, ASES funding requires a 33% in-kind or cash contribution in matching funds, while 21st CCLC does not legally require matching funds but encourages building partnerships to promote sustainability (CDE, 2012a).

California surpasses all other states in financial contributions to support afterschool programs (Afterschool Alliance, 2009). Between 1998 and 2003, California's investment in afterschool programs grew significantly, clearly demonstrating California's leadership role in funding and supporting afterschool programs. During this 5-year period, allocations from California's Before and Afterschool Learning and Safe Neighborhoods partnership grants increased from \$3.6 million to \$13 million; serving approximately 250,000 children (Fletcher & Padover, 2003). With the passage of Proposition 49 in 2002, this funding increased to nearly \$550 million in state contributions. ASES state funding supports afterschool programs by (a) maintaining existing before and afterschool program funding, and (b) providing eligibility to all California public elementary and middle schools who submit quality applications (CDE, 2009). The first time the *After School Education and Safety Act of 2002* was fully funded in California's state budget was with the approval of Governor Schwarzenegger's 2006-2007 state budget. ASES funding can also be combined with other state funding sources to serve students (Mahoney et al., 2009). Data available from the CDE (2011) indicated that \$530,726,028 of ASES funding has been allocated throughout all California to publicly fund programs serving over 370,000 students. In addition, California receives 21st Century Community Learning Centers federal grants of which approximately \$130 million were allocated in 2012 (Afterschool Alliance, 2013).

Program Development

Over the past several years, both state and federal funding have facilitated the expansion of extended learning programming. The goal of ASES programs is to improve and support local efforts by providing a broader base of resources and enrichment opportunities for students in support of their education in a safe environment during non-school hours. Education Code 8482.3 encourages and supports collaboration between LEAs, city and county government agencies, non-profit organizations, community-based organizations, and the private sector (CDE, 2012c). ASES programs should be designed to complement and not repeat the content of the regular school day. Education Code 8482 states that programs must possess two elements: (a) an education and literacy element that helps students meet standards in core academic subjects such as language arts, math, social studies, and science and (b) an enrichment element that offers a variety of activities that may include, but are not limited to, youth development, general recreation, career awareness and work preparation, health and nutrition promotion, performing arts, music, and community service-learning (CDE, 2012c).

Although program element requirements exist for both California (ASES) and federally funded (21st CCLC) programs, no clear expectations, guidelines, examples or criteria exist for how to achieve these requirements (David, 2011; Hirsch, 2011; Piha, 2006). The development of quality standards for afterschool programs in California is currently (2013) in the final stages of approval, however up to this point the only guide for programs was contained in a list of assurances that programs must fulfill in order to receive and maintain funding (CDE, 2012c). ASES program assurances (Appendix A) are slightly different from 21st CCLC assurances (Appendix B), and the federal assurances outline the most recent

requirements in the Request for 21st CCLC grants that CDE accepted on November 30, 2012 (CDE, 2012c).

Program goals and outcome measures are similar for each type of funding; however, 21st CCLC grant funding is for a 5-year period and then requires the grantee to reapply and repeat the entire application process while ASES grant funding is for a 3-year period and ongoing, without a reapplication process, subject to demonstration and evidence of positive outcomes in student academic performance, improved social behavior and increased attendance during the school day (Fletcher & Padover, 2003). Grantees report student data annually to the California Department of Education in the form of a statewide evaluation report. Additionally, the ASES grant does not require a separate family literacy component as required by the 21st CCLC, which also provides an opportunity to serve adult family members of program participants (CDE, 2012c).

A strategic initiative is underway in California (2012–2015) to guide the work of the After School Division (ASD). The purpose of this work is to develop: (a) a statement of strategic direction to include a vision, purpose, core values, strategic initiatives and goals for the After School Division; (b) an accountability framework for the ASD detailing objectives, indicators, and targets in order to determine when goals have been accomplished; and (c) an annual implementation plan that summarizes key activities, responsible parties, and timelines for the work necessary to meet all objectives; acknowledges accomplishments; and directs the development of future goals and responsibilities for next steps (CDE, 2012b). The strategic initiative areas include:

1. System of Support - Provide a comprehensive and coordinated system of support and accountability to maintain and improve

program quality while encouraging creativity and innovation in the field.

2. Grant Administration and Policy - Develop and maintain clearly defined guidelines, regulations, and program requirements and processes and support efficient program administration.
3. Communication/Information Systems – Communicate with stakeholders (grantees, school districts, community based organizations and all other parties involved in or affected by the decisions made in the After School Division) in a clear, timely, and transparent manner.
4. Expanded Learning/ K-12 Integration – Identify and develop methods to champion expanded learning as a vital, equal, integrated part of the education system (CDE, 2012b).

Other states such as Georgia are also working to improve the field of expanded learning. In 2011, the Georgia Afterschool Investment Council (GAIC) initiated the development of quality standards for afterschool programs. In this work, GAIC defines afterschool as an inclusive term referring to programming that takes place during out-of-school time hours, which includes before school, after school, summer, holidays and weekends. Afterschool programming is structured and provides a diverse range of programming to enrich learning experiences, promote healthy living, and support positive emotional, social and cognitive development in children and youth (GAIC, 2011).

The Afterschool Investment Council views the quality standards as a framework to help program providers identify areas for improvement and create an action plan for improvement. The standards are also a means for funders to hold providers accountable to a defined standard of quality. Lastly, the standards

are a tool to help educate Georgians about what quality afterschool programming looks like. The development and release of the Georgia afterschool quality standards completes the first phase of a multi-stage process. During phase two, which began in 2012, the GAIC is developing indicators for the quality standards. Specifically, the purpose of this phase is to clarify how afterschool programs can incorporate these standards. The third and final phase will focus on the development of a measurement and monitoring tool based on these indicators (GAIC, 2011).

The Georgia quality standards for afterschool programs are:

- A framework of clear expectations for all stakeholders.
- A guide for providers in program self-assessment to indicate what is going well and what needs improvement.
- A tool for parents and youth to identify quality programming.
- A set of recommendations that, when adopted, act as an assurance to funders that programs will be high quality.
- A compliment to other standards in the state of Georgia focused on quality improvement - such as the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) standards of the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.
- A symbol of Georgia's commitment to provide children, youth and families access to a diverse range of programming that enrich and support the positive development of young people across the state (GAIC, 2011).

Impact of Afterschool Programs

Hall et al. (2010) conducted a study to investigate the perceived effects of afterschool programs relative to student achievement, student self-esteem, and

student attitudes. Four research questions were addressed in the study focused on: (a) the extent to which student perceptions of an afterschool program featuring academic and cultural enrichment services relate to a set of 11 personal and social perception variables-(personal self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, parental duties, parental emotional support, school disciplinary action, peer misbehavior, teacher support, satisfaction with school, personal responsibility, personal achievement, and locus of control), (b) the extent to which the level of student involvement in the program differs by parent concerns regarding their children's safety/well-being, perceptions of their children's self-esteem, and perceived quality of their children's school, (c) the extent to which staff perceptions of program quality relate to staff philosophies of education and beliefs about children; and (d) characteristics of the program that students, parents and staff perceive as noteworthy. The study was conducted in six Title 1 schools (three elementary K-5 sites and three middle school 6-8 sites), and participants included 257 students, parents and staff involved in afterschool programs residing in underprivileged neighborhoods. A concurrent mixed method design was used consisting of surveys, individual interviews and focus groups (Hall et al., 2010).

Student survey data revealed moderate to large relationships between personal and social perception variables and the two dependent variables, perceptions of program and perceptions of program staff. Findings indicated that students who: have a positive perception of school; are personally responsible; possess a high sense of achievement; feel supported by parents, program staff, and teachers; and have a strong internal loci of control perceive afterschool programs positively. Qualitative findings supported students' positive perceptions of the program and the relationships with developing social skills and autonomy as well as an involved caring staff. Discriminant analysis was conducted to determine the

extent to which the level of student involvement in the program differed by parent concerns about their children's safety/well-being, perceptions of their children's self-esteem, and perceptions of the quality of their children's school. Results revealed that parents of children more involved in the afterschool program did not have appreciably different concerns when compared to parents of children less involved. Parents in the study identified the program as a safe haven. Parents' decisions regarding their children's participation in afterschool programs were not related to their feelings about their children's personal well-being and school experience. Program operating time and availability of adult supervision emerged as factors relative to parents' decisions to have their children participate in afterschool programs (Hall et al., 2010).

A regression analysis was conducted to investigate the extent to which staff perceptions of program quality relate to staff philosophies of education and beliefs about children. Results revealed no appreciable relationship between staff philosophy/beliefs and perceptions of program quality. Focus group results indicated a generally positive staff attitude toward the program; therefore regression results might be interpreted to suggest variation in staff perceptions of quality. Results did not measure the extent to which staff felt the program exceeded a minimal threshold of quality. Results also revealed that program leadership respected individual differences in staff views of education and children as long as staff adhered to the basic tenets and goals of the program (Hall et al., 2010).

Student, parent and staff survey data revealed five program characteristics perceived as noteworthy: autonomy among staff and students, dedicated staff, parent involvement, student learning, and developing relationships. Providing a safe haven for students and the opportunity to develop relationships with caring

adults emerged as noteworthy program characteristics from parent interview data. Staff identified access to continuous expert education and training as critical characteristics for a successful program. Hall et al. (2010) concluded that afterschool programs are valuable and necessary for many children, particularly children from economically disadvantaged environments; supporting the idea that care should be taken to ensure that these programs meet students' needs in the most effective, beneficial way possible.

Gottfredson et al. (2010) conducted a study to assess the effects of afterschool program participation on middle school youth relative to a number of outcomes. The variables or intermediate outcomes examined were pro-social attitudes, social competence, school bonding, positive peer influence, unsupervised socializing; and distal outcomes examined were school attendance, academic performance and conduct problems. Participants included a random sample of 447 students from five low-performing middle schools in the Baltimore County Public Schools in Baltimore, Maryland. Participants were either involved in an organized afterschool program or identified themselves as participating in some organized activity during afterschool hours from programs developed in collaboration with four public agencies. The research design included two groups, a treatment and a control group. Participants from each school had a 50% chance of being assigned to the treatment group (students enrolled in the afterschool program) and the control group (students not enrolled in the afterschool program). The principals of the five low-performing middle schools expressed a need for afterschool programs in their schools. Data were collected from student registration forms, the Youth Experienced Survey 2.0 (YES), school records (grades, attendance, and discipline), teacher survey ratings (teachers rated students on classroom behavior, social adjustment and academic competence), a web-based

management information system (quantity and quality of services provided), and composite scales, based on scales researchers developed to capture eight outcomes identified in the program model. Four outcomes (unsupervised socializing, positive peer influence, school bonding, and school attendance) were measured with a single indicator. The other outcomes (social competence, pro-social attitudes and beliefs, academic performance, and conduct problems) were measured with multiple indicators. Multiple indicators including teacher reports of academic competence, grade point average, Maryland School Assessment (MSA) reading, and MSA math scores (standardized test scores) were combined to form four academic performance composite scales (Gottfredson et al., 2010).

Much like prior research (Durlak & Weissberg, 2007; Dynarski et al., 2004; Flay et al., 2005; Huang, Kim, Marshall, & Perez, 2005; Lauver, 2002; Scott-Little, Hamann, & Jurs, 2002; Smith & Kennedy, 1991; Weisman et al., 2002), major findings indicated no strong evidence that participation in an afterschool program for middle school students produces positive outcomes. This result may be due to extremely low attendance rates and current thinking that program design is ineffective in reaching middle school aged youth. Gottfredson et al. (2010) concluded that middle school youth might respond better to afterschool activities that focus on developing bonds with positive adult role models or mentors. Alternate afterschool models should be considered such as a model focused on mentoring activities with a small number of youth for a shorter period of time that builds closer relationships between youth and adults and provides a more fluid and flexible schedule (Gottfredson et al., 2010)

Bender et al. (2011) conducted four field studies for the purposes of examining predictors of program participation, outcomes associated with intervention elements, and assessment of additional service needs. Results from

the four individual studies also contributed to identifying challenges experienced when conducting research in this setting. The four studies were conducted between 2008 and 2010 in four public housing neighborhoods served by the Bridge Project. All youth who elect to participate in the Bridge Project are low-income and racially and ethnically diverse. Each study included participants selected from approximately 400 youth, between the ages of 3 and 18, registered to participate in the Bridge Project annually, and based on criteria specific to the study.

Study 1 was conducted to determine the type of social support provided to Bridge Project youth that increases participation in tutoring. Eighty-five youth, enrolled in grades 6-8, participated in the study. Results revealed that youth with a greater amount of support from friends, teachers, and individuals within the neighborhood engaged in tutoring more frequently. Specifically, when controlling for all other support factors and socio-demographics, the only significant predictor of tutoring participation was support from one's teacher (Bender et al., 2011).

Study 2 investigated (a) the extent to which youth participating in the Bridge Project over the course of one academic year improved their reading ability, and (b) the association between increased hours of programming and enhanced reading ability. Ninety-six kindergarten through eighth graders participated in the study. Findings revealed significant improvement in participants' reading levels from fall pretest to spring posttest. Approximately 87% of youth evidenced at least one-grade level improvement. Regression analyses revealed that the number of hours a youth participated in literacy programming had a positive and significant association with students' computer use (Bender et al., 2011).

Study 3 investigated parental participation in youths' education. The investigation also sought to identify barriers to parental involvement in their child's educational activities due to the fact that Bridge Project interventions seek to help parents become more involved in specific services related to supporting their child's academic success. Two structured focus groups were conducted with 12 parents of children attending the Bridge Project identified through a snowball sampling technique among parent networks. Results indicated tangible barriers for parents regarding their ability to participate in school-related activities: limited time available, lack of finances and transportation, cultural and language barriers, and lack of access to the technology used to communicate with teachers. Parents also reported feeling marginalized when interacting with school officials as well as frustrated and helpless due to their perception of being "dismissed" for coming from a low-income background (Bender et al., 2011).

Study 4 was conducted to identify environmental risk factors that may contribute to and influence program participants' to exhibit negative behaviors and impact program participants' academic achievement. Bridge Project participants live in public housing neighborhoods; therefore the study compared the relative influence of deviant friendships to the influence of deviant neighborhood peers on Bridge Project participants' behavior and academic outcomes. Findings revealed that friends' deviant behavior was related to participants' behavior and academic problems. The findings also suggested that the delinquent behaviors of other youth in the neighborhood were associated with negative outcomes for Bridge Project participants. Bender et al. (2011) concluded that providing youth with strategies and skills to select positive peer groups, resist peer pressure, and effectively solve problems might be one means of combating the negative influence of deviant friends and reduce the negative effects of neighborhood peers.

Additionally, in order to engage and retain youth and promote positive development in afterschool programs, peer contexts should be built for youth that foster a sense of community and acceptance and are developmentally appropriate and age group appealing. Programming should continue to consider and adapt to peer risk factors to achieve the aim of improving academic outcomes (Bender et al., 2011).

Based on review and analyses of the four studies, Bender et al. (2011) identified challenges of conducting program-based research in afterschool settings, which included small sample size, measuring relevant change, and threats to internal validity. Bender et al. concluded that while evaluation in this context is challenging, attempts at rigorous evaluation will likely result in improved services for youth and their families and justification for continued financial support for these programs.

Mahoney et al. (2007) conducted a study to assess afterschool program-level differences relative to student competencies, student engagement, program quality, and program content. The study was conducted over a 2-year time period and included 141 children (73 girls and 66 boys), averaging 8.4 years of age, attending nine afterschool programs in an urban, disadvantaged city in the United States. This subgroup of students was part of the original sample of 651 students involved in the longitudinal study of after school time and children's well-being. Classroom teacher ratings provided information for measuring student competence, while program engagement, quality, and content were assessed primarily through observation. After considering several possible selection factors and controlling for prior assessments of competence, findings revealed that student grades were not significantly associated with program engagement. Using observation and evaluation of program schedules, data revealed that programs

considered engaging were rated significantly higher in several domains of process quality (i.e., organization, social climate, skill-building emphasis) and devoted more time to enrichment activities and less time to homework and non-skill-building activities (Mahoney et al., 2007).

Using a reflective inquiry process involving multiple stakeholders and practitioners, Sabo-Flores (2010) conducted a study in collaboration with a team from the Robert Browne Foundation to identify the characteristics present in quality out-of-school time programming. Phase 1 of the process examined promising practices in nine out-of-school time programs relative to the research team's identified criteria, exploring aspects of organizational effectiveness that supported *quality* programming. Phase 2 expanded on the findings of phase one, however, four programs were eliminated due to the fact that they were not operating as typical afterschool programs based on content and time of operation. Phase 2 examined program context, looking outside traditional paradigms, and explored new models and frameworks for success. Individual interviews of 18 executives, focus group interviews including 35 staff members, and three observations of each of the five programs were conducted.

Results revealed unique organizational attributes for each program producing successful outcomes. Each program developed learning organizations that used positive youth development, exhibiting characteristics similar to but not identical to Senge's five disciplines. Each site also reported high levels of personal fulfillment, with staff retention levels averaging nearly five years. A high level of staff training was evident, creating a highly qualified staff. In addition, programs were committed to continual improvement with the organizations creating and re-creating content based on staff and youth passion and interests. Sabo-Flores (2010) concluded that what made programs in the study *high quality*

was the engagement of staff and youth in program planning/design and implementation based on attributes of and strategies for positive youth development which included relationship building; building and supporting systems; a commitment to strong flexible teams; engagement in open, critical and reflective discourse; and valuing unique contributions of individuals working individually and together.

Quality

Defining and Assessing Quality

In the most general terms, quality can be defined as “degree of excellence” (“Quality,” 2013). For decades quality has been a term used in evaluation to measure outcomes or level of effectiveness in manufacturing and business; however, measuring quality in education has proven to be more problematic (Ryan, 2004). According to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), (2005), Education for All Global Monitoring Report, two objectives characterize most attempts to define quality in education; the first of which is the learner’s cognitive development and measuring this is relatively simple using achievement scores that are often used to identify *quality*. The second objective emphasizes education’s role in promoting values and attitudes of responsible citizenship and nurturing creative and emotional development. Achievement of these objectives is difficult to assess and compare across countries. Quality determines how much and how well children learn and the extent to which their education translates into a range of personal, social and developmental benefits (Scheeren, Luyten & Ravens, 2011; UNESCO, 2005).

Phillip B. Crosby (1979), W. Edwards Deming (2000), Walter Shewhart (1980), Armand Feigenbaum (1991), and Joseph M. Juran (1992), all industry

leaders, have contributed to building the body of knowledge and understanding of the concept of *quality*. Crosby defined quality as conformance to requirements. The performance goal of zero defects is a part of Crosby's philosophy, in which the approach to quality management means prevention. Quality defects are associated with significant cost; the most obvious being money, time, resources, and lost reputation. Programs to eliminate quality defects can be expensive and time consuming. One of Crosby's most compelling concepts, *zero defects*, begs the question, do you insist on eliminating defects entirely no matter the cost or do you accept that a certain, albeit very small, percentage of defects is acceptable, and just accept the costs and learn to live with them? Zero defects is a way of thinking and doing that reinforces the notion that defects are not acceptable, and each member of an organization should *do things right the first time*. Crosby explained that there are three main ingredients to preventing errors: determination, education, and implementation, and argued that when there are zero defects, no costs are associated with issues of poor quality; and hence, quality becomes free. The zero defect philosophy increases profit and success by eliminating the cost of failure; thus increasing revenue and customer satisfaction (Crosby, 1979).

Crosby (1979) contended that statistical levels of compliance set people up for failure; therefore, inspection testing and checking other non-preventive techniques have no place in quality management. Quality is either present or not; there are no *levels* of quality. Crosby claimed five absolutes of quality management:

1. Quality means conformance not elegance;
2. There is no such thing as a quality problem;
3. There is no such thing as the economics of quality; it is always cheaper to do the job right the first time;

4. The only performance measurement is the cost of quality and;
5. The only performance standard is zero defects. (p. 131)

Crosby (1979) described quality improvement as a process, not a program, which should be permanent and lasting and purported 14 steps necessary for quality improvement:

1. Clearly communicate to all employees that management is committed to quality;
2. Form quality improvement teams with representatives from each department;
3. Determine how to measure where current and potential quality problems exist;
4. Evaluate the cost of quality and explain its use as a management tool;
5. Raise quality awareness and personal concern of all employees;
6. Take formal action to correct problems identified through previous steps;
7. Establish a committee for the zero defects program;
8. Train all employees to actively carry out their part of the quality improvement program;
9. Hold a zero defects day to let employees realize that there has been a change;
10. Encourage individuals to establish improvement goals for themselves and for their groups;
11. Encourage employees to communicate to management the obstacles they face in attaining their improvement goals;
12. Recognize and appreciate those who participate;

13. Establish quality councils to communicate on a regular basis; and
14. Repeat all of the steps over again to emphasize that the quality improvement process never ends. (pp. 132-139)

Walter A. Shewhart (1980), a quality control pioneer and mentor of Juran (1992) and W.E. Deming (2000), created the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle; later adopted by Deming and transformed into the Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle.

Nicknamed the *father of statistical quality control*, Shewhart (1980) brought together and bridged the disciplines of statistics, engineering, and economics. In 1931, he authored the first statistics text focused on quality, *Economic Control of Quality of Manufactured Product*, which was reissued as an Anniversary edition in 1980 (Shewhart, 1980).

Deming, American statistician turned business consultant during the 1900s, viewed quality as the primary driver for business and societal success and communicated the quality philosophy as a chain reaction. The premise is if quality improves, costs decrease, and resources are better utilized. Increased productivity allows companies to capture market share due to high quality and low price, which in turn keeps organizations in business and provides more jobs (Deming, 2000). Deming's 14 points on quality management, a core concept on implementing total quality management, is his most well-known contribution to transform Western management:

1. Create consistency of purpose for improvement of product and service;
2. Adopt a new philosophy;
3. Cease dependence on mass inspection;
4. End the practice of awarding business on price tag alone;

5. Improve constantly and forever the system of production and service;
6. Institute training;
7. Adopt and institute leadership;
8. Drive out fear;
9. Break down barriers between staff areas;
10. Eliminate slogans, exhortations, and targets for the workforce;
11. Eliminate numerical quotas for the workforce and eliminate numerical goals for people in management;
12. Remove barriers that rob people of pride of workmanship;
13. Encourage education and self-improvement for everyone; and
14. Take action to accomplish the transformation. (pp. 23-24)

Deming (2000) also identified *seven deadly diseases* believed to be the major barriers to business success: (a) lack of consistency, purpose, plan and service, (b) emphasis on short-term profits, (c) personal review systems or evaluation based on performance, merit rating, annual review, etc. for people in management, (d) mobility of management - or job hopping, (e) operating the company on visible figures only for management, with little consideration of figures that are unknown or unknowable, (f) excessive medical costs for employee healthcare, and (g) excessive costs of liability. Organization transformation begins with a foundational belief that one must have a solid understanding of oneself and the world in which one operates. In order to develop this understanding, four major components of knowledge are required: appreciation of the system, knowledge about variation, theory of knowledge, and psychology of change (Deming, 2000).

Juran (1992) defined quality as fitness for use or a balance between features and products free from deficiencies, using the work product to describe the output of any process. Referred to as the *Juran Trilogy*, the three basic managerial processes required for quality include *quality planning* - defining customers and how to meet their needs; *quality control* - keeping the process working well; and *quality improvement* - learning, optimizing, refining, and adapting (Juran & Gryna, 1988).

The quality planning process consists of six steps: (a) determine quality goals; (b) identify customers; (c) discover customer needs; (d) develop product features that respond to customer needs, (e) develop processes to produce the product; and (f) transfer the process, with appropriate controls, to operations. Quality control takes place at all levels, from the CEO to the workers, and includes a feedback loop to measure performance of the process, compare performance to the goal, and initiate action if a gap exists (Juran, 1992).

The goal of management should be to achieve self-control in processes and plan for control as part of the process design function (Juran, 1992). In his book, *Managerial Breakthrough*, Juran (1964) presented a structured approach for improving quality which includes a list of responsibilities that upper management should not delegate: (a) create awareness of the need and opportunity for improvement, (b) make quality improvement a part of every job description, (c) create an infrastructure - quality council who selects projects for improvement and establishes teams, (d) provide training in quality improvement methods, (e) review improvement methods regularly, (f) recognize improvement teams, (g) use results to communicate the power of the efforts, (h) revise reward systems to enforce the rate of improvement, and (i) maintain momentum by enlarging the business plan to include goals for quality improvement.

American quality control expert and businessman Amand V. Feigenbaum (1991) posited that quality goes far beyond defect management and viewed quality as a commitment to excellence. Total quality control is the responsibility of the entire organization and should be driven by a quest for excellence rather than defect driven. In this quest for excellence, Feigenbaum identified three critical elements: quality, technology, and organizational commitment. Feigenbaum's work contributed greatly to knowledge development and understanding that in order to remain globally competitive, there is no end to the quest for quality. Organizations should develop a strategic plan for continuous improvement with an emphasis on valuing the contributions of all members of the team as well as satisfying customers (Feigenbaum, 1991).

Feigenbaum (1991) defined four management fundamentals of total quality:

1. Competition means there is no such thing as a permanent quality level. Continuous improvement is necessary if one is to stay competitive.
2. Good management involves personally leading the effort by mobilizing the organization's quality knowledge, skill, and attitudes such that everyone realizes that improvement in quality makes everything better.
3. High quality is required to support successful innovation, especially where this quality standard enables new products to be designed and launched quicker and more effectively.
4. Costs and quality are complementary rather than conflicting objectives. (p. 150)

The most well-known and broadly used comprehensive and structured approach to improve quality is the philosophy of Total Quality Management

(TQM), an integrative philosophy of management for continuously improving the quality of products and processes (Westcott, 2006). Juran (1992) defined TQM as a collection of specific quality related activities that include integrating items on quality in every upper management agenda, establishing quality goals in the business plan, deploying goals to action levels, training all levels of the system, establishing measurement throughout project implementation, reviewing progress regularly against goals at the upper management level, recognizing superior performance, and revising the reward system. The result of the use of TQM should be delighted customers through empowered employees leading to higher revenue and lower cost. Additionally, the use of the TQM philosophy allows a system to maintain stable internal processes through adaptation to new customer demands while delivering superior products and services in an ever-changing market (Juran, 1992).

TQM has application for any type of organization; originating in the manufacturing sector and has since been adapted for use in almost every type of organization imaginable including schools, highway maintenance, hotel management, and churches. TQM is a management approach for a customer-focused organization, involving all employees in the organization as well as establishing a system for continuous improvement. The primary principles or elements of TQM are customer focus, total employee involvement, process-centered, integrated system, strategic and systematic approach, continual improvement, fact based decision making, and communication. Although these elements may be defined slightly different for business, the medical field, and education, all primary elements of TQM become a part of the core values of these varying organization systems (Walpole & Noeth, 2010).

An important part of total quality management is the total quality philosophy and philosophy of continuous improvement. Total quality philosophy supports the processes involved in total quality management and embraces the attitude of continuous improvement and using data to evaluate the work underway to determine areas of refinement for system improvement (Detert & Jenni, 2000). Total quality philosophy is based on the belief that the requirements of a program or project will be fully met based on established quality policies and procedures with established goals and a purpose guiding the effort. The total quality philosophy provides a lens for establishing systems to promote and sustain quality (Juran, 1992).

According to Deming (2010), total quality philosophy seeks to integrate all organizational functions (marketing, finance, design, engineering, production and customer service) focused on meeting the objectives while also providing superior customer service. Total quality philosophy embraces the work of Deming's mentor Walter Shewhart, who designed an approach for continuously using data and analysis to make system wide decisions, Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA), otherwise known as the Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) method. Applying the total quality philosophy involves using data to create a continuous cycle of improvement; therefore, collecting appropriate data aligned with program goals is a foundational piece of this philosophy. A total quality philosophy is demonstrated when a culture of shared leadership, coupled with gathering and analyzing statistical data, has been developed to direct the organization's path and contribute to continuous improvement (McElroy & Ulmer, 2013).

Bergquist and Ramsey (1999) examined the linkages between quality and performance to identify the impact of formal quality management practices on the performance of U.S. companies. A review of the 20 highest scoring 1988-89

Baldrige Award applications was conducted. The principle finding was that companies who had adopted quality management practices experienced overall improvements in corporate performance. Results indicated that companies who implemented total quality management practices achieved better employee relations, higher productivity, greater customer satisfaction, increased market share, and improved profitability. Six common factors emerged related to the companies' quality efforts and improved performance: customer focus, management leadership, employee involvement, open corporate culture, fact based decision making, and partnerships with suppliers (Bergquist & Ramsey, 1999).

Measuring Quality in Education:

According to Baker (1988), efforts have been made and continue to be made in identifying quality education indicators that extend beyond the limitations of achievement tests. Unlike the business industry, quality in education cannot be measured with simple economic indicators. In *Perspectives in Educational Quality*, Scheeren et al. (2011) explained that educational outcome measures are generally categorized in six major themes: (a) demographic, social and economic context of education (e.g., literacy skills of the adult population), (b) financial and human resources invested in education (e.g., educational expenditure per student), (c) access to education, participation and progression (e.g., overall participation in formal education), (d) transition from school to work (e.g., youth unemployment and employment by level of educational attainment), (e) learning environment and the organization of schools (e.g., total intended instruction time for pupils in lower secondary education), and (f) student achievement and the social and labor-market outcomes of education (e.g., mathematics achievement of students in 4th and 8th grades and earnings and educational attainment).

Multiple agencies, including the Rand Corporation; the Center for Policy Research at Rutgers; and the Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST) at UCLA, have studied potential methods for accurately measuring quality in education (Baker, 1988; Piha, 2006). The Center for Education Statistics identified initial education quality indicators based on ease of accessibility such as dropout rates, per capita student funding, student-teacher class ratios, and enrollment figures. Use of this type data became problematic due to vastly different reporting approaches. The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (1987) recognize districts and states count dropouts at different intervals and at different ages or grades, use different base rates, and track student mobility differently; therefore, these inconsistencies inhibited the ability to collect valid data (as cited in Baker, 1988).

In the report, *Can We Fairly Measure the Quality of Education*, Baker (1988) explained the need to develop quality indicators so that *quality* is measured in a valid and comprehensive way. In order to track, report, and comprehend the effects of educational reform, a system must be developed to collect information accurately and comfortably in schools as well as report such findings. Indicators such as achievement test scores, college admission rates, or dropout figures represent the accessible and identifiable part of indicators; however, quality indicators should also take into account input variables and measures of process. The use of reform data to effect policy is also important. The validity of any measure or indicator should be paramount, whether a measure of outcomes such as student achievement, of input such as teacher knowledge, or of process such as student coursework. Measures should be designed to allow multiple or flexible ways for students to demonstrate success. Focused on serving students and improving schools, measures should help educators identify weaknesses in policy

and practice. Measures should not be created for the convenience of test developers, administrators, legislators, or even teachers, rather to assess the impact of the organization's approaches on current and future students and educational effectiveness (Baker, 1988). Tools or instruments currently used to evaluate quality in education include standardized achievement tests, educational program evaluations, teacher made tests, and minimum competency tests for students; all of which lead to judgment about the quality of the nation's educational systems for children (Baker, 1988; Detert & Jenni, 2000; Scheeren et al., 2011).

Detert and Jenni (2000) conducted three studies for the purpose of creating and validating a survey instrument to measure quality and continuous improvement practices in an educational setting. Initially 200 schools who self-identified as *quality implementers* (known as schools using principles of quality in their reform efforts) volunteered to participate in the studies. In order to refine the list of participating schools to those schools most using the principles of quality in their reform efforts, researchers collected survey data and conducted phone interviews and site visits with staff and administrators; reducing the number of sites participating in the study to 14. In the initial phase of instrument development, seven constructs were identified as the foundation for survey development: customer input/focus, continuous improvement, systems thinking, leadership, training, studying and evaluating processes, and data based decision making. These constructs were identified through an in-depth review of the literature related to TQM and how TQM principles relate to education and other non-profit environments. The review of the literature was the basis for the development of the items for the questionnaire used in study 1.

Study 1 was conducted to initiate the process of creating and validating a survey instrument for measuring quality practices in an educational setting. After

a thorough review of the literature related to TQM, seven constructs relating to TQM in education were identified: customer input or focus, continuous improvement, systems thinking, leadership, training, studying and evaluating processes, and data-based decision making. These constructs were then used to develop the survey questions. Researchers developed 12 to 20 survey questions for each of the constructs focused on identifying the factors to be included in the study and used to create an instrument to help educational leaders assess the degree of TQM implementation in their particular setting. Three independent quality experts reviewed the draft survey questions for content validity, and some questions were eliminated. Formal pilot testing was conducted by administering the survey to focus groups in two different school districts including four to eight teachers and one researcher from each district. Following the administration of this pilot, additional editing occurred. Questions 1-53 were designed to measure respondents' perceptions and questions 54-82 were designed to measure respondents' own practices. Additional consultation with focus groups including four to eight teachers from two districts and one researcher resulted in the development of an 82-question survey (Detert & Jenni, 2000).

The 82-item survey was administered to teachers representing eight states from 14 school sites ranging from large urban and suburban schools located in large cities to small rural schools (nine high schools and five elementary sites from one K-8 district). Seventy percent of the eligible participants ($n=825$) responded, resulting in 576 surveys received ($n=385$ from 9-12 grade schools and $n=191$ from K-8 schools). Based on the findings, the instrument was reduced to six constructs that were then used to initiate the second study.

Study 2 was conducted to test revisions made to the instrument based on the results of study 1. Six constructs were included in study 2: customer focus,

training effectiveness, leadership, data based decision making, studying and evaluating processes, and systems thinking. Participants in the study included teachers representing five different school districts from 13 schools ranging from large urban schools to small rural schools. The students and the staff in these locations were diverse, however the sites were similar in that they all possessed two common characteristics: (a) the school had been implementing TQM principles for over 3 years or someone in leadership at the central office advocated for TQM, and (b) the school was involved in the researchers' national longitudinal study of quality practices and school culture. Teachers completed a 40-item quality practices survey. Survey response rate was 64% with 407 of 632 participants responding. Based on data analysis, questions were dropped or combined resulting in a survey instrument comprised of five constructs: parent focus; leadership; studying, evaluating and using data to assess teaching and learning; systems thinking; and training effectiveness (Detert & Jenni, 2000).

Study 3 was conducted for the purpose of replicating study 2. This study included five schools in three states. The survey was administered to 323 eligible teacher participants with a 54% response rate. Based on findings, further adjustments were made to the survey instrument and questions eliminated, which resulted in a final survey instrument model comprised of five factors: parent focus; leadership; studying, evaluating and using data to assess teaching and learning; systems thinking; and training effectiveness. Detert and Jenni (2000) concluded that the survey instrument or tool developed through a series of studies to measure quality and continuous improvement practices in an educational setting consisted of five of the seven Baldrige Award category items and significant overlap existed between the five-factor survey model produced and the two

remaining Baldrige category items: educational and support process management and school performance results (Detert & Jenni, 2000).

Quality in Afterschool Programs

Quality is a rather ambiguous term in the field of expanded learning. Although many researchers, authors, and industry leaders have identified characteristics of quality, indicators or evidence for demonstrating quality are not defined and inconsistent (Huang et al., 2008). The Harvard Family Research Projects on Out-of-School Time identified appropriate supervision and structure, well-prepared staff, and intentional programming as key factors in developing *high quality* programs (Bodilly & Beckett, 2005; Harris, 2010). Neuman (2010) asserted that high quality afterschool programs can be the safety net or scaffolding that changes the odds for the at-risk students that these programs are targeted to serve.

Birmingham, Pechman, Russell, and Mielke (2005) stated that programs often identified as high performing share five characteristics: a broad array of enrichment opportunities; opportunities for skill building and mastery; intentional relationship building; a strong experienced leader or manager supported by a trained and supervised staff; and administrative, fiscal, and professional development support of the sponsoring organization. Numerous sources list program leadership and alignment with the regular school day as the most important indicators of a quality program (Afterschool Alliance, 2012; David, 2011; Jordan et al., 2009). Bodilly and Beckett (2005) identified several factors most often found in quality afterschool programs: a clear mission; high expectations and positive social norms; a safe and healthy environment; a supportive emotional climate; a small total enrollment; stable, trained personnel; and appropriate content and pedagogy relative to the children's needs.

In *A Guide to Exemplary Practices in After School Programs*, Fletcher, Piha, and Rose (2005) stated that the most fundamental difference between programs that achieve their potential and those that come up short is the presence of strong, capable leaders who:

- create a powerful vision that blends different perspectives, viewpoints and interests into a common purpose,
- lead intentionally, think strategically and work collaboratively,
- go beyond training to establish a comprehensive system of staff development, and
- manage their programs and staff in ways that produce the best possible results.

In short, these capable leaders set meaningful goals, develop successful strategies for achieving the goals, continually assess progress, and hold everyone accountable for what happens in the program; thereby, creating a culture of excellence (Fletcher et al., 2005).

Lauver (2012) contended that afterschool programs are successful when aligned with the instructional day. The U.S. Department of Education released action tips for aligning afterschool programs with the school day. These tips include sharing responsibility; making data-driven decisions and communicating effectively; hiring, training and retaining for high quality staff; planning and providing preparation time; developing and maintaining partnerships at multiple levels; and connecting to families and community resources (You4Youth, 2013).

Currently, afterschool program evaluations provide little insight into the quality of the programs; limited knowledge as to the specific goals being achieved or the approaches that are working well to produce results (David, 2011; Hirsch, 2011). Learning Point Associates, Harvard Family Research Project, National

Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), National Governor's Association (NGA), National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), and Fight Crime Invest in Kids are among the numerous groups working to develop an integrated system of support, build partnerships and develop policies, and continue the commitment of building a sustainable network of high quality afterschool programs (NAESP, 2009). This work is focused on a number of goals:

1. Goal 1: Create a sustainable structure of statewide, regional and local partnerships, particularly school-community partnerships, focused on supporting policy development at all levels.
2. Goal 2: Support the development and growth of statewide policies that will secure the resources needed to sustain new and existing afterschool programs.
3. Goal 3: Support statewide systems to ensure programs are of high quality.

Each goal demonstrates the need for collaborators to: (a) agree on a definition of *high quality* and develop shared meaning, (b) establish an integrated system of instituting policies and support, (c) monitor progress, and (d) exhibit shared responsibility in holding one another accountable (NAESP, 2009).

Assessment and Evaluation Tools Used in Afterschool Programs

Evaluation 101. In 2011 the Harvard Family Research Project developed Evaluation 101, a resource containing a step-by-step toolkit or process for evaluating an expanded learning program. The toolkit includes nine steps for selecting an evaluation method and conducting an evaluation:

Step 1: Determining the Evaluations Purpose

Step 2: Developing a Logic Model

Step 3: Assessing Your Program's Capacity for Evaluation

Step 4: Choosing a Focus for Your Evaluation

Step 5: Selecting the Evaluation Design

Step 6: Collecting Data

Step 7: Analyzing Data

Step 8: Presenting Evaluation Results

Step 9: Using Evaluation Data (Harris, 2011).

The intent of this publication was to equip expanded learning program directors and staff members with an evaluation strategy. The resources provide information relative to what evaluation is, who should be involved in evaluation, why evaluation should be conducted, why a strategy for evaluation needs to be established, and how to conduct a program evaluation (Harris, 2011).

California Afterschool Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSAT).

The QSAT, developed in collaboration between the California Afterschool Network and the California Department of Education, is a tool designed to engage stakeholders in meaningful, focused conversations about afterschool program quality. The tool facilitates support and program improvement through a self-directed process, in which self-assessment findings inform action plan development and the immediate, mid-range, and long-term professional development and technical support needed to enhance program quality and set goals. The QSAT, accompanied by a User's Guide, is designed to assist programs in performing a comprehensive self-analysis relative to identified "quality" elements through perceptions of implementation. The QSAT is not intended for use as an external evaluation tool, and each individual program determines how the QSAT is used (California Afterschool Network, 2009).

High-School Program Quality Self-Assessment Rubric (QSAR). The QSAR is a self-assessment tool similar to the QSAT; however, this tool was designed for high school programs funded through 21st CCLC grants from the federal government. This tool was created to establish a framework to measure program quality and outcomes in California as well as across the nation. The intent of the tool is to provide a common language and framework for various levels of program planning with stakeholders including schools, students, families, communities and community partners. The QSAR supports programs in focusing on continuous improvement of services to students attending high school programs (California Afterschool Network, 2009).

Learning in Afterschool and Summer (LIAS) principles. The LIAS principles is a self-assessment tool to help examine the level of youth engagement in afterschool programs through five defined principles of learning: active, collaborative, meaningful, supports mastery, and expands horizons. The five principles or indicators of learning are identified and described as an integral part of this tool to help promote young people's learning and their development after the school day. The identification of these five principles was the result of a pilot project that involved afterschool advocates' and leaders' efforts to unify the field of afterschool and focus on increasing awareness of the potential opportunities that afterschool programs offer students. The project objectives were to: (a) define the role of California afterschool programs in young people's learning and articulate the learning principles that research has identified as effective, (b) enlist afterschool leaders and stakeholders across California and the nation to support the learning principles and approaches, and (c) provide compelling evidence and guidance to important afterschool stakeholders who were interested in focusing afterschool efforts on learning. These stakeholders include afterschool

practitioners, policymakers, funders, educators, technical assistance providers, and evaluators. The LIAS principles tool was a result of this pilot project and concluded with the identification of five principles of learning (Temescal Associates, 2012a).

NYSAN New York Afterschool Network Program Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) Tool: Planning for Ongoing Program Improvement. The NYSAN New York Afterschool Network Program Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) Tool: Planning for Ongoing Program Improvement, referred to as an instrument, is organized around ten elements considered essential to operating an effective afterschool program: environment and climate; administration and organization; relationships; staffing and professional development; programming and activities; linkages between day and after-school; youth participation and engagement; parent, family and community partnerships; program sustainability and growth; and outcome measurement and evaluation. Performance levels are designated for each of the ten elements and improvement planning guidelines are provided to support program planning (NYSAN, n.d.).

Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA). YPQA, an instrument validated by research and designed by the High Scope Educational Research Foundation, is used to assess the quality of youth programs and for the purposes of accountability, evaluation, and program improvement. The instrument has been used in a wide variety of settings: afterschool programs, community-based programs, camp, drop-in programs, and mentoring programs. High Scope Educational Research Foundation purported that the YPQA is a dual-purpose instrument, robust enough to use for high-stakes accountability and research purposes and user-friendly enough to use for program self-assessment; serving as both an evaluation and learning tool (Smith, Akiva, & Henry, 2006).

Use of Evaluation and Assessment Data for Continuous Improvement

The terms *assessment* and *evaluation* are often used interchangeably, however based on the context, may have different meanings. According to the American Evaluation Association (2013), evaluation involves assessing the strengths and weaknesses of programs, policies, personnel, products, and organizations to improve effectiveness. Evaluation is the systematic collection and analysis of data needed to make decisions, a process in which most well-run programs engage from the outset (American Evaluation Association, 2013).

The use of formalized methods and principles of evaluation help policy makers, program managers, and other interested parties obtain more evaluative information and reliable and trustworthy data. Formal evaluation encompasses a broad range of methods, depending on the objective of an evaluation study. Evaluations can focus on administrative compliance, efficiency, outputs, outcomes, or impact. Evaluations may be performed in a number of ways including focus groups, inspections, quantitative methods, qualitative methods, program logic models, participatory evaluation, randomized assignment groups, and systems analysis (Williams & Sankar, 2008). Rossi, Lipsey, and Freeman (2004) explained that evaluation in the “broadest sense means to determine or *ascertain* the worth of, or to fix a value on some object” (p. 2). Program evaluation or evaluation research refers to evaluation that is applied specifically as a “social science activity directed at collecting, analyzing, interpreting and communicating information about workings and effectiveness of social programs” (Rossi et al., 2004, p. 2). Program evaluations are conducted for a variety of practical reasons: inform decision making such as whether programs should be continued, improved, expanded, or curtailed; to assess the utility of new programs

and initiatives; to increase the effectiveness of program management and administration; and to satisfy the accountability requirements of program sponsors (Rossi et al., 2004). The purpose of evaluation and gaining a broader perspective regarding quality is not only to identify how programs impact the lives of students, but also to support action plan development for program and system improvements (Baker, 1988).

According to Palomba and Banta (1999), assessment is the systematic collection of information about educational programs for the purpose of improving learning and development. Assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop deep understanding to improve both teaching and learning (Angelo & Cross, 1993). Boyce (2008) asserted, “the fundamental principles of assessment include the need for ongoing, systematic collection of meaningful data from a variety of sources” (p.1). Davis, Kumtepe, and Aydeniz (2007) claimed that assessment is a critical component of educational practices and impacts educational reform efforts in regards to accountability and continuous improvement.

Formative assessment is described as assessment done for the purpose of informing action such as instruction or program planning. Formative assessment provides an opportunity for stakeholders to gather immediate evidence in order to make changes. Modifications are made to increase potential for accomplishing desired program outcomes (Angelo & Cross, 1993). The formative assessment of student learning should take place *during* the course of learning (Boyce, 2008).

Summative assessment is comprehensive in nature and conducted to evaluate the end result (Boyce, 2008). This type of assessment might be used to provide evidence of program effectiveness after participants have concluded participation in a program. Oftentimes program goals and objectives reflect the

cumulative nature of learning that takes place throughout a program; therefore a program should conduct summative assessment at the end of the program to measure student success in meeting program goals and objectives (Angelo & Cross, 1993; Boyce, 2008).

Self-Assessment and Self-Evaluation

Self-assessment and self-evaluation are different from formal program evaluation as it provides a lens for understanding the overall quality of a program, how the program has evolved over time, and where the program should be in the future (New York State Afterschool Network [NYASN], 2010). The effective use of data based on rigorous self-evaluation can be extremely beneficial for encouraging discussion, promoting a reflective attitude, enhancing involvement of team members, strengthening cohesion and clarifying responsibilities for programs (California Afterschool Network, 2010; NYSAN, 2010)

According to Vanhoof and Van Petegem (2012), there are potential limitations to using self-assessment and self-evaluation. Limited empirical evidence exists that self-evaluation provides quality information, and at this point it is unclear as to the level of professional expertise schools have developed on their own to evaluate strategies, methodologies, and criteria for performing a high quality self-evaluation. Additionally, several things can interfere with the process of participating and completing a quality self-assessment such as a lack of: vision, openness, involvement, expertise and follow-up, realism and resources (Vanhoof & Van Petegem, 2012).

No systematic or adequate approach currently exists in the field of afterschool education for reporting and accountability directly related to program goals. Data driven program decision making based on valid measures must increase to ensure that afterschool programs of the highest quality are developed,

implemented and sustained and that the programs serving the most needy children continue to receive appropriate technical assistance and funding (CDE, 2012d; NAESP, 2007b; Huang, Cho, Mostafavi, & Nam 2010; Piha, 2006; Torlakson & Peck, 2013). Quality assurance cannot be assumed solely on the basis of implementing a self-assessment. Criteria for examining quality in education are varied and often do not align with the stated goals of the program. Often tools used to collect evidence regarding program quality have not been developed based on rigorous research. In order to examine quality and assure that it exists, it is important to focus on the learners or participants and their experience (Scheeren et al. 2011; UNESCO, 2005; Wallace Foundation, 2011).

Piha (2006) explained that the current measures for judging afterschool programs are standardized test scores. The assumption is that students enrolled in afterschool programs will progress at a faster rate than students not enrolled in programs and that this progress will be demonstrated by increased student performance on standardized tests. The practice of using standardized test scores as a measure to judge programs not specifically designed to increase academic achievement, not funded at the level of schools, and not staffed by credentialed teachers is a disservice to the multidimensional aspects and numerous benefits students receive through participation in well-designed afterschool programs. Expected afterschool program outcomes and the data gathered to evidence these outcomes need to reflect diverse program goals, and currently the data collected do not align with program goals (Piha, 2006). As California's investment in afterschool programs increases, a system needs to be developed that reflects agreed upon measures that accurately gauge student learning (Torlakson & Peck, 2013).

Huang et al. (2010) conducted a 5-year study to inform the development of an afterschool system, assist policy-makers in decision making, and provide afterschool programs with a tool to enhance sustainability. Specifically, this portion as part of a larger study sought to (a) identify afterschool sites across the U.S. that were demonstrating exemplary or promising practices and (b) validate afterschool success in the content areas of reading, math, science, arts, technology, and homework help. Fifty-three programs were selected for the study, 33 affiliated with school districts, 10 identified as community based organizations, and 10 identified as community based non-profit organizations. Participating programs were those identified as demonstrating *exemplary practices* in relation to instructional quality of the program content. Staff surveys, parent surveys, teacher surveys, interviews, and program observations and follow-up observation reports were used to collect data. Observations were conducted in programs, involving 44 visits and 104 observations. A total of 338 project directors, site coordinators, instructors and other staff members volunteered to participate in interviews.

Findings indicated evidence of alignment between characteristics of afterschool programs studied and the criteria established for exemplary practices relative to program structure, student engagement, instructional strategies, and issues of accountability. The common characteristics identified in the participating programs included:

- strong leadership and clear goals,
- program structures and contents aligned to meet program goals,
- a set schedule that allowed time for students to learn and practice,
- relationships with the day school,
- curriculum, in general, reflected a linkage to standards,
- most programs used research-based strategies,

- some form of evaluative structure was maintained,
- low staff turnover,
- staff members related well to the students, and
- staff built rapport, maintained high expectations, and motivated and engaged students.

The single, most dominant characteristic consistently revealed in program visits was the positive relationships built between staff and students. Staff felt that they had made a positive impact on students' self-confidence, social skills, and attitudes toward learning (Huang et al., 2010).

One implication from the study was that as afterschool programs become more deeply entrenched in the social systems of schools, families, communities, networks and federal policies and regulation, all systems need to function collaboratively in order to produce sustainable change. Findings also revealed low levels of staff participation in professional development and indicated a need for additional policies to support professional development, increased funding for professional development, and ongoing program evaluation to identify professional development needs (Huang et al., 2010).

Huang et al. (2010) contended that nationally there is an increasing emphasis on evaluation in afterschool programs. Investors want to know that their investment is paying off and that programs are producing the desired outcomes. All 53 participating programs reported some degree of engagement in internal or external evaluation of their program, although they indicated that rigorous evaluation was very rare (Huang et al., 2010).

In order to develop a systematic approach to afterschool program improvement, assessment or evaluation data should be used to improve program structure and implementation, and determine changes needed in organization,

environment, and instruction of students (Huang et al., 2008). Huang et al. (2008) claimed,

With current policies and laws that point to the accountability of ELOs (extra learning opportunities), data and evidence-based programming is essential in assessing program outcomes and improving program quality. When programs are consistently evaluated and improved, they can yield the most benefits for their student populations and garner more support from local, state, and federal constituencies. (p. 48)

Marzano (2003) emphasized that the use of data to guide decision making is critical; just as critical as using the appropriate data for the specific context in which one applies the results. Continuous evaluation is necessary to gauge program performance and strive for continuous improvement (Huang et al., 2010). Developing a system of data collection and analysis provides a broad view of the work being done (Senge, 2006). System thinking improves program evaluation by expanding the view to take into account the large number of interactions occurring that impact the program (Aronson, 1996). The systems design approach strives to gain an understanding of situations from an interconnected, interdependent perspective in order to identify how each component in any given system works together to create the outcome (Laszlo & Krippner, 1998).

A systems perspective means managing your whole organization, as well as its components to achieve results and to strive for performance excellence . . . and using your measures, indicators, core competencies and organizational knowledge to build your key strategies. It means linking those strategies work systems and key processes and aligning your resources to improve your overall performance and your focus on students and stakeholders. (Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, 2011-2012, p. 54)

Summary

This chapter provided a review of the literature focused on three relevant areas providing a foundation for this study. First, a historical perspective of

afterschool programs was provided including the origins and descriptions of funding sources. The development of afterschool programs, from small locally run operations to large scale programs that exist today, was described. The historical perspective also traced the funding for afterschool programs to the current level of nearly \$700 million allocated from state and federal sources. The literature review explained the changing role of afterschool programs, originally designed to provide a safe place for kids after school to becoming an integral part of the education system providing enriched learning environments. Next, the topic of quality, specifically defining and assessing quality, quality in education and afterschool programs, and tools for assessing quality in afterschool programs were discussed. Quality is defined as a “degree of excellence,” and the concepts of total quality management and the specific application in the educational setting were discussed. Lastly, research relative to the evaluation, assessment, and use of data to develop systems for continuous improvement were reviewed. The literature reviewed the difference between self-assessment and formal program evaluation. Research was presented regarding the elements most often found in programs of quality such as strong leadership, established goals, student engagement, well-developed lessons and stable and engaged staff. The need to align assessment tools with program goals was revealed.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology used for this study including the research design and questions, purpose of the study, participant sample, instrumentation and pilot study, and data collection and analysis procedures. The limitations of the study are also discussed. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study and analysis of the data in relation to the research questions. Chapter 5 presents a summary of findings and conclusions, discussion of the literature in relation to study findings, and implications for practice and future research.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify and examine afterschool program elements considered most important or essential to developing, executing, and sustaining a high quality program. Specifically, this study (a) identified the QSAT elements and LIAS principles frontline implementers and technical assistance providers perceive as most important and highest leverage in creating and sustaining a program of high quality and (b) explored the value and impact of using the QSAT and LIAS principles tool to improve and sustain program quality.

Research Design

A mixed methods design was used for this study. A combined or mixed method design is one in which multiple methods are used for data collection and analysis. These methods involve *between methods* approaches, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative procedures (Jick, 1983). Quantitative data were collected and analyzed through the use of a Q Methodology research technique. This technique allows for participants to represent their vantage point and decide what they believe is meaningful and significant from their perspective. This methodology allows the researcher to focus on the study of subjectivity. Q Methodology looks for correlations between subjects across a sample of variables. Q factor analysis reduces the many individual viewpoints of the subjects down to a few *factors*, which represent a shared way of thinking (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

The combined methods approach involved the concurrent collection, analysis, and interpretation of data from a Q-sort survey and individual interviews to answer two research questions. The data were analyzed independently to answer each question followed by triangulation of the results to confirm, cross

validate or corroborate the findings. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) stated that this convergent design is ideal for obtaining a more complete understanding of a topic or if there is a need to validate or confirm quantitative results. The scope of this study could not accurately be measured using a single method of study, and according to Creswell and Plano-Clark, when there is a need to use both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the mixed methods is the preferred design because there is no need to sacrifice the quality of the research for the convenience of selecting only one research method.

The multi-method approach enables the researcher to more accurately demonstrate that the research results reflect reality (Brewer & Hunter, 1989). In a mixed methods design, two weighting options are possible. This study employed a QUAL+ QUAN design in which quantitative and qualitative methods played an equally important role in addressing the research area of study (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Research Questions

The following questions were used to guide the study and inform the research:

1. What QSAT elements and LIAS principles do leaders in the field of expanded learning (frontline implementers and technical assistance providers of elementary and middle school site-based afterschool programs) identify as most important and highest leverage for program improvement and sustaining a program of high quality?
2. What are frontline implementers' perceptions regarding the use and impact of the QSAT and LIAS principles tool on program quality?

Participants

This study included participants considered leaders in the field of expanded learning, individuals directly involved in afterschool program implementation (frontline implementers) and individuals who provide technical assistance to afterschool programs. The sampling technique used in this study was purposeful criterion sampling. According to Patton (1990), the logic of criterion sampling is to select information rich cases in which one can learn a great deal about the focus of the topic being studied, and review and study cases that meet predetermined criterion of importance. Participants were chosen for a purpose related to the ability to answer questions central to the research study (Salmons, 2010). Two groups of participants were selected for the survey portion of the study. All participants met the criterion of leader in the field of expanded learning involved with a publically funded afterschool program in California. Some participants were frontline implementers (district or site level leaders of school-based programs at the elementary and middle school level) and some participants were leaders who provide technical assistance to school-based afterschool elementary and middle school programs. Participants were selected from the accessible population that included all elementary and middle school, school-based publically funded afterschool programs in California; the list of the accessible population was obtained from the California Department of Education After School Division.

The interview portion of the study also employed purposeful criterion sampling for participant selection. The criteria used to select interview participants were frontline implementers of publically funded afterschool programs in California at the elementary and middle school levels and stage of program development (programs perceived as high quality and programs perceived as still in the developmental stage). Regional Leads from Northern,

Central and Southern California were asked to identify four afterschool programs perceived as high quality and four afterschool programs perceived as still in the developmental stage. Frontline implementers from four programs in each region (two of high quality and two in the developmental stage) were contacted to determine willingness and availability for participation in the study. If a frontline implementer of a program was unwilling or unavailable to participate, one of the other identified programs was contacted. A total of 12 interviews were conducted.

Instrumentation and Pilot Study

Two instruments were used in this study: Q-sort survey using an electronic process and semi-structured individual interviews.

Q-sort

To investigate participant perceptions of the most important and highest leverage elements of the QSAT and LIAS principles tool to improve and sustain a program of high quality, the researcher developed an electronic Q-sort survey instrument along with an audio supported PowerPoint, which provided instructions for completing the Q-sort survey. Three to four descriptive statements were developed for each of the eleven QSAT sections and five LIAS principle descriptors. Using Q Methodology, participants were asked to rate the importance of 48 items (Appendix C) based on the 11 sections of the Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSAT) and the Learning in After School and Summer (LIAS) principles. According to Watts and Stenner (2012), a typical procedure for Q-sort methodology is:

- Participants sign a consent form and receive information on completing the sort;

- Participants receive a blank copy of the sorting distribution, which includes ranking values from highest ranking on the right, lowest ranking on the left and “O” in the middle;
- Participants receive written explanation of the research question and the conditions or instructions for completing the sort using the ranking values;
- Participants receive a set of ranking cards, each containing one statement (this procedure was conducted electronically for this study); and
- Participants look at each card (statement), one at a time, and divide cards into three provisional ranking categories: Category 1 describes the items participants determine as the most important (MUST elements in quality programs); Category 2 describes the items participants deem as least important (or perceive as not important); and Category 3 describes items participants feel indifferent about or items that are important but not the most important as the items placed in category 1, but more important than the items placed in category 2. There is no limit to items that can be placed in each category (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

At this point in the procedure, participants progressively rank each of the 48 statements based on the distribution provided. In this study, an 11-point distribution or ranking system from most important element (11) to least important element (1) was used. Participants were allowed to rate two items as most important (+5), three items as extremely important (+4), four items as very important (+3), five items as somewhat important (+2), six items as important (+1), eight items as neutral (0), six items as somewhat less important (-1), five

items as less important (-2), four items as minimally important (-3), three items as rarely important (-4), and two items as least important (-5). An electronic template was provided to participants to help them rate items by placing cards into physical categories (Appendix D). A pilot test of the Q-sort instrument was conducted with a frontline implementer and a technical assistance provider in the field of expanded learning who were not actual participants in the study. The pilot study was used to test logistics and gather feedback in order to make adjustments, as necessary, to the instrument and process prior to the actual study.

Individual Interview

Individual in-depth interviews were conducted by phone to collect data from frontline implementers of afterschool programs. The purpose of the in-depth interview was to probe deeply into understanding the perceptions of these frontline implementers regarding their use of the QSAT and the LIAS principles tool and the impact the information gained from these tools has had on improving or sustaining the quality of their programs. An interview guide was developed that included a list of questions and areas to explore as well as probes to generate additional thinking and dialogue (Appendix E). According to Gall, Borg, and Gall (2003), a “semi structured interview involves asking a series of structured questions and then probing more deeply using open-form questions to obtain additional information” (p. 310). The order of the questions is dependent on the flow of the conversation (Angrosino, 2005). The researcher acted as a moderator, guiding the respondent from one topic to another. Interview questions were field-tested with a frontline implementer who was not a participant in the formal study in order to refine questions and make adjustments as necessary (Angrosino, 2005) as well as to insure clarity and give the researcher practice with using the interview protocol (Salmons, 2010).

Data Collection Procedure

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was first obtained from California State University, Fresno.

Q-sort

- Researcher developed an electronic Q-sort instrument and audio supported instructional PowerPoint.
- Pilot test of Q-sort instrument was conducted with a frontline implementer and technical assistance provider in the field of expanded learning, who were not actual participants in the study, prior to large-scale administration. Pilot study results were analyzed and instrument and instructional audio supported PowerPoint instructions were revised as appropriate.
- Researcher contacted Regional Leads, CDE and California Afterschool Network to obtain contact lists and participant recommendations, and Q-sort eligible participants were identified.
- Letters/emails were sent with a description of the study requesting participation (Appendix F).
- Large-scale Q-sort electronic process was sent to all participants via email in August 2013, including audio supported PowerPoint instructions (Appendix G), guidelines and procedures. Support was provided if there were questions or technical difficulties preventing completion of the Q-sort.
- Reminder emails were sent 2 weeks after initial process began.

Individual Interviews

- Researcher contacted Regional Leads from Northern, Central and Southern California for interview participant recommendations - frontline implementers of programs in each region (programs of high quality and programs in the developmental stage).
- Initial phone contact was made in August 2013 with identified participants to determine willingness and availability for participation in the study and arrangements were made for date and time of phone interview.
- Follow-up email including consent form (Appendix H) was sent to confirm scheduled interview time and other pertinent information.
- Interview questions were electronically sent approximately 3 days in advance of the interview to give the participant time to reflect.
- Each interview was conducted following the same procedures (Appendix I).
- Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim as to capture the entirety of information provided.
- All interview data were secured in a safe location accessible only to researcher.

Date Analysis

This study used a mixed methods design resulting in both quantitative (Q-sort electronic survey) and qualitative (individual interview) data collection, analysis and interpretation.

Q-sort

Data from each respondent were placed in an excel spreadsheet to determine the frequency of responses occurring in each position of the Q-sort within the data set.

Data were analyzed using PCQ software. According to Watts and Stenner (2012), Q-sort methodology can be sorted into three separate variances: the specific variance, the common variance, and the error variance. The following steps were taken to analyze the data:

- Determined common variance, or the variability in the Q-sort that is held in common with or by the group completing the sort.
- Employed factor analysis data reduction technique in order to evaluate data.
- Created a matrix to do a statistical inspection of the correlations, regularities or patterns of similarity across the data set.
- Performed a centroid factor analysis to explore all other factors that may be revealed in the data set. All possibilities of correlations and inter correlations were evaluated.

Individual Interviews

Notes and recordings of interviews were transcribed verbatim. Data were entered into NVivo for analysis. NVivo qualitative research software was used to assist the researcher in managing and making sense of the unstructured information. NVivo assisted the researcher in sorting, classifying and arranging the data so that more time could be focused on analysis of the information to identify themes and patterns as well as garner significant insights and develop meaningful and relevant conclusions.

Limitations

One limitation of the study was that this research was based on publicly funded programs operated with partnerships between local education agencies and community partners, and findings may not be generalizable to privately funded programs operating under different parameters; however, should be transferable. A second limitation was that purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the participants' perspectives are meaningful, relevant, knowledgeable, and explicit, and that their perspectives will provide deep insight into the topic of study. Identification of programs considered high quality and still in developmental stages was based on personal recommendation and interpretations could be slightly different. However, by asking experts in the field to make recommendations regarding participants for the interview that could best provide deep insight, the study's data collection procedures ensured that this assumption was supported. Lastly, the study was limited by the set of questions that was asked through individual interviews and the willingness of participants to set aside the needed time to provide relevant and meaningful insight.

Summary

This chapter described the research design, purpose of the study, research questions, participants, instrumentation and pilot study, data collection and analysis procedures, and limitations of the study.

Chapter 4 presents the findings and analysis of the data related to the research questions gathered through literature and document review, an electronic survey process using Q-sort methodology, and individual interviews. Chapter 5 presents a summary of the findings and conclusions and discussion of the research questions related to the literature as well as recommendations for actions and implications for future study.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Review of Methodology

The purpose of this study was to identify and examine afterschool program elements considered most important or essential to developing, executing, and sustaining a high quality program. Specifically, this study identified the QSAT elements and LIAS principles frontline implementers and technical assistance providers perceive as most important and highest leverage in creating and sustaining a program of high quality and explored the value and impact of using the QSAT and LIAS principles tool to improve and sustain program quality. A pragmatic, mixed methods design was used that included concurrent collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. Fifty Q-sorts, using Q Methodology, were collected and analyzed to examine participants' perceived level of importance regarding statement elements related to developing and sustaining a high quality afterschool program.

Q Methodology indicates an individual's feelings, opinions, perspectives or preferences. Q Methodology requires participants to provide their perspective by sorting items, typically statements related to the topic, into a sorting grid determined by the researcher (Newman & Ramlo, 2010). These Q-sorts are then analyzed via factor analysis, which allows those of similar views to be grouped into factors. According to Watts and Stenner (2012), Q-set design requires effort and rigor. Statements are developed to broadly represent the opinion domain. The statements can be structured or unstructured. This study contained structured statements that were divided into domains with approximately the same number of items relative to each domain. Watts and Stenner state that the *house standard* for the number of items is between 40 and 80 items based on the sorting task and the

purpose of the research. This study contained 48 statements. The statements were developed based on the contents of the QSAT and LIAS principles tool. The items were designed with a standardized presentation; each statement began with the phrase “Programs of high quality provide....”

In addition, 12 individual interviews were conducted with frontline afterschool program implementers, representing Northern, Central and Southern California regions, to explore the use of self-assessment, most specifically the use of the QSAT and LIAS principles tool to improve and sustain the quality of their programs. Six interviewees were frontline implementers of afterschool programs perceived as high quality, and six interviewees represented programs perceived as still in the developmental stage.

Quantitative Results – Q-sort Findings

Research Question 1. What QSAT elements and LIAS principles do leaders in the field of expanded learning (frontline implementers and technical assistance providers of elementary and middle school site-based afterschool programs) identify as most important and highest leverage for program improvement and sustaining a program of high quality?

Data were collected from 50 participants working in the field of afterschool. Table 1 depicts the program role and affiliation of the leaders in the field of expanded learning who completed the Q-sort.

The 48 Q-sort items were based on the 11 critical sections of the QSAT and five indicators of student engagement on the LIAS principles tool. These statements made up the 12 domains that the statements addressed: The 48 statements were sorted on an 11-point distribution continuum with +5 indicating the most important elements to -5 indicating least important elements. Participants progressively ranked each of the 48 statements accordingly: two items as most

Table 1

Q-sort Participants: Program Role and Affiliation of Leaders in the Field of Expanded Learning

Program Role	Number of Respondents
School Site Administrator (A)	1
Liaison (L)	3
Director (D)	13
Frontline (F)	18
Technical assistance provider, trainer, coach (T)	15
Affiliation	
School district employee (S)	25
Community Based Organization employee (C)	18
County Office of Education employee (E)	4
Other Organization in the field of afterschool employee (O)	3

important (+5), three items as extremely important (+4), four items as very important (+3), five items as somewhat important (+2), six items as important (+1), eight items as neutral (0), six items as somewhat less important (-1), five items as less important (-2), four items as minimally important (-3), three items as rarely important (-4), and two items as least important (-5).

Tables 2 through 13 represent a distribution of participant response frequencies and percentages for each Q-sort item (I#) grouped by element domains; -5 = Least Important (LI), -4 = Rarely Important (RI), -3 = Minimally Important (MI), -2 = Less Important (LI), -1= Somewhat Less Important (SLI), 0

= Neutral (N), +1 = Important (I), + 2 = Somewhat Important (SI), +3 = Very Important (VI), +4 = Extremely Important (EI) and +5 = Most Important (MI).

For the Program Design and Assessment domain (Table 2), 66% (44 of 50) of respondents ranked item 1, *have a clearly defined vision and mission agreed upon by all stakeholders*, as important to most important while 20% (10 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as neutral and few respondents, 14% (7 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. A large majority, 80% (40 of 50) of respondents ranked item 2, *have well-defined, hands-on, student-centered activities and incorporate and combine academics, youth development and recreation*, as important to most important while few respondents, 8% (4 of 50), ranked this item as neutral, and 12 % (6 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Two-thirds or 66% (33 of 50) of respondents ranked item 3, *have clearly defined, measureable goals that link to participant and community needs*, as important to most important while 20% (10 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as neutral, and 14% (7 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important.

For the Program Administration and Finance domain (Table 3), over one-quarter, 30% (15 of 50) of respondents ranked item 4, *have a clear system of program administration and finance*, as important to most important, however close to half of respondents, 40% (20 of 50), ranked this item as neutral, and 30% (15 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Over half of respondents, 52% (26 of 50), ranked item 5, *have staff recruitment, hiring, and retention policies that are well defined and support the program goals*, as important to most important while 16% (8 of 50) ranked this item as neutral, and 32 % (16 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as somewhat

Table 2

Response Frequencies and Percentages: Program Design and Assessment Domain

I#	LTI -5	RI -4	MI -3	LI -2	SLI -1	N 0	I 1	SI 2	VI 3	EI 4	MI 5
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1	0	0	0	1	6	10	7	7	4	3	12
	0	0	0	2	12	20	14	14	8	6	24
2	0	0	1	0	5	4	8	6	10	10	6
	0	0	2	0	10	8	16	12	20	20	12
3	0	0	3	2	2	10	8	19	3	1	2
	0	0	6	4	4	20	16	38	6	2	4

Item Statements:

1. Programs of high quality have a clearly defined vision and mission agreed upon by all stakeholders.
2. Programs of high quality have well-defined, hands-on, student-centered activities and incorporate and combine academics, youth development and recreation.
3. Programs of high quality have clearly defined, measurable goals that link to participant and community needs.

less important to least important. Thirty-six percent (18 of 50) of respondents ranked item 6, *ensure that all attendance, evaluation, and expenditure reports are submitted on time*, as important to most important while 14% (7 of 50) ranked this item as neutral, and one-half of all respondents (25 of 50) ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Few respondents, 16% (8 of 50) and 6% (3 of 50) respectively, ranked item 7, *have clear evidence demonstrating that program adheres to all fiscal accounting requirements*, as important to most important and neutral, however, a large majority, 78% (39 of 50) of respondents, ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important.

For the Community Partnerships and Collaboration domain (Table 4), only 10% (5 of 50) of respondents ranked item 8, *have a system for building community partnerships and collaboration*, as important to most important while 26% (13 of 50) ranked this item as neutral, and the majority of respondents, 64%

Table 3

Response Frequencies and Percentages: Program Administration and Finance Domain

	LTI -5	RI -4	MI -3	LI -2	SLI -1	N 0	I 1	SI 2	VI 3	EI 4	MI 5
I#	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
04	1	0	4	4	6	20	10	4	1	0	0
	2	0	8	8	12	40	20	8	2	0	0
	0	2	5	2	7	8	6	9	7	4	0
05	0	4	10	4	14	16	12	18	14	8	0
	2	3	3	6	11	7	3	7	7	1	0
06	4	6	6	12	22	14	6	14	14	2	0
	3	7	6	5	18	3	2	3	1	1	1
07	6	14	12	10	36	6	4	6	2	2	2

Item Statements:

4. Programs of high quality have a clear system of program administration and finance.
5. Programs of high quality have staff recruitment, hiring, and retention policies that are well defined and support the program goals.
6. Programs of high quality ensure that all attendance, evaluation, and expenditure reports are submitted on time.
7. Programs of high quality have clear evidence demonstrating that program adheres to all fiscal accounting requirements.

(32 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Only one respondent (1 of 50) ranked item 9, *have collaborative relationships with partners to provide a framework for effective partner engagement*, as important to most important while 24% (12 of 50) ranked this item as neutral, and a majority of the respondents, 74 % (37 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. More than a quarter of respondents, 30% (15 of 50), ranked item 10, *create partnerships that support long-term sustainability through joint fundraising and in-kind contributions and materials*, as important to most important while 12% (6 of 50) ranked this item as neutral, and more than half of respondents, 58 % (29 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Very few respondents, 6% (3 of 50), ranked item 11, *provide updates and information about the program to collaborative partners using a variety of*

formats in multiple languages, as important to most important, and only 8 % (4 of 50) of respondents ranked this item neutral. However, a large majority of the respondents, 86% (43 of 50), ranked item 11 as somewhat less important to least important.

Table 4

Response Frequencies and Percentages: Community Partnerships and Collaboration Domain

	LTI -5	RI -4	MI -3	LI -2	SLI -1	N 0	I 1	SI 2	VI 3	EI 4	MI 5
I#	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
08	0	6	7	11	8	13	2	0	2	1	0
	0	12	14	22	16	26	4	0	4	2	0
09	2	11	7	11	6	12	0	1	0	0	0
	4	22	14	22	12	24	0	2	0	0	0
10	2	9	4	7	7	6	2	7	4	1	1
	4	18	8	14	14	12	4	14	8	2	2
11	2	4	15	15	7	4	3	0	0	0	0
	4	8	30	30	14	8	6	0	0	0	0

Item Statements:

8. Programs of high quality have a system for building community partnerships and collaboration.
9. Programs of high quality have collaborative relationships with partners to provide a framework for effective partner engagement.
10. Programs of high quality create partnerships that support long-term sustainability through joint fundraising and in-kind contributions and materials.
11. Programs of high quality provide updates and information about the program to collaborative partners using a variety of formats in multiple languages.

For the Alignment and Linkages to the School Day domain (Table 5), a little over half of the respondents, 52% (16 of 50), ranked item 12, *have a system to provide alignment and linkages with the school day*, as important to most important while only 4% (2 of 50) ranked this item as neutral, and slightly less than one-half of respondents, 44% (22 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less

important to least important. Few respondents, 12% (6 of 50), ranked item 13, *require staff participation on school committees*, as important to most important, and only one individual ranked this item as neutral. However, a majority of respondents, 86 % (43 of 50), ranked item 13 as somewhat less important to least important. More than one-third of respondents, 38% (19 of 50), ranked item 14, *have access to participants' data (grades, attendance, test scores, home language) to tailor activities*, as important to most important while 10% (5 of 50) ranked this item as neutral, and more than half of respondents, 52 % (26 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. The majority of respondents, 64% (32 of 50), ranked item 15, *provide academic activities that incorporate a variety of age-appropriate instructional strategies that help youth build and master key academic skills and content*, as important to most important while 8 % of respondents (4 of 50) ranked this item neutral, and slightly more than one-quarter of the respondents, 28% (14 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important.

For the Program Environment and Safety domain (Table 6), 32% (16 of 50) of respondents ranked item 16, *have a system for evaluating the environment and safety*, as important to most important while 28% (14 of 50) ranked this item as neutral, and 40% (20 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Nearly half of respondents, 44% (22 of 50), ranked item 17, *provide a safety plan that is aligned with the host school*, as important to most important while 20% (10 of 50) ranked this item as neutral, and a little over one-third, 36 % (18 of 50) of respondents, ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Nearly half of respondents, 48% (24 of 50), ranked item 18, *provide a comprehensive plan for ensuring health and safety procedures are in place*, as important to most important while 14% (7 of 50) of respondents

Table 5

Response Frequencies and Percentages: Alignment and Linkages to the School Day Domain

	LTI -5	RI -4	MI -3	LI -2	SLI -1	N 0	I 1	SI 2	VI 3	EI 4	MI 5
I#	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
12	1	2	14	4	1	2	7	5	6	5	3
	2	4	28	8	2	4	14	10	12	10	6
13	17	13	3	4	6	1	1	0	0	3	2
	34	26	6	8	12	2	2	0	0	6	4
14	3	6	2	7	8	5	10	5	3	1	0
	6	12	4	14	16	10	20	10	6	2	0
15	2	2	7	1	2	4	8	9	8	5	2
	4	4	14	2	4	8	16	18	16	10	4

Item Statements:

12. Programs of high quality have a system to provide alignment and linkages with the school day.
13. Programs of high quality require staff participation on school committees.
14. Programs of high quality have access to participants' data (grades, attendance, test scores, home language) to tailor activities.
15. Programs of high quality provide academic activities that incorporate a variety of age-appropriate instructional strategies that help youth build and master key academic skills and content.

ranked this item as neutral, and more than a third of respondents, 38 % (19 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. The majority of respondents, 74% (37 of 50), ranked item 19, *provide an emotional climate that is positive, demonstrating respect and support between staff and students*, as important to most important while 16 % of respondents (8 of 50) ranked this item neutral, and few respondents, 10% (5 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important.

For the Youth Development domain (Table 7), 38% (19 of 50) of respondents ranked item 20, *provide youth development*, as important to most important while 24% (12 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as neutral, and

Table 6

Response Frequencies and Percentages: Program Environment and Safety Domain

	LTI -5	RI -4	MI -3	LI -2	SLI -1	N 0	I 1	SI 2	VI 3	EI 4	MI 5
I#	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
16	4	4	2	4	6	14	7	4	1	1	3
	8	8	4	8	12	28	14	8	2	2	6
17	2	1	3	3	9	10	5	5	7	5	0
	4	2	6	6	18	20	10	10	14	10	0
18	1	0	3	9	6	7	1	2	10	6	5
	2	0	6	18	12	14	2	4	20	12	10
19	0	0	1	0	4	8	6	14	4	7	6
	0	0	2	0	8	16	12	28	8	14	12

Item Statements:

16. Programs of high quality have a system for evaluating the environment and safety.
17. Programs of high quality provide a safety plan that is aligned with the host school.
18. Programs of high quality provide a comprehensive plan for ensuring health and safety procedures are in place.
19. Programs of high quality provide an emotional climate that is positive, demonstrating respect and support between staff and students.

28% (14 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Nearly one-quarter, 24% (12 of 50) of respondents, ranked item 21, *provide youth with the opportunity to participate in community service projects*, as important to most important while 12% (6 of 50) ranked this item as neutral, and well over half of respondents, 64 % (32 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. A little over one-third of respondents, 34% (17 of 50), ranked item 22, *provide youth the opportunity to make choices and provide input into the structure of the program*, as important to most important and 12% (6 of 50) ranked this item as neutral. However, more than half of respondents, 54 % (26 of 50), ranked item 22 as somewhat less important to least important. Most of the respondents, 86% (43 of 50), ranked item 23,

demonstrate through actions of youth and staff a strong sense of ownership and belonging such as holding one another accountable to behavior expectations and program traditions, as important to most important while only 6 % (3 of 50) of respondents ranked this item neutral, and few respondents, 8% (4 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important.

Table 7

Response Frequencies and Percentages: Youth Development Domain

	LTI -5	RI -4	MI -3	LI -2	SLI -1	N 0	I 1	SI 2	VI 3	EI 4	MI 5
I#	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
20	1	2	7	2	2	12	6	3	3	7	0
	2	4	14	4	4	24	12	6	6	14	0
21	2	7	6	11	6	6	10	1	1	0	0
	4	14	12	22	12	12	20	2	2	0	0
22	4	8	9	1	5	6	9	4	3	1	0/
	8	16	18	2	10	12	18	8	6	2	0
23	0	0	0	2	2	3	8	7	8/	17	3
	0	0	0	4	4	6	16	14	16	34	6

Item Statements:

20. Programs of high quality provide youth development.
21. Programs of high quality provide youth with the opportunity to participate in community service projects.
22. Programs of high quality provide youth the opportunity to make choices and provide input into the structure of the program.
23. Programs of high quality demonstrate through actions of youth and staff a strong sense of ownership and belonging such as holding one another accountable to behavior expectations and program traditions.

For the Staff Recruitment and Professional Development domain (Table 8), nearly three-quarters of respondents, 74% (36 of 50), ranked item 24, *have a well-defined plan for staff recruitment and professional development*, as important to most important while 18% (9 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as neutral, and only 8% (4 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as somewhat less important

to least important. Over half of respondents, 62% (31 of 50), ranked item 25, *provide staff with performance based assessments of their work and the opportunity to build needed skills*, as important to most important while 20% (10 of 50) ranked this item as neutral, and 18 % (9 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. A majority of respondents, 68% (34 of 50), ranked item 26, *provide ongoing professional development in varied formats*, as important to most important while few respondents, 6% (3 of 50) ranked the item as neutral, and 32 % of respondents (16 of 50) ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. About one-quarter of respondents, 24% (12 of 50), ranked item 27, *provide opportunities for district level staff to meet with site level staff on a regular basis*, as important to most important while 10 % (5 of 50) of respondents ranked the item neutral, and the majority of respondents, 66% (33 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important.

For the Family Involvement domain (Table 9), 36% of respondents (18 of 50) ranked item 28, *encourage family involvement*, as important to most important while 18% (9 of 50) of respondents ranked the item as neutral, and 46% (23 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Similar to item 28, 36% of respondents (18 of 50) ranked item 29, *provide opportunities for parents and caregivers to actively participate in supporting their children's education*, as important to most important. Twenty- four percent (12 of 50) of respondents ranked item 29 as neutral, and 40 % (20 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Few respondents, 14% (7 of 50), ranked item 30, *provide referrals to community resources available to the families*, as important to most important while 22% of respondents (11 of

Table 8

Response Frequencies and Percentages: Staff Recruitment and Professional Development Domain

I#	LTI -5	RI -4	MI -3	LI -2	SLI -1	N 0	I 1	SI 2	VI 3	EI 4	MI 5
	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
24	0	0	0	4	0	9	14	6	7	9	1
	0	0	0	8	0	18	28	12	14	18	2
25	2	0	0	3	4	10	9	12	5	4	1
	4	0	0	6	8	20	18	24	10	8	2
26	0	5	1	2	5	3	13	6	6	6	3
	0	10	2	4	10	6	26	12	12	12	6
27	6	2	5	14	6	5	3	6	2	0	1
	12	4	10	28	12	10	6	12	4	0	2

Item Statements:

- 24. Programs of high quality have a well-defined plan for staff recruitment and professional development.
 - 25. Programs of high quality provide staff with performance based assessments of their work and the opportunity to build needed skills.
 - 26. Programs of high quality provide ongoing professional development in varied formats.
 - 27. Programs of high quality provide opportunities for district level staff to meet with site level staff on a regular basis.
-

50) ranked the item as neutral, and the majority of respondents, 64 % (32 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Over one-third of respondents, 38% (19 of 50), ranked item 31, *establish a system of regular, positive communication with the parents or caregivers*, as important to most important while 26 % (13 of 50) of respondents ranked this item neutral, and 36% (18 of 50) of the respondents ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important.

For the Nutrition and Physical Activity domain (Table 10), 38% (19 of 50) of respondents ranked item 32, *include nutrition and physical activity*, as important to most important while 18% (9 of 50) of respondents ranked the item neutral, and close to half of the respondents, 44% (22 of 50), ranked the item as somewhat less important to least important. Few respondents, 18% (9 of 50),

Table 9

<i>Response Frequencies and Percentages: Family Involvement Domain</i>											
	LTI -5	RI -4	MI -3	LI -2	SLI -1	N 0	I 1	SI 2	VI 3	EI 4	MI 5
I#	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
28	3	0	7	3	10	9	9	4	3	0	2
	6	0	14	6	20	18	18	8	6	0	4
29	2	0	9	5	4	12	10	5	3	0	0
	4	0	18	10	8	24	20	10	6	0	0
30	5	7	4	9	7	11	4	0	3	0	0
	10	14	8	18	14	22	8	0	6	0	0
31	1	2	0	4	11	13	6	2	7	4	0
	2	4	0	8	22	26	12	4	14	8	0

Item Statements:

- 28. Programs of high quality encourage family involvement.
- 29. Programs of high quality provide opportunities for parents and caregivers to actively participate in supporting their children's education.
- 30. Programs of high quality provide referrals to community resources available to the families.
- 31. Programs of high quality establish a system of regular, positive communication with the parents or caregivers.

ranked item 33, *emphasize character building components during physical activities*, as important to most important while 24% (12 of 50) ranked this item as neutral. However, over half of the respondents, 58 % (29 of 50), ranked item 33 as somewhat less important to least important. Nearly one quarter of respondents, 24% (12 of 50), ranked item 34, *provide healthy food and safe drinking water*, as important to most important while 22% (11 of 50) ranked the item as neutral, and over half of the respondents, 54 % (27 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Less than one-fourth of respondents, 22% (11 of 50), ranked item 35, *engage youth daily in moderate to vigorous physical activity*, as important to most important while 28 % (14 of 50) of respondents ranked the item neutral, and the majority of respondents, 62% (31 of 50), ranked the item as somewhat less important to least important.

Table 10

Response Frequencies and Percentages: Nutrition and Physical Activity Domain

	LTI -5	RI -4	MI -3	LI -2	SLI -1	N 0	I 1	SI 2	VI 3	EI 4	MI 5
I#	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
32	1	2	4	7	8	9	8	8	3	0	0
	2	4	8	14	16	18	16	16	6	0	0
33	0	4	6	12	7	12	3	4	2	0	0
	0	8	12	24	14	24	6	8	4	0	0
34	6	7	3	7	4	11	8	1	0	2	1
	12	14	6	14	8	22	16	2	0	4	2
35	3	10	9	2	7	8	4	7	0	0	0
	6	20	18	4	14	16	8	14	0	0	0

Item Statements:

32. Programs of high quality include nutrition and physical activity.
 33. Programs of high quality emphasize character building components during physical activities.
 34. Programs of high quality provide healthy food and safe drinking water.
35. Programs of high quality engage youth daily in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

For the Promoting Diversity, Access, Equity and Inclusion domain (Table 11), 42% (21 of 50) of respondents ranked item 36, *promote diversity, access, equity and inclusion*, as important to most important while 26% (13 of 50) ranked the item as neutral, and 32% (16 of 50) of respondents ranked the item as somewhat less important to least important. Few respondents, 8% (4 of 50), ranked item 37, *encourage student participation from diverse populations of the community*, as important to most important while 14% (7 of 50) ranked this item as neutral and over three quarters or 78 % (39 of 50) of respondents ranked the item as somewhat less important to least important. For item 38, *provide available information in parents' and caregivers' home languages*, 10% (5 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as important to most important, 36% (18 of 50) ranked the item as neutral and over half of the respondents, 54 % (27 of 50),

ranked the item as somewhat less important to least important. An equal number of respondents, 36% (18 of 50), ranked item 39, *provide youth with the opportunity to explore, share and celebrate their culture with others*, as important to most important and neutral while the remaining 28 % of respondents (14 of 50) ranked the item as somewhat less important to least important.

Table 11

Response Frequencies and Percentages: Promoting Diversity, Access, Equity and Inclusion Domain

	LTI -5	RI -4	MI -3	LI -2	SLI -1	N 0	I 1	SI 2	VI 3	EI 4	MI 5
I#	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
36	0	1	4	6	5	13	17	2	1	1	0
	0	2	8	12	10	26	34	4	2	2	0
37	0	5	8	3	23	7	2	1	0	1	0
	0	10	16	6	46	14	4	2	0	2	0
38	8	2	2	8	7	18	2	3	0	0	0
	16	4	4	16	14	36	4	6	0	0	0
39	2	2	4	4	2	18	6	7	4	1	0
	4	4	8	8	4	36	12	14	8	2	0

Item Statements:

- 36. Programs of high quality promote diversity, access, equity and inclusion.
- 37. Programs of high quality encourage student participation from diverse populations of the community.
- 38. Programs of high quality provide available information in parents' and caregivers' home languages.
- 39. Programs of high quality provide youth with the opportunity to explore, share and celebrate their culture with others.

For the Effectively Supporting English Learners domain (Table 12), 44% (22 of 50) of respondents ranked item 40, *effectively support English Learners*, as important to most important, 26% (13 of 50) ranked the item as neutral, and 30% of respondents (15 of 50) ranked the item as somewhat less important to least important. More than half of the respondents, 60% (30 of 50), ranked item 41, *provide strategies that support English Learners to achieve a greater level of*

fluency, as important to most important, 12% (6 of 50) ranked the item as neutral, and a little over a fourth of respondents, 28% (14 of 50), ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. An equal number of respondents, 22% (11 of 50), ranked both items 42 and 43, structure interactions between English Learners and English-fluent students to promote inclusion and strengthen participants' English development (item 42) and empower English Learners socially and academically through staff and leadership (item 43), as important to most important. Few respondents, 10% (5 of 50), ranked item 42 as neutral, and a majority or 68 % (34 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Item 43 was similar with 18% of respondents (9 of 50) ranking the item as neutral while 60% (30 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important.

For the Learning in Afterschool and Summer (LIAS) principles domain (Table 13), most respondents, 88% (44 of 50), ranked item 44, provide actively engaging learning activities, in which students are physically active, and participate, in hands-on, project-based activities that provide a total learning experience to enhance their ability to think critically, as important to most important, 6% (3 of 50) ranked the item as neutral, and only 6% (3 of 50) of respondents ranked the item as somewhat less important to least important. Similarly to item 44, most respondents, 86% (43 of 50), ranked item 45, provide collaborative learning experiences that engage students in common tasks requiring them to depend on and be accountable to each other, as important to most important, 8% (4 of 50) of respondents ranked the item as neutral, and only 6% (3 of 50) of respondents ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. Nearly three-quarters or 72% (36 of 50) of respondents ranked item 46, provide meaningful learning experiences, in which students have the opportunity

Table 12

Response Frequencies and Percentages: Effectively Supporting English Learners Domain

	LTI -5	RI -4	MI -3	LI -2	SLI -1	N 0	I 1	SI 2	VI 3	EI 4	MI 5
I#	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
40	0	5	4	0	6	13	6	5	9	2	0
	0	10	8	0	12	26	12	10	18	4	0
41	3	2	2	1	6	6	7	8	14	1	0
	6	4	4	2	12	12	14	16	28	2	0
42	2	2	2	14	14	5	7	0	2	2	0
	4	4	4	28	28	10	14	0	4	4	0
43	0	0	7	9	14	9	11	0	0	0	0
	0	0	14	18	28	18	22	0	0	0	0

Item Statements:

- 40. Programs of high quality effectively supporting English Learners.
- 41. Programs of high quality provide strategies that support English Learners to achieve a greater level of fluency.
- 42. Programs of high quality structure interactions between English Learners and English-fluent students to promote inclusion and strengthen participants' English development.
- 43. Programs of high quality empower English Learners socially and academically through staff and leadership.

to develop ownership and assess their own progress as they participate in activities involving responsibility, leadership and service to others, as important to most important, 14% (7 of 50) of respondents ranked the item as neutral, and 14% of respondents (7 of 50) ranked this item as somewhat less important to least important. For item 47, provide learning experiences that support mastery; activities are explicitly sequenced and students have the opportunity to create a product demonstrating mastery that can be viewed by peers and shared with others, the distribution on each side of neutral was similar with 40% (20 of 50) of respondents ranking the item as important to most important, 44% (22 of 50) of respondents ranking the item as somewhat less important to least important, and

16% (8 of 50) of respondents ranked the item as neutral. Nearly three quarters or 74% (37 of 50) of respondents, ranked item 48, provide learning experiences that expand students' horizons; programs provide opportunities outside the "classroom" that give students a vision of the broader world, of which they are a part, and build cultural, environmental, political and global awareness, as important to most important, 8% (4 of 50) of respondents ranked the item as neutral, and 18% of respondents (9 of 50) ranked the item as somewhat less important to least important.

Items never ranking lower than less important (-2). Analysis of findings revealed that several items never ranked lower than less important (-2) on any sort: item 1, Programs of high quality have a clearly defined vision and mission agreed upon by all stakeholders; item 23, Programs of high quality demonstrate through actions of youth and staff a strong sense of ownership and belonging such as holding one another accountable to behavior expectations and program traditions; item 24, Programs of high quality have a well-defined plan for staff recruitment and professional development; and item 45, Programs of high quality provide collaborative learning experiences that engage students in common tasks requiring them to depend on and be accountable to each other.

Items never ranking in the top three distribution categories. Results revealed that five items never ranked in the top three distribution categories (very important, extremely important or most important): item 9, *Programs of high quality have collaborative relationships with partners to provide a framework*; item 11, *Programs of high quality provide updates and information about the program to collaborative partners using a variety of formats in multiple languages*; item 35, *Programs of high quality engage youth daily in moderate to vigorous physical activity*; item 38, *Programs of high quality provide available*

Table 13

Response Frequencies and Percentages: Learning in Afterschool and Summer (LIAS) principles (Student Engagement) Domain

	LTI -5	RI -4	MI -3	LI -2	SLI -1	N 0	I 1	SI 2	VI 3	EI 4	MI 5
I#	N %	N %	N %	N %	N% %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
44	0	1	0	1	1	3	3	10	4	12	15
	0	2	0	2	2	6	6	20	8	24	30
45	0	0	0	0	3	4	4	7	15	6	11
	0	0	0	0	6	8	8	14	30	12	22
46	3	0	3	0	1	7	4	6	8	8	10
	6	0	6	0	2	14	8	12	16	16	20
47	1	1	3	13	4	8	2	3	7	7	1
	2	2	6	26	8	16	4	6	14	14	2
48	0	3	1	4	1	4	9	12	4	4	8
	0	6	2	8	2	8	18	24	8	8	16

Item Statements:

44. Programs of high quality provide actively engaging learning activities, in which students are physically active, and participate, in hands-on, project-based activities that provide a total learning experience to enhance their ability to think critically.
45. Programs of high quality provide collaborative learning experiences that engage students in common tasks requiring them to depend on and be accountable to each other.
46. Programs of high quality provide meaningful learning experiences, in which students have the opportunity to develop ownership and assess their own progress as they participate in activities involving responsibility, leadership and service to others.
47. Programs of high quality provide learning experiences that support mastery; activities are explicitly sequenced and students have the opportunity to create a product demonstrating mastery that can be viewed by peers and shared with others.
48. Programs of high quality provide learning experiences that expand students' horizons; programs provide opportunities outside the "classroom" that give students a vision of the broader world, of which they are a part, and build cultural, environmental, political and global awareness.

information in parents' and caregivers' home languages; and item 43, Programs of high quality empower English Learners socially and academically through staff and leadership.

Highest degree of correlation among the survey respondents. PCQ

software was used for data analysis to identify the highest degree of correlation among the fifty survey respondents. Through the use of Q-sort methodology,

factor extraction was applied to identify the sorts with the highest degree of correlation.

Table 14 represents the factor loadings for each of the 50 sorts following varimax rotation. Sorts with a value of greater than or equal to $\pm .37$ are significant and represent the highest degree of correlation. The first factor (Factor 1) extracted from the data identifies the largest portion of common or shared ground that the Q-sorts or data sets hold in common (Watts & Stenner, 2012) and is the factor of interest for this study.

Q-sorts with significant loadings related to more than one of the extracted factors are considered confounding sorts. The Q-sorts confounded in this analysis are: 3, 10, 12, 14, 19, 21, 24, 27, 35, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46 and 50 and, therefore, are not included in the construction of Factor 1.

The following non-confounded statistically significant sorts represent the highest degree of correlation: LS01, DS02, FS04, TC07 , DS09, TC11, DS13, DS15, FC22, FC23, TC25, TS26, DC29, TO31, FS32, TC33, LS34, TC36, FS37, LS40, FC47, DS48, FC49. The higher the sort value, the greater the contribution of the sort to the construction of Factor A, which is the single Q-sort configured to represent the viewpoint of Factor 1.

Table 15 depicts the six factors extracted from the Q-sort data as well as the percent of variance and eigenvalue. This data represents the relationship between each factor.

Factor 1 has an eigenvalue of 13.91 and explains 28% of the study variance, representing over one-quarter (28%) of everything the Q-sorts have in common. When factors are extracted from a data set using the correlations between the factor loadings, it is typical for Factor 1 to identify the strongest correlations between the viewpoints that the Q-sorts have in common. Factor 1

Table 14

Rotated Factor Matrix

Q-sort Label	Factors					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 LS01	.69	-.23	-.29	.34	.30	-.28
2 DS02	.42	.11	.00	.20	-.11	.34
3 DC03	.46	-.45	.04	-.08	-.22	-.26
4 FS04	.65	.28	.29	.11	.10	.07
5 TC05	.28	-.11	.14	-.19	.23	.32
6 TE06	.23	-.11	.00	-.34	-.08	.27
7 TC07	.73	-.26	-.16	-.11	-.17	.11
8 TE08	.28	.27	.28	-.19	-.17	-.45
9 DS09	.58	-.27	-.08	.04	-.16	-.02
10 DS10	.55	-.07	-.01	-.54	-.17	-.08
11 TC11	.61	-.14	-.08	-.05	-.05	.05
12 FS12	.53	-.19	.34	-.30	.40	.17
13 DS13	.41	-.32	.22	.13	-.01	.08
14 DC14	.58	-.46	.02	.27	-.16	.02
15 DS15	.73	-.05	-.11	.14	-.26	.08
16 DS16	.20	-.40	-.28	-.16	-.10	-.07
17 TE17	.25	.07	-.23	-.30	.07	.47
18 DC18	.58	-.50	-.05	.10	-.23	.14
19 DS19	.41	.25	.25	.45	-.02	-.08
20 TE20	.28	.27	.28	-.19	-.17	-.45
21 FS21	.40	.25	.26	.44	-.02	-.10
22 FC22	.59	-.28	-.23	.28	.23	-.32
23 FC23	.54	.05	-.11	.05	-.14	.01
24 FS24	.67	.54	-.28	-.01	-.08	-.17
25 TC25	.46	.05	.10	.13	-.08	.13
26 TS26	.52	.14	-.02	-.22	-.17	.00
27 FS27	.67	.54	-.28	-.16	-.08	-.17
28 AS28	.07	.26	.04	.11	-.16	.08
29 DC29	.39	.20	.25	-.25	.19	-.08
30 TO30	-.08	.08	-.05	-.10	.05	.10

Table 14 (cont.)

Q-sort Label	Factors					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
31 TO31	.66	-.04	.05	.02	-.14	-.17
32 FS32	.65	.28	.29	.11	.10	.07
33 TC33	.65	.11	.34	-.10	-.25	-.02
34 LS34	.69	-.23	-.29	.34	.30	-.28
35 DC35	.53	-.19	.34	-.30	.40	.17
36 TC36	.50	.04	.17	.04	.08	.05
37 FS37	.69	-.23	-.29	.34	.30	-.28
38 FS38	.67	.54	-.28	-.16	-.08	-.17
39 TC39	.55	.20	-.20	.08	-.19	.41
40 LS40	.69	-.23	-.29	.34	.30	-.28
41 FS41	.44	.40	-.16	.08	.11	-.13
42 FS42	.44	.40	-.16	.08	.11	-.13
43 FS43	.67	.54	-.28	-.16	-.08	-.17
44 FC44	.53	-.19	.34	-.30	.40	.17
45 FC45	.33	-.05	-.19	.04	-.38	.13
46 TO46	.46	-.45	.04	-.08	-.22	-.26
47 FC47	.47	-.02	-.02	.11	-.17	.17
48 DS48	.39	-.27	-.19	-.11	-.20	-.25
49 FC49	.05	.16	.19	.35	.16	.11
50 FS50	.44	.19	-.20	-.53	.22	.13

Note: Factor loadings > or = ± .37 are **bolded** and represent the sorts used to construct Factor A, which is the single Q-sort configured to represent the viewpoint of Factor 1. Q-sort Label indicates number of sort and participant's program role and affiliation, for example, LS01 is sort number one and was completed by a liaison employed by a school (Table 1).

Table 15

Summary of Q-sort 6 Factor Extraction with Eigenvalue and Variance

Factors	Totals						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
eigens	13.91	4.02	2.74	2.81	2.03	2.24	27.76
% variance	28	8	5	6	4	4	55

represents the largest portion of shared ground through which these groups and viewpoints are connected. A total variance of 35% – 40 % or greater represents a sound analysis of the data (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Combined, the six factors indicated 55% of the study variance.

Table 16 represents the sorts used to construct Factor A as well as the factor *load* and variance accounted for by each individual sort.

Figure 1 is a graphic representation of Factor A, depicting a holistic view of all sorts, representing all items and highest level of correlation among the perception of participants for each item relative to level of importance.

Evidenced by their placement in Figure 1, Q-sort participants indicated statements or items 2, 23, 44, 45 and 46 as the most critical elements needed to operate an afterschool program of quality:

- Item 2: Programs of high quality have well-defined, hands-on, student-centered activities and incorporate and combine academics, youth development and recreation.

Table 16

Highest Degree of Correlation: Sorts Contributing to Factor A

Q-sort label	load	% variance	Q-sort label	load	%variance
LS01	0.70	49	DS02	0.43	18
FS04	0.65	42	TC07	0.74	55
DS09	0.59	35	TC11	0.62	38
DS13	0.42	18	DS15	0.74	55
FC22	0.60	36	FC23	0.54	29
TC25	0.47	22	TS26	0.52	27
DC29	0.39	15	TO31	0.66	44
FS32	0.65	42	TC33	0.65	42
LS34	0.70	49	TC36	0.50	25
FS37	0.70	49	LS40	0.70	49
FC47	0.48	23	DS48	0.39	15
FC49	0.55	30			

- Item 23: Programs of high quality demonstrate through actions of youth and staff a strong sense of ownership and belonging such as holding one another accountable to behavior expectations and program traditions.
- Item 44: Programs of high quality provide actively engaging learning activities, in which students are physically active, and participate, in hands-on, project-based activities that provide a total learning experience to enhance their ability to think critically.

- Item 45: Programs of high quality provide collaborative learning experiences that engage students in common tasks requiring them to depend on and be accountable to each other.
 - Item 46: Programs of high quality provide meaningful learning experiences, in which students have the opportunity to develop ownership and assess their own progress as they participate in activities involving responsibility, leadership and service to others.

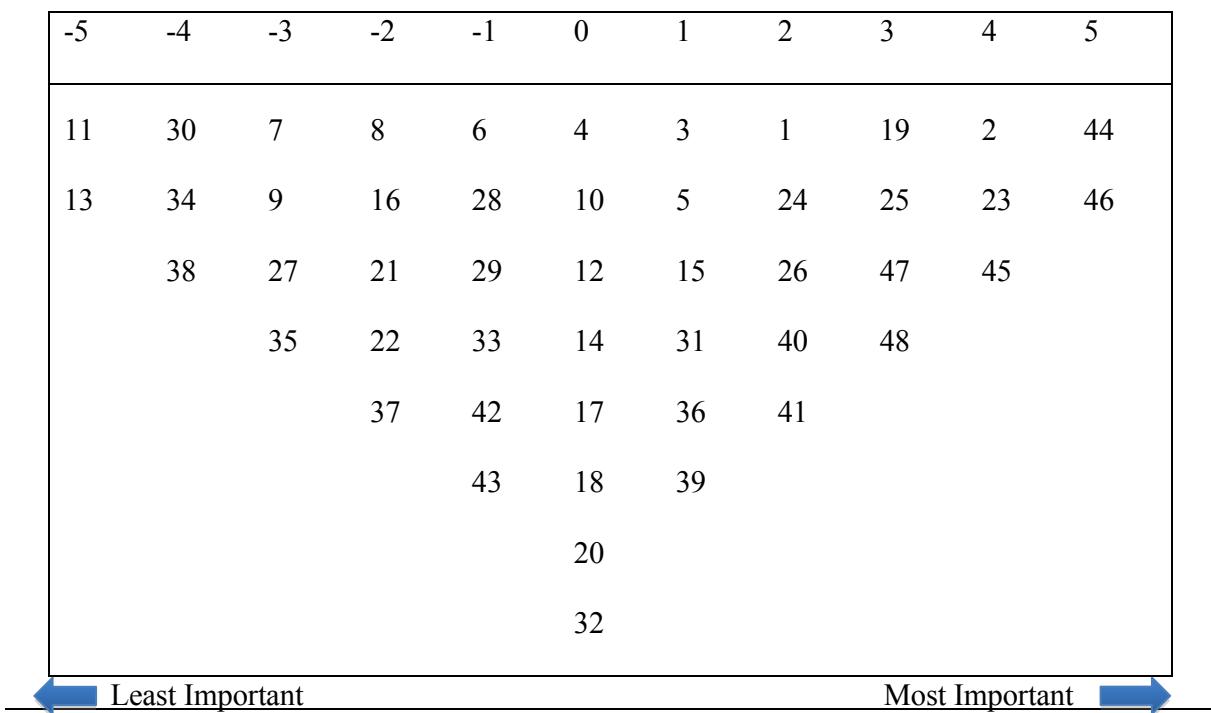


Figure 1. Graphic representation of Factor A.

Note: Numbers from -5 to 5 correspond to level of importance for each item on the Q-sort or location in the Q-sort matrix, and each number represents a Q-sort statement element

Qualitative Results

Research Question 2. What are frontline implementers' perceptions regarding the use and impact of the QSAT and LIAS principles tool on program quality?

Twelve individual telephone interviews were conducted with frontline afterschool program implementers representing Northern, Central and Southern regions of California to explore the use of self-assessment tools, most specifically the use of the QSAT and LIAS principles tool, to improve and sustain the quality of afterschool programs. Six interviewees were frontline implementers of afterschool programs perceived as high quality, and six interviewees represented programs perceived as still in the developmental stage. A semi-structured interview protocol was used, and the average length of time for interviews was approximately 25 minutes. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim and the data were entered into NVivo to help identify themes. Each interviewee was assigned a code name based on the first 12 letters of the alphabet, Interviewee A through Interviewee L.

Findings revealed that 10 of the 12 interviewees had used the Quality Self-Assessment Tool in the past or were currently using the tool to evaluate their program. The two interviewees who had not used the Quality Self-Assessment Tool were both employed by nationally recognized community based organizations, which use the organization's self-assessment tool for program evaluation. Of the respondents who had used the QSAT tool, seven were still using it to some degree and three were not. The three interviewees who had stopped using the QSAT were associated with large organizations that had used the tool as a starting point but had progressed onto other assessment tools based on the needs of their organizations and specific goals. These organizations had created program specific tools using a combination of indicators found in the QSAT as well as additional research based indicators for program evaluation, and one program developed a tool based on the YPQA.

Of the 10 interviewees who had used or were currently using the QSAT, 61% (7) of participants felt that the tool was very valuable for providing them with a “place to start.” In addition, the tool provided the academic language to discuss important program elements and was valuable for setting goals for future improvement. Interviewee A (personal communication, September 11, 2013) stated that the QSAT was helpful because “we learned that it can even be site specific, it helped us identify areas to target to improve and the steps to do so, or what action plan to implement.” Interviewee F (personal communication, October 4, 2013) and Interviewee G (personal communication, October 5, 2013) expressed that the QSAT tool was very limited and did not provide a clear rubric for accurate program evaluation, however, these two respondents stated that when the tool was created it provided a “stepping stone” to develop more current tools.

All respondents who were currently using or had used the QSAT reported that their perception of their program had changed as a result of using this tool. The most common statements included, “it really forced us to examine where our program was in a broader sense,” (Interviewee A, personal communication, September 11, 2013), “it helped us to identify what we were doing well, if we were meeting our requirements,” (Interviewee E, personal communication, September 17, 2013) and “it gave us goals to work toward” (Interviewee B, personal communication, September 27, 2013 & Interviewee L, personal communication, October 21, 2013). Interviewee J (personal communication, October 11, 2013) and Interviewee K (personal communication, October 15, 2013) expressed the belief that the tool was far too overwhelming, and stated that they use the tool in sections, breaking it up to discuss with stakeholders and often focusing on only one specific area at a time.

The way that we have used it is we have taken sections of it, I have taken sections of it, I've taken sections to staff coordinators, the part that person may have some control over, like the principal we may give it to them so they can look at what they may want to work on or focus on to accomplish in afterschool. For example, at the end of the year, let's look at the program, how did we do in youth development, how did we do with connecting to the school day. . . how did we do with families, how are we connecting to the community and what do we want to do more of?
(Interviewee K, personal communication, October 15, 2013)

Interviewee K (personal communication, October 15, 2013) stated,

“...using it (the QSAT) as it is, is way too detailed, it boggles the mind. If we think about all the things that we are not, it will paralyze us.” Over half of the programs reported that relationships or linkages with the school day improved as a result of using the QSAT tool stating “it guided our conversations” (Interviewee A, personal communication, September 11, 2013), “it gave us a place to start” (Interviewee C, personal communication, September 26, 2013) and “it provided us with concrete evidence of the need to improve” (Interviewee E, personal communication, October 4, 2013).

Of the 12 respondents only three had used the Learning in Afterschool and Summer (LIAS) principles tool to evaluate their program. All three respondents represented programs operating several hundred sites. Of the nine who had not used the LIAS tool, six reported that they had knowledge of the principles and were looking forward to using them in the future, and three respondents were unfamiliar with the LIAS principles. Interview L (personal communication, October 21, 2013) stated that their program and district leaders were hoping to “use the principles to guide the program goals because our goals are going to have to change.” Interviewee L (personal communication, October 21, 2013) shared that the program had received postcards with the LIAS principles listed, and program leaders currently had staff using them to guide their daily activities.

Overall, respondents indicated that the principles would have a positive impact on the quality of their program and interactions with students, but they had not had the time to fully implement the principles at this point.

When participants were asked to identify on a scale of 1-10 with “1” representing “not at all important” and “10” representing “extremely important-a must do,” 10 of the 12 or 83% of the respondents felt that self-assessment was “extremely important-a must do” for their programs. Approximately half of the respondents mentioned the need to have a system in place and a process set up in order to continually review and evaluate their program in relation to *intended outcomes* and *determining next-steps*. The two programs that did not rate the use of self-assessment as a “10” were programs identified as still in the developmental stages. Both programs were newer programs located in small rural communities, and had experienced a recent change in leadership. The largest, most highly developed participating programs described extensive systems in place for assessing staff performance as well as program quality. This systematic approach included identifying staff, student and community needs; coaching staff; mentoring leaders; reviewing results and implementing changes. When asked how useful the Learning in Afterschool and Summer Learning principles tool was to inform decisions or next steps, Interviewee G (personal communication, October 5, 2013) responded that the principles are a 10 on a scale of 1-10 because,

...it's much more simple, it is something that can be applied to a beginner because it is concrete and especially if you allow them to structure your training so that they are experiencing what each of those five principles are so that they have a concrete understanding of what it means to be hands on and minds on. How is that different? What does it mean to do something that is meaningful to you rather than something that is arbitrary, what does it mean to see your skills improving, how does that feel and did you know all this or did we broaden your horizons?

Participants expressed that the significant actions they had taken to improve or sustain the quality of their programs had been very valuable. Two-thirds of the respondents, 8 of the 12, stated that the most significant action they had taken to improve the quality of their program based on self-assessment was improving the alignment with the school day, which was described as working together to provide students with a *seamless* transition from the school day to the afterschool program. Another important action explained was working together to provide common expectations and consistent rules. Although several of the interviewees operate programs identified by leaders in the field as “model programs,” when asked to evaluate the quality of their own program responses varied. Three interviewees rated their program a 9 or 10, one program was rated a 7/8, six interviewees stated that their programs were a 6 or 7, one program reported as a 5, and one interviewee stated that their program was less than a 5. The program that identified itself as less than a 5 was a new, very small program under new leadership. Interviewees operating several programs found rating their programs more difficult and expressed that for a program to be considered a “10” it must be well developed, well established, deeply integrated; a program that has all of its systems in place and also has “signature practices” that are specific to their particular community.

Indicators of program quality. Three themes emerged as key indicators of program quality: positive student and parent feedback, staff retention, and securing additional funding. Eight-three percent of interviewees reported that receiving positive feedback from their parents and students was an indicator of program quality. Interviewee L (personal communication, October 21, 2013) reported that a student survey response stated, “when I come (to the afterschool program) the kids that are mean to me during the day disappear.” Interviewee E,

(personal communication, September 17, 2013) expressed, “Parents are telling us their students are doing better, their kids want to stay for the program.” In addition, maintaining a consistent student waiting list was also viewed as an indicator of success. Interviewee H (personal communication, October 9, 2013) stated, “We need a larger facility, we are completely over capacity at both of our sites, so we are looking at opportunities to expand our sites or to add a site.” More than half of the interviewees explained that they had been able to retain their staff, which was regarded as a sign that they were operating a quality program because the staff stayed. One third of participants expressed that they had secured additional funding for their program based on reports and the reputation or perception that they were operating a program of high quality.

Identified needs to improve a program to a level of highest quality – a model for others. Six themes emerged relative to what participants identified as a need in order to improve the program and be rated a *10*, a program *of the highest quality that it could be a model for others*: money, training, staff, leadership, systems for continuous improvement, and support from stakeholders. Money affects programs in multiple ways, and Interviewee J (personal communication, October 11, 2013) stated, “At a fiscal level programs are measured by our ability to earn the grant in order to keep your money you have to make daily attendance so the state doesn’t take your money away, but that’s actually a travesty.” This interviewee explained that basing funding on attendance gives no indication of the quality of program that students are offered, and contended that funding should be based on the quality of the program.

Training staff was an element viewed as critical need, and Interviewee D (personal communication, September 26, 2013) stated, “The professional development piece, making it a requirement for all staff, this has a direct impact

because we are giving them more tools in their tool belt.” Developing high quality programs is dependent on retaining experienced staff, and staffing was viewed as paramount to program success. Interviewee A (personal communication, September 11, 2013) indicated, “We are losing trained staff and then we have to hire untrained staff,” which costs both time and money. Maintaining consistent, high quality leadership was also viewed as important. Interviewee B (personal communication, September 27, 2013) specified, “We need someone that understands curriculum and the bigger picture; we have had turnover in our administration, there is not continuity.”

Implementing and maintaining systems for continuous improvement and considering the unique characteristics of each program was an important identified need. Interviewee F (personal communication, October 4, 2013) stated:

First and foremost it is a commitment to quality improvement and it's a cycle, that programs are in a constant state of quality improvement. I mean year after year that it's a revolving door of effective leadership transitions, the schools may deal with a whole lot of variables demographically...self-assessment is of critical importance and that dialogue where you acknowledge where you have room to grow and then seek our technical assistance through coaching, consulting, training mentorship, building a community of practice, that is critical.

Support from stakeholders was also identified as essential; Interviewee A (personal communication, September 11, 2013) reported the need for “more involvement with stakeholders, more support.”

Facilitators and barriers to improving and sustaining an afterschool program of quality. Four major themes emerged as facilitators to improving and sustaining an afterschool program of quality: leadership, establishing a vision and setting goals, staffing - recruiting, hiring, training and retaining quality staff who develop positive relationships, and support. A majority of respondents felt that program leadership was instrumental in building and sustaining a program of

quality. Integral to developing a program of high quality is program leadership who establishes goals and a vision for the program as well as puts systems in place to obtain those goals. Interviewee C (personal communication, September 26, 2013) stated that continued and involved support from the administration has “empowered the staff to run managed well-behaved classrooms.”

All interviewees mentioned staffing as either a barrier or a facilitator. Interviewee K, (personal communication, October 15, 2013) expressed that the most critical element present in their program was the staff and “their relationships with the children are what makes our program special.” Interviewee L (personal communication, October 21, 2013) stated,

The quality of our program is dependent upon our staff, not just peer relationships but really quality adult relationships is a huge measure of how successful a student will be if they have really important adult relationships in order to succeed. They really need people to listen to them, it doesn’t matter how much homework they accomplished what really matters is that someone listened to them.

Interviewee G (personal communication, October 5, 2013) contended that a facilitator to improving and sustaining a high quality program was having systems in place for training and supporting staff,

When we began there was not enough support in the system, nor having systems and not having support, there has to be a system in place to jumpstart new staff because there is constant turnover, otherwise what happens is you train them in August and by October you have a bunch of new faces and they are not trained. It’s a process building the competency and the capacity of the staff to understand the *why* and the *what* and to work on the *how*. (Interviewee G, personal communication, October 5, 2013)

Money was the primary theme that emerged as a barrier to developing and maintaining a program of high quality, which also impacts the number of staff that can be hired, the competitiveness of salaries in order to retain staff, and the

professional development that can be offered. “I would definitely say . . . and funding are our biggest challenges” (Interviewee H, personal communication, October 9, 2013). One third of the respondents stated that they were still operating on the same budget as several years ago, which was becoming increasingly difficult because their staffing and operation costs have continued to rise, but their funding level has not. Interviewee D (personal communication, September 26, 2013) reported, “Hiring enough people to serve students, enough money for staff, we can’t pay enough to keep the good ones, we cannot pay them what they are worth.” Interviewee D (personal communication, September 26, 2013) also explained how funding is an issue in that “ASES allows us to serve only a limited number of students, funding won’t allow us to hire staff to serve the number of students needing services.”

Other barriers to program quality included attendance, transportation, and space. Two of the 12 programs reported that attendance was an issue, and explained that they were unable to keep high enough numbers to retain funding; however, the other ten interviewees reported that their programs had waiting lists of students. Transportation was a real barrier for two of the programs due to limited funding to support transportation. Interviewee D, (personal communication, September 26, 2013) stated, “transportation is a huge issue, we have huge wait lists but we can’t get the students here to serve them.” Three of the 12 interviewees reported space as an issue indicating that they had either outgrown the space they were in or were not allowed to use space due to limitations placed on them by schools or school districts.

Summary

Chapter 4 detailed the results of the quantitative and qualitative findings guided by the research questions. Findings revealed that participants consistently

ranked four statements derived from the LIAS principles as most important for developing a high quality afterschool program: statement 44, *Programs of high quality provide actively engaging learning activities, in which students are physically active, and participate, in hands-on, project-based activities that provide a total learning experience to enhance their ability to think critically*; statement 45, *Programs of high quality provide collaborative learning experiences that engage students in common tasks requiring them to depend on and be accountable to each other*; statement 46, *Programs of high quality provide meaningful learning experiences, in which students have the opportunity to develop ownership and assess their own progress as they participate in activities involving responsibility, leadership and service to others*; and statement 48, *Programs of high quality provide learning experiences that expand students' horizons; programs provide opportunities outside the classroom that give students a vision of the broader world, of which they are a part, and build cultural, environmental, political and global awareness*.

Q-sort participants indicated four elements as most critical to operating an afterschool program of quality: element statement 2, *Programs of high quality have well defined, hands-on, student-centered activities and incorporate and combine academics, youth development and recreation*; element statement 23, *Programs of high quality demonstrate through actions of youth and staff a strong sense of ownership and belonging such as holding one another accountable to behavior expectations and program traditions*; element statement 44, *Programs of high quality provide actively engaging learning activities, in which students are physically active, and participate, in hands-on, project-based activities that provide a total learning experience to enhance their ability to think critically*; and element statement 46, *Programs of high quality provide meaningful learning*

experiences, in which students have the opportunity to develop ownership and assess their own progress as they participate in activities involving responsibility, leadership and service to others.

Six themes emerged relative to what participants identified as a need in order to improve the program and be rated a *10*, a program *of the highest quality that it could be a model for others*: money, training, staff, leadership, systems for continuous improvement, and support from stakeholders. Four major themes emerged as facilitators to improving and sustaining an afterschool program of quality: leadership, establishing a vision and setting goals, staffing - recruiting, hiring, training and retaining quality staff who develop positive relationships, and support; while money or level of funding was the primary theme perceived as a barrier.

Chapter 5 presents a summary of the findings and conclusions and a discussion of the research questions related to the literature as well as recommendations for actions and implications for future study.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY/DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

This chapter presents a summary of the major findings and conclusions of the study, followed by a discussion of the findings related to the literature, and implications for action and recommendations for further research. This study centered on publicly funded California afterschool programs supported primarily through state and federal grant funding; California's investment in afterschool programs is nearly \$700 million per year (Torlakson & Peck, 2013). Lawmakers and educators have the responsibility of finding ways to accurately measure the impact of this major investment in order to determine whether or not these programs are meeting their intended goals.

The purpose of this study was to identify and examine afterschool program elements considered most important or essential to developing, executing, and sustaining a high quality program. Specifically, this study identified the QSAT elements and LIAS Learning principles frontline implementers and technical assistance providers perceive as most important and highest leverage in creating and sustaining a program of high quality and explored the value and impact of using the QSAT and LIAS principles tool to improve and sustain program quality. A pragmatic, mixed-methods design was used that included concurrent collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. Q Methodology was used to examine the level of importance participants place on element statements related to developing and sustaining a high quality afterschool program. The statements were developed based on the contents of the QSAT and LIAS principles tool. The items were designed with a standardized presentation; each statement began with the phrase "Programs of high quality provide...".

In addition, 12 individual interviews were conducted with frontline afterschool program implementers representing Northern, Central and Southern California regions to explore the use of self-assessment, most specifically the use of the QSAT and LIAS principles tool to improve and sustain the quality of their programs. Six interviewees were frontline implementers of afterschool programs perceived as high quality, and six interviewees represented programs perceived as still in the developmental stage.

Summary of Findings

Findings revealed consistent identification of elements that leaders in the field of expanded learning (frontline implementers and technical assistance providers) perceive as the most critical for developing and sustaining a high quality program. Q-sort statements were randomly presented to participants without their awareness of domain categories. Results revealed that participants consistently ranked four statements derived from the LIAS principles as most important for developing a high quality afterschool program; these principles were ranked among the top or highest four distribution levels of importance (somewhat important +2, very important +3, extremely important +4, or most important +5):

- Item 44: *Programs of high quality provide actively engaging learning activities, in which students are physically active, and participate, in hands-on, project-based activities that provide a total learning experience to enhance their ability to think critically* (41 of the 50 respondents or 82%),
- Item 45: *Programs of high quality provide collaborative learning experiences that engage students in common tasks requiring them to*

depend on and be accountable to each other (39 of 50 respondents or 78%),

- Item 46: *Programs of high quality provide meaningful learning experiences, in which students have the opportunity to develop ownership and assess their own progress as they participate in activities involving responsibility, leadership and service to others* (32 of 50 respondents or 64%), and
- Item 48: *Programs of high quality provide learning experiences that expand students' horizons; programs provide opportunities outside the classroom that give students a vision of the broader world, of which they are a part, and build cultural, environmental, political and global awareness* (28 of 50 respondents or 56%).

Item 47, Programs of high quality provide learning experiences that support mastery, activities are explicitly sequenced and students have the opportunity to create a product that demonstrates mastery and can be viewed by peers and shared with others, and also one of the five LIAS principles, was more evenly distributed with the highest concentration of respondents (13 of 50 or 26%) ranking it as less important (-2).

Over half of the participants (28 of 50 or 56%), ranked item 42, Programs of high quality structure interactions between English Learners and English-fluent students to promote inclusion and strengthen participants' English development, as slightly less important (-1) or less important (-2). Respondents ranked items related to equity and inclusion near the center of the sort with 30 of 50 or 60% of respondents ranking item 37, Programs of high quality encourage student participation from diverse populations of the community, as neutral (0) or slightly

less important (-1), and 25 of 50 or 50% of respondents ranked item 38, Programs of high quality provide available information in parents' and caregivers' home languages, as neutral (0) or slightly less important (-1). Item 13, Programs of high quality require staff participation on school committees, ranked substantially lower in level of importance than the other elements; 17 of 50 or 34% of respondents ranked item 13 as least important (-5) and 13 of 50 or 26% of respondents ranked it as rarely important (-4), representing 60% of the respondents for this item. Findings revealed a large concentration of respondents (30 of 50 or 60%) indicating item 11, Programs of high quality provide updates and information about the program to collaborative partners using a variety of formats in multiple languages, as less important (-2) and minimally important (-3).

In addition, 43 of 50 participants or 86% of respondents ranked item 23, Programs of high quality demonstrate through actions of youth and staff a strong sense of ownership and belonging such as holding one another accountable to behavior expectations and program traditions, above neutral as important to most important (+1 to +5), and 20 of 50 or 40% of participants ranked this item in the top two positions as extremely important and most important (+4 and +5). Item 19, Programs of high quality provide an emotional climate that is positive, demonstrating respect and support between staff and students, was ranked by 31 of the 50 participants or 62% in the top four positions of importance. Item 1, Programs of high quality have a clearly defined vision and mission agreed upon by all stakeholders, also had a relatively high concentration of respondents indicating its importance with 12 of 50 or 24% of participants ranking it in the most important position (+5), which was the highest level of importance.

Relative to level of importance, Table 17 depicts a summary of all Q-sort items by domain (D) and frequency that ranked in either the highest - most important (+5) or lowest - least important (-5) positions.

Table 17

Q-sort Items by Domain and Frequency Relative to Level of Importance: Highest - Most Important (+5) and Lowest - Least Important (-5)

Highest Ranking Items +5 = Most Important				Lowest Ranking Items -5 = Least Important			
Item#	D	N	%	Item#	D	N	%
44	LIAS	15	30	17	PES	13	34
1	PDA	12	24	38	PDAEI	8	16
45	LIAS	11	22	34	NPA	6	12
46	LIAS	10	20	27	SRPD	6	12
48	LIAS	8	16	30	FI	5	10
19	PES	6	12				
2	PDA	6	12				
18	PES	5	10				

Note. PDA=Program Design and Assessment, PES=Program Environment and Safety, SRPD=Staff Recruitment and Professional Development, FI=Family Involvement, NPA=Nutritional and Physical Activity, PDAEI=Promoting Diversity, Access, Equity and Inclusion, and LIAS=Learning in Afterschool and Summer principles (focus on student engagement)

Of the 12 domains, three domains were represented with items that ranked as most important (+5): (a) Learning in Afterschool and Summer (LIAS) principles with 4 of 8 or 50 % of the most important rated items, (b) Program Design and Assessment (PDA) with 2 of 8 or 25% of the most important rated items, and (c) Program Environment and Safety (PES) with 2 of 8 or 25% of the most important rated items. Four of the eight highest ranking items were from the LIAS domain. Five domains were represented with one item that ranked least

important (-5): Program Environment and Safety (PES), Promoting Diversity, Access, Equity and Inclusion (PDAEI), Nutritional and Physical Activity (NPA), Staff Recruitment and Professional Development (SRPD), and Family Involvement (FI). One domain, Program Environment and Safety (PES), was represented with items in both the highest and lowest ranking positions.

Table 18 presents a summary of all Q-sort items by domain (D) and frequency relative to level of importance that ranked in either the top three - highest matrix positions (+3 to +5) or bottom three - lowest matrix position (-3 to -5).

Table 18

Q-sort Items by Domain and Frequency Relative to Level of Importance: Top 3 Matrix Positions (+3, +4, and +5) and Bottom 3 Matrix Positions (-3, -4, and -5)

Items Ranking Very (3), Extremely (4) or Most Important (5)				Items Ranking Minimally (-3), Rarely (-4) or Least Important (-5)			
Item#	D	N	%	Item#	D	N	%
45	LIAS	33	66	13	ALSD	33	66
44	LIAS	31	62	35	NPA	22	44
23	YD	28	56	11	CPC	21	42
46	LIAS	26	52	22	YD	21	42
2	PDA	26	52	9	CPC	20	40
18	PES	21	42				

Note. PDA=Program Design and Assessment, CPC=Community Partnerships and Collaboration, ALSD=Alignment and Linkages to the School Day, PES=Program Environment and Safety, YD>Youth Development, NPA=Nutritional and Physical Activity, and LIAS=Learning in Afterschool and Summer principles (focus on student engagement)

Of the 12 domains, four were represented with items that ranked as very important (+3), extremely important (+4) or most important (+5): LIAS domain, Youth Development (YD) domain, Program Design and Assessment (PDA)

domain, and the Program Environment and Safety (PES) domain. Three of the six items that ranked in the top three or highest positions of importance were from the LIAS domain. Four of 12 domains were represented with items that ranked minimally important (-3), rarely important (-4), or least important (-5): Alignment and Linkages to the School Day (ALSD), Nutritional and Physical Activity (NPA), Community Partnerships and Collaboration (CPC), and Youth Development (YD). One domain, Youth Development (YD), was represented in both the three highest and three lowest ranked positions.

No participant ranked items 9, 11, 35, 38 or 43 as very, extremely or most important (+3, +4, +5) - the three highest positions in the Q-sort matrix:

- Item 9: *Programs of high quality have collaborative relationships with partners to provide a framework.*
- Item 11: *Programs of high quality provide updates and information about the program to collaborative partners using a variety of formats in multiple languages.*
- Item 35: *Programs of high quality engage youth daily in moderate to vigorous physical activity.*
- Item 38: *Programs of high quality provide available information in parents' and caregivers' home languages.*
- Item 43: *Programs of high quality empower English Learners socially and academically through staff and leadership*

Four items (1, 23, 24, and 45) never ranked as minimally, rarely or least important - the three lowest rankings in the distribution of importance:

- Item 1: *Programs of high quality have a clearly defined vision and mission agreed upon by all stakeholders.*

- Item 23: *Programs of high quality demonstrate through actions of youth and staff a strong sense of ownership and belonging such as holding one another accountable to behavior expectations and program traditions.*
- Item 24: *Programs of high quality have a well-defined plan for staff recruitment and professional development.*
- Item 45: *Programs of high quality provide collaborative learning experiences that engage students in common tasks requiring them to depend on and be accountable to each other.*

Findings revealed that all but two of the interviewees (10 of 12) had used or were currently using the Quality Self-Assessment Tool to assess their program. The two interviewees who had not used the Quality Self-Assessment Tool were employed by a nationally recognized community based organization, which uses the organization's self-assessment tool for program evaluation. Of the respondents who had used the tool, seven were still using it to some degree and three were not. The three interviewees who had stopped using the QSAT were associated with large organizations that had used the tool as a starting point but had progressed onto other assessment tools based on the needs of their organization and specific goals. Sixty-one percent (7) of the participants using the QSAT felt that the tool was valuable for providing them with a *place to start* and setting goals for future improvement as well as provided the academic language to discuss important program elements. All respondents who were currently using or had used the QSAT tool reported that their perception of their program had changed as a result of using this tool.

Only three of the 12 interviewees had used the Learning in Afterschool and Summer (LIAS) principles tool, and they represented programs operating several hundred sites. Of the nine who had not used the LIAS tool, six reported that they had knowledge of the principles and were looking forward to using them in the future, and three respondents were unfamiliar with the LIAS principles. Overall, respondents indicated that the principles would have a positive impact on the quality of their program and interactions with students, but they had not had the time to fully implement the principles at this point.

Six themes emerged relative to what participants identified as a need in order to improve the program and be rated a *10*, a program *of the highest quality that it could be a model for others*: money, training, staff, leadership, systems for continuous improvement, and support from stakeholders. Four major themes emerged as facilitators to improving and sustaining an afterschool program of quality: leadership, establishing a vision and setting goals, staffing - recruiting, hiring, training and retaining quality staff who develop positive relationships, and support. All interviewees mentioned staffing as either a barrier or a facilitator. Money was the primary theme that emerged as a barrier to developing and maintaining a program of high quality, which also impacts the number of staff that can be hired, the competitiveness of salaries in order to retain staff, and the professional development that can be offered. Other barriers to program quality included attendance, transportation, and space.

Surprise Finding

Data were collected from across the State of California regarding important elements for a high quality extended learning (afterschool) program. Although 90% of Q-sort participants selected at least one of the LIAS principles as

important elements to operate an afterschool program of high quality, only three of 12 interview participants were very familiar with the principles. Overall, interview participants were much more familiar with the Quality Self-Assessment Tool, and although the majority felt it had been very useful to inform program development, the majority described the tool as too overwhelming and not user friendly.

Discussion Related to the Literature

Identifying a commonly held understanding of what constitutes a quality afterschool program and developing a commonly used, broadly disseminated systematic assessment tool for ongoing assessment of program quality is essential to program success. Collaboration in meaningful ways with community partners, schools and afterschool partners is required to provide quality, relevant and high impact afterschool learning experiences for children. This collaboration should produce a shared vision for student success, recommendations for strategies to pool human and financial resources, and in depth information related to fully taking advantage of the resources that the state provides to maximize successful outcomes for students (Piha, 2006; Torlakson & Peck, 2013).

This study was grounded in total quality philosophy and total quality management philosophy including the use of data for system development and continuous system improvement. Total quality philosophy supports the processes involved in total quality management and embraces the attitude of continuous improvement and using data to evaluate the work underway to determine areas of refinement for system improvement (Detert & Jenni, 2000). Total quality philosophy is based on the belief that the requirements of a program or project will be fully met based on established quality policies and procedures with established

goals and a purpose guiding the effort. This study demonstrates a need for implementation of such a system to guide and direct the field of expanded learning. Based on the work of Crosby (1979), Deming (2000), Feigenbaum (1991) and Juran (1992), the three major tenets behind TQM are satisfy the customer, satisfy the supplier, and continuously improve. The major findings of this study that identified student engagement (LIAS principle) items as the most important elements for a high quality program describe the need to *satisfy the customer*, the students; findings relative to training and building capacity of staff describe the need to *satisfy the supplier*; and the development of a clear system to evaluate effectiveness and implement a continuous cycle of improvement, which was indicated as a facilitator to developing a model program, describe the tenant of continuous improvement.

Deming (2000) emphasized a process for continuous improvement and contended that management should frequently assess and use data to improve the system of production and service (Deming, 2000). In order for schools and programs to use the concepts of total quality philosophy that result in improvement, data must be gathered, documented accurately, and include valid measures, and then used to drive next best decisions for improvement (Detert & Jenni, 2000). Based on the data gathered during interviews with frontline implementers currently working in the field of expanded learning, the majority of interviewees purported that self-assessment of their programs was of utmost importance. The most frequent reason given for this perspective was the opportunity to really examine programs and to set goals and develop plans for continuous improvement based on the results.

The application of total quality management principles involves a long-term commitment to excellence, including a commitment to goal setting, problem solving and working together as a team (Bergquist & Ramsey, 1999). Continuation of the work currently taking place in the field of expanded learning coupled with a long term commitment to improving program quality will enable leaders and frontline implementers to produce long lasting, positive results.

The total quality philosophy provides a framework for using data to create a continuous cycle of improvement for afterschool programs. As the nation continues to restructure the ways that students are evaluated, afterschool programs need to be a part of this change. Current program evaluation methods must be redesigned and alternative forms of assessment used. Leaders in the field must be involved in the creation and analysis of these approaches and instruments. Ongoing, hands-on, experiential professional development with continued mentoring and coaching will also be required to build capacity among program leadership. These leaders should work together to develop a system for identifying high quality programs, evaluating programs, providing support and making funding decisions in order to affect long-lasting, sustainable change.

The literature review presented various elements most often present in afterschool programs viewed as quality: a strong vision; management and collaboration; sufficient and quality staff; attention to safety, health and nutrition issues; effective family and community partnerships; enriching learning opportunities that complement the school day; links between school-day and after school staff; and evaluation of program progress and effectiveness (Afterschool Alliance, 2012; Bodilly & Beckett, 2005; David, 2011; Jordan et al., 2009). Findings from this study, based on both Q-sort survey and interview data, support

elements previously cited in research. However, it is important to note that since participants in this study were given the opportunity to rank elements based on their perceived level of importance, several of the elements previously cited by research as most often present in quality programs such as linkages with the school day (Lauver, 2012) and identification of health and wellness, mental health, nutrition, physical fitness, enrichment opportunities and youth development (Hall, et al., 2010) were consistently ranked by study participants as less important than the elements that described student engagement.

Conclusions

Q-sort participants identified the elements related to student engagement found in the Learning in Afterschool and Summer (LIAS) principles as the most critical elements necessary to develop and sustain a high quality afterschool program, however many of the interview participants had minimal knowledge of these principles. This finding indicates the need to develop a strong marketing strategy to disseminate this information to all parties involved in implementing afterschool programs across the state.

The current system for assessing afterschool programs is not currently aligned with the goals and objectives of afterschool programs. Distributing funding based on the attendance numbers and determining funding based on the level of Free and Reduced Priced Meal data for school sites is not enough to ensure responsible use of funding. A system needs to be developed to accurately assess program quality and monitor compliance to assurances as well as collect data that will support and evidence the need for continued or increased funding. This systematic approach will also contribute to defining and identifying high quality programs, developing systems to support and provide technical assistance,

measuring effectiveness and developing processes and procedures for sustaining high quality programs.

While this study identified the domains most important in developing high quality programs, it also identified several domains that were not seen as critical for implementation of high quality programs. The effort underway involving the strategic initiative teams, which are lead by the After School Division, is to focus the work being done in the field of expanded learning. This research provides evidence for the need to focus this effort on the LIAS principles and using these five principles to identify quality, provide support, evaluate programs, and make funding decisions based on quality as well as compliance to assurances. Just having students in programs does not accurately measure the level of service that students, families, and communities are receiving. Responsible use of funding requires providing a high level service.

Recommendations for Future Research and Practice

The findings from this study suggest the following recommendations for action.

Research

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations are offered for future research:

1. Replicate this study specifically gathering additional information on program demographics to determine if findings are consistent across a broader range of settings.
2. Conduct a study to determine the capabilities of program leaders to execute the elements identified as critical to the development of a quality program.

3. Conduct a study to investigate schools', districts' and community based organizations' definition of a high quality afterschool program and the criteria used to self-assess and develop goals for implementing a high quality program compared to the quality standards for expanded learning, currently being development.

4. Conduct a study to examine the processes schools and districts use to evaluate the effectiveness of service providers.

5. Conduct a study to examine the perceptions of a broader audience relative to program quality; specifically identifying respondents from various organizations. A broader audience would provide additional information that would either confirm similarities of thought or delineate differences in views held by various organizations.

Practice

Based on the findings from this study, the following are implications for practice:

1. The afterschool division at California Department of Education together with their stakeholder groups should continue the work currently underway which was initiated in 2012-2013 with the strategic initiative team that includes developing: systems of support, grant administration and policy, communication/information systems, and expanded Learning/K-12 integration. This work has the potential to change the face of expanded learning in California and across the nation.

2. The afterschool division at California Department of Education should continue work with the strategic initiative team to develop an assessment tool that programs should be required to use to self-assess their program based on the

Learning in Afterschool and Summer (LIAS) principles. Program leaders should administer the tool to assess current levels of student engagement in programs, and information gained from the results should be used to inform future professional development and support.

3. In a collaborative effort with California Afterschool Network and the Afterschool Division of the California Department of Education, programs should build the capacity of frontline implementers to use the quality standards for expanded learning, currently being developed as a guide.

4. Internal (program) and/or external evaluators should monitor and evaluate program quality and effectiveness and then work together to help create a system for total quality management of programs, defining and implementing a cycle of continuous improvement and capacity building across the state.

5. The afterschool division at California Department of Education should consider:

- Developing clear job descriptions and expectations of those providing technical assistance to programs across the state.
- Developing training and accountability methods to ensure programs receive support, guidance and coaching.
- Revising grant assurances to include expectations for demonstrating level of program quality in order to receive continued funding. This would include increased oversight into fiscal management of grant funds.
- Creating a procedure for programs to request additional funding based on criteria and special circumstances (rural or remote

locations, increased need based on waitlisted students, programs used in teacher preparation programs, training programs).

6. The field of expanded learning should optimize collaborative work with community based organizations and school districts to provide students with well-rounded, balanced programs that support learning while offering students the opportunity to participate in active learning activities that will prepare them for the future and broaden their horizons.

Concluding Remarks

Districts, schools, and community-based organizations are making critical decisions about the best use and allocation of resources during unprecedented economic times and ever-changing student demographics. It is imperative that we ensure that California's current investment of \$550 million and the additional \$140 million of federal funding spent annually to support afterschool and summer learning programs is money well spent. Expanded learning programs provide much needed support and are a promising practice to supporting the highest needs students in achieving greater success. The necessity to define, measure and create systems for sustaining quality in afterschool programs is paramount to increasing the quality of service to students. Leaders in the field of expanded learning must possess the knowledge, skills, and tools to carry out this very significant reform effort. Identification of the elements most critical for addressing student needs as well as the vital importance of developing a targeted, user friendly tool to address current program goals is a necessity for moving forward in justifying and maintaining the current use of these scarce resources.

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APPENDIX A: ASES GRANT ASSURANCES

Note: All grantees are required to retain on file a copy of the General Assurances for their records and for audit purposes. Please download the General Assurances on the CDE Funding Forms Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/fm/ff.asp>. Grantees should **not** submit General Assurances to the CDE.

CERTIFIED ASSURANCES

On behalf of the applicant agency, the Authorized Executive is to sign at the bottom of each page acknowledging understanding of/and agreement with each Certified Assurance.

Program Elements

- 1 The program will include an educational and literacy element designed to provide tutoring and/or homework assistance in one or more of the following subject areas: language arts, mathematics, history and social science, science, and computer training.
- 2 The program will have an educational enrichment element that may include, but is not limited to: fine arts, career technical education, recreation, physical fitness, and prevention activities. Such activities might involve the arts, music, physical activity, health promotion, general recreation, technology, career awareness, and activities to support positive youth development.
- 3 The program will provide a safe physical and emotional environment and opportunities for relationship building and will promote active student

engagement.

- 4 The program will collaborate and integrate with the regular school day program and other extended learning opportunities.
- 5 The program will provide a snack that conforms to the nutrition standards in the California *Education Code*, Part 27, Chapter 9, Article 2.5, commencing with Section 49430.
- 6 The program will provide opportunities for physical activity.

Program Plan

- 7 Partners to this application, as well as school staff, have demonstrated commitment to supporting the program and sharing responsibility for the planning and quality of the program at the designated site(s).
- 8 The program is planned through a collaborative process that includes parents, youth, and representatives of participating public school sites, governmental agencies (e.g., city and county parks and recreation departments), local law enforcement, community organizations, and the private sector.
- 9 The program will review Program Plans every three years. This review is to include, but not be limited to: program goals, program content, and outcome measures that the grantee will use for the next three years; and, any other information requested by the CDE. New program goals may be selected for the following three years during the grant renewal process.
- 10 The program acknowledges that the CDE will monitor the Program Plan review as part of its onsite monitoring process.
- 11 The program will notify the CDE if the program goals or outcome measures are changed.

Program Operations

- 12 The program will maintain a student to staff member ratio of no more than 20:1.
- 13 The program will begin operation immediately upon the end of the regular school day. (Note: A regular school day is any day that students attend and instruction takes place.)
- 14 The program will operate for a minimum of 15 hours per week.
- 15 The program will operate until at least 6:00 p.m., on every regular school day.
- 16 The program will establish a reasonable early release policy for students attending the after school component.
- 17 Elementary students should participate every day that the after school program operates.
- 18 Middle/junior high school students should attend a minimum of nine hours and three days per week. (Note: The program must operate all regular school days.)
- 19 A flexible attendance schedule for middle/junior high school students may be implemented in order to develop an age appropriate program. Priority for enrollment will be given to students who attend daily.
- 20 Every student attending a school operating a program is eligible to participate in the program, subject to program capacity.
- 21 The program is not required to charge family fees or conduct individual eligibility determination based on need or income.
- 22 The program will provide all notices, reports, statements, and records to parents or guardians in English and the student's primary language when 15

percent of the students enrolled at the school site speak a single primary language other than English as determined by language census data from the preceding year.

Site Staff and Volunteers

- 23 The program will establish qualifications for each position so that all staff members directly supervising students meet the minimum qualifications of an instructional aide, pursuant to the policies of the district.
- 24 Selection of the program site supervisors are subject to the approval of the school site principal.
- 25 Staff and volunteers will fulfill health screening and fingerprint clearance requirements in current law and in compliance with school district, private school, or agency policy.

Staff Training and Development

- 26 The program will provide staff training and development.
- 27 A program may provide a maximum of three staff development days a year during regular program hours using grant funds.

Other Sites

- 28 If the site is not located on a school campus, safe, supervised transportation must be provided to enrolled students.
- 29 Programs may be conducted on the grounds of a community park, recreational facility, or other site as approved by the CDE in the grant application process.
- 30 Off-site programs will be aligned with the educational and literacy components of the program with participating students' regular school programs.
- 31 Off-site programs will ensure communication among teachers in the regular

school program, after school staff and parents of students.

- 32 Off-site programs will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements of those conducted on the school site.

Attendance and Evaluation Measures

- 33 The program will keep accurate program attendance records and report actual attendance to the CDE twice per fiscal year.
- 34 The program will report school day attendance rates for participating students.
- 35 The program will meet all evaluation requirements, including participation in a statewide evaluation process as determined by the CDE, and provide all required information on a timely basis.
- 36 The program will provide information for the statewide independent evaluation.
- 37 The program will respond to any additional surveys or other methods of data collection that may be required throughout the life of the program.
- 38 The program will annually provide participating students' regular school day, program attendance, and Standardized Testing and Reporting test results.
- 39 The program will use standardized procedures and collection tools developed by the CDE for evaluation purposes. Locally developed tools or protocols will not be accepted.

Fiscal Issues

- 40 The program will expend no more than 15 percent of funding on administrative costs, which include indirect costs.
- 41 The program's indirect costs will be the lesser of: the school district's indirect

cost rate, as approved by the CDE for the appropriate fiscal year; or five percent of the state program funding received pursuant to this article.

- 42 The program will expend at least 85 percent on direct services to students.
- 43 The program will use these funds to supplement, but not supplant, existing funding for after school programs.
- 44 The program will provide at least 33 percent cash or in-kind local matching funds from the school district, government agencies, community organizations, or the private sector for each dollar expended in grant funds. Not more than 25 percent of the match requirement will be fulfilled by facilities or space usage.
- 45 The program acknowledges that state categorical funds for remedial education activities are not eligible as matching funds for after school programs.

California Education Code (EC) citation for each assurance:

1. (EC 8482.3 [c][1]) (EC 8482.3 [f][6]) (EC 8483.3 [c][1])2. (EC 8482.3 [c][2]) (EC 8482.3 [f][6]) (EC 8483.3 [c][2])3. (EC 8483.3 [c][3])4. (EC 8483.3 [c][5])5. (EC 8482.3 [d]) (EC 8483.3 [c][8])6. (EC 8483.3 [c][7])7. (EC 8483.3 [f][1-3]) (EC 8483.3 [c][6]) (EC 8486)8. (EC 8482.5 [b])9. (EC 8482.3 [g][1])10. (EC 8482.3 [g][2])11. (EC 8482.3 [g][1])12. (EC 8483.4)13. (EC 8483 [a][1])14. (EC 8483 [a][1])15. (EC 8483 [a][1])16. (EC 8483 [a][1])	17. (EC 8483 [a][2])18. (EC 8483 [a][2])19. (EC 8483 [a][3])20. (EC 8482.6)21. (EC 8482.6)22. (EC 8483.4)23. (EC 8483.4)24. (EC 8483.4)25. (EC 8483.4)26. (EC 8483.3 [c][4])27. (EC 8483.7[a][1][C])28. (EC 8482.8 [a]) (EC 8484.6 [a])29. (EC 8484.6 [a])30. (EC 8482.8[a]) (EC 8484.6 [a])31. (EC 8482.8 [a])32. (EC 8484.6 [b])	33. (EC 8482.3 [f][10][C]) (EC 8484 [a][1][B])34. (EC 8482.3 [f][10][A]) (EC 8484 [a][1][A])35. (EC 8482.3 [f][7-8]) (EC 8483.3 [c][11]) (EC 8484 [a])36. (EC 8482.3 [f][7-8]) (EC 8484 [a][2][E])37. (EC 8482.3 [f][7-8]) (EC 8484 [a][2][B]) (EC 8484 [a])39. (EC 8482.3 [f][7-8]) (EC 8484 [c])40. (EC 8483.9 [b])41. (EC 8483.9 [a])42. (EC 8483.9 [c])43. (EC 8483.5 [e]) (EC 8483.7 [b])44. (EC 8483.7 [a][5])45. (EC 8483.7 [b])
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**APPENDIX B: 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS
GRANT ASSURANCES**

General Assurances 2013-14

California Department of Education General Assurances and Certifications for fiscal year 2013-14.

General Assurances

1. Programs and services are and will be in compliance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the California Fair Employment Practices Act, Government Code §11135; and Chapter 4 (commencing with §30) of Division I of Title 5, *California Code of Regulations (CCR)*
2. Programs and services are and will be in compliance with Title IX (nondiscrimination on the basis of sex) of the Education Amendments of 1972. Each program or activity conducted by the LEA will be conducted in compliance with the provisions of Chapter 2, (commencing with §200), Prohibition of Discrimination on the Basis of Sex, of Part 1 of Division 1 of Title I of the *Education*

Code (EC), as well as all other applicable provisions of state law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex.

3. Programs and services are and will be in compliance with the affirmative action provisions of the Education Amendments of 1972.
4. Programs and services are and will be in compliance with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975.
5. Programs and services for individuals with disabilities are in compliance with the disability laws. (PL 105-17; 34 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) 300, 303; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973)
6. When federal funds are made available, they will be used to supplement the amount of state and local funds that would, in the absence of such federal funds, be made available for the uses specified in the state plan, and in no case supplant such state or local funds. (20 United States Code (USC) §6321(b)(1); PL 107-110 §1120A(b)(1))
7. All state and federal statutes, regulations, program plans, and applications appropriate to each program under which federal or state funds are made available through this application will be met by the applicant agency in its administration of each program.

8. Schoolsite councils have developed and approved a Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) for schools participating in programs funded through the consolidated application process, and any other school program they choose to include, and that school plans were developed with the review, certification, and advice of any applicable school advisory committees. (*EC* §64001)
9. The local educational agency (LEA) will use fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that will ensure proper disbursement for state and federal funds paid to that agency under each program. (*CCR* T5, §4202)
10. The LEA will make reports to the state agency or board and to the Secretary of Education as may reasonably be necessary to enable the state agency or board and the Secretary to perform their duties and will maintain such records and provide access to those records as the state agency or board or the Secretary deems necessary. Such records will include, but will not be limited to, records which fully disclose the amount and disposition by the recipient of those funds, the total cost of the activity for which the funds are used, the share of that cost provided from other sources, and such other records as will facilitate an effective audit. The recipient shall maintain such records for three years after the completion of the activities for which the

funds are used. (34 CFR 76.722, 76.730, 76.731, 76.734, 76.760;

34 CFR 80.42)

11. The local governing board has adopted written procedures to ensure prompt response to complaints within 60 days, and has disseminated these procedures to students, employees, parents or guardians, district/school advisory committees, appropriate private school officials or representatives, and other interested parties. (CCR T5, §4600 et seq.)
12. The LEA declares that it neither uses nor will use federal funds for lobbying activities and hereby complies with the certification requirements of 34 CFR Part 82.
13. The LEA has complied with the certification requirements under 34 CFR Part 85 regarding debarment, suspension and other requirements for a drug-free workplace. (34 CFR Part 85)
14. The LEA provides reasonable opportunity for public comment on the application and considers such comment. (20 USC §7846(a)(7); 20 USC, §1118(b)(4); PL 107-110, §1118(b)(4))
15. The LEA will provide the certification on constitutionally protected prayer that is required by PL 107-110, §9524 and 20 USC §7904.

16. The LEA administers all funds and property related to programs funded through the Consolidated Application. (20 USC §6320(d)(1); PL 107-110, §1120(d)(1))
17. The LEA will adopt and use proper methods of administering each program including enforcement of any obligations imposed by law on agencies responsible for carrying out programs and correction of deficiencies in program operations identified through audits, monitoring or evaluation. (20 USC §7846 (a)(3)(B))
18. The LEA will participate in the Standardized Testing and Reporting program. (20 USC §6316(a)(1)(A-D); PL 107-110, §1116(a)(1)(A-D); *EC* §60640, et seq.)
19. The LEA assures that classroom teachers who are being assisted by instructional assistants retain their responsibility for the instruction and supervision of the students in their charge. (*EC* §45344(a))
20. The LEA governing board has adopted a policy on parent involvement that is consistent with the purposes and goals of *EC* Section 11502. These include all of the following: (a) to engage parents positively in their children's education by helping parents to develop skills to use at home that support their children's academic efforts at school and their children's development as

responsible future members of our society; (b) to inform parents that they can directly affect the success of their children's learning, by providing parents with techniques and strategies that they may utilize to improve their children's academic success and to assist their children in learning at home; (c) to build consistent and effective communication between the home and the school so that parents may know when and how to assist their children in support of classroom learning activities; (d) to train teachers and administrators to communicate effectively with parents; and (e) to integrate parent involvement programs, including compliance with this chapter, into the school's master plan for academic accountability. (*EC §§11502, 11504*)

21. Results of an annual evaluation demonstrate that the LEA and each participating school are implementing Consolidated Programs that are not of low effectiveness, under criteria established by the local governing board. (*CCRT5, §3942*)
22. The program using consolidated programs funds does not isolate or segregate students on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status. (*USC, Fourteenth Amendment; Calif. Constitution, art. 1, §7; Gov.C §§11135-11138; 42 USC §2000d; CCR T5, §3934*)

23. Personnel, contracts, materials, supplies, and equipment purchased with Consolidated Program funds supplement the basic education program. (*EC §§62002, 52034(I), 52035(e)(l), 54101; CCR T5, §§3944, 3946*)
24. At least 85 percent of the funds for School Improvement Programs, Title I, Title VI and Economic Impact Aid (State Compensatory Education and programs for English learners) are spent for direct services to students. One hundred percent of Miller-Unruh apportionments are spent for the salary of specialist reading teachers. (*EC §63001; CCR T5, §3944(a)(b)*)
25. State and federal categorical funds will be allocated to continuation schools in the same manner as to comprehensive schools, to the maximum extent permitted by state and federal laws and regulations. (*EC §48438*)
26. Programs and services are and will be in compliance with Section 8355 of the California Government Code and the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, and implemented at CFR Part 84, Subpart F, for grantees, as defined at 34 CFR Part 84, Sections 84.105 and 84.110.

27. Federal grant recipients, sub recipients and their grant personnel are prohibited from text messaging while driving a government owned vehicle, or while driving their own privately owned vehicle during official grant business, or from using government supplied electronic equipment to text message or email when driving. Recipients must comply with these conditions under Executive Order 13513, "Federal Leadership On Reducing Text Messaging While Driving," October 1, 2009.

APPENDIX C: Q-SORT STATEMENTS

Domain 1: Program Design & Assessment

1. Programs of high quality have a clearly defined vision and mission agreed upon by all stakeholders.
2. Programs of high quality have activities that are well-defined, hands-on, student-centered and incorporate and combine academics, youth development and recreation.
3. Programs of high quality have clearly defined, measureable goals that link to participant and community needs.

Domain 2: Program Administration & Finance

4. Programs of high quality have a clear system of program administration and finance.
5. Programs of high quality have staff recruitment, hiring, and retention policies that are well-defined and support the program goals.
6. Programs of high quality ensure that all attendance, evaluation, and expenditure reports are submitted on time.
7. Programs of high quality have clear evidence demonstrating that program adheres to all fiscal accounting requirements.

Domain 3: Community Partnerships & Collaboration

8. Programs of high quality have a system for building community partnerships and collaboration.
9. Programs of high quality have collaborative relationships with partners to provide a framework for effective partner engagement.
10. Programs of high quality create partnerships that support long-term sustainability through joint fundraising and in-kind contributions and materials.
11. Programs of high quality provide updates and information about the program to collaborative partners using a variety of formats in multiple languages.

Domain 4: Alignment & Linkages with the School Day

12. Programs of high quality have a system to provide alignment and linkages with the school day.
13. Programs of high quality require staff participation on school committees.
14. Programs of high quality have access to participants' data (grades, attendance, test scores, home language) to tailor activities.
15. Programs of high quality provide academic activities that incorporate a variety of age-appropriate instructional strategies that help youth build and master key academic skills and content.

Domain 5: Program Environment & Safety

16. Programs of high quality have a system for evaluating the environment and safety.
17. Programs of high quality provide a safety plan that is aligned with the host school.
18. Programs of high quality provide a comprehensive plan for ensuring health and safety procedures are in place.
19. Programs of high quality provide an emotional climate that is positive, demonstrating respect and support between staff and students.

Domain 6: Youth Development

20. Programs of high quality provide youth development.
21. Programs of high quality provide youth with the opportunity to participate in community service projects.
22. Programs of high quality provide youth the opportunity to make choices and provide input into the structure of the program.
23. Programs of high quality demonstrate through actions of youth and staff a strong sense of ownership and belonging such as holding one another accountable to behavior expectations and program traditions.

Domain 7: Staff Recruitment & Professional Development

24. Programs of high quality have a well-defined plan for staff recruitment

and professional development.

25. Programs of high quality provide staff with performance based assessments of their work and the opportunity to build needed skills.
26. Programs of high quality provide ongoing professional development in varied formats.
27. Programs of high quality provide opportunities for district level staff to meet with site level staff on a regular basis.

Domain 8: Family Involvement

28. Programs of high quality encourage family involvement.
29. Programs of high quality provide opportunities for parents and caregivers to actively participate in supporting their children's education.
30. Programs of high quality provide referrals to community resources available to the families.
31. Programs of high quality establish a system of regular, positive communication with the parents or caregivers.

Domain 9: Nutrition & Physical Activity

32. Programs of high quality include nutrition and physical activity.
33. Programs of high quality emphasize character building components during physical activities.

34. Programs of high quality provide healthy food and safe drinking water.
35. Programs of high quality engage youth daily in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Domain 10: Promoting Diversity, Access, Equity, & Inclusion

36. Programs of high quality promote diversity, access, equity and inclusion.
37. Programs of high quality encourage student participation from diverse populations of the community.
38. Programs of high quality provide available information in parents' and caregivers' home languages.
39. Programs of high quality provide youth with the opportunity to explore, share and celebrate their culture with others.

Domain 11: Effectively Supporting English Learners

40. Programs of high quality effectively support English Learners.
41. Programs of high quality provide strategies that support English Learners to achieve a greater level of fluency.
42. Programs of high quality structure interactions between English Learners and English-fluent students to promote inclusion and strengthen participants' English development.
43. Programs of high quality empower English Learners socially and

academically through staff and leadership.

Domain 12: Learning in After School and Summer (LIAS) principles

44. Programs of high quality provide actively engaging learning activities, in which students are physically active, and participate, in hands-on, project-based activities that provide a total learning experience to enhance their ability to think critically.
45. Programs of high quality provide collaborative learning experiences that engage students in common tasks requiring them to depend on and be accountable to each other.
46. Programs of high quality provide meaningful learning experiences, in which students have the opportunity to develop ownership and assess their own progress as they participate in activities involving responsibility, leadership and service to others.
47. Programs of high quality provide learning experiences that support mastery; activities are explicitly sequenced and students have the opportunity to create a product to demonstrate mastery that can be viewed by peers and shared with others.
48. Programs of high quality provide learning experiences that expand students' horizons; programs provide opportunities outside the "classroom" that give students a vision of the broader world, of which

they are a part, and build cultural, environmental, political and global awareness.

APPENDIX D: Q SORT MATRIX

Least important	Neutral	Most important

APPENDIX E: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Have you used the Quality Self-Assessment Tool to examine the quality of your program?

IF YES

- 1.1 Please describe the information you gained from using this tool.
What did the data tell you?
What did you learn about your program by completing the QSAT?
- 1.2 Did your perception regarding the quality of your program change after you completed the QSAT? Yes or No and Explain
- 1.3 On a scale of 1 – 10 with “1” being “not at all useful” and “10” being “extremely useful and invaluable,” how useful was the information gained from the QSAT at informing your next steps for improving or sustaining the quality of your program?

_____ Please give a rationale for your response.

- 1.4 Have you planned or taken actions to improve or sustain the quality of your program based on information you gained from the QSAT? If yes, please explain?

IF NO

- 1.1 Have you used any other type of self-assessment tool to examine the quality of your program?

If yes, what was the tool and what prompted you to use it?

Please describe the information you gained from using this tool.

What did the data tell you?

Continue with questions 1.2 – 1.5 below.

If no, are there any specific reasons why you have not used the QSAT tool? Please explain.

Proceed now to question 2.

- 1.2 Did your perception of the quality of your program change after you completed the self-assessment tool? Yes or No and Explain
 - 1.3 On a scale of 1 – 10 with “1” being “not at all useful” and “10” being “extremely useful and invaluable,” how useful was the information gained from the tool you used at informing your next steps for improving or sustaining the quality of your program?

_____ Please give a rationale for your response.
 - 1.4 Would you recommend this tool to others? Please explain
 - 1.5 Have you planned or taken actions to improve or sustain the quality of your program based on information you gained from the self-assessment tool? If yes, please explain.
2. Have you used the Learning in After School and Summer (LIAS) principles self-assessment tool to examine student engagement in your program?

IF YES

- 2.1 Please describe the information you gained from using this tool.
What did the data tell you?
What did you learn about your program by completing the LIAS principles tool?
- 2.2 Did your perception of your program change after you completed the LIAS principles survey? Yes or No and Explain
- 2.3 On a scale of 1 – 10 with “1” being “not at all useful” and “10” being “extremely useful and invaluable,” how useful was the information gained from the LIAS Learning Principles survey at informing decisions or next steps for your program?

_____ Please give a rationale for your response.

- 2.4 Have you planned or taken actions in your program based on information you gained from the LIAS principles? If yes, please explain?

IF NO

- 2.1 Have you used any other type of self-assessment tool to examine student engagement in your program?

If yes, what was the tool and what prompted you to use it?

Please describe the information you gained from using this tool.

What did the data tell you?

Continue with questions 2.2 – 2.5 below.

If no, are there any specific reasons why you have not used the LIAS principles tool? Please explain.

Proceed now to question 3.

- 2.2 Did your perception of student engagement in your program change after you used the self-assessment tool to examine student engagement in your program? Yes or No and Explain

- 2.3 On a scale of 1 – 10 with “1” being “not at all useful” and “10” being “extremely useful and invaluable,” how useful was the information gained from the tool you used at informing your next steps regarding student engagement in program?

_____ Please give a rationale for your response.

- 2.4 Would you recommend this tool to others? Please explain

- 2.5 Have you planned or taken actions in your program regarding student engagement based on information you gained from the self-assessment tool? If yes, please explain.

3. On a scale of 1 – 10 with “1” being “not at all important ” and “10” being “extremely important – a must do,” how important is self-assessment of your program.

_____ Please give a rationale for your response.

If scale response is a 6 or higher, please describe what program self-assessment looks like to you.

4. What have been the most significant actions taken to improve or sustain the quality of your program?

4.1 What prompted each of the actions?

4.2 On a scale of 1 – 10 with “1” being “not at all effective ” and “10” being “extremely effective”, how effective has *<name the action>* been at improving or sustaining the quality of your program? *Note: Ask this question for as many actions interviewee gave for question 4.*

_____ What criteria or indicator did you use to determine effectiveness?

5. On a scale of 1 – 10 with “1” being “not at all of quality” and “10” being “of highest quality, my program could be a model for others,” where would your program be on the continuum?

_____ What criteria did you use to determine this response?

6. What are key indicators of quality present in your program?
7. If on a continuum “10” is a program of highest quality and could be a model for others, what would make your program a “10”?
8. What are facilitators to improving and sustaining an afterschool program of quality?
9. What are barriers to improving and sustaining an afterschool program of quality?

10. Is there anything I have not asked you regarding improving and sustaining an afterschool program of quality that you feel is important that I should know and pertinent to this study?

APPENDIX F: LETTER TO Q-SORT PARTICIPANTS

[Date]

Dear Colleague:

I am Julie Boesch, candidate in the Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership at California State University, Fresno. I am conducting a study to examine the most important and highest leverage quality indicators found in the Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSAT) and Learning in Afterschool and Summer (LIAS) principles tool and the impact these tools have had on the implementation of afterschool programs.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a part of the team of community partners supporting afterschool programs as either frontline implementers or technical assistance providers. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to rate the importance of the eleven elements found in the QSAT and LIAS principles in regards to building a high quality afterschool program.

This study is IRB approved and has full support of my dissertation committee, Dr. Linda Hauser, Chair; Dr. Sharon Brown-Welty; and Dr. Nancy Akhavan. There is no foreseen risk associated with this process. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact doctoral candidate and researcher, Julie Boesch. Dr. Linda Hauser, chair, (lhauser@csufresno.edu, 559-278-0362), or the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects at California State University, Fresno at 559-287-6639 are additional contacts to answer questions.

Your participation is critical to examining the concept of quality and strictly voluntary. Your identity and district, school or region affiliation will be anonymous.

I would greatly appreciate if you could complete the survey by [insert date].

Thank you so much for your participation and support!

Sincerely,

Julie Boesch

Ed.D. Candidate

California State University, Fresno

rjboesch@mail.fresnostate.edu

661-565-5525

Please view attached instructions and complete Q-sort. Then save as instructed and return rjboesch@mail.fresnostate.edu

APPENDIX G: AUDIO SUPPORTED POWERPOINT INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING Q SORT

Moving statements into sort:

Place cursor on edge of shape until you see the intersecting arrows:



At this point you can pick up the shape and move it without changing the shape or editing the contents.



Place each statement in the appropriate location in the Q-sort

Remember that each item may be important, our goal is to identify those items that possess the most leverage in developing and creating afterschool programs that are of high quality and are sustainable.



Begin by doing the initial sort

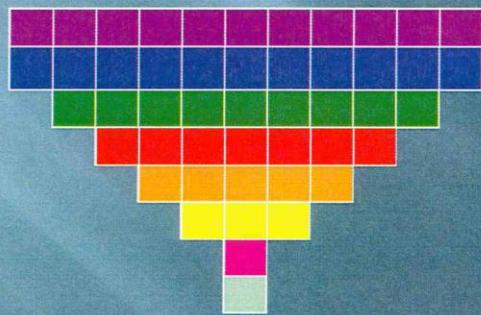
Read each statement, place each statement in a category based on their level of importance or leverage, don't worry, you can always move them again if you change your mind. There is no right or wrong choice. There is no limit to how many can be in each category at this phase.

Least Important	Neutral	Most Important
	Statement	



Place statements in Q-sort based on their level of importance or leverage in program improvement and sustaining a program of high quality.

Less Important					Neutral					Most Important				
-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5				



**Thank you!
I appreciate your
participation!**



APPENDIX H: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in a research study conducted by Julie Boesch, a doctoral candidate at California State University Fresno. The study is entitled *An Examination of Expanded Learning (Afterschool) Leaders' Perceptions Regarding Most Important Elements for Program Quality and Use of Self-Assessment Tools for Continuous Improvement*. The purpose of the study is to identify and examine afterschool program elements considered most important or essential to developing, executing, and sustaining a high quality program and specifically, explore the value and impact of the use of the QSAT and LIAS principles tool to improve and sustain program quality.

I understand this project has the full support of California State University, Fresno (CSUF) and it will serve as the dissertation research study for Julie Boesch, a candidate in the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program at CSUF.

I understand that in this study, Julie Boesch will respect my privacy and will not use my name or any identifying information.

I understand that my participation will consist of participating in a 15-20 minute telephone interview.

I understand that the interview will be audiotaped so detailed comments can be collected, but only the researcher will have access to the recording. I understand that all comments made will not be connected to my name and in no way will reveal my identity.

I understand that my participation is voluntary, and I may stop participating at any time. In addition, I understand that there are no anticipated risks through my participation in this study. Furthermore, the information gained from this study could contribute greatly to the field of expand learning.

I understand that in the event that I have any questions, I may contact Julie Boesch (rjboesch@mail.fresnostate.edu, 661-565-5525), doctoral candidate, and her chair, Dr. Linda Hauser (lhauser@csufresno.edu, 559-278-0362) as well as the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects at California State University, Fresno at 559-278-6639.

Please Print Name _____

Signature_____ Date _____

APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW PROCEDURE

- Greet participant and make them feel comfortable.
- Explain the purpose of the interview and ask the participant for consent.
- Explain that all participant identification will remain anonymous.
- Assign identification code to each participant in order to identify data while protecting identification of participant.
- Explain how the information will be recorded. Ask for permission to tape-record the session.
- Begin with safe topic to develop rapport and comfortable conversation.
- Pick up phrases from participant and use common language to phrase questions.
- Avoid asking leading questions.
- Follow the flow of the discussion, but make sure that all the topics are covered.
- Thank participant for his or her time at the conclusion of the interview.