

Moving Towards Success: Framework for After-School Programs



WORKING DOCUMENT

FUNDED BY C.S MOTT FOUNDATION | MAY 2005

A Committee of researchers, evaluators and program experts jointly developed the *Framework for After-School Programs*.

Participation in the Committee does not imply the endorsement of the Framework by their organizations.

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Suggested Citation:

C.S. Mott Foundation Committee on After-School Research and Practice. Moving Towards Success: Framework for After-School Programs. Washington, DC: Collaborative Communications Group, 2005.

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Working Document

Why a Framework?



On June 5 - 6, 2003, an After-School Summit hosted by the U.S. Department of Education and Arnold Schwarzenegger, and sponsored by the C.S. Mott Foundation, was held in Washington, DC. Researchers and evaluators, program and policy experts, educators, and government officials gathered for two days to discuss ways to improve and measure the quality and effectiveness of after-school programs. They agreed that after-school programs can achieve a broad range of desired participant outcomes and that a successful program can meet some, while not all the possible outcomes at any one time. Summit attendees strongly emphasized that after-school programs are not solely responsible for any one participant outcome; rather they can contribute to a range of positive outcomes including academic, social and emotional, health and safety, and community engagement.

WHY A FRAMEWORK?

Summit attendees agreed that to become successful, programs need to first set appropriate program goals, recommend program elements, and identify desired participant outcomes – a process often called developing a theory of change. In addition, program designs should include concrete plans for evaluation, including continuous program improvement focused on progress toward desired participant outcomes.

As follow-up to the Summit, a committee of researchers and program experts (the Committee) developed this document to further articulate why intentionally linking program goals, program elements, participant outcomes, and evaluation is critical to improving the effectiveness of after-school programs. This document provides overall recommendations and guidelines to after-school staff and others about why such a framework is important in developing and sustaining an effective program. It describes a theory of change approach to help guide the thinking and implementation of program goals and elements, outlines a broad range of desired participant outcomes to consider, and discusses conditions most suitable for achieving positive results that meet the needs of the after-school participants.

The Committee believes that after-school programs are rooted in the values and beliefs of the communities in which they are located. Communities that understand and share responsibility for supporting children and families are more apt to unite in their support for high-quality after-school programs. Partnering with parents, participants, districts and schools, and members of the broader community is essential in identifying program goals that are grounded in the ideas, values, people, and institutions of the community. Other community partners and resources may include community residents, law enforcement agencies, service providers, community and faith-based organizations, civic organizations, colleges, businesses, arts and cultural institutions, museums, park and recreation, and public officials. Effective partnerships can improve participation of parents and school day teachers in identifying appropriate activities and program governance, and improve coordination of information and different services for children and families.

The Committee emphasizes there are no guarantees that the specific examples of program elements provided in this document will yield the suggested results at your program, but using a theory of change approach to program design, implementation, and evaluation, will lead to strengthening and improving program practice. This document is meant to inspire thoughtful processes and outcomes that will engage appropriate stakeholders in developing and providing effective programs to participants who need such programs. Therefore, consider this document a “road map” to guide program planning and implementation. Use it in conjunction with other materials and hands-on guidance by program experts and evaluators.

A Theory of Change

This Framework is a guide to assist both start-up and existing after-school programs in a variety of settings. It is designed as a tool to be used in conjunction with other existing resources to help program staff and researchers/evaluators embark on a long-term strategic plan of program development, program improvement, and measuring program effectiveness.

For start-up programs, the Framework describes a theory of change approach to guide the identification of program goals, program elements, desired participant outcomes, and measures and data sources. To support that process, the charts offer examples in each of these areas to guide and support program development. For existing programs, the Framework can be used as a tool to assess the alignment of a programs' theory of change, examining existing program goals, program elements, desired outcomes, and measures. For both start-up and existing programs, the Framework can provide ideas for identifying additional program goals, program elements, desired participant outcomes and measures that might be incorporated into program designs, and realistic expectations for program success. Ultimately, the Framework does not offer a "recipe for success," but rather a process for program planning, implementation, and improvement that can lead towards success.

A THEORY OF CHANGE

This Framework is best used by a committed team of program partners, including program staff and the researcher and/or evaluator, who meet regularly to refine and customize a theory of change to fit the needs of the participants.

A theory of change is a progression of thinking and planning that guides a team towards setting program goals and designing program elements that can result in positive participant outcomes. Developing a theory of change is also useful for evaluation planning, continuous learning and improvement, and effective communication among diverse program partners.

A critical feature of developing a theory of change is to engage local after-school partners, including program staff, program participants, their families, and other community members and organizations, in the development process. Getting buy-in from all program stakeholders ensures that the program will be grounded in the ideas, beliefs, and principles of the community.

Steps in Developing a Theory of Change

1) Draw a logic model (see page 5)

A logic model summarizes the key elements of a program, identifies the rationale behind the elements, articulates desired short- and long-term outcomes and how they can be measured, and shows the cause-and-effect relationships between a program and its desired outcomes.

2) Refine and identify program goals to meet the needs of the participants

This can occur in meetings or through surveys with program staff, school-day staff, parents, participants, community members, and funders to discuss the purposes and goals of after-school in the community.

3) Refine and select program elements needed to achieve the program goals

An existing program may make a list of current program elements and compare the two lists. Are there current program elements that do not support the goal? How can programming be adjusted to align with newly identified goals?

4) Brainstorm and refine participant outcomes aligned with the program goals and elements

Consider:

- ◆ Short-term outcomes are usually those that are attainable within a year and/or observable within the program.
- ◆ Long-term outcomes are usually assessed after one year and include outcomes observable in school, home, and community as well as in the program.

When determining participant outcomes, it is important to consider age of participants, “age and stage” of program, and realistic program attendance expectations. New programs need time to mature before they can begin to assess outcomes. Collecting information on program implementation can help assess who is being served, how frequently they are attending, and what activities the program is offering. This information can be used to hone in on specific performance outcome measures.

A Theory of Change

5) Establish performance measures, data sources, and data collection methods to assess implementation program elements and progress towards program goals

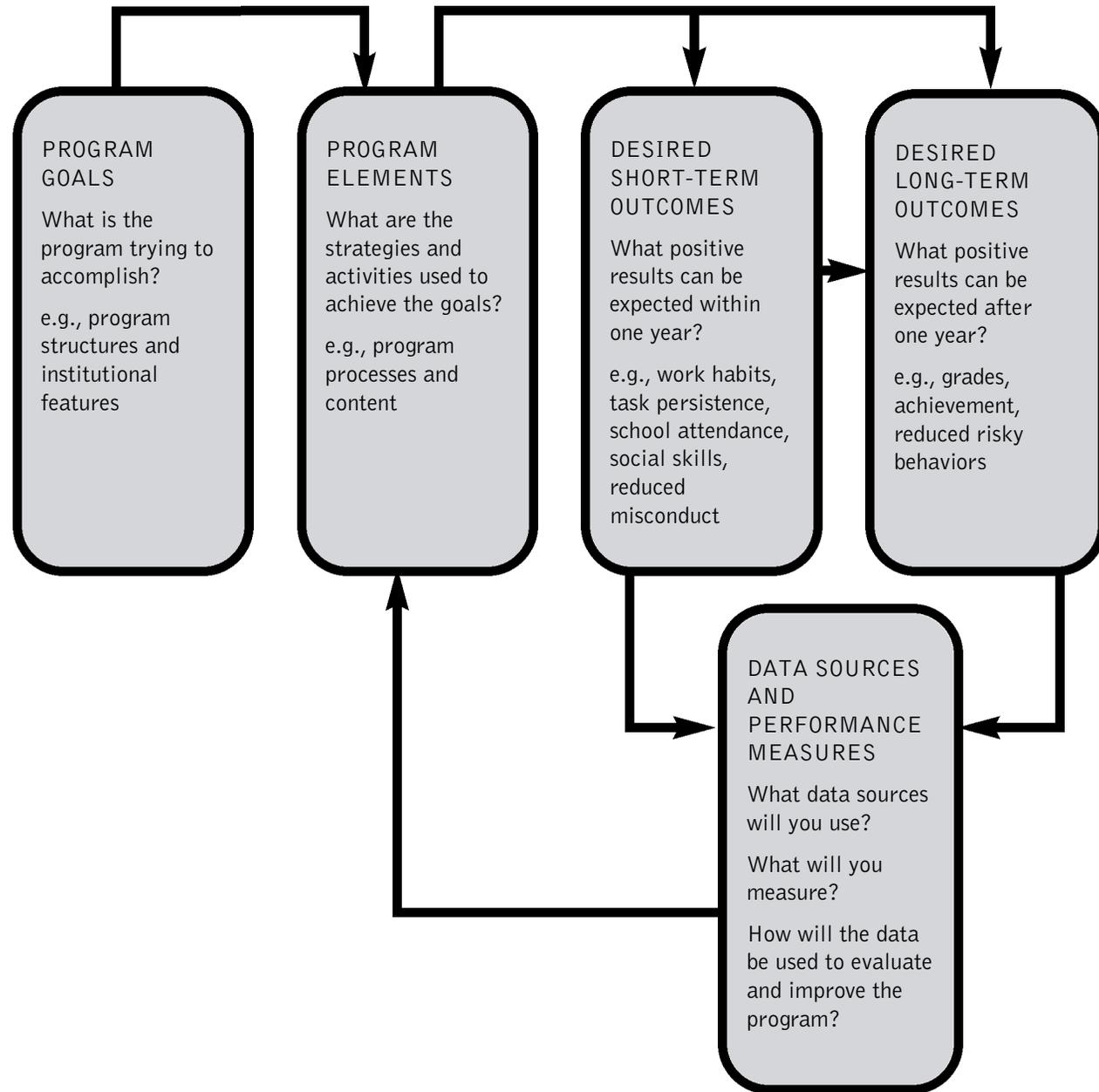
Performance measures assess a program's progress on the implementation of strategies and activities. There are generally two types of performance measures:

- ◆ Measures of effort help a program understand what activities and other services are being offered in the program. Examples include: types and number of activities offered (e.g., tutoring three times a week, service-learning in the community once a month), level and intensity of the activities (e.g., daily attendance, type of homework assistance provided and how often), and participant demographics.
- ◆ Measures of effect reflect changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behavior of participants. Examples include: improved study habits, increased sense of responsibility to the community, and increased parent and/or participant satisfaction with programs.

There are many data sources and data collection methods. Data can be collected from youth, families, staff, funders, educators, and other stakeholders. Surveys are often effective for assessing participant or parent satisfaction. Focus groups or observations are often used to collect participant satisfaction depending on the ages of participants. When possible, utilize existing sources of information such as attendance records, or school records.

Consider asking the following questions as goals, program elements, and desired outcomes are identified:

- Who are the community stakeholders (e.g., individuals, groups, organizations, and institutions, including schools, that reside in the community)?
- What community resources are available to the program?
- What partnerships can contribute to helping programs achieve goals?
- What are factors in the community that may effect program goals and outcomes?
- Who are the participants?
- What are the family backgrounds of participants?



Using Results

USING RESULTS

Present the data on measures of effect carefully to help stakeholders understand its meaning. Data from measures of effect can be used in various ways. Often programs find it useful to present information on how program participants perform relative to school: for example, programs may present measures of knowledge, skills, or academic achievement. They may also want to present information on other developmental outcomes such as involvement in the community. Sometimes this information is shared by highlighting improvements over time as young people participate in a program for longer duration.

However, for participant outcomes to be truly useful, it is important to link that data to information about the participants served by the program. For example, if a program recruits young people who are doing poorly in school, or who have few alternatives for structured and supported after-school activities, measures of effect could be small and stakeholders could misinterpret measures of academic success as discouraging when a program is actually making a difference for low-performing students.

Ideally, program evaluation would collect information on the program participants and compare their outcomes over time to those of a similar group of students who do not participate in the after-school program. Because this is often complicated for programs to do, it may be more feasible for programs to link information on outcomes with a description of the young people. Either strategy can help consumers of the data anchor the outcome levels and trends in a reasonable set of expectations or benchmarks for interpreting what they see.

Quality after-school programs can provide safe and engaging environments that motivate and inspire learning outside the regular school day. While there is no one single formula for success in after-school programs, both practitioners and researchers have found that effective programs combine academic, enrichment, cultural, and recreational activities to guide learning and engage children and youth in wholesome activities. They also find that the most effective programs develop activities to meet the particular needs of the communities they serve. In developing this document, the Committee based their recommendations on an understanding of the operational conditions that research and practice have found to be essential to sustain high-quality after-school programs. To better ensure the optimal success of a program, these conditions include:

- ◆ Effective partnerships to promote learning and community engagement
- ◆ Strong program management including adequate compensation of qualified staff
- ◆ Qualified after-school staff and volunteers with regular opportunities for professional development and career advancement
- ◆ Enriching learning opportunities that complement school-day learning, utilize project-based learning, and explore new skills and knowledge
- ◆ Intentional linkages between school-day and after-school staff including coordinating and maximizing use of resources and facilities
- ◆ Appropriate attention to safety, health, and nutrition issues
- ◆ Strong family involvement in participants' learning and development
- ◆ Adequate and sustainable funding
- ◆ Evaluation for continuous improvement and assessing program effectiveness

Chart Introduction

The following pages are examples of how a program can move from identifying goals to implementing program elements to measuring short- and long-term outcomes. Included in the charts are also performance measures and possible data sources. The examples are categorized by the following four goals focused on participant outcomes. For a worksheet to develop your own set of goals, elements, and short- and long-term outcomes, see page 42.



1. Academic and Other Learning Goals pp. 10-23

- ◆ Improved literacy and communication skills for all participants (including English language learners) in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and technology
- ◆ Improved math skills
- ◆ Increased knowledge and skills in science and social studies
- ◆ Increased knowledge, participation, and skills in the visual and performing arts
- ◆ Increased awareness of real-life uses of academic skills

After-School Homework Activities: These additional charts embedded in the Academic section offer suggestions for how programs can promote the quality of homework help in meaningful ways throughout their daily operations. Specifically, after-school programs can affect student outcomes in three key areas that relate to successful homework completion:

- ◆ Increased success and achievement in school
- ◆ Acquisition and use of independent learning skills
- ◆ Facilitate communication among home, school, and students to support student learning



2. Social and Emotional Goals pp. 24-31

- ◆ Improved social skills
- ◆ Increased leadership and responsibility
- ◆ Reduced at-risk behavior
- ◆ Improved emotional well-being



3. Health and Safety Goals pp. 32-37

- ◆ Improved nutrition and health practices
- ◆ Improved physical development
- ◆ Improved personal safety



4. Community Engagement Goal pp. 38-39

- ◆ Improved community awareness and engagement

Academic: Literacy

◆ GOAL

Improved literacy and communication skills for all participants, including English language learners, in: reading, writing, speaking, listening, technology, foreign language



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Staff with basic knowledge, skills, and strategies that support and promote literacy
- ◆ Opportunities for skill development through diverse language arts activities and projects (e.g., poetry corner, pen pals, reading/writing centers, peer tutoring)
- ◆ Books, materials, computer hardware and software, and other tools/resources that teach and stimulate and are (a) sensitive to the societal and cultural context and (b) fit the ages and interests of the participants
- ◆ Information and/or workshops for parents on what children are learning in school
- ◆ Opportunities to use new skills in practical, enjoyable settings that enable participants to a) to use their skills outside of the classroom, b) participate in project-based learning and exploration; and c) connect with the community
- ◆ Literacy rich environments for communication and critical thinking (e.g., library visits, writing centers, computer labs)
- ◆ Family literacy support available to parents with their children (e.g., family reading nights, family book bags)

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

S H O R T - T E R M

- ◆ Participants read and write more
- ◆ Participants enjoy reading, talking about what they have read, and telling stories with a beginning, middle, and end
- ◆ Participants increase their use of computers to communicate and learn new information (e.g., using the Internet to research a famous person)
- ◆ Parents of participants understand what their children are learning in school

L O N G - T E R M

- ◆ Participants show improved academic performance in subjects that require reading comprehension and writing
- ◆ Participants increase language arts skills including speaking, listening, reading comprehension, and writing (e.g., writing a script for a play, reciting poetry, understanding a story)
- ◆ Participants use strategies such as rereading, questioning, and predicting to understand (e.g., Who do you think is going to win the race? I think the rabbit because he is faster than the turtle.)
- ◆ Participants use of reading, writing, listening, and speaking in all aspects of daily life (e.g., reading a roadmap, following complex directions, listening to radio talk show)

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

D A T A S O U R C E S

- ◆ Reading logs
- ◆ Participant portfolios and journals
- ◆ Family activity logs
- ◆ Performance-based reading comprehension and writing assessments
- ◆ Standardized tests
- ◆ Report cards
- ◆ School records
- ◆ Teacher-reported or observed reading and writing performance
- ◆ Parent-reported or observed reading and writing performance

P E R F O R M A N C E M E A S U R E S

- ◆ Number and type of books checked out
- ◆ Number of books read
- ◆ Number of group and individual public speaking opportunities
- ◆ Hours per week spent reading
- ◆ Ratings of reading and writing enjoyment
- ◆ Number of times per week used computer, tape recorder, etc. to complete school or personal projects
- ◆ Grades
- ◆ Grade point average
- ◆ Test scores on reading and related subjects
- ◆ Homework completion rate
- ◆ School attendance
- ◆ Usefulness of workshops attended by parents of participants
- ◆ Number and type of family literacy activities

Academic: Math



GOAL

Improved math skills



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Staff with basic knowledge, skills, and strategies to support and promote mathematical thinking and problem solving
- ◆ Opportunities to practice math skills through diverse math activities and projects (e.g., math games, math problem of the day)
- ◆ Books, materials, computer software and hardware, and other tools/resources that teach and stimulate mathematical thinking and are (a) sensitive to the societal and cultural context and (b) fit the ages, skills, and interests of the participants
- ◆ Varied opportunities to use math skills in practical, enjoyable settings outside of the classroom (e.g., calculating cost of grocery items, estimating weights and distances)
- ◆ Workshops available for parents to help with math homework

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

SHORT-TERM

- ◆ Participants play and enjoy math-based games and puzzles (e.g., checkers, chess, Uno, dominos)
- ◆ Participants use and express mathematical thinking (e.g., cooking, measuring, sewing, problem solving, reasoning)
- ◆ Participants increase use of math skills to interact with peers (e.g., marking out a playing field, keeping sports scores)
- ◆ Participants increase their enjoyment and pride in applying math skills at school, home, and in the community (e.g., building a bookcase, shopping, using money)

LONG-TERM

- ◆ Participants show improved academic performance in subjects that require math skills and thinking
- ◆ Participants increase using math for complex problem-solving (e.g., designing a greenhouse for the school; build a model that requires multiple steps)
- ◆ Participants increase their skill and confidence in the use of calculators and computers (e.g., solve problems, check answers, learn new information)
- ◆ Participants increase ability to collect, analyze, and present data using technology as appropriate (e.g., graphs, conducting surveys and presenting results)
- ◆ Participants increase knowledge of the role of mathematics and technology in society (e.g., understanding global weather patterns, national baseball league rankings)

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

DATA SOURCES

- ◆ Completed projects, portfolios, etc. that demonstrate practical applications of mathematical thinking and problem solving
- ◆ Completed projects that demonstrate participant knowledge of the role of mathematics in society
- ◆ Observed or teacher-reported use of math skills
- ◆ Parent and participant reports of the use of math skills and applications
- ◆ School records

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- ◆ Rating of enjoyment and comfort with math concepts
- ◆ Rating of improved understanding of math applications
- ◆ Grades
- ◆ Scores on mathematics and related subject tests
- ◆ Homework completion rate
- ◆ School attendance

Academic: Science & Social Studies

◆ GOAL

Increased knowledge and skills in science and social studies



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Staff with basic knowledge and skills of science and social studies (e.g., condensation, four basic food groups, solar system, world geography)
- ◆ Opportunities to practice and apply knowledge and skills through diverse activities and projects (e.g., field trips to local museums, planetariums, and laboratories, growing plants from seeds, science experiments)
- ◆ Books, materials, and other tools/resources that focus on building knowledge of oneself, one's community, and the world, and of geographic, cultural, and economic variations
- ◆ Opportunities to use science and social studies skills in practical, enjoyable settings (e.g., interviewing community members, research community traditions, participation in science or social studies fairs)

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

SHORT-TERM

- ◆ Participants are more curious about the world and its make-up (e.g., exploring nature, Earth Day activities)
- ◆ Participants improve understanding of the relevance and practical application of scientific and social studies knowledge (e.g., photosynthesis and plant life, knowledge of basic U.S. history timeline)
- ◆ Participants increase geography knowledge (e.g., map reading, country recognition, climate zones)
- ◆ Participants increase their understanding of connections between individuals and their wider communities (e.g., relating personal or local issue to current events, citizenship)

LONG-TERM

- ◆ Participants show improved academic performance in subjects linked to science and social studies knowledge and skills
- ◆ Participants increase their knowledge of scientific and social studies skills (e.g., understanding the role of science in society; understand that weather and activities differ by seasons)
- ◆ Participants apply and integrate geographic knowledge into relevant projects (e.g., understanding why tribal communities migrate from one region to another, understanding why voting is important)

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

DATA SOURCES

- ◆ Completed projects, portfolios, and/or homework or other assignments that demonstrate application of skills
- ◆ Teacher-reported or observed use of skills
- ◆ Course grades in subjects that include science and/or social studies knowledge or skills
- ◆ State tests
- ◆ Parent reports of use of inquiry skills
- ◆ Projects and/or other demonstrations of geographic and cultural knowledge

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- ◆ Number and type of books checked out
- ◆ Number of service and citizenship activities
- ◆ Number and type of science fair projects
- ◆ Number and type of social studies fair projects
- ◆ Ratings of enjoyment in learning science and social studies concepts
- ◆ Grades
- ◆ Grade point average
- ◆ Test scores on science, social studies, and related subjects
- ◆ Homework completion rate
- ◆ School attendance

Academic: Visual & Performing Arts

◆ GOAL

Increased knowledge, participation, and skills in both the visual and performing arts



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Staff with basic knowledge and skills and the ability to engage outside experts in arts activities and performances
- ◆ Opportunities to participate in activities and projects that integrate the arts across content areas (e.g., writing and producing a play, composing a song, designing costumes)
- ◆ Books, materials, and other tools/resources that explore the arts and encourage the use of artistic expression
- ◆ Opportunities to use new skills in enjoyable settings that promote participant creativity and presentations (e.g., theatrical performances, art displays in the classroom)
- ◆ Scheduled art performances, visits, and outside trips to theater and/or museums

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

SHORT-TERM

- ◆ Participants increase interest in and enjoyment of the arts (e.g., appreciation of a theater performance, participating in a school play)
- ◆ Participants improve ability for self-expression in both individual and group settings (e.g., drawing a mural, singing in a choir)
- ◆ Participants increase knowledge of basic art forms and the role of the arts in society (e.g., appreciation of professional dance performers, understanding the diverse forms of artistic expression – dance, painting, sculpture)

LONG-TERM

- ◆ Participants improve use of the arts for personal expression, and fulfilling personal and social goals (e.g., forming a band, hobbies, theater membership, career choices)
- ◆ Participants show use of varied arts skills (e.g., design a garden for the school courtyard contest)

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

DATA SOURCES

- ◆ Attendance and participation in art activities, performances, etc.
- ◆ Teacher-reported or observed use of arts skills
- ◆ Parent and participant reports of engagement with and/or use of the arts
- ◆ Student portfolios

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- ◆ Number and type of arts activities in which youth participate
- ◆ Number and type of arts performances attended
- ◆ Number and types of community institutions visited
- ◆ Number and type of arts-related skills applied in after-school setting
- ◆ Number and type of arts-related skills applied outside of the after school setting
- ◆ Number and type of creative and inventive individual and/or group art productions
- ◆ Number of teachers reporting increase in participant knowledge of arts traditions

Academic: Homework Success

GOAL

Increased success and achievement in school



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Program provides time, space, resources, and materials for working on homework assignments
- ◆ Program is structured and staffed to provide appropriate amounts of support for homework completion, and subject-specific support for homework correctness
- ◆ Staff is trained in core language arts and math support techniques
- ◆ Individual tutoring is available

Homework assistance is frequently cited by parents as one of their chief reasons for enrolling their children in after-school programs. Among after-school activities, homework assistance tends to vary the most in terms of quality and participant benefit. Experience indicates that, perhaps more than any other area, the design of homework assistance activities needs to be grounded in a concrete understanding of participant goals, sound program elements, and clear expectations for outcomes. After-school programs can actively assist participants in acquiring the underlying skills in time management, personal organization, and study skills that lead to homework success and thus contribute to academic achievement. While not a student goal per se, homework is an integral part of many after-school programs. These charts provide suggestions of ways programs can improve their homework assistance in an effort to strengthen its impact on the academic outcomes for program participants.

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

S H O R T - T E R M

- ◆ Participants devote appropriate and/or improving amounts of time to homework assignments.
- ◆ Participants use homework time to review class material and learning

L O N G - T E R M

- ◆ Participants complete homework assignments and turn them in regularly
- ◆ Participants connect homework effort and completion to class/school success
- ◆ Participants show improved performance on class tests
- ◆ Participants attend homework program as needed

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

D A T A S O U R C E S

- ◆ Student homework logs show amount of time devoted to homework
- ◆ Student logs show amount of homework submitted to teachers

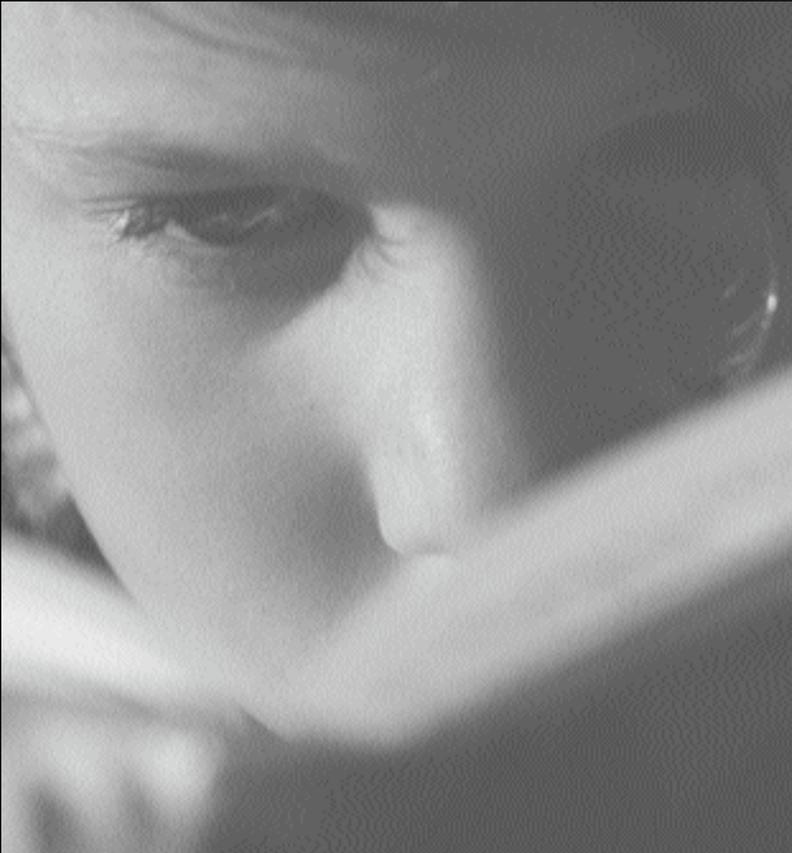
P E R F O R M A N C E M E A S U R E S

- ◆ Teachers report improved homework submission by participating students
- ◆ Teacher surveys show increased quantity and/or improved quality of homework submitted by participants
- ◆ Participant surveys show recognition of the value of homework submission to success in school
- ◆ Participants receive increased credit or grades for homework, as applicable
- ◆ Participant year-end grades improve
- ◆ Drop out rate decreases (high school)
- ◆ Participants pursuit of continuing education increases

Academic: Homework Success

◆ GOAL

Acquisition and use of independent learning skills



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Staff provides ready access to materials, supplies, and resources
- ◆ Space is available for individual and group study, test preparation, projects, homework, and skill-building activities
- ◆ Program provides diverse learning opportunities to accommodate participants without homework, and participants with different learning styles
- ◆ Participants track homework assignments, completion, and submission
- ◆ Cross-age peer and adult tutoring is available on an optional basis
- ◆ Participants identify their goals and create learning and/or homework contracts
- ◆ Staff support independent learning (including time planning, tracking assignments, understanding assignments, focus, finding resources, and asking for help) and use different types of helping techniques
- ◆ Program allows for student choice and self-direction

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

S H O R T - T E R M

- ◆ Participants recognize that help and resources are available, and that assignments are manageable
- ◆ Participants use materials and resources with minimal support
- ◆ Participants seek help and assistance appropriately
- ◆ Participants demonstrate ability to work cooperatively in groups

L O N G - T E R M

- ◆ Participants plan their time and work appropriately to achieve their goals
- ◆ Participants use diverse resources (including print, electronic, and human) effectively and efficiently (e.g., asking questions to staff, checking facts in encyclopedias or the Internet)
- ◆ Participants complete assignments in timely fashion

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

D A T A S O U R C E S

- ◆ Attendance in homework program (as appropriate)
- ◆ Teacher logs and surveys of student use of resources
- ◆ Participant surveys of use of resources
- ◆ Teacher observation logs/checklists of student application to homework (time on task) and other learning activities

P E R F O R M A N C E M E A S U R E S

- ◆ Participant surveys show students find and use help and resources
- ◆ Class teacher surveys indicate students know how to find help and use resources to complete assignments
- ◆ Students submit and complete more homework

Academic: Homework Success



GOAL

Facilitate communications among home, school, and student to support student learning



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Regular communication between school-day teacher and after-school staff
- ◆ Communication systems provide feedback to parents and teachers
- ◆ Parent/teacher meetings include discussions of homework in after-school
- ◆ Program uses parent-student-teacher homework contracts
- ◆ Program conducts home visits

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

SHORT-TERM

- ◆ Teachers are aware of after-school homework support opportunities, give homework, and follow up with homework assignments
- ◆ Teachers give credit for homework effort and completion
- ◆ Parents are aware of the after-school homework their children are working on
- ◆ Parents appreciate increased support for homework in after-school

LONG-TERM

- ◆ Teachers maximize the opportunities available in after-school (e.g., assign homework geared to completion in after-school, by groups, using materials)
- ◆ Parents increase awareness of school work and activities

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

DATA SOURCES

- ◆ Teacher and/or administrator surveys
- ◆ Parent surveys of awareness of their child's schoolwork
- ◆ Parent surveys of satisfaction with homework in the after-school program
- ◆ Student tracking chart

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- ◆ Sustained attendance (as appropriate)

Social and Emotional: Social Skills



GOAL

Improved social skills



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Staff with basic knowledge, skills, and strategies to promote social skills; this includes hiring supportive staff and promoting supportive staff-participant interactions
- ◆ Opportunities to participate in activities and projects that promote social skills, including opportunities to promote teamwork and collaboration, and opportunities to resolve problems peacefully (e.g., peer conflict resolution training and programs)
- ◆ Classes on peer pressure, sportsmanship, conflict management and social skills, respect, and responsibility
- ◆ Books, materials, and other tools/resources that promote the development of social skills and are (a) sensitive to societal and cultural context and (b) appropriate for the age and developmental level of participants
- ◆ Opportunities to use social skills in many different aspects of the program (e.g., opportunities for participants to exercise voice and choice in areas such as the type of activities offered and individual decisions to participate)

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

SHORT-TERM

- ◆ Participants improve interactions with staff at the program (e.g., asks adults for assistance interpreting rules for a game)
- ◆ Participants exhibit fewer hostile, impulsive interactions, such as shouting, profanity in after-school program and elsewhere
- ◆ Participants use discussion and begin to see compromise as a way of resolving conflict
- ◆ Participants converse more easily with familiar adults and peers at home, in schools, and in the community
- ◆ Participants increase understanding and respect for diverse cultures

LONG-TERM

- ◆ Participants are more involved with school and community
- ◆ Participants show improved interactions with adults outside of the program, such as teacher-participant relations at school and parent/sibling-participant relations at home (e.g., less conflict, more cooperation)
- ◆ Participants form friendships with peers
- ◆ Participants listen to others and participate in group efforts, recognizing that peer opinions differ from own (e.g., supporting someone's ideas for a group project)
- ◆ Participants voluntarily invite peers of different ethnic or cultural backgrounds, different genders, or have special needs to participate activities
- ◆ Participants examine existing rules and contribute to group decision making (e.g., instead of choosing teams, let's count off to make the teams fair)

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

DATA SOURCES

- ◆ Participant
 - ◆ Program Staff
 - ◆ Teacher
 - ◆ Parent
 - ◆ School administrator reports
 - ◆ School guidance counselor
- Through:
- ◆ Interviews
 - ◆ Observations
 - ◆ Surveys
 - ◆ Focus groups
 - ◆ Behavioral assessments
 - ◆ Records of disciplinary actions both during and after-school

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- ◆ Participants, program staff, teachers, parents, and/or others report increase in positive participant behavior
- ◆ Participants, program staff, teachers, parents, and/or others report decrease in negative participant behavior
- ◆ Percent participants, program staff, teachers, parents, and/or others who report improved participant relationships with diverse sets of adults
- ◆ Percent of program staff, parents, and teachers and/or others who report improved participant relationships with diverse sets of peers
- ◆ Percent of participants, program staff, teachers, parents, and/or others who report improved participant social communications skills
- ◆ Percent of participants, program staff, teachers, parents, and/or others who report improved participant problem-solving skills
- ◆ Number/percent of participants involved in school-based activities
- ◆ Number/percent of participants involved in community-based activities

Social and Emotional: Leadership

◆ GOAL

Increased leadership and responsibility



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Staff with basic knowledge, skills, and strategies to promote leadership and responsibility, including how to relate to young people to foster supportive participant-staff interactions
- ◆ Opportunities to participate in activities and projects that promote leadership and responsibility (e.g., organize field trips organize and carry out activities such as a community mapping project, food drive, tutoring of younger participants)
- ◆ Books, materials, and other tools/resources that promote the development of leadership and responsibility and are (a) sensitive to societal and cultural context and (b) appropriate for the age and developmental level of participants
- ◆ Opportunities to use leadership skills in many different aspects of the program, including opportunities to exercise voice and choice in program design, implementation and evaluation and opportunities to be independent and autonomous

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

S H O R T - T E R M

- ◆ Participants demonstrate improved willingness to take responsibility for behavior
- ◆ Participants attitudes toward self and school improve
- ◆ Participants exhibit improved work habits at school and home
- ◆ Participants take on more leadership in program design and implementation (e.g., participants set the rules, choose activities, plan schedules, assist with evaluation planning)

L O N G - T E R M

- ◆ Participants make informed educational and career aspiration decisions
- ◆ Participants improve sense of personal efficacy (e.g., feelings that “I can make a difference”)
- ◆ Participants improve ability to learn from successes and failures
- ◆ Participants exhibit greater confidence in handling challenging situations in a productive manner

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

D A T A S O U R C E S

- ◆ Participant
- ◆ Program Staff
- ◆ Teacher
- ◆ Parent
- ◆ School administrator reports
- ◆ School guidance counselor

Through:

- ◆ Interviews
- ◆ Observations
- ◆ Surveys
- ◆ Focus groups
- ◆ Behavioral assessments
- ◆ Records of disciplinary actions both during and after-school

P E R F O R M A N C E M E A S U R E S

- ◆ Percent program staff, parents, and teachers and/or others who report increase in participant sense of responsibility for own behaviors
- ◆ Percent program staff, parents, and teachers and/or others who report increase in participant leadership skills
- ◆ Number and types of community projects (e.g., canned food drives, beautification projects, playground clean-up)
- ◆ Number attending leadership classes at college level
- ◆ Number attaining a job
- ◆ Number keeping a job

Social and Emotional: Behavior

◆ GOAL

Reduced at-risk behavior



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Staff with basic knowledge, skills, and strategies to help participants reduce at-risk behaviors
- ◆ Opportunities to participate in activities and projects that help participants reduce at-risk behavior, for example, building teamwork and collaboration skills
- ◆ Books, materials, and other tools/resources that promote a reduction in at-risk behaviors and responsibility and are (a) sensitive to societal and cultural context and (b) appropriate for age and developmental level of participants
- ◆ Opportunities that promote a reduction in at-risk behavior provided in many different aspects of the program (e.g., opportunities for voice and choice, autonomy; opportunities to become part of positive peer groups and develop friendships)

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

SHORT-TERM

- ◆ Participants improve regular attendance at the after-school program or other structured out-of-school activity improves
- ◆ Participants improve regular school attendance improves
- ◆ Participants improve friendships with “positive” peers increases

LONG-TERM

- ◆ Participants avoid use of tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs
- ◆ Participants decrease violent and criminal activities
- ◆ Participants decrease behavior referrals in school (e.g., detention, suspension)
- ◆ Participants increase avoidance of minor misconduct
- ◆ Participants increase pro-social behaviors and activities

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

DATA SOURCES

- ◆ School records
- ◆ Police records
- ◆ Participant, parent, and staff reports
- ◆ Parent surveys and observations
- ◆ Teacher and family observations
- ◆ Peer observations

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- ◆ Percent program staff, parents, and teachers and/or others who report decrease in participant aggressive behavior
- ◆ Percent program staff, parents, and teachers and/or others who report decrease in participant delinquency
- ◆ Percent decrease in crime rate in community
- ◆ Percent participants reporting a delay in sexual activity
- ◆ Percent participants reporting decrease in drug abuse and increase in awareness and resistance
- ◆ Percent program staff, parents, and teachers and/or others who report decrease in participant gang membership
- ◆ Percent program staff, parents, and teachers and/or others who report increases in participant pro-social behavior and activities

Social and Emotional: Well-Being

◆ GOAL

Improved emotional well-being



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Staff with basic knowledge, skills, and strategies to promote emotional well-being and encourage supportive peer relationships
- ◆ Opportunities to participate in activities and projects that promote the emotional well-being of program participants (e.g., team sports, clubs, rap-sessions, etc.)

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

S H O R T - T E R M

- ◆ Participants are more engaged in program and with each other
- ◆ Participants feel less isolated
- ◆ Participants feel less anger

L O N G - T E R M

- ◆ Participants feel more sure of themselves
- ◆ Participants feel more positive emotions

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

D A T A S O U R C E S

- ◆ Participant
- ◆ Program staff
- ◆ Teacher
- ◆ Parent
- ◆ School administrator reports

Through:

- ◆ Interviews
- ◆ Observations
- ◆ Surveys
- ◆ Focus groups
- ◆ Behavioral assessments
- ◆ Records of disciplinary actions

P E R F O R M A N C E M E A S U R E S

- ◆ Number of behavior reports sent to the office
- ◆ Percent program staff, parents, and teachers and/or others who report improved participant self-esteem
- ◆ Percent program staff, parents, and teachers and/or others who report participant improved self-confidence
- ◆ Number of friendships and social networks reported by participants

Health & Safety: Nutrition & Health

◆ GOAL

Improved nutrition and health practices



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Staff with basic knowledge, skills, and strategies to promote nutrition and health practices
- ◆ Opportunities to participate in activities and projects that provide instruction and reinforcement of skills (e.g., cooking lessons, planning meals for large groups)
- ◆ Books, materials, and other tools/resources that teach and stimulate interest in good nutrition and health practices (e.g., health and nutrition information posted and disseminated availability of nutritious snacks)
- ◆ Varied opportunities to use new skills in practical, enjoyable settings beyond the program (e.g., students journal diet and exercise)

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

SHORT-TERM

- ◆ Participants eat one nutritious snack per day in the program
- ◆ Participants improve communication with staff and others about nutrition
- ◆ Participants follow safety rules without adult supervision
- ◆ Participants are responsible for personal hygiene needs (e.g., cleans up when appropriate)

LONG-TERM

- ◆ Participants show increased healthy choices in food selection in and out of school
- ◆ Participants show improved health (e.g., higher energy, fewer illnesses, reduced obesity)
- ◆ Participants understand the need for a balanced, varied diet based on the food pyramid
- ◆ Participants understand implications of participating in potentially unhealthy behaviors (e.g., smoking, drinking, drugs)

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

DATA SOURCES

- ◆ Food records/logs (e.g., caloric intake, amount of water consumption) from programs, cafeteria, and home
- ◆ Parent/child reporting
- ◆ Doctor/school nurse report records that document nutrition and health practices

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- ◆ Number of nutritious snacks consumed per day
- ◆ Number of nutritious meals consumed per day
- ◆ Percent decrease in absences due to illness
- ◆ Percent increase in teacher reports of better energy levels
- ◆ Percent increase of program staff reporting conversations with participants about nutrition

Health & Safety: Physical Development

◆ GOAL

Improved physical development



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Staff with basic knowledge, skills, and strategies to promote physical development
- ◆ Opportunities to participate in activities that provide instruction and reinforcement of skills (e.g., activities that promote large and small motor coordination equal access to physical opportunities by age and gender)
- ◆ Books, materials, and other tools/resources that teach and stimulate interest in physical activity and are (a) sensitive to societal and cultural context and (b) appropriate for age and developmental level of participants (e.g., books about sports figures, exercise posters)
- ◆ Varied opportunities to use new skills in practical, enjoyable settings beyond the program (e.g., opportunity to practice team sports, walking, exercising)

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

SHORT-TERM

- ◆ Participants spend more time in physical activities at programs, including competitive games and non-competitive sports (e.g., yoga, wall-climbing, etc.)
- ◆ Participants enjoy physical activity
- ◆ Participants show increasing ability, strength, and control over eye-hand coordination (e.g., bead work, using writing and drawing tools, catching a ball, dribbling a basketball)

LONG-TERM

- ◆ Participants spend more time in physical development activities outside the program, including competitive games and non-competitive sports (e.g., yoga, wall-climbing, etc.)
- ◆ Participants develop sportsmanship as a spectator and a participant
- ◆ Participants develop interest in sustaining physical activity (e.g., regular exercise)
- ◆ Participants show improved health (e.g., higher energy, fewer illnesses, reduced obesity)
- ◆ Participants understand implications of participating in potentially unhealthy behaviors (e.g., smoking, drinking, drugs)

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

DATA SOURCES

- ◆ Program records, participant reports, school and team records, and coach report records that document and assess progress in physical development
- ◆ Medical records, participant reports, and physical fitness tests that document and assess progress in improved physical development
- ◆ Time spent in physical activities (e.g., sports, exercise, strength training)

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- ◆ Frequency and type of participation in physical activities, including competitive games as well as non-traditional sports (e.g., yoga, wall-climbing, etc.)
- ◆ Percent improvements in weight/body mass and other physical indicators (including flexibility, physical movement, energy expenditure, visual motor control, cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, and endurance)
- ◆ Percent reporting improved fitness attitudes and knowledge

Health & Safety: Personal Safety



GOAL

Improved personal safety



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Staff with basic knowledge, skills, and strategies to promote personal safety (e.g., first aid training, experience in violence reduction/behavior management, CPR training)
- ◆ Opportunities to participate in activities and projects that provide instruction and reinforcement of skills (e.g., lessons on first aid, visits from health providers in the community)
- ◆ Provision of safe places after-school (e.g., controlled entry and exits, lighting, spaces for activities)
- ◆ Books, materials, and other tools/resources that teach and stimulate interest in personal safety and are (a) sensitive to societal and cultural context and (b) appropriate for age and developmental level of participants (e.g., first aid materials available; safety posters)
- ◆ Varied opportunities to use personal safety skills in practical, enjoyable settings beyond the program (e.g., first aid and CPR classes)

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

SHORT-TERM

- ◆ Participants improve feelings of personal safety in the program
- ◆ Participants decrease feelings of victimization in the program
- ◆ Participants improve knowledge of basic first aid skills

LONG-TERM

- ◆ Participants improve feelings of personal safety in school and the community
- ◆ Participants decrease feelings of victimization in school and in the community

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

DATA SOURCES

- ◆ Incident reports filed by program and school staff
- ◆ Child and staff reports that document progress in improved personal safety

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- ◆ Percent participants reporting increased personal safety in the program
- ◆ Percent participants reporting increased personal safety in school and in the community
- ◆ Number completing first aid and CPR courses
- ◆ Percent program staff and participants reporting less victimization in the program
- ◆ Percent program staff and participants reporting less victimization in the school and the community

Community Engagement



GOAL

Improved community awareness and engagement



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- ◆ Staff with basic knowledge, skills, and strategies to promote community awareness and engagement (e.g., training in civic engagement, youth leadership, as well as staff who understand and are members of the community)
- ◆ Opportunities to participate in activities and projects that provide instruction and reinforcement of skills (e.g., community asset mapping, instruction in the democratic process)
- ◆ Books, materials, and other tools/resources that teach and stimulate interest in their community and are (a) sensitive to societal and cultural context and (b) appropriate for age and developmental level of participants (e.g., distribution of flyers about community programs, resources that reflect the cultural diversity of the community)
- ◆ Varied opportunities to use community awareness and engagement skills in practical, enjoyable settings beyond the program (e.g., community service and project-based activities)
- ◆ Involve children with senior citizens, local garden clubs (e.g., volunteers make community quilts)

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES

S H O R T - T E R M

- ◆ Participants improve knowledge of the local community
- ◆ Participants increase involvement in community service through the after-school program
- ◆ Participants increase awareness of community resources
- ◆ Participants demonstrate environmentally responsible behaviors (e.g., recycling)

L O N G - T E R M

- ◆ Participants increase appreciation/pride in the local community
- ◆ Participants demonstrate more evidence of civic skills (e.g., knowing where to look for information on community problems, etc.)
- ◆ Participants increase involvement in community through leadership opportunities (e.g., youth member of Mayor’s Council)
- ◆ Participants increase involvement in democratic processes (e.g., voting campaigns, rallies for issues, etc.)

POSSIBLE DATA SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

D A T A S O U R C E S

- ◆ Program records and community resource records that document community engagement and awareness
- ◆ Participant and staff reporting of community engagement and awareness
- ◆ Media coverage of youth involvement in community events/activities
- ◆ Mock election votes
- ◆ Documentation of student involvement in community activities

P E R F O R M A N C E M E A S U R E S

- ◆ Number and types of community service activities conducted by participants
- ◆ Percent participants able to identify other resources available to them
- ◆ Percent participants engaged in community improvement and leadership
- ◆ Observed changes in neighborhood (e.g., an empty lot transformed)

The *Framework for After-School Programs* was developed by a national committee of researchers, evaluators, policymakers, and program experts with funding from the C.S. Mott Foundation. Priscilla Little of the Harvard Family Research Project and An-Me Chung of the C.S. Mott Foundation served as contributors, editors and guided the document to completion.

The Committee wishes to thank the dedicated after-school practitioners from LA's BEST, The After-School Corporation, and programs supported by Foundations, Inc., who provided invaluable input and advice on the format, language, and design of the document.

The statewide afterschool networks, active in 25 states and partially funded by the C.S. Mott Foundation, contributed perspective and on the content and potential uses of the Framework.

Those interested in using this document are invited to join technical assistance conference calls offered throughout the year. Please visit <http://www.publicengagement.com/Framework/> for dates and times of technical assistance conference calls.

In addition, the Committee welcomes any feedback that will continually improve the document. Questions about the document and feedback may be submitted to afterschool@publicengagement.com.

A .pdf version of the Framework and a feedback form is available online at <http://www.publicengagement.com/Framework/>

Collaborative Communications Group managed the development of the document, including coordinating committee meetings.

Worksheet

- ◆ Articulate a concise program goal related to a goal area.
- ◆ Identify program elements that will contribute to goal attainment.
- ◆ Identify short-and long-term outcomes. Be realistic about what YOUR program can do given its “age and stage.”
- ◆ Identify possible data sources and performance measures.

Program Goals	Examples of Program Elements	Examples of Desired Short-Term Outcomes	Examples of Desired Long-Term Outcomes	Possible Data Sources and Performance Measures
				Data Sources
				Performance Measures

