

SURVIVOR ELEMENTS FOR AFTERSCHOOL

The Six E's for Quality, Sustainable Expanded Learning in Afterschool, Summers and Community Learning Centers

Can your community learning center, afterschool or summer programs both start-up right and be sustained long enough to make a difference? Take this test and see how your programs score.

I. The first ingredient for surviving is that your program has to be full of quality elements. How does your program stack up? On each element rate your program (or plan) from 10 to 1 (high to low).

Success and Quality Ingredients-The "Six E's":

_____ **ENGAGING** (A rating of "10" should have **at least all** of these indicators.)

- ✓ Our staff builds positive relationships with our students and helps them achieve high expectations.
- ✓ We **have high regular attendance** because we aggressively reach out to children and their families.
- ✓ We draw in children and youth with interesting, challenging activities and enrichment opportunities.

_____ **ENRICHING**

- ✓ The students regularly participate in intentional learning that reinforces and stretches their skills (e.g., the arts, technology, 2nd and 3rd languages, fitness, and chess, film-making and international clubs).
- ✓ The learning activities are linked to the school day, help the children "catch up and keep up," but are not "drill and kill" worksheets; however, they do embed critical academic standards.
- ✓ Cultural, community and arts organizations include and integrate the arts and music in the program.

_____ **EXTRA CONNECTIONS, HANDS AND HOPE**

- ✓ Participants have mentors and tutors to learn critical skills and see first-hand how their learning relates to their future (e.g., senior citizens, college students and from local businesses and faith-based groups).
- ✓ Civic, youth, art and community-based organizations deliver engaging and enriching content and courses and connect the young people and their families to positive activities in the community.
- ✓ Health, social service and physician groups do eye and health screenings and provide follow-up help.

_____ **EDUCATIONAL EXPERTISE ALSO FLOWS FROM THE SCHOOLS TO THE COMMUNITY**

- ✓ The school's learning resources (e.g., library, computers, fitness equipment, drama and music facilities, and language labs) are made available as organized community learning centers.
- ✓ Students do community service - teach what they know to adults and senior citizens (e.g., computers, English, 2nd languages), maintain neighborhood libraries, and tutor younger students.
- ✓ Learning opportunities for families are easily available—computer classes, GED, family literacy.

_____ **EXCELLENCE and HIGH EXPECTATIONS**

- ✓ We have expected outcomes, measure them, and report them loudly and often to everyone touched by the program (i.e., better grades, lower discipline referrals, more engagement and better attendance).
- ✓ Very direct connections and experiences are made known and available to help families and students see and learn the pathways to jobs, promising careers and 2 and 4-year colleges.
- ✓ For older youth, programming includes college courses, credit recovery and work experiences.

ENERGETIC STAFF

- ✓ Our staff is energetic, even at 5 pm or on a warm summer day, and they regularly upgrade their skills.
- ✓ They link to the regular classroom teachers and to community and faith-based groups, and colleges.
- ✓ The teachers and mentors in the program are real advocates for the program in the community.

_____ **Subtotal: What is your score on this first half of the “Sustainability” Test?**

II. The second ingredient for surviving and sustaining afterschool and community learning centers is diversified funding and strong school-family-community connections. Rate each element from 10 to 1 (high to low):

PARENT CONTRIBUTIONS AND SUPPORT (A rating of 10 should have all of these indicators)

- ✓ The activities and projects reflect what families want to enhance their children's opportunities and to enhance their own skills, and the families should have an easily accessible parent resource center.
- ✓ Parents and family members regularly contribute in a variety of ways (e.g., volunteering time, paying on a sliding fee schedule), and they bring in other community resources.
- ✓ They advocate for and recruit support from others for increased local, state and federal funding.

DIVERSIFIED FUNDING

- ✓ We are entrepreneurial and position ourselves for new funding opportunities (e.g., 21st Century Community Learning Centers, dropout prevention funds, Title I and Title I School Improvement, Supplemental Services, AmeriCorps, etc.) and seek funding from city and county governments.
- ✓ We are staffed to handle a mixture of local, state, federal, and private funding.
- ✓ The local school board, superintendent, municipal and county leaders, and the United Way support our programs with resources because we involve them and provide them with solid evaluation data.
- ✓ We recognize all kinds of resources and invite all kinds of contributions.

"IN-KIND" RESOURCES ARE FULLY USED

- ✓ We have the buy-in of key teachers and the principal and use the school's computer and language labs, library, art and music rooms, classrooms, and sports facilities.
- ✓ We recruit, organize and train college and high school students as tutors as well as reach out to members of faith-based organizations and employers to secure mentors.
- ✓ Health and wellness programs, parks, recreation, cultural groups and the public libraries work with us, and our activities are connected.

WIN-WIN PARTNERSHIPS

- ✓ Law enforcement and safe community programs are partners.
- ✓ Colleges, Communities in Schools, Y's, 4-H, Junior Achievement, Boys and Girls Clubs, and Big Brother Big Sister are offering what they do best and work in partnership, including on transportation.
- ✓ We foster inter-agency collaboration to provide appropriate health and support services in the schools or the nearby community to address issues that impact student learning.
- ✓ Local museums, public libraries, and cultural facilities offer coordinated projects at their sites and ours.

BUILDING SENIOR CITIZEN, LOCAL BUSINESS, AND PUBLIC SUPPORT

- ✓ Retirees are both recruited as volunteers and provided programs as lifelong learners
- ✓ We research what local businesses would like to contribute and seek that support.
- ✓ We have a well organized public awareness campaign, including using the Afterschool Alliance ads and participate in their Lights-On event. We sponsor visits of officials to our programs.
- ✓ We make program users and lead staff aware of the need for program quality and fragility of funding.

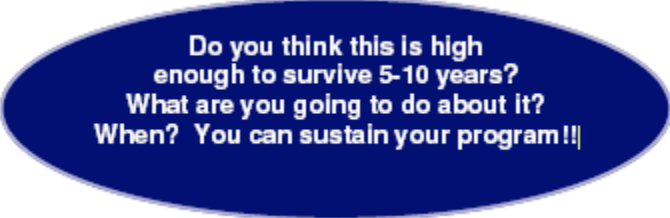
_____ **Subtotal: What is your score on the second half of After School Survivor Test?**

_____ **BONUS:** Add 10 points if you and your local colleagues are regularly advocating for more local, state

and federal support, quality improvement efforts and funding for afterschool and summer programs and community learning centers.

_____ **TOTAL SCORE:** (Out of 120)

*Updated for 2012
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**Do you think this is high
enough to survive 5-10 years?
What are you going to do about it?
When? You can sustain your program !!**