

Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers Best Practices Resource Guide

In an effort to better support high-quality 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) programming, the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) encourages grantees to incorporate these five best practices into their program. Each best practice is directly linked to Montana Afterschool Alliance's [Guiding Principles](#).

<p>Program Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create an opportunity for school day staff/parents/community stakeholders to participate in an advisory board - Use data to inform decisions - Monitor progress towards goal and outcomes set by the vision, mission and purpose 	<p>Guiding Principle Addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear Vision, Mission, Purpose (10) - Collaborative Partnerships (11) - Continuous Quality Improvement (12) - Program Management (13) - Sustainability (14)
<p>Equitable Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with the school district and other local stakeholders to ensure all students are included - Encourage youth to embrace differences in a positive and supportive way - Utilize an advisory board to create opportunities for local stakeholders to collaborate on events 	<p>Guiding Principle Addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safe & Supportive Environment (1) - Positive & Empowering Relationships (4) - Inclusion & Access (7) - Cultural Responsiveness (8) - Collaborative Partnerships (11)
<p>Social Emotional Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage a culture of honesty and empathy - Assist students in setting short- and long-term goals - Help students identify and manage feelings 	<p>Guiding Principle Addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safe & Supportive Environment (1) - Skill Building (3) - Positive & Empowering Relationships (4) - Youth Voice & Leadership (5) - Healthy Choices & Behaviors (6)
<p>Academic Achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide structured homework time and tutoring - Incorporate enrichment activities to reinforce similar themes as the regular school day - Provide youth with a role in programming to foster engagement 	<p>Guiding Principle Addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active & Engaged Learning (2) - Skill Building (3) - Youth Voice & Leadership (5) - Quality Staff (9)

<p>Health & Wellness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Incorporate physical activity into every day, allowing for structured and unstructured programming- Provide developmentally appropriate programs around key topics; nutrition, hygiene, healthy relationships, etc.- Provide youth voice in programming to encourage youth leadership.	<p>Guiding Principle Addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Skill Building (3)- Youth Voice & Leadership (4)- Healthy Choices & Behavior (6)
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Program Structure		
Title	Source/Author	Description
Tool Starter Set	You for Youth	“This list features Y4Y tools, chosen by our team of experts, that will lead you and your program to success! All tools can be customized to your needs.”
Impact Afterschool	Iowa Afterschool Alliance	“This manual is intended to help equip you with strategies and tools to get you up to speed faster and to achieve more, sooner. Use this as a blueprint for creating your action plan and guide through the start-up phase of program implementation.”
Development, management, and curriculum-building	Afterschool Alliance	Research based tools and guides to help build a quality program.

Equitable Access		
Title	Source/Author	Description
What to look for in an Afterschool Program	Afterschool Alliance	Quality programs understand that children and youth in different age groups have different academic, psychological, and physical activity needs.

Let's Talk	Teaching Tolerance	Use the strategies in this resource as you prepare to facilitate difficult conversations about race and racism.
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Resources	National Geographic	This collection contains resources to provide learners with background knowledge as they explore issues related to justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Social Emotional Learning		
Title	Source/Author	Description
Harmony Social Emotional Learning	Online Curriculum	Harmony is a no-cost, evidence based social emotional curriculum for grades K-6.
Inspire Teaching and Learning	Online Professional Development	Inspire offers free on-demand courses and resources to support social emotional learning in PK-12 classrooms.
CASEL Program Guide	CASEL	"The CASEL Guide provides a systematic framework for evaluating the quality of social and emotional programs and applies this framework to identify and rate well-designed, evidence-based SEL programs."

Academic Achievement		
Title	Source/Author	Description
What Does the Research Say About Afterschool?	Afterschool Alliance	This article shows the positive impact afterschool programs have on students' academics, school-day attendance, engagement in learning, and behavior.
Afterschool Training Toolkit	You for Youth	This toolkit provides research-based practices, sample lessons, video examples, and resources to support academic enrichment in afterschool.
Tiers of Evidence	Montana Office of Public Instruction	This document reviews the different tiers of evidence when choosing an academic program.

Health & Wellness		
Title	Source/Author	Description
Afterschool Snacks	U.S. Department of Agriculture	"The afterschool snack component of the National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted snack service that fills the afternoon hunger gap for school children."

Child and Adult Care Food Program	U.S. Department of Agriculture	<p>“Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool Meals Component provides funding to afterschool programs that serve a meal and/or snacks to children and teens in low-income areas.”</p>
Healthy Out-of-School Time Model Wellness Policy Guidance	Alliance for a Healthier Generation	<p>“This document provides model policy language that is aligned with the National Afterschool Association Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) Standards and will assist OST sites in developing strong wellness policies. OST organizations can also act as hubs for community health and wellness and may want to integrate such language into their wellness policies.”</p>