



New Jersey Quality Standards for Afterschool Section II: The Standards



Administration

The administration effectively manages the procedures, policies, [staff](#), and other elements of the program framework that enable a high level of program quality.

1. The program has and uses a mission statement.

- a. The program has a written mission statement that sets forth the program's primary purpose(s).
- b. The mission statement guides administrative decisions about the program, including decisions about curriculum, staffing, and policy.
- c. All staff are aware of the mission statement.

2. The administration takes steps to facilitate continuous improvement in program quality.

- a. The administration oversees the development of program goals and objectives.
- b. The administration conducts an internal monitoring or evaluation system to continuously improve program quality.
- c. The administration incorporates input and feedback from program [stakeholders](#) as central components of the quality improvement process.

3. The administration offers staff the best possible working conditions and pay.

- a. The program offers staff paid preparatory time.
- b. The program facilitates opportunities for additional training that is related to a staff's professional growth plan, including paying for outside training, if appropriate.
- c. Staff have opportunities to discuss their own concerns regarding the program.
- d. Staff have opportunities within the program for [self-direction](#), decision-making, and developing long-term program plans and vision.
- e. There are policies and procedures in place to give positive feedback and recognize the contributions of staff members.

4. The administration provides a high quality system of professional development.

- a. The administration conducts an ongoing assessment of the program's professional development needs and evaluation of the professional development offerings.
- b. The administration develops an annual professional development plan with a timeline.
- c. The administration uses qualified, experienced trainers and/or [evidence-based](#) training materials for professional development.
- d. Professional development at the program includes mentoring and on-going, [job-embedded learning](#) in addition to formal training opportunities.

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5. The administration manages volunteers effectively.

The program has plans for recruiting, orienting, training, supervising, and recognizing volunteers. The plan may be the same as what the program does for paid staff at times, but the program has a distinct plan when needed.

Note: Standards related to staff conduct in the Human Relationships and Special Needs/The Whole Child categories should apply to volunteers.

6. The administration takes steps to support effective communication.

- a. There are policies or procedures in place that support effective and frequent communication between program staff and families. For example, the program may have a practice of calling the homes of a few families each week for regular check-ins.
- b. There are policies or procedures in place that support positive communication between program staff and families. For example, the administration sets the expectation that staff communicate with parents for positive reasons and not just when there is a problem or the program needs information.
- c. There are policies or procedures in place that support effective communication between program staff and the [host agency](#) or other [community stakeholders](#), if applicable.
- d. Program policies and procedures support effective communication among program staff. This includes effective communication between administrative staff and non-administrative staff. For example, administrative staff use one-on-one and face-to-face communications with non-administrative staff as well as group meetings and written communication.

7. The administration values input and feedback about the program and is responsive to it.

- a. The program uses formal and informal methods to seek feedback and input from youth and families.
- b. There are procedures in place for the program to obtain input and feedback from the [host agency](#) or other [community stakeholders](#), if applicable.
- c. The program is responsive to input and feedback from youth, families, the host agency, and other [stakeholders](#).
- d. The program involves staff, families, and youth in decision-making and planning.

8. There are policies or procedures in place that involve families in the life of the program.

- a. Information for families is available in the language(s) the families speak, to the extent possible, and at the literacy level of most parents or guardians. The program also takes into account the unique communication needs of parents or guardians with special needs.
- b. The program offers orientation sessions for new families.
- c. The program involves parents/guardians in program events when possible, and there is a policy to welcome “drop-in” visits from family members to the program.



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9. The program respects the rights of the youth, parents/guardians, and staff.

- a. The program has an internal process that program applicants, participants, and stakeholders can use to express and resolve a grievance or complaint. The program communicates this process to the parents/guardians of youth in the program and to program staff.
- b. The program has and adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination, which is reflected in all program activities and communications.
- c. The program does not release confidential information about youth without informed, signed authorization from the child or youth and the parent or legal guardian. When the law permits the release of confidential information without this authorization, the program at a minimum informs youth and families of the release.

10. The administration maintains and updates program policies and records.

- a. The administration maintains a parent/guardian handbook, an employee handbook, and a policies and procedures manual. This includes annually reviewing each of these documents and updating them as needed.
- b. The administration maintains youth and staff files and other important program records in an organized manner. The administration ensures individual records are checked at least twice a year and updated as needed.

11. The administration acts responsibly regarding program finances and financial sustainability.

- a. The administration conducts [sound financial management](#) of the program, if applicable. If the program administration is not managing the program budget, then the administration maintains familiarity with the budget.
- b. The program has an established process for collecting funds from parents/guardians, if applicable.
- c. The administration maintains awareness of multiple, possible funding streams to support the program.

12. The administration maintains sufficient staff: youth ratios and supervision of youth.

- a. Ratios of staff to youth in the program should be between 1:10 and 1:15 when youth are ages six (6) and older. Ratios of staff to children should be between 1:8 and 1:12 when the program includes children who are age five (5). When possible, at least two (2) staff members are with a group of youth that is in an isolated room.
- b. There is a plan to provide adequate staff coverage in case of emergencies. This includes emergencies that require one (1) staff member to tend to the needs of a single child, as well as situations in which on-duty staff members become ill or suffer from other emergencies.
- c. There is a plan to use substitute staff to maintain ratios when regular staff are absent. This includes keeping an up-to-date list of adults qualified to serve as substitutes, as well as providing support for and evaluation of substitutes to maintain quality.
- d. The program plans for and provides different levels of supervision according to the type of activity as well as the ages and abilities of the youth.



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13. The administration stays current on licensing and other relevant laws and regulations.

- a. The administration ensures the program follows any relevant laws and regulations, including state licensing standards.
- b. The administration ensures that the program follows the rules in the state licensing standards over the recommendations in this standards document if the licensing rules are more stringent.
- c. The administration is aware of changes that may impact relevant laws and regulations and other current issues related to laws and regulations that could impact the program.

14. The administration researches and connects to potential community partners in order to facilitate staff, youth, and families taking advantage of community resources.

- a. The program administration researches services and resources within the community to which staff may refer families when appropriate and necessary. Examples are free dental screenings, fire-prevention seminars, parenting classes, health clinics, food programs, library services, language classes, counseling services, and crisis intervention services. The program administration provides this information to staff and ensures that the information is current and high-quality.
- b. The program administration develops links with the community that staff may take advantage of when planning activities. Examples include activities that help children get to know the larger community, such as trips to a library or visits from leaders and mentors in the community, as well as community service projects.

<u>Cross-References</u>		
Subject	Category	Standard Number
Professional development in specific areas	Special Needs/The Whole Child	3
	Health Behavior: Physical Activity and Nutrition, Physical Activity	4
	Health Behavior: Physical Activity and Nutrition, Nutrition	5
	Programming and Activities	12
Linking the afterschool program to the school day	Programming and Activities	11, 12
Nature and components of high-quality communication with families	Special Needs/The Whole Child	4
	Programming and Activities	8
	Human Relationships	12, 13



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<u>Licensing</u>	
Subject	NJ Licensing Section
Information programs must get from parents	10:122-3.6
Information programs must supply to parents	10:122-6.8
Discipline and the discipline policy	10:122-6.6
Supervision and tracking of youth and staff/child ratios	10:122-4.3
Staff orientation and development	10:122-4.7
Prevention of child abuse	10:122-4.8, 10:122-4.9