

School Age Community Programs are those school-based programs offering care to all children, including children with disabilities, from age 5 up to age 13. School Age Community Programs can be provided to children enrolled during non-school hours, after their daily class sessions, or during other non-school hours (i.e., breaks, holidays, or weekends, etc.). School Age Community programs incorporate a strong sense of school, family, and community members that collaboratively contribute to the growth of students as they mature into caring, competent, and responsible adults. Additionally, School Age Community Programs should also try and meet the needs of working parent(s) during non-school days.

The purpose of the School Age Community grant is to increase program's availability and quality in public educational institutions in order to provide a safe environment that meets the individual, developmental, social, leisure and academic needs of children age 5 up to age 13.

Overview

Research indicates, a safe, well supervised, and enriching School Age Community Program's environment can greatly enhance the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development of children. Afterschool programs are not intended to extend the direct instruction of the classroom by using "right answer" materials and textbooks. However, parents, regular school staff and most financial stakeholders including legislators want and need to know that academic support is taking place. All Afterschool programs can support the academic development of participants by maximizing a variety of "teachable" moments to promote the cognitive, social, and recreational health of students. School Age Community (SAC) programs can also reduce the negative effects many children experience from being in self-care (i.e. negative peer pressure, loneliness, boredom, fear, accidents, and poor school performance).

Quality Afterschool Activities

Quality Afterschool programs can provide safe, engaging environments that complement the school day by promoting learning to improve student outcomes. While there is no one single formula for success in Afterschool 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 best programs develop activities to meet the particular needs of the communities they serve.

The types of activities found in a quality Afterschool program include:

- Remedial education activities;
- Mathematics and reading/language arts education activities;
- Science, arts and music education activities;
- Entrepreneurial education programs;
- Tutoring services (including those provided by senior citizen volunteers) and mentoring programs;
- Programs that provide after-school activities for limited English proficient students that emphasize language skills and academic achievement;
- Recreational activities;
- Telecommunications and technology education programs;
- Expanded library service hours;

- Programs that provide assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled, to allow the students to improve their academic achievement; and
- Drug and violence education.

According to the U.S. Department of Education's publication *Working for Children and Families: Safe and Smart Afterschool Programs*, there are nine components present in high-quality Afterschool programs. These include:

- Goal Setting, Strong Management, and Sustainability
- Quality Afterschool Staffing
- High Academic Standards
- Attention to Safety, Health, and Nutrition Issues
- Effective Partnerships with Community-Based Organizations, Juvenile Justice Agencies, Law Enforcement, and Youth Groups
- Strong Involvement of Families
- Enriching Learning Opportunities
- Linkages Between School-Day and Afterschool Personnel
- Evaluation of Program Progress and Effectiveness

Are there hours when the SAC program must be open?

SAC grant funded programs must be open a minimum of four (4) days per week and not less than 14 hours per week.

Who is eligible to receive awards?

Only applications submitted by public educational institutions will be considered for grant awards. Public educational institutions may submit an application for a School Age Community program administered by a not-for-profit organization that is utilizing school facilities, such as the YMCA, YWCA, 4-H Youth Development, PTA, or other not-for-profit organization.