PROGRAM GUIDE FOR SCHOOL-AGE CARE PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS

Compiled by a
Minnesota Community Education Association Task Force
July 1989, updated August 2001
History of Program Guide Development

This Program Guide was the work of a Minnesota Community Education Association (MCEA) taskforce comprised of school-age care (SAC) professionals who represented a variety of SAC programs throughout the state: programs administered by public schools, by community youth service organizations, as well as private child care organizations. They worked together to discuss and develop minimum standards that would help all programs develop safe and healthy learning environments for school-age children before and after school and all day during school vacations. For many children the time spent in these programs represents a greater amount of time than in the classroom during the school year.

Because many school-age care programs are legally exempted from child care licensure requirements in Minnesota these minimum standards were developed to be similar to the regulations for child care programs that are required to be licensed by the State of Minnesota through Child Care Center Rules, Chapter 9503.

The State Board of Education was authorized in the 1988 legislative session to adopt standards for SAC program run by public schools. New language was proposed and passed which prohibited the state Board of Education from adopting rules, requiring instead that local Boards of Education adopt their own standards on an individual basis.

The task force felt that the standards they had developed were “practical, realistic and relevant to programs providing care for children ages 5 through 12 years”, according to chairperson, Linda Sisson, director of Edina Kids Club, who chaired the MCEA taskforce. Linda was the executive director of the National School-Age Care Alliance (NSACA) in Boston, Massachusetts. She has been instrumental in designing national standards in collaboration with SAC professionals across the nation. This process also has led to a national accreditation process that allows programs to participate in a quality improvement and a national accreditation process.

Approximately 95% of school district programs in the state report having adopted these standards, or a variation of, in its entirety.

The Program Guide was updated in 2001 to improve the format and clarity and update some of the criteria. Another resource that many programs find helpful in further identifying standards and developing program quality is the Standards for Quality School-Age Care available through the National School-Age Care Alliance www.nsaca.org.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Organization and Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chair: Linda Sisson</td>
<td>Kids Club, Edina Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCEA Board Liaison: Ann Coates</td>
<td>Community Education Director, Prior Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roz Anderson</td>
<td>Adventure Club, Robbinsdale Area Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave Borgert</td>
<td>Boys Club, St. Cloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Clapper</td>
<td>Southwest ECSU, Marshall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catharine Cuddeback</td>
<td>Minneapolis Kids, Minneapolis Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lois Engstrom</td>
<td>Minnesota Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy Gammel</td>
<td>Stepping Stones, Maplewood Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Lou Gorski</td>
<td>Community Education, Anoka-Hennepin Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Gustafson</td>
<td>Adventures Club, Robbinsdale Area Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Janelle Kirsch</td>
<td>Minneapolis Kids, Minneapolis Public Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ardis Kysar</td>
<td>Extended Day, St. Paul Public Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gail McDermott</td>
<td>Stepping Stones, Maplewood Public Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robin Mercier</td>
<td>Glendale, Minneapolis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deb Miller</td>
<td>Adventures Plus, Anoka-Hennepin Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Miller</td>
<td>Kidstop, Osseo Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat Ribeau</td>
<td>South Washington County Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kathy Soucy</td>
<td>Fun Club, Richfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet Szasner</td>
<td>Kidstop, Osseo Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marty Tyminski</td>
<td>Northwest YMCA, Mounds View</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sally Wheeler</td>
<td>Adventures Plus, Anoka-Hennepin Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Wicks</td>
<td>Boys Club, St. Cloud</td>
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### SECTION I. DEFINITIONS

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<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Background Study</td>
<td>All staff who have contact with children need a background study done before starting as required by MN Statutes section 245A.04 using forms prescribed by the Commissioner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center</td>
<td>Each location at which activities take place within a program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Guidance</td>
<td>Procedures that outline for staff specific techniques for supervision of children and youth. Examples might be: communication, discipline, behavior improvement strategies, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean</td>
<td>Free from dirt or other contaminants that can be detected by sight, smell, or touch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporal Punishment</td>
<td>Corporal punishment is conduct involving hitting or spanking a person with or without an object or unreasonable physical force that causes bodily harm or substantial emotional harm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current First Aid Certification</td>
<td>Documentation of at least eight hours of training received from a certified instructor, public health nurse, Red Cross instructor, or a postsecondary teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disinfected</td>
<td>Treated to reduce microorganism contamination after an object has been cleaned. Disinfection must be done by rinsing or wiping with a solution of one-fourth cup chlorine bleach plus water to equal one gallon or an equivalent product or process approved by the Board of Health or its designee as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 145A.02.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Abuse</td>
<td>The infliction of verbal or psychological abuse. Emotional abuse includes, but is not limited to, name calling, ostracism, shaming, derogatory remarks about the child or child’s family and language which threatens, humiliates, or frightens the child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility</td>
<td>The indoor and outdoor space in which the child care program is conducted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>License</td>
<td>A certificate issued by the Commissioner authorizing the license holder to operate a child care program. Under current law child care programs for school age children under the auspices of schools are exempt from licensing and are termed “legally unlicensed”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>A substance used to treat disease or injuries, maintain health, heal, or relieve pain. The term applies to prescription and nonprescription substances taken internally or applied externally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent or Guardian</td>
<td>The person or persons with legal custody of the child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-Age Child</td>
<td>A child who is at least of sufficient age to have attended the first day of kindergarten, or is eligible to enter kindergarten with the next four months, but is younger than 13 years of age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-Age Care</td>
<td>A school-age care program provides care, organized activities, and nurture for school age children during those hours of the day in which the children are not in school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Needs</td>
<td>Special needs refers to children who have been identified by the local school district as a child with disabilities or has been determined by a licensed physician, psychiatrist, licensed psychologist to have special needs relating to physical, social or emotional development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Needs Levy Legislation for SAC</td>
<td>School districts that offer a SAC program are eligible for SAC revenue for the additional costs of providing services to children with disabilities in the SAC program. MS 124D.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>Movement of children within a program; may be arriving, departing, going outdoors, coming inside, etc. It is a component of the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit of Training</td>
<td>One unit of training is the equivalent of 10 class hours of postsecondary or approved in-service training.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION II. STAFF FUNCTIONS, QUALIFICATIONS AND INSERVICE TRAINING

A. Staff Function:
Staff members of a school-age care program must perform the following functions. The positions are given job titles for the purpose of defining levels of responsibility; each school district may use titles consistent with its own personnel practices, provided the definitions of responsibility levels are maintained.

1. **Program Coordinator** is the administrator responsible for, and must be competent in:
   a) Overall program implementation and evaluation;
   b) Compliance with child care rules;
   c) Long-range planning;
   d) Fiscal management;
   e) Personnel management;
   f) Maintenance of program records;
   g) Reporting to a governing board or school district administration; and
   h) Coordinating parent involvement and input.

2. **Program Supervisor** is primarily responsible for, and must be competent in:
   a) Planning program activities;
   b) Designing the program environment;
   c) Communicating with parents;
   d) Directing the work of staff members; and
   e) Supervising children.

3. **Program Assistant** is responsible for, and must be competent in:
   a) Assisting the program supervisor in planning the program and environment; and
   b) Independently supervising a group of children with the assistance of a program aide.

4. **Program Aide** works under the direction of a program supervisor or program assistant supervising children in carrying out program plans.

B. Staff Qualifications:

1. Recruitment and hiring of staff members must be consistent with the school district’s personnel policies.

2. All staff members must demonstrate through at least two references and through direct observation of performance during a probation period.
   a) an ability to relate well with children;
   b) dependability; and
   c) cooperation with other staff members

3. Experience. At least one-half of related experience must be in paid or unpaid employment serving school age children.

4. In addition, staff members must meet the following qualifications for each specific position:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>MINIMUM AGE</th>
<th>TRAINING</th>
<th>EXPERIENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Aide</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Current first aid certification</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Assistant</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6 units of relevant training in areas such as:</td>
<td>1040 hrs. or AA degree, voc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- child development</td>
<td>certification &amp; 500 hrs.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- child guidance</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- cultural dynamics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- communications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- recreational programming</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- current first aid certification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- current CPR Certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Supervisor</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>All of the above plus:</td>
<td>2080 hrs. or BA/BS &amp; 1040 hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 additional units of relevant training in the above areas for a total of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12 units</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Coordinator</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>All of the above plus:</td>
<td>2080 hrs. or BA/BS &amp; 1040 hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 additional units of management training, or documented competency in</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>the following areas:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- staff development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- program evaluation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- personnel management</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- relevant statutes, rules and policies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- fiscal management</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- cultural dynamics</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

5. Meeting Staff Qualifications

a) Minimum entry level requirements:
   1) All staff members must meet the minimum age requirements at the time they are hired.
   2) All staff members must submit documentation of current first aid training within 90 days of beginning date of employment. Within the first 6 months, all supervisory staff has completed CPR training; updated annually.
   3) All program supervisors and program coordinators must have had at least 500 hours of relevant experience at the time of hire.
   4) Before supervising children alone, even for a short time, new program supervisors, assistants, and aides must complete the program’s orientation training. Orientation shall provide training in the program’s philosophy and goals, personnel policies, procedures for illness and emergencies, reporting requirements in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect, and other program procedures.
   5) All staff have a background study before being hired as required by MN Statutes section 245A.04, subd.3

b) Grace period for meeting staff qualification requirements:
With the exception of the minimum entry level requirements above, if fully qualified staff are not available to fill all positions, the school district will have two years from the date of hire for staff members to complete the training and experience requirements other than the minimum entry level requirements above.

c) Inservice training requirements:

Inservice training will be aimed at developing and enhancing such competencies as guidance and discipline techniques, communication skills, team building skills, activity planning, environmental design, family studies, child development, child health and safety, cultural dynamics, child abuse and neglect prevention, recreational skills, etc.

1) Postsecondary coursework, seminars, conferences, workshops, and documented observation of other programs shall constitute inservice training. Staff meetings held for administrative purposes, program planning, or dealing with specific discipline problems do not qualify as in-service training.

2) Each staff member must annually complete a number of hours of inservice training equal to at least 2% of the hours for which the staff member is paid annually.

3) Fifty percent of the inservice hours must be received from a source other than the regular staff of the program in which the staff member is employed.

4) Documentation including date, place, topic, and presenter will be signed and approved by the program coordinator and the presenter and kept in the employee’s personnel file.

Rationale for Staff Qualification, Grace Period and Training:

The single most significant determinant of quality in a school-age care program is the staff. The effectiveness of staff is largely influenced by the maturity, creativity, relevant training, and experience level of the people on staff. The requirements ensure that the staff will have rudimentary training in the areas of competence required for each position, will be of a minimum age to assume the responsibility required of the positions, and will have enough experience to be familiar with the requirements of the positions.

The reason no allowance is made for the minimal age and first aid training requirements is that the maturity level of the staff and their ability to handle and prevent accidents and emergencies is directly related to the basic safety of the children in the program. The level of responsibility of the program coordinator and the program supervisor require that they be somewhat experienced in working with children in this age group and have some first-hand knowledge of programming for the age group.

There may be programs in operation where some staff members do not meet all of the training and experience requirements. A two-year grace period is a reasonable time during which all staff should be able to complete the requirements through the program’s inservice training plan. The allowance for programs to provide the training within two years from the date of hire is included so those programs will not be prevented from operating in areas where they may not be currently qualified staff. By requiring that the training be completed within two years, the district is responsible for attending to the training needs of staff.
SECTION III. STAFF DISTRIBUTION AND RATIOS, SUBSTITUTES AND VOLUNTEERS

A. Staff Distribution (Minimum)

1. The first staff member needed to meet the required staff to child ratio as stated below must be qualified as a program supervisor; the second staff member shall be qualified as a program aide; the third staff member shall be qualified as a program assistant; the fourth staff member shall be qualified as an aide; the fifth staff member shall be qualified as a program supervisor; this pattern must be repeated as enrollment increases.

2. A staff member who is at least program assistant qualified must be on site at all times children are in attendance.

3. A staff member with current first aid and CPR certification must be on site at all times; including field trips, when children are in attendance.

B. Ratios (Staff to Child)

1. Only qualified staff persons working directly with the children shall be counted in the staff-to-child ratios.

2. The minimum ratios of staff to children shall be:

   Kindergarten  1:12
   Grades 1-6    1:15
   Mixed groups K-6 1:12

3. For kindergarten children a maximum group size shall be no more than 24.

4. For children in grades 1 to 6 a maximum group size shall be no more than 30.

   **TYPICAL SCHOOL -AGE CARE/PRACTICES**

   | ACTIVITIES: | A variety of diverse choices, optional activities: active and passive, loud and quiet, individual and group. |
   | SETTINGS:   | Settings, rooms, and spaces used may change often; in new settings (e.g., on field trips) and in the regular setting allowances are made for more freedom of movement from one area to another. |
   | CONFIGURATIONS: | Children are in a variety of fluid mixed-age groups, usually based on children’s choices of activities. |
   | PROGRAM OBJECTIVES: | Strong emphasis on individual choice of activities based on children’s own interests. |
   | DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS: | Staff need time to give individual choice of activities based on children’s own interests. |
   | PARENT INTERACTION: | Daily, informal interaction with parents. |
C. Substitute Staff

1. Substitute staff are used when regular staff are not available.

2. Short-term substitutes are used for 10 consecutive working days or less than 10% of scheduled working days per year. Existing staff may move up one position to fill in for each absent staff.

3. Long-term substitutes are used for more than 10 consecutive working days or more than 10% of scheduled working days per year. A person designated as a long-term substitute must meet the qualifications of the staff person being replaced.

D. Volunteers

A volunteer may be included in the staff-to-child ratio if they meet the requirements for the assigned staff position as specified in staff qualifications.

Rationale for Recommended Ratios and Staff Distribution:

The ratios recommended for school-age care programs are necessary due to the nature of activities involved and the developmental needs of children who are in a group setting for extended periods of time. The above chart describes typical SAC program practices.
SECTION IV. FACILITIES

A. School Buildings:

Buildings in current use as district owned facilities shall be considered appropriate for use by school-age care programs caring for children of the same age as those who use the facility during regular school hours.

B. Other Buildings:

Programs conducted off school district grounds in public or private buildings (i.e. community centers, recreation centers, churches, non-used school buildings, etc.) may not operate until:

1. It has been ascertained that such use conforms to local codes and ordinances, and until the premises have passed inspection by:
   a) Fire Marshall. The premises shall have been inspected by the fire marshall holding local jurisdiction and any changes required by the fire marshall have been completed before children may occupy the premises. A floor plan of the area used by the program must be on file with the local fire department.
   b) Building Official. Local building authorities having jurisdiction over the premises shall be satisfied with building code compliance and documentation kept on file. Any required changes shall be made before the program may occupy the space.

2. Enforcement. The district superintendent of schools is responsible for seeing that the above inspections are carried out and that any needed modifications to program facilities are made. Documents verifying these inspections and any changes or reconstruction carried out pursuant to official’s requirements shall be available for inspection by any citizen in the superintendent’s office. If any person has reasonable cause to believe that a potential hazard exists, he or she may request that the superintendent order a reinspection.

C. Indoor Space

Programs shall provide a minimum of 35 square feet of usable space per child. Indoor active play space must be available to children daily.

1. Primary space is space used exclusively by the school-age care program during hours the center is in operation. Such space may be used by others at other hours of the day. Indoor active play space must be available to children daily.

2. Auxiliary space is space that may be used cooperatively with other groups during hours the school-age care program is in operation, e.g. gymnasium, lunch room, media center, playground, etc. Auxiliary space may not be counted for more than one-half of the total space requirement.
D. Outdoor Space:

1. Unless the program operates for less than three hours per day, the facility must have an outdoor activity space of at least 75 square feet per child. The area must be equipped with adequate large muscle playground equipment for the group size.

2. If there are hazards such as highways, railroad tracks, a body of water, or old wells nearby, the outdoor play area must be safe and well supervised and may require extra precautionary measures.

E. Storage, Toilet, Water, Phone:

1. Space for storage of equipment and children’s personal belongings must be available.

2. There should be access to an appropriate number of toilets, sinks, and drinking water.

3. A telephone which does not require coins to operate must be within or immediately accessible to the program’s primary space and accessible to staff at all times. Program staff must be available to parents by phone during hours of program operation. Phone numbers for emergency services as may be locally appropriate must be posted near the telephone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Space Requirements At A Glance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indoor Space</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*minimum of 35 square feet per child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*auxiliary space can represent up to 1/2 space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*storage space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*access to water, toilets, phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*space for indoor active play</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rational for Facilities:

Many children spend as much time in SAC programs as they spend in a classroom during the year. It is critical that space is thoughtfully planned and developmentally appropriate for the children served. Children need to feel comfortable and have reliable space that they can call their own. It needs to be safe and free of hazards.
SECTION V. PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM

A. Goals:

The program must have written goals which provide a balance to the academic emphasis of the regular school day. School-age care programs should pay primary attention to the development of social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and recreational skills. Curriculum for school age children must be based on the following developmental goals.

1. **Personal Discipline.** Acquiring capacity for industry, production, and completion of tasks. Developing responsibility for one’s own actions, setting limits, respecting rights and property of others, forming friendships, and using community resources responsibly.

2. **Social Development and Psychological Health.** Forming friendships, mastering a variety of human interactions such as comparing self with peers and being an interactor in social situations, not just an observer.

3. **Physical Skills.** Developing a sense of confidence in dealing with the physical environment through games, hobbies and exercise; learning to be content with personal abilities through competition.

4. **Health and Safety Skills.** Developing a wide variety of independent living skills such as self-protection, violence prevention and safety, nutrition, and respect for developing a healthy lifestyle.

B. Program Content:

Curriculum and environment offered the school age child must meet the widest possible range of personal and cultural interests and development levels. Personal choice and self-initiated learning experiences are to be encouraged and supported in all curriculum planning. The program should offer, but not necessarily be limited to, the following list of recommended activities, activity centers and projects:

1. Creative construction
2. Group and individual reading of literature and writing
3. Building and miniature imaginative play
4. Fine arts
5. Individual hideaway
6. Puzzle and table games
7. Science, math and exploration
8. Dramatic play
9. Health, safety, and care of self
10. Active outdoor and indoor activities
11. Clubs, scouting, group sports, lessons, special activities, service to others
12. Field trips, walks and park activities
A school-age care program must provide for cooperation with the K-12 system and other public and nonprofit entities in the planning of activities.

Activities and program materials should reflect heterogeneous racial, gender, and cultural attributes.

C. Plan.

The program must have a written curriculum plan for the year which reflects recommended goals and objectives for the program. Written daily, weekly, and monthly schedules of activities for the various components of the program (before and after school, kindergarten, vacation day) must be posted and available to parents.

D. Rest.

1. Kindergartners must have a daily rest time of at least 30 minutes, on a comfortable cot or mat.

2. Programs must develop a policy for a quiet time that is consistent with the developmental level of older children enrolled in the program on full days.

E. Outdoor Activities.

Daily outdoor activities should be a part of each child’s schedule. If the outdoor play area is not immediately adjacent to the program facility, children must be supervised in transition to the outdoor area.

Program Curriculum Examples. Program curriculum examples are in the Addendum.

Rationale for Program and Curriculum Development:

School age children spend a large part of their day in a structured academic setting. The program needs to offer a variety of self-directed learning activities that allow children to develop a sense of competence in controlling their environment and leisure time.

In order to meet the wide variety of developmental levels that exist in these programs, a wide variety of choices need to be made available. Children need a balanced day, with opportunities for rigorous physical activity, outdoor time, quiet time, time with friends, time to be alone, time to reflect and time to discuss, debate, problem solve and explore. Staff may need to plan a day that has a wide variety of activities from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. and that has new challenges and opportunities to explore weekly, monthly and annually.
SECTION VI. HEALTH AND SAFETY

A. Policies.

The program shall have written health and safety policies covering child and/or exclusion of sick children, procedures in illness and emergency, control of infectious diseases and reporting procedures for cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. These policies must be given in written form to staff and parents and must be available to members of the public.

B. Environmental Cleanliness and Safety.

A safe environment free of hazards must be maintained.

1. Items such as sharp objects, medicines, plastic bags, cleaning supplies, poisonous plants and chemicals shall be stored out of reach of children.

2. Tables, chairs and other furniture shall be appropriate to the age and size of the children who use them.

3. Equipment and furniture must be without sharp corners, splinters, or paint containing lead more than one-half percent by weight of the total solids in the paint.

4. Areas used by children must be free from debris, loose or peeling paint or wallpaper, crumbling plaster, holes in walls, floors, or ceilings, or litter. Rugs must have nonskid backing or be firmly attached to the floor and be free from wrinkles, tears, or edges that interfere with walking.

5. The program facility must be cleaned daily, including disinfection of toilets and table tops.

6. A minimum temperature of 68°F Fahrenheit must be maintained in indoor space used by children.

7. Each program shall be designated a non-smoking area under Minnesota Statutes, section 144.414 to 144.417 and part 4620.0400.

C. Health Statement.

Upon initial admission of each child, the parent must provide a (current) health statement or a photocopy of one signed by the child’s physician. The program may require that a child have a new physical examination at any time. The health statement must be kept on site accessible to authorized personnel at any time.
D. Sick Children.

The program shall follow existing local school district policies in regard to the definition of excludable illness, care of sick children, and notification to parents.

E. Medication.

1. Medication will be administered in accordance with district policy and only with written permission of a parent.

2. All medicine
   • must be kept in its original container
   • must have a legible label containing the child’s name and written instructions for use from a licensed physician
   • must be kept in a place inaccessible to children
   • must be recorded in a log each time it is administered

3. Parents should give the first dose of any medication so that they may personally observe the child’s reaction.

F. First Aid and CPR

1. A standard Red Cross first aid kit and directions for its use must be available within the center and taken on all activities outside the center.

2. All staff will take first aid training and have it updated every three years.

3. At least one staff person with every group of children will maintain a current CPR certificate. It is recommended that all program supervisors and assistants as well as the coordinator maintain CPR certification.

   • CPR training will be updated annually.

G. Emergency Procedures

The safety and security of children are protected. Systems are in place to protect children from harm.

1. All programs must have written policies and procedures for action in case of fire, civil defense, severe weather, missing children and other emergencies.

2. All staff must have training and annual review of that training for behavior in an emergency.

3. Programs must conduct emergency practice with children according to school district policy.
4. Programs must review policies and procedures annually with a health care or public safety consultant.

H. Supervision and Guidance Procedure

1. Staff have written procedures to ensure that children are supervised at all times.

2. Staff use Positive techniques to guide the behavior of children and youth:
   - give positive attention, appreciation
   - set appropriate limits
   - use no harsh discipline methods
   - help children learn problem solving and conflict resolution skills

Rationale For Health and Safety Policies:

It is critical that policies and procedures are established to ensure the safety of children. Most of the program hours occur when other school building personnel are gone and when there is no access to a school office or to health records. This section is also reasonable in that several of the children could be bussed to the program from other school locations, meaning their health records would not necessarily be at the particular program location.

It is important that the program have written emergency procedures, because many activities occur off school grounds, and because substitute and volunteer staff need to have access to such procedures at all times. It is critical that staff have current emergency safety training to effectively respond to children’s emergencies.

Health and safety issues are ever changing. It is important that programs review their policies, procedures and practice annually to ensure that staff are aware of emerging issues of child safety and safe practice. School districts and public health agencies are continually reviewing child safety and can be a good resource for updated practice.

It is important that staff are continuing to develop effective guidance and supervision skills that promote the development of healthy, happy and responsible citizens.
SECTION VII. NUTRITION

A. The program will provide or ensure the availability of adequate and nutritious meals and snacks appropriate to the ages and needs of the children.

1. Menus. Programs need to serve food and drinks that meet the needs of children and youth.
   - Menus must follow the requirements of the school district and they must comply with the nutritional requirements of the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 7, part 210, 220 and 226).
   - School district food service personnel must review the program’s menus and food preparation practices at least annually.
   - Menus must be planned on a monthly basis and posted in a conspicuous place where they can be reviewed by parents.

2. Food Preparation and Sanitation. Procedures for preparing, handling, and serving food, and washing food, utensils, and equipment must comply with the school district’s food service policies.
   - Both staff and children must wash hands before and after food service.
   - All program personnel involved during food preparation or services must be trained in sanitary procedures.

3. Meals and Snacks. Nutritious meals and snack are made available at appropriate times for children.
   - The amount and type of food is appropriate for age and size of children.
   - Programs may make breakfast available.
   - Programs must make lunch available and provide an afternoon snack.
   - Staff members must be seated with children during meal times.

4. Special Dietary Needs. The program must provide for a child’s special dietary needs as prescribed by the child’s source of medical care or require the parent to provide the prescribed diet items that are not part of the program’s menu plan.

5. Food Allergies. A list of the allergies suffered by children in attendance in the program must be in possession of food service personnel, and all program personnel must be informed of these allergies.

B. Water Supply. Safe drinking water will be available throughout hours of program operation through a drinking fountain or single service cups.

1. A center that uses water from a source other than a municipal water supply or an approved commercial supplier must have its water source tested annually by a Minnesota Department of Health certified laboratory for coliform bacteria and/or nitrate nitrogen levels.
2. Any results indicating unsafe coliform bacteria and/or nitrate nitrogen levels must be sent to the public health officer with jurisdiction who may require re-testing and corrective measures.

Rationale for Nutrition:

Many children receive a third to two thirds of their daily nutrition in SAC programs. It is important that food served is nutritious, prepared and served in a sanitary manner and helps children develop healthy life styles. Parents need to be informed of what children are eating. Staff need to have systems in place to ensure that children with food allergies and cultural restrictions are protected.
SECTION VIII. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

A. Written Policies

The designated program administrator is responsible for developing written policies and procedures which are consistent with the policies of the school district and the health and safety of children in group care.

1. **General program policies and procedures and staff guidelines must include:**
   - program philosophy and goals and program mission
   - ages of children served
   - hours and days of operation
   - admission requirements and registration procedures
   - fees and policies for payments and subsidies available
   - enrollment of children with special needs and plan of consultation with special education staff to make any needed program modifications
   - plan of supervision
   - guidance and discipline, including policy for excluding children
   - plan for staff-parent communication, including procedures for parent complaints
   - system for orientation of parents to the program
   - policy for handling or excluding sick children
   - plan for reporting communicable diseases
   - plan for administering medications
   - meals and snacks provided
   - food service procedures and sanitation
   - policy for administration of medications
   - emergency procedures
   - injury prevention and risk management
   - policy for recording and reporting accidents
   - child protection procedures including release of children to authorized individuals, reporting of child abuse, release of child to intoxicated parent
   - policy regarding staff contact with children enrolled in the program outside working hours
   - handling missing persons
   - transportation arrangements and policies
   - field trips and permission procedures
   - data privacy provisions
   - procedures to parental input regarding program design and direction for consideration by program administrators
   - procedures for using volunteers
   - policy statements must be given to all parents and staff and must be available to other persons upon request.
   - policies allowing parents to visit any time
   - annual training requirements for first aid and CPR
   - playground safety check
2. **Written Family Policies and information for each family must include:**
   - mission of program
   - program hours, days, holidays, days closed
   - enrollment policies and cost
   - availability of subsidies
   - program’s commitment to include children with special needs
   - activities provided
   - program’s philosophy of child guidance, discipline
   - invitation to visit any time
   - orientation to program for families
   - opportunities for family/staff communication
   - ways for families to have input into program policies

**Health and Safety Policies**
- administration of medications policy
- sick child policy
- accident policy
- emergency policies
- food served and nutrition policies
- policy for checking children into program and releasing them
- field trip and transportation safety policies
- emergency closing

3. **Personnel Policies.** The program must have written policies and procedures covering:
   - equal opportunity employment
   - job descriptions, staff qualifications, benefits, probation, grievance procedures, performance evaluation, resignation and termination
   - staff orientation and in-service training
   - documentation of first aid and CPR training
   - substitute staffing procedures
   - use of volunteers
   - background study

4. **All records must be kept in accordance with the data privacy provisions of Minnesota Statutes, Section 13.32, subdivisions 2 and 3.**
   a) **Staff records must include:**
      - identification-name, address, hire date, phone number
      - terms of employment
      - physical health report
      - documentation of education and experience
      - records of in-service training
      - documentation of completion and updating of first aid and CPR
      - performance evaluation
      - daily attendance records
b) **Records on children must include:**
- registration information
- name(s), addresses, and phone number(s) of parent(s) or those legally responsible for the child
- three persons who can be contacted in case of illness or emergency
- list of persons authorized to pick up child from center and list of persons not authorized to do so
- phone numbers of child’s health care providers
- signed parental permission slips for field trips and for administration of medications
- information on special medical, dietary, or health needs, allergies, etc.
- health form, documentation of immunization
- documentation of parent conferences, observation of behavior, accident reports, records of any medication administered
- daily attendance records.

5. **Plan of Supervision:** A written plan is in place that outlines policies and procedures regarding the supervision of children:
The program shall have supervision policies and procedures and ensure that those policies are available in writing to parents, staff, and interested persons.
   a) Guidelines for supervision of children by age group should identify specific supervision requirements for various age groupings:
      - **Kindergarten.** Children in this age group must be under direct supervision. Independence should be encouraged by allowing children to do things for themselves but in the presence of adult staff.
      - **Primary children.** (6-9 years old) While these children should generally be under direct supervision, they may be beyond the vision or hearing of the staff for short periods of time. The staff must have a clearly-understood system for knowing the whereabouts of the children at all times, and definite rules must be communicated to the children, e.g., for moving about the building, going to the bathroom, areas off limits, etc.
      - **Intermediate children.** (9-13 years old) In this age group most children do not need constant direct supervision, but there must be a clear system for the children to let the staff know where they are at all times and the nature of their activities.

b) Children and youth are carefully supervised to maintain safety
c) Staff have systems in place for knowing where children are at all times
d) Staff have written systems for recording when children arrive and leave; parent release protection; missing child

6. **Plan for Guidance of Children and Youth:** Child guidance policies and procedures are in writing and available for parents, program staff and school district staff.

**Guidance.** The program shall have child guidance and discipline policies and procedures and ensure that those policies are available in written form to parents, staff, school district administrators, and other interested persons. Persistent behavior problems should be documented and parents and professional counselors, if appropriate, should be involved in solving the problem. Corporal punishment and emotional abuse of a child are strictly
prohibited. 121A.58 Minnesota Statutes states that: “An employee or agent of a district shall not inflict corporal punishment or cause corporal punishment to be inflicted upon a pupil to reform unacceptable conduct or as a penalty for unacceptable conduct.” Staff have a plan and training to relate to children in positive ways

- Staff have plans to respond to the individual needs, cultures, and abilities of individual children
- Staff encourage children and youth to make choices and to become more responsible
- Staff use positive techniques to guide the behavior of children
- Staff document unacceptable behavior and have written plan to address in consultation with parents and appropriate school staff
- Staff work together to meet the needs of children

**Rationale for Written Procedures, Record Keeping, Supervision and Guidance Procedures:**

Established policies and procedures facilitate consistency and promote understanding. Having written policies allow school district staff to evaluate consistency of policies. The staff needs to have easy access at all times to emergency information and authorization for medical treatment.

Certain records (e.g., attendance, and medical records) need to be available for compliance with requirements of programs, which provide parents public subsidy for childcare. Accident reports need to be kept on file and logged so the program can identify problem areas that may need attention in order to prevent future accidents. Accident reports also need to be kept in case of possible litigation against the program.

The documentation of parent conferences, student development, and behavior problems is important in helping staff understand and deal with the children. This documentation is critical in the case of severe behavior problems when a family needs to be referred for professional help or when it becomes necessary to terminate a child’s enrollment in the program.

Written guidelines are necessary to safeguard children against undue risk and physical harm. Staff need to be aware of the wide range of developmental levels between the youngest and the oldest and know a wide range of guidance techniques. Many negative behavior and “discipline problems” can be prevented by providing a positive social climate, an emotionally secure atmosphere, an appropriate routine, consistent guidelines and a challenging environment.
**SECTION IX. ADDENDUM: PROGRAM CURRICULUM EXAMPLES**

The following list of activity or interest centers encourages and supports self-initiated learning experiences for school age children. The amount of equipment must be suitable to the ages and skill levels of the children as well as total numbers of children enrolled in a given program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Interest Center</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Indoor</td>
<td>Children need to have a variety of activities that allow time to move around and “let off steam.” If a gym is not available, other space must be provided for moderately active games. Children need opportunities to build skills in inter-action with peers and adults, group dynamics, coordination, score-keeping and physical fitness.</td>
<td>Low organized game, dodgeball, leapfrog, 4-square, red rover, etc., contests, section off areas for individual activities. Resources: athletes, specialists, rope jumper. Clubs: tumbling, bowling, fooseball, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active Outdoor</td>
<td>Children need to have the opportunity to learn to enjoy a variety of leisure time activities out-of-doors. Because of the variety of resources available to different sites, each individual program needs to capitalize on its own individual resources to introduce resources to introduce children to the most accessible activities.</td>
<td>A variety of durable equipment must be available for kids to explore: balls, frisbees, skates, jump ropes, etc. Community parks, swimming pools, skating rinks, hiking trails, ball fields, and tennis courts may be other resources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building and Miniature Material for Imaginative Play</td>
<td>Children need opportunities to build and manipulate a variety of materials to create miniature environments for imaginative play. Space must be provided for uninterrupted construction that can be left for a period of time or from day-to-day.</td>
<td>Building with legos, wooden unit blocks, tinker toys and a wide variety of props or accessories to make-believe.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clubs, Organizations, and Other Resources</td>
<td>To further the growth of independence and responsibility in school age children, children should be encouraged to participate in supervised activities offered by other youth serving agencies. Children should be supervised in making a transition between one program and another.</td>
<td>Boy and Girl Scouts, 4-H, religious groups, chess club, team sports, intramural sports, music lessons, park and recreation activities, i.e., cheerleading, magic classes, bowling, drawing, sports, dance, theater groups, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative Construction</td>
<td>Children need opportunities for nondirected, creative activities that fulfill a sense of industry to be able to make something that can be taken home or used.</td>
<td>Make it, take it construction out of recyclable materials like cardboard tubes, cloth, paper, tape, wire, etc. Woodworking, needle crafts, paper crafts and cooking projects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dramatic Play, Role Playing</td>
<td>A variety of props set the stage and allow children to “try on” a variety of occupations, roles and experiences of the real world. Seven and eight-year-olds are at the peak of interest in dramatic play, make-believe and adventure.</td>
<td>Props can be made available on a routine basis or as a special event, i.e., set up a bakery after a field trip to the bakery or school kitchen. Props can identify such areas as: office, fix-it shop, travel bureau, dentist, shoe shop, hat shop, home, hospital, plumber, flower shop, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Trips</td>
<td>School age children have a particular interest in exploring the world around them and local field trips are an effective way of capitalizing upon this interest. Especially on non-school days, children should have the opportunity to go out into the broader community.</td>
<td>Nature centers, parks, zoos, local businesses, theaters, swimming, roller rinks, community centers, humane societies, libraries, science and art museums, historical sites, cultural events, health facilities are some examples.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Children need a variety of opportunities to observe and experience the performing arts.</td>
<td>Drama, puppetry, dance, music, graphic arts, easel arts, sculpting, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health, Safety and Taking Care of One’s Self</td>
<td>School age children need to learn independent living skills. They may be frequently home alone without adult supervision or adult resources.</td>
<td>Basic first aid, fire prevention, safe bike operation, how to care for bikes, how to use telephone effectively, babysitting, nutrition, personal hygiene, caring for one’s self.</td>
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<td>Individual Hideaway</td>
<td>Because children have been with a group for a major portion of their day, provision for privacy through arranging small, quiet areas that are inviting to children is essential. Children often seek time to be alone to rest, reflect, read, do homework.</td>
<td>Loft, quiet pillow corner, large boxes to create quiet space, study carrels, dividers, etc.</td>
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<td>Literature</td>
<td>A space which is comfortable and inviting to explore a variety of written material can enhance children’s interest and enjoyment of reading as a leisure activity.</td>
<td>Individual browsings, stories read by older children, taping stories, trip to libraries, flannel board stories, writing centers, listening to records, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Puzzles</td>
<td>A variety of puzzles can be auto-educative tools for trial and error construction.</td>
<td>Variety of puzzles, problem solving situations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science, Math, Social Studies and Exploration</td>
<td>Centers should be set up where children can experiment, investigate and explore on a nonthreatening, creative, problem solving basis.</td>
<td>Experiments, math and science games, small motors to take apart and investigate, plants, animals, computer and other electronics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Table Games</td>
<td>A variety of board and cognitive games help develop skills in problem solving, strategy setting, peer cooperation and competition, as well as direction following.</td>
<td>Table games, chess, checkers, board games, tournaments.</td>
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