# MPSA

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES SELF-ASSESSMENT

Michigan 21st Century Community Learning Centers
Soaring Beyond Expectations

MICHIGAN Department of Education

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## *Guidebook*

The MPSA was created for Michigan 21st Century Community Learning Centers' Project Directors

## Contents



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# Purpose

The Management Practices Self-Assessment (MPSA) is a measurement instrument created to empower Michigan 21st CCLC Project Directors to be (a) reflective and intentional about organizational practices and culture; (b) quality improvement leaders at their sites; (c) engaged with youth, families, and their communities; and (d) well-informed about state-wide requirements and guidance. ***The MPSA provides a set of items for management best practices in 21st CCLC administrative and program settings*.** MPSA provides Project Directors with the opportunity to check-in with themselves and their team by identifying practices and policies that are well-documented and working well, or that could be updated or improved, and areas where they need additional assistance to reach their full potential.

Before completing the MPSA, consider several ways in which the measurement process and resulting data can be used:

1. **Planning for the upcoming year**. Project Directors can use this tool to document practices and procedures that are already in place, to create or update protocols and policies, to schedule trainings throughout the year, and as part of the quality improvement planning process. For new Grantee Directors, the MPSA is an important support to start-up planning with staff and school personnel. The MPSA is also a good way to request assistance from the state and technical assistance (TA) providers.
2. **Reflecting on the past progress**. When used at the beginning and at the end of the year, Project Directors can reflect on the progress they were able to make over the year and track issues that remain to be addressed. The MPSA also allows Project Directors to identify which practices or efforts were not effective and where additional TA or support would be helpful.
3. **Preserving institutional knowledge**. Project Directors can use the MPSA to document the location of written policies, procedures, and practices in a single reference document. This allows Project Directors to explain practices to staff and program partners and supports smooth transitions from one Project Director to another.

Although the primary purpose of the MPSA is to facilitate Project Director self-reflection, a second purpose is to continuously improve 21st CCLC management skills and systems. Once a year, all Project Directors will be asked to provide the results of the MPSA to MDE by uploading a completed copy to the Grant Electronic Monitoring System (GEMS). The results will be analyzed and used to guide MDE in selecting trainings, conference sessions, and other professional development opportunities throughout the ensuing year. At no time will results be used by MDE for grantee assessment.

The MPSA is made up of 4 domains, 8 scales, and 25 items of management best practices in 21st CCLC program settings and should take no longer than 2 hours to complete. The MPSA requires the user to list the best practice; answer questions about implementation and the need for technical assistance; and provide evidence, documentation, and notes. For more detailed instruction, see the MPSA Protocol.

# Protocol

Project Directors should complete the MPSA and upload a copy to GEMS by the end of August. Once submitted, the results will be analyzed and used by MDE Consultants and Grantee Project Directors to design professional development resources and offer specific technical assistance.

**Before starting the MPSA:**

Have access to policy manuals, staff/parent/student handbooks, program and grantee calendars, the grant application and MOU, job descriptions, staff evaluations, and other official documentation or shared folders.

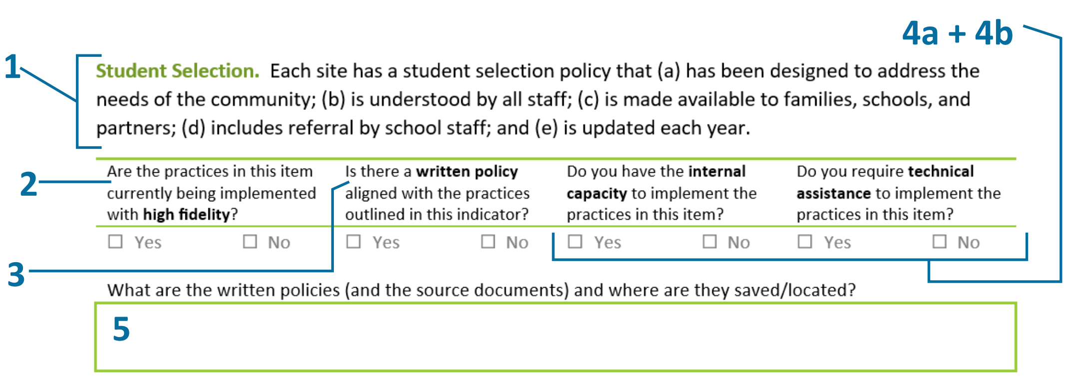
Set aside approximately two and a half hours to go through the tool. We suggest going through the whole tool in one sitting. However, if that is not possible, we suggest completing one domain at a time.

The MPSA can be completed by the Project Director or the leadership team as a group.

**Once you are ready to begin the tool, approach each item by following the listed steps:**

1. Read through the item, and identify each aspect of best practice described.
2. Think about the implementation of the practices described in the item.
    - Do the practices at your site(s) align with the item?
3. Next, locate existing descriptions of the item/practice in your existing documents and guidance (e.g., Policy Handbook, shared drive, shared calendar).
    - Are the practices defined by the item documented accurately?
    - Are parts of the item located in different sources?
    - If someone new stepped into my role, could they execute the item with success based on what is written down?
4. *If documentation and actual practice align with the item, skip to step 5.* If the item, actual practice, and policy <u>do not all</u> align, determine if (a) technical assistance is required, or (b) the leadership team has the internal capacity to successfully align policy and practice to the item.
5. Finally, briefly explain what this item looks like, in practice, at your sites and where the associated written policies and procedures are located.

Below is a diagram of the tool that aligns the steps listed here with the different questions asked.



**After you have completed the self-assessment:**

1. Set goals for improvement.
    a. Determine which items you want to focus on, and set action steps for improving practice or updating policy.
    b. Set a time to revisit the MPSA to document improvement and keep track of your progress over time.
2. Reach out to MDE if your team would like to receive support and resources.
3. Upload a copy of the MPSA to GEMS (by the end of August).

## MPSA Items

### ACCESS

**Targeting Services**

**Student Selection**. Each site has a student selection policy that (a) has been designed to address the needs of the community; (b) is understood by all staff; (c) is made available to families, schools, and partners; (d) includes referral by school staff; and (e) is updated each year.

**Skill (Needs) Assessment**. Site Coordinators are supplied with some type of baseline information, for each student at the site, about academic and socio-emotional learning (SEL) skills (e.g., teacher or parent verbal or written comments, SEL skills pre-test, prior year's grades and achievement data).

**Special Needs**. Each site is prepared and has staff who are adequately trained to serve special populations (including but not limited to students who are English language learners, have special needs, are migrants, or are homeless).

**Family and Community Engagement**

**Encourage Attendance**. Each site as an attendance policy that encourages regular participation during each semester and includes follow-up with families and enrolled students who do not attend consistently.

**Family Communication**. Each site has a set of communication strategies for engaging with families, including family members with limited English proficiency, and all staff understand the strategies.

**Advisory Committee**. The Grantee Advisory Committee has diverse membership and strives to represent all stakeholders (e.g., parents, community members, school leadership/teachers, volunteers, and social services agencies/organizations), including at least one family member of students from each site who participates in at least one biannual meeting regarding program planning, implementation, and evaluation.

### PROGRAM MODEL

**Valid Model for Skill Building and Skill Transfer**

Philosophy. All Site Coordinators understand the Michigan 21st CCLC's developmentally-focused approach to afterschool curricula (i.e., SEL, enrichment, academics), are familiar with the goals proposed in their grant, understand the daily goals of their programming, can explain how those goals relate to students' SEL and academic skill growth during the program, and can explain how those skills transfer to the school day.

Curriculum. The curriculum is developmentally appropriate; offers SEL, enrichment, and academic content aligned to school-day objectives; and directly relates to the performance goals at each site.

Responsiveness. The Project Director is actively involved at the site, and both site staff and youth are comfortable and familiar with the Project Director. There are, at all times, enough properly trained staff to meet the targeted student-staff ratio, and the staff feel they are able to provide responsive practices (i.e., scaffolding, coaching, facilitating, and modeling). The curriculum is flexible enough to meet the daily needs of the students.

### School Connection

School Advocacy. The Project Director regularly checks in and supports the Site Coordinator's efforts to connect with the school about students and connect afterschool families to school-day staff and opportunities.

School Communication. The Project Director assures communication each day between school-day staff and Site Coordinators so that afterschool staff can support the students (e.g., if someone had a particularly hard day at school, if they are sick, or if there is something going on at home).

School Recognition. The Project Director creates opportunities for the Site Coordinator to build relationships with school leaders to ensure that school leaders understand the value of 21st CCLC programs and that they work as a team to meet the needs of young people. Each site has an approach to daily routines and expectations that reinforces and honors school-day routines and expectations.

## TALENT

### Recruit, Hire, Onboard

Pipelines. The Project Director has talking points for professional advancement and career benefits that follow from employment in the Federal 21st CCLC program and works with local school districts, colleges/universities, and youth organizations to build staffing pipelines and recruit new staff.

Hiring. Job descriptions and hiring protocols are written and reviewed each year, and youth voice is represented in the hiring process.

Onboarding. Each site has an onboarding training for all staff and vendors. All Site Coordinators and staff have appropriate credentials and have been properly trained to successfully address the needs of the students.

### Professional Learning

Mentor-Coaching. The Project Director provides support and training to create a culture where staff are comfortable in their role and confident in their ability to provide high-quality services to children and families. The Project Director uses a mentor/coach approach with new Site Coordinators.

Training. The Project Director understands program staff's skills and career aspirations from observations and staff feedback; provides relevant training and learning opportunities; and encourages staff attendance at local, state, and national conferences.

Recognition. The Project Director identifies Site Coordinators, and other staff who are expert practitioners, to receive professional recognition and lead internal trainings.

Monitoring. The Project Director regularly checks in with Site Coordinators by visiting and observing sites. Each site has its own written policy and calendar for monitoring that Site Coordinators use during routine observations and check-ins with staff, volunteers, and vendors.

## EVALUATION AND FISCAL

### Evaluation

Calendar and protocols. The Project Director assures that Site Coordinators have a calendar and protocols for all federal, state, and local data collection requirements.

Local Evaluation and Improvement. The Project Director helps site staff understand and use program data, including locally generated feedback from students and families. The Project Director supports and guides sites in their goal-setting and improvement process. Youth, volunteers, parents, and community partners are invited to participate in the evaluation and improvement process.

### Fiscal

Expend Funds. The Project Director has a clear understanding of how to appropriately expend funds, assuring that the use of funds “supplements rather than supplants” other funding sources.

Documentation. The Project Director assures that the policy for documentation of program spending and program contributions is understood by each Site Coordinator.

Sustainability. The Project Director cultivates sustainable funding sources and partnerships.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

*When should I conduct my MPSA – and how often?*
The MPSA should be completed by the end of August to meet the annual GEMS submission deadline, but revisiting the MPSA throughout the year is encouraged. After the MPSA has been uploaded to GEMS, Project Directors can use the results to plan and set goals for the upcoming year. If the Project Director would like to check progress or use the MPSA as a reflection tool, then completing it more than once is an appropriate decision.

*Will I have to submit the MPSA each time I use it after the August GEMS deadline?*
No. Project Directors will be required to submit the MPSA only once a year with the GEMS upload. Any additional use of the MPSA will not require a submission.

*Is the MPSA designed for both new and experienced Project Directors?*
Yes, the MPSA was designed to be useful to all Project Directors – regardless of experience – and the MPSA may be used differently by different Project Directors, depending on their experience. For new Project Directors, the MPSA can help Project Director familiarize themselves with the policies and staff practices already in place. If the Project Director is working with new site(s), they can use the MPSA as a planning tool for training and system building leading up to the start of the school year. For experienced Project Directors, the MPSA can be used to update and re-examine existing policies and practices.

*How long will it take me to complete the MPSA?*
Experience from the MPSA pilot suggests that it will take anywhere from 1-2.5 hours to complete. The range of time required to complete the tool is dependent on the Project Director's familiarity with site and grantee policies and procedures as well as the amount of detail provided in the responses. We suggest setting aside a 2.5 hour block to work through the entire assessment, without interruption.

*What if we have a policy that relates to one of the items but is not being implemented as it is written?*
If a practice is written policy but not being implemented, the Project Director should review with their team the policy as it is written and consider potential revisions. If the Project Director and their team do not currently have the capacity to implement the written policy, they should discuss and document the resources necessary to successfully implement the policy.

*What if the item describes practices we implement successfully, but these practices are not documented in a Policy Manual, Handbook, or other source?*
Time to preserve that institutional knowledge! Formalize successful practices by creating written procedures for how and when to implement them. Remember, Policy Manuals and Staff Handbooks are not the only places things get written down. A range of different sources can be used for documentation (e.g., curriculum activity plans, calendars, shared drives) as long as they are saved and accessible to staff.

*If we need technical assistance in order to implement an item and/or update our policies to reflect it, what do I do and who do I reach out to?*
Connect with MDE and they will be able to provide guidance and TA. They may have resources to quickly help enact change, or they may suggest speaking with a consultant or other Project Director to help think about the next steps.

*What happens after I complete the MPSA?*

Project Directors will be required to submit a copy of the MPSA with the annual GEMS upload, once a year between May and August. But, more importantly, the Project Director should prioritize areas for improvement and set goals for their practice going forward. Perhaps there is a particular area that requires substantial effort and concentration, so the team will focus efforts there. Or, perhaps there are a few small tweaks that can be made simultaneously. Either way, Project Directors should use the results of the MPSA to organize and prioritize their own improvement plans.

*What happens after my results are uploaded to GEMS?*

MDE will use the compiled results to guide the design and offering of professional development throughout the year.  MPSA results will also guide coaching and TA conversations between consultants and individual Project Directors and their staff.

## Best Practice Examples

This section provides examples from experienced Project Directors for each MPSA item. These examples were drawn from interviews, and each example represents a single description from a single Project Director. Each example includes (a) a Project Director's description of the policy and/or practice from their Grantee that exemplifies the MPSA item and (b) the location where that policy and/or practice is written down or otherwise recorded for others to see (see italicized portion of each example).

### ACCESS

Targeting Services

Student Selection. Each site has a student selection policy that (a) has been designed to address the needs of the community; (b) is understood by all staff; (c) is made available to families, schools, and partners; (d) includes referral by school staff; and (e) is updated each year.

Program admission is based on specific criteria (e.g., student grades and academic performance) agreed upon when the 21st CCLC grant proposal was written. The Project Director makes it clear to parents, afterschool staff, and school administrators that 21st CCLC program staff do not have the ability to "let students into the program." Instead, it is the school's responsibility to provide the afterschool program with enough youth who can be admitted into the program. *The written policy on program admission is shared with all co-applicants (e.g., building principal, resource-room teacher) and is in the organization's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the Policies and Procedures Manual.*

The Grantee selection process focuses on reading scores. With the school's partnership, the afterschool program identifies students who are currently testing below their grade level in reading. Program employees reach out to students using an identifier letter and give preference to those students during preregistration. If there are additional open spots, and the program has the capacity to serve more students, they will open registration to students who did not meet the specific admission criteria. This selection process allows the Grantee to focus on the needs of the school (math scores at some sites, STEM activities at others, and literacy overall). This policy is in the Parent Handbook (which is given to each parent) and is explained to parents during the application process for their child. *This policy is also reviewed with each Site Coordinator at the beginning of the semester and during check-ins twice each month.*

Skill (Needs) Assessment. Site Coordinators are supplied with some type of baseline information, for each student at the site, about academic and socio-emotional learning (SEL) skills (e.g., teacher or parent verbal or written comments, SEL skills pre-test, prior year's grades and achievement data).

The Local Evaluator provides a report describing each student's previous academic performance (e.g., GPAs), disciplinary referrals (e.g., suspensions), and achievement test scores (e.g., NWEA math/reading). The Local Evaluator keeps a record of all students and parents who are enrolled in programming and tracks them over time. These reports and records help staff reach more vulnerable students because, for example, the "first come first serve [policy] doesn't always produce equity." *Reports and assessment procedures are stored in a shared folder.*

The DESSA is completed by a school-day teacher for each student (K-12), and this provides afterschool site staff with an understanding of the socio-emotional skills each student brings to the program. The Local Evaluator sends reports to, and connects with, Site Coordinators four times per year (twice in person, twice over email) to review DESSA results and any other data collected for that site. *The expectations and timelines for the Local Evaluator's reports and the technical assistance touch-points are explained in the Local Evaluator and Data sections of the Grantee's Policies and Procedures Manual.*

Special Needs. Each site is prepared and has staff who are adequately trained to serve special populations (including but not limited to students who are English language learners, have special needs, are migrants, or are homeless).

Project Directors employ school-day teachers or other support staff who are qualified and trained to work with special populations. Direct staff are trained to use response to intervention (RTI) strategies, work in small groups, do 20-Minute homework, and other practices. The Site Coordinator and the Project Director work with program staff who are not similarly trained, for support. *The role qualifications are described in job descriptions for site staff.*

Project Directors work with site staff to identify gaps in staff knowledge about supporting special populations and provide support for training and resources. *This process is outlined in the Professional Development section of the Grantee's Policies and Procedures Manual.*

## Family and Community Engagement

Encourage Attendance. Each site as an attendance policy that encourages regular participation during each semester and includes follow-up with families and enrolled students who do not attend consistently.

The Project Director audits weekly students' site attendance. When a student enrolls, their parent (or guardian) signs the program's written attendance policy. The attendance policy requires students to attend a specific number of days a week or month. If students miss more than the specific number of days, site staff contact the parent or guardian to understand the barriers that may be preventing the student from attending the program. If, after speaking with the student's family, the site staff determines that the student will not be able to regularly attend the program, staff will remove the student's name from the roster and offer the slot to another student. *The processes for tracking attendance, following-up with families, and removing or adding students are described in the Student Attendance section of the Staff Handbook.*

Family Communication. Each site has a set of communication strategies for engaging with families, including family members with limited English proficiency, and all staff understand the strategies.

Sites send monthly newsletters, with upcoming events, in English as well as the other languages spoken by the family members being served by the program. Sites also have access to, and utilize, the school's social media accounts and robo-call systems. *Family communication strategies are on the Site Coordinator's onboarding checklist (completed in August), in the Grantee's Policies and Procedures Handbook under Branding and Approval, and entered into GEMS.*

Advisory Committee. The Grantee Advisory Committee has diverse membership and strives to represent all stakeholders (e.g., parents, community members, school leadership/teachers, volunteers, and social services agencies/organizations), including at least one family member of students from each site who participates in at least one biannual meeting regarding program planning, implementation, and evaluation.

The Advisory Committee is made up of a diverse interest group (as outlined in the MOU) and participates in data collection, goal creation, activity planning, and focus groups (to understand family views and needs). The creation and utilization of the Advisory Committee is described in the Grantee Policies and Procedures Handbook, which is shared with the Site Coordinators at beginning of year. *The biannual meeting schedule is entered into GEMS.*

A Grantee Advisory Committee meeting occurs quarterly and includes district administrators, building liaisons, parents, youth, and a few community stakeholders. *The Advisory Committee is described in the MOU with the School District and in a shared calendar for all participants.*

## PROGRAM MODEL

Valid Model for Skill Building and Skill Transfer

Philosophy. All Site Coordinators understand the Michigan 21st CCLC's developmentally-focused approach to afterschool curricula (i.e., SEL, enrichment, academics), are familiar with the goals proposed in their grant, understand the daily goals of their programming, can explain how those goals relate to students' SEL and academic skill growth during the program, and can explain how those skills transfer to the school day.

Sites hold monthly parent meetings where site staff distribute EZ report handouts that describe the upcoming program schedule. *This practice is described in handouts at the program kickoff-meeting.*

Site Coordinators are given information and resources on developmentally-appropriate practices at every staff meeting, and these professional development experiences are often discussed explicitly in terms of the program philosophy. Site Coordinators then observe program sessions and discuss the relation of programming to the Grantee's big picture goals and philosophy. *Documentation of this process is in the training records for Site Coordinators and in the calendar and notes for observations of staff.*

Exploration and explanation of our philosophy is a part of orientation and onboarding, "what we do and why we do it." *The Grantee has Mission and Vision statements that are in the Staff Handbook.*

Curriculum. The curriculum is developmentally appropriate; offers SEL, enrichment, and academic content aligned to school-day objectives; and directly relates to the performance goals at each site.

Sites produce a lesson plan (formatted according to MDE standards) for each activity and share it with all sites in our Grantee. The curriculum development process encourages students and Site Coordinators to assist each other on programming. Sites provide parents with program progress reports for each student that describe the curriculum activities. *The Project Director creates a shared folder on Google Drive for all Site Coordinators to store all lesson plans.*

Project Directors bring in instructional coaches (e.g., experts on the school-day curriculum). Sites also utilize online math and ELA resources so that students can work at their own skill level. *These lesson plans are saved online and as hard copies.*

Sites receive "pacing guides" from the school district. Sites employ a school-day staff person who acts as a liaison between the school day and afterschool programs. *The utilization of "pacing guides" and collaboration with school-day staff is written into the grant and reflected in job descriptions.*

Responsiveness. The Project Director is actively involved at the site, and both site staff and youth are comfortable and familiar with the Project Director. There are, at all times, enough properly trained staff to meet the targeted student-staff ratio, and the staff feel they are able to provide responsive practices (i.e., scaffolding, coaching, facilitating, and modeling). The curriculum is flexible enough to meet the daily needs of the students.

Project Directors conduct weekly site visits and complete a walk-through document that records what they observed. *There is a calendar for weekly visits, and review criteria (from the past visit) are sent to the Site Coordinator in advance.*

The Project Director uses an observation tool with the Site Coordinators that allows for evaluation and is based on PQA and MDE criteria. Site Coordinators are not notified in advance of Project Director visits but, because Site Coordinators and Project Directors are in constant communication, and because Site Coordinators know that the site visit is low stakes, it does not feel like a "gotcha moment." During the site visit, the Project Director conducts an observation and then the Site Coordinator and Project Director discuss the feedback. *This process is outlined in the Staff Handbook.*

## School Connection

School Advocacy. The Project Director regularly checks in and supports the Site Coordinator's efforts to connect with the school about students and connect afterschool families to school-day staff and opportunities.

The Project Director visits the sites and holds meetings with the Site Coordinator and Principal (or other administrator) throughout the year. The Project Director is not a strange face in the school, and school administrators are familiar with them. *The Project Director also holds one-on-one meetings with the Site Coordinator to discuss the support the Site Coordinator, or other program staff, needs from the school or the Project Director.*

School Communication. The Project Director assures communication each day between school-day staff and Site Coordinators so that afterschool staff can support the students (e.g., if someone had a particularly hard day at school, if they are sick, or if there is something going on at home).

The Site Coordinators meet the needs of students by collaborating regularly with the school-day teachers. Program staff are aware of each student's daily homework situation and help students work on it. *School-day staff use an email template to update the Site Coordinator about relevant incidents (e.g., unfinished homework, struggles with content, referrals, disputes with other students in the program).*

Afterschool staff who are in the building during the school day regularly connect with students and their teachers throughout the day and give a "progress report" to afterschool staff before the program begins each day.

School Recognition. The Project Director creates opportunities for the Site Coordinator to build relationships with school leaders to ensure that school leaders understand the value of 21st CCLC programs and that they work as a team to meet the needs of young people. Each site has an approach to daily routines and expectations that reinforces and honors school-day routines and expectations.

School administrators meet twice each month with the Project Director, Site Coordinators, and other stakeholders to discuss programming. Project Directors invite district and school administrators to attend afterschool program events (e.g., parent night, talent night).

When providing orientation for a new Site Coordinator, discuss all the important school administrators and staff they should develop relationships with and why these relationships are beneficial. *This process is explained and outlined in the Staff Handbook and orientation materials.*

## TALENT

Recruit, Hire, Onboard

Pipelines. The Project Director has talking points for professional advancement and career benefits that follow from employment in the Federal 21st CCLC program and works with local school districts, colleges/universities, and youth organizations to build staffing pipelines and recruit new staff.

Example: Project Directors and program staff present in university classrooms and career fairs to recruit staff and academic service-learning volunteers. Project Directors have marketing materials prepared and review them with their team until everyone is comfortable talking about their programs and the benefits of working for 21st CCLC programs in their community.

Hiring. Job descriptions and hiring protocols are written and reviewed each year, and youth voice is represented in the hiring process.

All jobs are documented with an accurate job description that is reviewed and approved annually by the Board of Directors. *The job descriptions are accessible to all staff in a shared folder.*

All Site Coordinators were previously front-line program staff. Site Coordinators have potential new staff hires visit the site for a day. This allows the potential hire to get a feel for youth work and not feel overwhelmed or shocked before they are an official staff member. The Site Coordinator meets with youth to discuss their thoughts about the potential staff and then debriefs with the potential hire before taking next steps. *This process is described in the Hiring section of the Policies and Procedures Manual.*

Onboarding. Each site has an onboarding training for all staff and vendors. All Site Coordinators and staff have appropriate credentials and have been properly trained to successfully address the needs of the students.

The onboarding process is tailored to the experience of the new hire. The onboarding process is more intense for someone new to youth work. Specific training (e.g., CPR) is required before staff can begin in the afterschool classroom. Additionally, job descriptions are updated regularly to reflect the required staff credentials (e.g., Spanish proficiency). *The onboarding process is outlined in the job descriptions section of the Staff Handbook and in other onboarding materials.*

The Project Director supports Site Coordinators by overviewing the onboarding process for front-line staff, usually after new staff have had a few weeks in the program so that they know what support they may need or questions they may have. Each year, there are at least two all-staff trainings for front-line staff, Site Coordinators, and the Grantee's administrative staff. The content of the all-staff meetings varies based on feedback from the Local Evaluator. *Documentation for the onboarding process is accessible in a shared folder, and onboarding overview meetings appear in a calendar.*

Project Directors provide "accelerator training" for part-time staff on topics such as positive youth development, socio-emotional learning, and best practices in instruction and assessment as reflected by the PQA. This "accelerator training" provides staff with professional development experiences, tools (with instruction on how to use them), and information about the challenges and opportunities of youth work. *Each Site Coordinator does a formal onboarding with staff that varies from site to site.*

## Professional Learning

**Mentor-Coaching.** The Project Director provides support and training to create a culture where staff are comfortable in their role and confident in their ability to provide high-quality services to children and families. The Project Director uses a mentor/coach approach with new Site Coordinators.

> The Project Director identifies expert Site Coordinators and has them mentor the "freshman group" with a more hands-on approach while the Project Director is available to provide additional guidance when necessary.
>
> The Project Director and Site Coordinator participate quarterly in a formal check in. The check-in explores systematically what is going well and where the Site Coordinator feels support is needed.
>
> Some Site Coordinators invite staff to participate in book discussion groups to guide internal professional development. These groups encourage staff to express ideas like, "What does support from me look like?". *The group leader takes notes that are shared with the Site Coordinator and stored in a shared folder (currently in paper form).*
>
> Mentor-coaching is done by the Project Director and experienced Site Coordinators. Project Directors are hands on with new staff and help partner them with experienced Site Coordinators. *This practice is not formally written but would be a useful addition to the Policies and Procedures Handbook.*

**Training.** The Project Director understands program staff's skills and career aspirations from observations and staff feedback; provides relevant training and learning opportunities; and encourages staff attendance at local, state, and national conferences.

> A new position for afterschool quality assurance (AQA) was created. The AQA "lives" in each site for a week, does everything from compliance monitoring to quality observations, and provides a written report for the Project Director. This AQA also organizes all-staff meetings, kickoffs, and special-topic trainings on a regular schedule. Based on staff strengths and weakness identified during personnel review and goal-setting meetings, the AQA develops trainings (e.g., retention, engagement, lower-stakes accountability). Site Coordinators meet with front-line staff three times each year to gather input for upcoming trainings. *Documentation includes schedules, evaluation reports, and staff personal-development goals, most of which is handled by the HR Department.*
>
> The Project Director and program staff participate in an Annual Review each year. Staff and their supervisor both complete the Annual Review tool, and then discuss the results and set goals going forward. *The Annual Review process is described in the Staff Handbook.*

**Recognition.** The Project Director identifies Site Coordinators, and other staff who are expert practitioners, to receive professional recognition and lead internal trainings.

> Professional Development is conducted mainly within the Grantee. Most Site Coordinators have been trained to be trainers (i.e., Training-of-Trainers), and they usually conduct our staff trainings. Program staff have also pushed for (and led) anti-racism workshops and explored "Dare to Lead" workshops. During staff meetings, internal experts are recognized for various things they are great at (e.g., EZ reports, family night, anti-racism), and staff are encouraged to tap their peer resources.

**Monitoring.** The Project Director regularly checks in with Site Coordinators by visiting and observing sites. Each site has its own written policy and calendar for monitoring that Site Coordinators use during routine observations and check-ins with staff, volunteers, and vendors.

The Project Director does a weekly site visit and produces feedback form based on the OST Expectations Checklist and items from the PQA. The completed feedback form is emailed to the Site Coordinators after each visit, and the Site Coordinators share it with their staff. Project Directors then schedule formal reviews and debriefs with staff in order to identify areas they would like the Project Director to focus on during observations. *This process is detailed in the Policy and Procedure Handbook.*

## EVALUATION AND FINANCE

### Evaluation

Calendar and protocols. The Project Director assures that Site Coordinators have a calendar and protocols for all federal, state, and local data collection requirements.

The Local Evaluator places relevant events and deadlines on the shared calendar, creates and distributes technical updates, and reviews and conveys all grant requirements to relevant stakeholders. *The shared calendar holds all deadlines and provides notifications to staff.*

Local Evaluation and Improvement. The Project Director helps site staff understand and use program data, including locally-generated feedback from students and families. The Project Director supports and guides sites in their goal-setting and improvement process. Youth, volunteers, parents, and community partners are invited to participate in the evaluation and improvement process.

When the Project Director gets feedback from the state (e.g., MDE), this feedback is reviewed with each Site Coordinator and shared with front-line staff. This whole-group review process challenges staff to engage with the information and interpret the meaning for each site's improvement work. The Local Evaluator also conducts site observations at least three times per year and does focus groups with students to assure student participation in the improvement processes. *These local evaluation and improvement requirements are described in the Local Evaluation Plan.*

### Finance

Expend Funds. The Project Director has a clear understanding of how to appropriately expend funds, assuring that the use of funds "supplements rather than supplants" other funding sources.

The Project Director attends all meetings organized by MDE regarding grant and compliance requirements and works closely with the Grantee's accountant to ensure funds are being accurately expensed and reported.

Documentation. The Project Director assures that the policy for documentation of program spending and program contributions is understood by each Site Coordinator.

The Grantee has a clear process of how purchase orders are submitted, approved, and recorded for all sites. The Project Director and the Site Coordinators work closely to identify and properly use grant funds for the program activities. *Documentation of expenses and site budget balances is provided in monthly financial updates from the Project Director to the Site Coordinators.*

Sustainability. The Project Director cultivates sustainable funding sources and partnerships.

The Project Director explores other grant funding opportunities and applies to additional funding sources as appropriate. Multiple partnerships with youth-serving and other community providers are all considered sustainable.