

School Age Curriculum Framework

For Programs in Delaware Stars Serving Children Ages 5-12

Curriculum Framework

Implementing a curriculum for an after school program serving children ages 5-12 will establish the learning opportunities that children have and the overall experience of families who choose the program for their children. Implementing a curriculum will set expectations for staff and provide guidance for the daily activities and interactions with children.

The after school program is an opportunity for children ages 5 to 12 to experience learning in a very different way than that of the school day. Homework support is an important component of most after school programs. However, the after school program should offer a chance for children to explore similar content in new and different ways and perhaps focus more intently on topics and themes. After school programs often have flexibility to design learning for multi-age groups and provide activities and materials not always found in the school setting.

After school programs can provide children opportunities to focus on social-emotional and character development. Program curriculum should promote personal wellness and development of life skills. Curriculum and activity plans should be designed to allow children to practice friendship skills, employ conflict resolution and develop appropriate boundaries and self-management.

The activities that children and youth experience in after school programming should seek to expand their understanding of themselves and the world around them and complement the learning from the school day. Programs serving school age children should offer a curriculum that is organized to establish goals and specific learning objectives in each content area for each age group served. Activity plans corresponding to the learning objectives should be developed to guide daily activities and routines.

The framework for curriculum should seek to offer child directed, project-based, hands-on learning opportunities; and to integrate learning across multiple content areas with a focus on overall development of life skills, social competence and character values.

Curriculum Framework Content

Programs must outline a minimum of one goal and three learning objectives for each of the following content areas:

Social, Emotional and Character Development: developing social skills and habits for social competence; developing emotional control and resiliency; developing character values of responsibility, respect, honesty, and caring.

Health and Personal Wellness: developing awareness and practicing healthy lifestyle and personal choices that promotes physical health and wellbeing

Literacy: reading for enjoyment, information gathering and critical thinking; speaking and writing for self- expression, persuasion and sharing of information.

STEM: exploring science, technology, engineering and math to complement and expand on learning from the school setting

Creative Expression: exploring visual arts, media arts, music, dance and theatre

Community and Cultural Awareness: enhancing knowledge and awareness of community, environment and the diversity of people and their pursuits, needs, and interests from the local community to the global arena; support development of citizenship and behaviors and skills in making a contribution to the world.

Activity Plans

Activity plans describe how the learning objectives will be implemented. Activity planning must take into account age appropriateness, developmental appropriateness, individual approaches to learning, and appreciation of the diversity of children experiences and interests. Individual assessments of children should be utilized to guide the scope and sequence of activity plans. Activities described in a plan should reference each content area(s) being addressed and the corresponding learning objectives. Activity plans should show integration across multiple curriculum content areas and allow for children to fully engage for extended time periods in preferred content areas.