



# The **ELO** Network

**Quality Standards of Care  
for After School Programs**

**Grand Rapids, Michigan**

## **Development of the Standards**

The ELO Standards of Quality for After School Programs were developed in 2006 through the community collaborative the Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) Network, which is working to ensure that every child in Grand Rapids has access to quality after school programs that are well coordinated and outcome-driven. These standards are reviewed annually. Parents need to know that their children's after school program is committed to excellence. Quality afterschool programs aim to expand children's opportunities to learn in a safe place and to provide life-long skill development for college, work and life.

The Standards are meant to be a common guidepost for quality programming from which any organization can build upon. They provide a framework for expectations that have been proven to be effective for youth, spanning across all types and sizes of programs. Smaller agencies that have one person performing a multitude of duties within their organization are still capable of meeting these Standards. If agencies have defined assessments of quality, they are encouraged to implement both the ELO Standards as well as any individual agency standards.

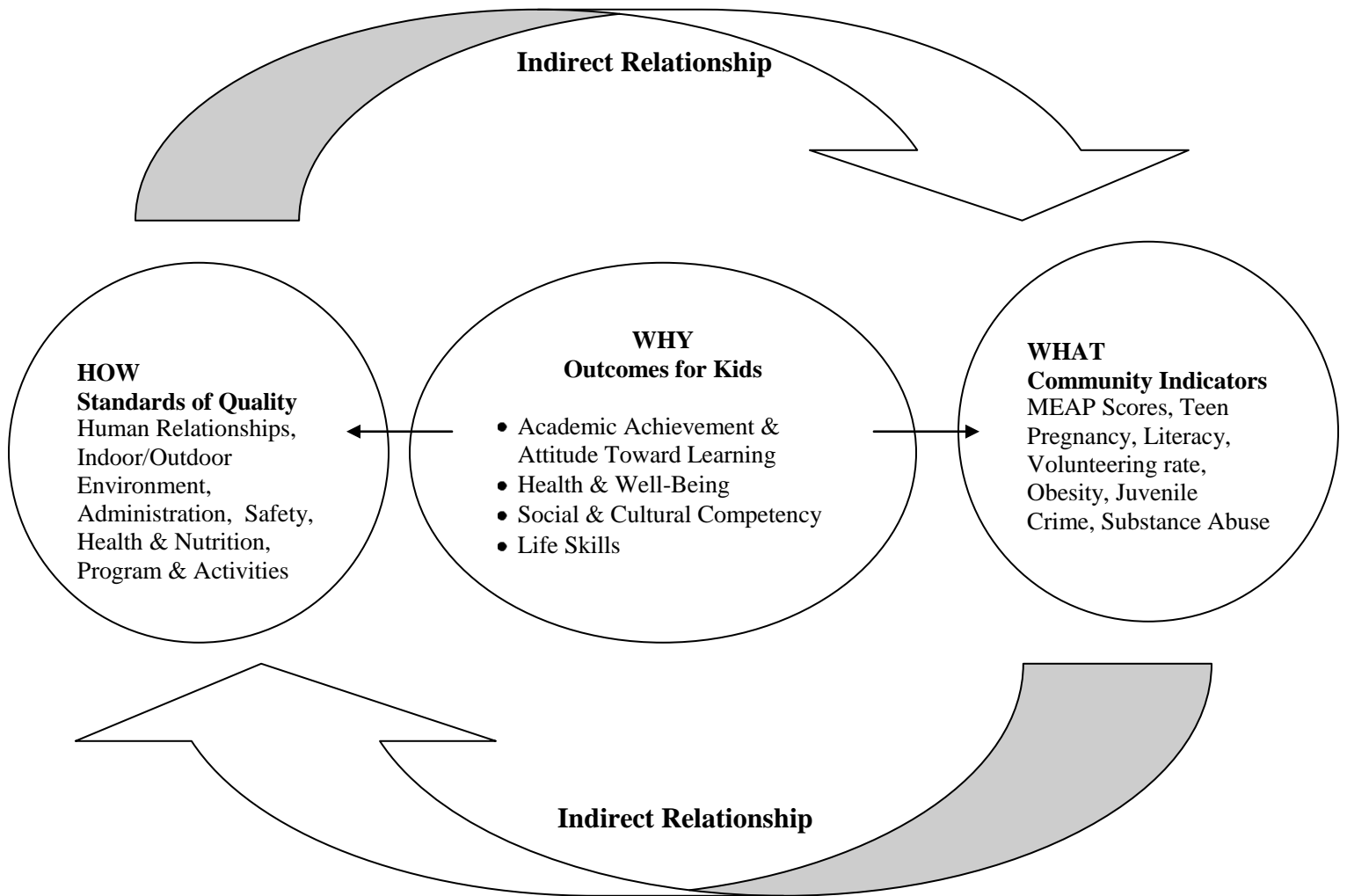
The Standards were developed by a team of community partners comparing a variety of research on best practices, outcomes, standards, and quality indicators, relying heavily on The National School-Age Care Alliance (NSACA) Standards for Quality School-Age Care. NSACA, now the National Afterschool Association, is the only accrediting body for out-of-school (after) school programs in the nation.

**After school** is defined as a program that offers a variety of learning, recreational, social and enrichment activities in a structured environment, taking place before school, after school, evenings, weekends, holidays and summertime. After school is meant to be an all inclusive term for youth development programming that occurs when a child or youth is not in school.

**The Michigan Department of Education (MDE)** also created Standards of Quality for Out-of-School Time programs, which are included at the end of the Standards document. Programs required to meet MDE Standards, such as school-based, or exempt after school programs, will be under the umbrella of the ELO Standards of Quality endorsed by the community, but will be required to adhere to the MDE After School Standards as well for licensing purposes. For more information on these standards go to: [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/OST\\_Standards\\_43292\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/OST_Standards_43292_7.pdf)

**Single Purpose Program Standards** are also provided as a way to measure quality for programs that are single purpose in nature, have a specific function within a program, and operate over a definite amount of time. These standards address quality for programs that do not seek to be comprehensive. Examples of this could be a hip-hop dance class, sewing instruction, or a financial literacy class, usually operating within the context of a more comprehensive program.

## **Standards, Outcomes & Why We Do What We Do**



For more information or to download the ELO Standards of Quality or the Standards Self-Assessment Tool, please visit: [www.eloafterschool.com](http://www.eloafterschool.com)

## **ELO Network Standards of Quality Care for After School Programs**

### **Program & Activities**

#### **AC-1 Standard: There is a planned daily schedule to meet the needs of children/youth.**

**Indicator 1:** Staff are prepared to offer schedule flexibility as needed.

**Indicator 2:** Smooth transitions occur between activities.

#### **AC-2 Standard: Activities reflect the mission of the program and promote the development of all children/youth in the program.**

**Indicator 1:** The organization's mission clearly states a desire to contribute to the development of children/youth.

**Indicator 2:** Activities are well-suited to the styles, abilities, developmental abilities and interest of the individuals in the program.

**Indicator 3:** Activities promote greater understanding of the languages and cultures of the families served.

**Indicator 4:** Strategies are in place to encourage attendance.

**Indicator 5:** Activities have educational, social-emotional, physical and/or life skills outcomes.

#### **AC-3 Standard: Activities are well planned.**

**Indicator 1:** There is a written lesson/activity plan.

**Indicator 2:** There are enough materials for all children/youth.

**Indicator 3:** Staff are well prepared to lead activities.

#### **AC-4 Standard: Staff, families and school appropriately share important information to support the well-being of children/youth.**

**Indicator 1:** Staff, families and schools (*when applicable*) work together to set goals for children/youth, working with outside specialists when necessary.

**Indicator 2:** Staff and families share information about how to support children/youth's development.

#### **AC-5 Standard: The program builds links to other programs.**

**Indicator 1:** Staff provides information to families about community resources.

**Indicator 2:** Staff implements activities to help children/youth get to know the larger community.

**Indicator 3:** Staff are aware of and collaborates with community-based programs to ensure a well-rounded program.

**Indicator 4:** Collaborative agreements/partnerships are established with community agencies.

#### **AC-6 Standard: Staff, children and youth work together to plan, implement and evaluate activities.**

**Indicator 1:** Children/youth are encouraged to assist with planning program activities so that activities reflect their interests.

**Indicator 2:** Activities are planned that reflect the cultures of the families of the programs.

**Indicator 3:** Children/youth are given opportunities to participate in the evaluation of program activities.

## **Administration & Staffing**

**AD-1 Standard:** Ratios permit staff and volunteers to meet the needs of children/youth. A minimum number of staff and adult volunteer(s) to child ratios are:

Children age 5 is **1:10**

Children/youth ages 6 to 8 is **1:12**

Children/youth age 9 and older is **1:18**

**Indicator 1:** There is every attempt made to have at least two adult staff members on site at all times when children/youth are present.

**Indicator 2:** There is a plan to provide adequate staff coverage in case of emergencies.

**Indicator 3:** Substitute staff are used to maintain ratios when regular staff are absent.

**AD-2 Standard:** Staff encourages families' involvement in the program.

**Indicator 1:** There is a policy that allows family members to visit anytime throughout program hours.

**Indicator 2:** Sites host parent and family focused activities.

**Indicator 3:** Parents and families have the opportunity to participate in program planning and implementation.

**AD-3 Standard:** All staff and volunteers working directly with children/youth are qualified.

**Indicator 1:** Staff and volunteers meet the academic and experience qualifications to work with youth as stated in the organization's job description for the position.

**AD-4 Standard:** Staff and volunteers are given an orientation to the job before working with children/youth.

**Indicator 1:** Staff and volunteer orientation includes:

- Review of organizational mission, goals, programs and activities
- Review of organizational/ program policies and procedures
- Review of job description and responsibilities
- Review of health, safety and emergency procedures
- Introduction to colleagues and work environment
- Written 3-month plan for training (including on-the-job), supervision and evaluation
- Who to go to for what within the organization and community

**Indicator 2:** Documentation of completed orientation is signed by supervisor and kept in personnel file.

**AD-5 Standard:** Staff and volunteers participate in on-going professional development.

**Indicator 1:** Training needs of staff and volunteers are assessed at least annually.

**Indicator 2:** A written training plan, including assessed needs of staff and volunteers working with youth, timeline and budget, is prepared each fiscal year.

**Indicator 3:** Fifteen hours of completed core training and/or enrichment training is documented for each staff person annually.

- Indicator 4:** Core training is required of all staff and includes:
- a. CPR, First Aid, blood borne pathogens, and emergency procedures
  - b. Reporting suspected child abuse and neglect
  - c. Child/youth development
  - d. Behavior management
  - e. Effective program planning, implementation, and evaluation
  - f. Cultural sensitivity and competence
  - g. Diversity and gender equity
  - h. Record keeping procedures

**AD-6 Standard: Staff and volunteers receive appropriate support to do their work.**

- Indicator 1:** The program has an implemented written plan which addresses short and long-term strategies for offering competitive wages and working conditions.
- Indicator 2:** An accessible and responsive communication system is in place for staff and volunteers to provide input and voice concerns.
- Indicator 3:** Staff receives continuous supervision and feedback, including written performance evaluations at least annually.
- Indicator 4:** Staff are provided the necessary and appropriate work materials, physical space, training and assistance to carry out their job description responsibilities.

**AD-7 Standard: Program policies and procedures are responsive to the needs of children, youth and families in the community.**

- Indicator 1:** A written mission statement sets forth the program's philosophy and goals, and is clearly displayed for staff and families to see.
- Indicator 2:** The program makes itself affordable to families by using all possible community resources and sources of subsidy.
- Indicator 3:** The program's hours of operation are based on families' needs, and are periodically reviewed and adjusted as needed.
- Indicator 4:** The program has a written strategy to reach under-served youth, and implements this strategy as capacity allows.
- Indicator 5:** Written policies and procedures pertaining to the program are provided to parents at registration.

**AD-8 Standard: A system of regular program evaluation is established and used to measure outcomes of the program for children/youth.**

- Indicator 1:** Developmentally appropriate outcomes are developed that are related to academic and/or personal success of children/youth.
- Indicator 2:** The evaluation plan identifies outcome measurement tools.
- Indicator 3:** Program manager uses outcome evaluation data to improve programming.
- Indicator 4:** At least annually, staff, children/youth, and parents are given the opportunity to evaluate the program and the results are used for program improvements.

**AD-9 Standard: Fund development and fiscal management systems are planned and implemented to provide for a high-quality program.**

- Indicator 1:** Revenues and expenses are reported and monitored utilizing Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP).
- Indicator 2:** Funding is derived from multiple sources to ensure the sustainability of quality programs, (i.e. fees, grants, subsidies, scholarships, donations, business partnerships, government, etc).

- Indicator 3:** Revenues and expenses are projected for based on historical data, new information and trends.

## **Human Relationships**

### **HR-1 Standard: A positive emotional environment exists.**

- Indicator 1:** Staff, children/youth treat each other with mutual respect and listen to one another.
- Indicator 2:** Staff, children/youth foster a welcoming and comfortable environment.
- Indicator 3:** Staff exhibit acceptance and appreciation through communication with children/youth.
- Indicator 4:** Staff is actively involved with children/youth throughout the program activities and personally acknowledges each child.

### **HR-2 Standard: Staff responds appropriately to the individual needs of children/youth.**

- Indicator 1:** Staff give attention to children/youths' individual needs, special interests and abilities.
- Indicator 2:** Staff approach conflict and negative behavior in a non-threatening manner and encourage growth mindset opportunities.
- Indicator 3:** There is no evidence of bias relating to ethnicity, culture, race, religion, class, gender or sexual orientation.
- Indicator 4:** Staff respond with patience and understanding to the range of children/youths' feelings and temperaments.

### **HR-3 Standard: Staff encourages children/youth to make choices and to become more responsible.**

- Indicator 1:** Staff offer assistance in a way that supports a child's initiative.
- Indicator 2:** Staff provide oversight for the program and balance control of activities by offering children leadership opportunities.
- Indicator 3:** Children/youth have multiple opportunities to make choices on what they would like to participate in, plan and lead.
- Indicator 4:** Staff provide guidance for children/youth to make informed and responsible choices.

### **HR-4 Standard: Staff interactions with children/youth help them learn and develop.**

- Indicator 1:** Staff ask questions that encourage children/youth to think for themselves.
- Indicator 2:** Staff model skills and utilize program resources to help children/youth gain information and solve problems through inquiry and persistence.
- Indicator 3:** Staff vary the approaches they use to help children/youth learn.
- Indicator 4:** Staff helps children/youth use language skills through frequent conversations.

### **HR-5 Standard: Staff use positive techniques to guide the behavior of children/youth.**

- Indicator 1:** Staff positively reinforce children/youth when they cooperate, share, care for materials and join in activities.
- Indicator 2:** Staff works with children/youth to develop rules that clarify expectations and that encourage self goal-directed behavior.
- Indicator 3:** Staff encourage children/youth to resolve their own conflicts and step in when needed.
- Indicator 4:** The established rules are applied consistently.

**HR-6 Standard: Staff work well together to meet the needs of children/youth.**

- Indicator 1:** Staff communicate with each other to ensure that the program flows smoothly.
- Indicator 2:** Staff is cooperative and respectful of each other, providing role models of positive adult relationships.
- Indicator 3:** Regular staff meetings are held to ensure that all staff is aware of program needs and issues.
- Indicator 4:** Staff composition reflects sensitivity to diversity and gender equity.

## **Indoor & Outdoor Environment**

**IN/OUT-1 Standard: The program's indoor space meets the needs of children/youth.**

- Indicator 1:** The space is arranged well for an appropriate range of learning and recreational activities that reflect various learning styles and abilities of children/youth.
- Indicator 2:** The space is arranged so that various activities can go on at the same time without disruption.
- Indicator 3:** There is adequate and convenient storage space.
- Indicator 4:** Access to the indoor space is barrier-free.

**IN/OUT-2 Standard: The outdoor play area meets the needs of children/youth.**

- Indicator 1:** The outdoor play area, including equipment and supplies, facilitates active and quiet play, as well as independent and group activity.
- Indicator 2:** Permanent playground equipment is developmentally appropriate for the program participants.
- Indicator 3:** Access to the outdoor play area is barrier-free.

## **Safety, Health & Nutrition**

**SHN-1 Standard: Program policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safety of children/youth in the program.**

- Indicator 1:** Prior to any contact with children/youth in the program, a criminal background and Protective Services Central Registry check has been completed on all staff and volunteers.
- Indicator 2:** Program space and equipment is maintained and free of hazards.
- Indicator 3:** No tobacco, alcohol or illegal substances are in spaces accessible to children/youth during program hours.
- Indicator 4:** Children's and youth's arrivals and departures are supervised.
- Indicator 5:** Children/youth are released to authorized persons only.
- Indicator 6:** Staff/volunteers are in each room, activity or program space to ensure that every child and youth is properly supervised.
- Indicator 7:** Staffing levels address the needs of all children/ youth who are enrolled.
- Indicator 8:** Children/youth are transported in vehicles deemed safe, appropriately equipped and adequately insured, and staff and volunteers transport children/youth only when authorized to do so.
- Indicator 9:** Staff and volunteers know what to do in a medical emergency, fire or other safety incident, and children know what to do in an emergency.
- Indicator 10:** Fire and weather drills are conducted according to program policy.



- Indicator 11:** Parents are aware of program notification procedures for emergency or significant incident, including program closure.
- Indicator 12:** Program staff knows what to do and takes appropriate action if a child or youth reports abuse and/or neglect.
- Indicator 13:** There are policies and procedures that address when staff, volunteers or parents appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

**SHN-2 Standard: Program policies and procedures are in place to ensure the health of the children/youth.**

- Indicator 1:** A minimum of one person who is currently certified in CPR/First Aid and infection control is on site at all times.
- Indicator 2:** Within three months of beginning to work in the program, each adult staff member shall hold valid certification in CPR, First Aid and infection control.
- Indicator 3:** Emergency medical and contact forms are completed on every child and youth in the program and are readily available to staff who have youth in an activity, on-site or off-site. Forms are maintained in a confidential manner.
- Indicator 4:** Procedures for effective hand-washing are posted, and adequate facilities and supplies are available for this purpose.
- Indicator 5:** Staff demonstrates awareness of and responds to the individual health needs of children/youth.
- Indicator 6:** Staff separates children/youth who become ill during the program.
- Indicator 7:** All spaces used by children/youth are smoke free.
- Indicator 8:** There are policies and procedures that address when children/youth appear to be under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

**SHN-3 Standard: Policies and procedures are in place to ensure that the nutritional needs of children/youth are met.**

- Indicator 1:** Drinking water is readily available at all times.
- Indicator 2:** Snacks and meals are timed appropriately and meet the nutritional, portion size and type of food that is appropriate for the ages and sizes of children/youth.
- Indicator 3:** Snacks and meals are not tied to disciplinary consequences.
- Indicator 4:** Staff is aware of any children or youth with food allergies and provides alternative options.
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## **Additional Michigan Department of Education Standards for SchoolBased Providers:**

### **Health, Safety & Nutrition**

**Standard:** E. Appropriate transportation rules are followed

**Quality Indicators:**

- Field trip transportation is arranged with the knowledge and consent of parents, and follows transportation rules required for school field trips or as required by child day care licensing for licensed programs.
- Public transportation is utilized in the manner approved in the Revised School Code or in Child Day Care Licensing Rules.

### **Human Relationships & Staffing**

**Standard:** C. Staff to child ratios and group size are established to insure that authentic, helpful, and caring relationships can be established and maintained between children in the program and staff. Required minimum staff-to-child ratios are maintained consistently; high-quality ratios are preferred.

**Quality Indicators:**

- At least two adult staff members are present in the program at all times when children/youth are present. Adult staff members are individuals who are 18 years of age or older. A high school student who is 17 and in the final year of a high school career preparation program in child care may count as an adult.
- High-quality ratios:
  - Grades K-3 : one adult for ten children
  - Grades 4 - 8 : one adult for 15 children

### **Indoor & Outdoor Environment**

**Standard:** A. The indoor environment is established to offer a safe, comfortable, age-appropriate, stable facility with adequate space in which to carry out the program.

**Quality Indicators:**

- There is specific space that is safe, clean, and comfortable with enough room (a minimum of 35 square feet per child) for all program activities.

### **Administration**

**Standard:** B. Stakeholders, including parents, guardians and family members, school personnel, businesses, service organizations, and others, in the school and community are identified and involved and/or informed of the program, its benefits to children and families, and the impact of the program on the community as a whole.

**Quality Indicators:**

- Community goals for children, as identified by the county multipurpose collaborative body, ISD, or municipal entities, are incorporated into the program.
- In an exempt program, the board of the school district or intermediate school district or board of directors of the public school academy, in consultation with the director of the program and the principal of the school at which the program is operated, must develop, adopt and annually review a policy concerning the program, that addresses safety procedures, including:
  - First Aid;
  - Food Safety;
  - Discipline;
  - Dispensing and storage of medication;
  - Access to student emergency information;
  - Access to telephones.

Not later than September 1 of each school year, the board of the school district or intermediate school district or board of directors of the public school academy shall adopt and submit to the secretary of the intermediate school board a resolution affirming that the program and the corresponding policies comply with these requirements.

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## Single Purpose Program Standards:

### Single Purpose Standard -1

**SPP-1 Standard:** Programs that are established to provide one type of activity for a limited time period meet minimum requirements to ensure students' health and safety.

ELO Standards SHN-1 thru SHN-3 are met.  
ELO Standards HR-2 and HR-5 are met.

### Safety, Health & Nutrition *for Single Purpose Programs*

**SHN-1 Standard:** Program policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safety of children/youth in the program.

- Indicator 1:** Prior to any contact with children/youth in the program, a criminal background and Protective Services Central Registry check has been completed on all staff and volunteers.
- Indicator 2:** Program space and equipment is maintained and free of hazards.
- Indicator 3:** No tobacco, alcohol or illegal substances are in spaces accessible to children/youth during program hours.
- Indicator 4:** Children's and youth's arrivals and departures are supervised.
- Indicator 5:** Children/youth are released to authorized persons only.
- Indicator 6:** Staff/volunteers are in each room, activity or program space to ensure that every child and youth is properly supervised.
- Indicator 7:** Staffing levels address the needs of all children/ youth who are enrolled.
- Indicator 8:** Children/youth are transported in vehicles deemed safe, appropriately equipped and adequately insured, and staff and volunteers transport children/youth only when authorized to do so.

- Indicator 9:** Staff and volunteers know what to do in a medical emergency, fire or other safety incident, and children know what to do in an emergency.
- Indicator 10:** Fire and weather drills are conducted according to program policy.
- Indicator 11:** Parents are aware of program notification procedures for emergency or significant incident, including program closure.
- Indicator 12:** Program staff knows what to do and takes appropriate action if a child or youth reports abuse and/or neglect.
- Indicator 13:** There are policies and procedures that address when staff, volunteers or parents appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

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- Indicator 1:** A minimum of one person who is currently certified in CPR/First Aid and infection control is on site at all times.
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- Indicator 3:** Emergency medical and contact forms are completed on every child and youth in the program and are readily available to staff who have youth in an activity, on-site or off-site. Forms are maintained in a confidential manner.
- Indicator 4:** Procedures for effective hand-washing are posted, and adequate facilities and supplies are available for this purpose.
- Indicator 5:** Staff demonstrates awareness of and responds to the individual health needs of children/youth.
- Indicator 6:** Staff separates children/youth who become ill during the program.
- Indicator 7:** All spaces used by children/youth are smoke free.
- Indicator 8:** There are policies and procedures that address when children/youth appear to be under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

**SHN-3 Standard:** Policies and procedures are in place to ensure that the nutritional needs of children/youth are met.

- Indicator 1:** Drinking water is readily available at all times.
- Indicator 2:** Snacks and meals are timed appropriately and meet the nutritional, portion size and type of food that is appropriate for the ages and sizes of children/youth.
- Indicator 3:** Snacks and meals are not tied to disciplinary consequences.
- Indicator 4:** Staff is aware of any children or youth with food allergies and provides alternative options.

## **Human Relationships for Single Purpose Programs**

**HR-2 Standard:** Staff responds appropriately to the individual needs of children/youth.

- Indicator 1:** Staff gives attention to children/youths' individual needs, special interests and abilities.
- Indicator 2:** Staff approaches conflict and negative behavior in a non-threatening manner.
- Indicator 3:** There is no evidence of bias relating to ethnicity, culture, race, religion, class, gender or sexual orientation.
- Indicator 4:** Staff responds with patience and understanding to the range of children/youths' feelings and temperaments.

**HR-5 Standard:** Staff uses positive techniques to guide the behavior of children/youth.

- Indicator 1:** Staff positively reinforces children/youth when they cooperate, share, care for materials and join in activities.

- Indicator 2:** Staff works with children/youth to develop rules that clarify expectations of desired behavior.
- Indicator 3:** Staff encourages children/youth to resolve their own conflicts and step in when needed.
- Indicator 4:** The established rules are applied consistently.

### **Single Purpose Standard – 2**

**SPP-2 Standard:** Programs are appropriate for the students enrolled.

- Indicator 1:** Activities are age appropriate.
- Indicator 2:** Activities meet the learning styles and interests of the enrolled students.

### **Single Purpose Standard – 3**

**SPP-3 Standard:** Activities meet the learning styles and interests of the enrolled students.

- Indicator 1:** At least one adult is present at all times.
- Indicator 2:** Staff members have specialty expertise relevant to the content/skill of the program being offered.

Reviewed: March, 2018 ldh