



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why develop a state model of accreditation?

In an effort to provide afterschool providers in Arizona with a **viable and affordable option** to national accreditation, AzCASE has taken the lead in developing an Arizona Afterschool Program Accreditation Model.

### How does this work intersect with the national system?

Providers in Arizona will be at a **greater advantage** than their peers in other states in that they will have multiple pathways to accreditation and can determine which model will best meet their needs.

### What are the principles that guide the development of the model?

- **The Arizona Afterschool Accreditation model must be rooted in a set of accreditation standards that reflect the collective wisdom of the field.** Our accreditation standards will build on the collective knowledge of the field and include research-proven, innovative and promising practices in afterschool programming.
- **The Arizona Afterschool Accreditation model must be responsive to the afterschool landscape in Arizona.** The accreditation standards and accompanying observation tool, while serving as the final assessment upon which an endorser will recommend accreditation, will allow for programs to utilize existing self-assessment processes (i.e. AzQSAT, YPQA, SACERS, etc.)
- **The Arizona Afterschool Accreditation model must be accessible and affordable to all afterschool programs.** It is anticipated that the accreditation price points will be between \$1000 - \$1500 (per the size and scope of the program) with a customized accreditation package for multi site organizations and/or programs serving in excess of 250 children.

### Who is eligible to participate?

All programs that serve school-age children in Arizona are eligible to participate. This includes both registered and legally exempt programs; private and public school age child care programs, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA's, 4H, and Parks and Recreation Departments participate.

### How long will accreditation remain in effect?

If awarded, accreditation will remain in effect for five years, pending completion of an annual activity report. An abbreviated accreditation renewal process is available to interested programs beyond the initial accreditation period.



## Afterschool Program Accreditation

Program accreditation is the ultimate indicator of program quality – quality that lends itself to improved outcomes for children, youth and families. The various stakeholders and their role and responsibilities are described below.

### Representative(s) of Program Seeking Accreditation

- Utilizes the AzCASE website to better understand the Accreditation process
- Submits completed application and fees to AzCASE
- Secures a quiet, private space for the Accreditation Endorser the day of the endorsement visit
- Attends meeting with ALL staff and the Accreditation Endorser the day of the endorsement visit
- Attends an exit interview session the day of the endorsement visit

### Accreditation Endorser

- Participates in training delivered by AzCASE
- Serves as the representative of AzCASE
- Schedules and performs assigned program endorsement visit
- Coordinates a meeting with program staff to obtain additional evidence of program quality
- Reviews program documentation and self-study materials
- Observes the program for a minimum of 2.5 hours (or duration of program)
- Interviews the Program Director in an effort to learn more about aspects of the program that may not have been clearly observed and to obtain additional evidence to determine the level of quality
- Verifies that all procedures have been followed and submits completed documentation to AzCASE
- Respects the confidentiality of all information reviewed during the accreditation visit
- Submits paperwork to AzCASE within 5 business days after performing the Accreditation endorsement visit

### AzCASE

- Maintains up-to-date list of Accreditation Endorsers trained and supported by AzCASE
- Maintains up-to-date Accreditation Guidebook and all supporting material
- Matches program with Accreditation Endorser
- Ensures accreditation visit procedures were followed
- Convenes Statewide Accreditation Review Panel to carefully review paperwork of each program seeking accreditation, including a second review of information collected during the endorsement visit and documentation review
- Awards Accreditation Certificate or defers until appropriate changes are made



## **Steps to Afterschool Program Accreditation**

Step One: The interested program participates in an accreditation orientation .

Step Two: Program representative completes the accreditation application, including AzQSAT self-study tool (can use tool results from up to 6 months prior) and pre-visit documentation checklist and submits the completed documentation to AzCASE.

Step Three: Within 30 business days of receipt, AzCASE reviews the documentation to ensure completeness and assigns an Accreditation Endorser.

Step Four: The assigned Accreditation Endorser contacts the program representative within 5 business days to schedule a visit within the following 30 days.

Step Five: The endorsement visit is completed within 30 business days.

Step Six: Within 5 business days of the visit, the Accreditation Endorser submits the completed paperwork to AzCASE along with a recommendation for accreditation or deferment.

Step Seven: Within 45 business days of receiving documentation, the Arizona Afterschool Program Accreditation Review Board assesses the paperwork, makes the final accreditation determination and notifies the program of the decision.





### Accreditation Pre-Visit Documentation Review Checklist

- ☐ Completed accreditation application
- ☐ Staff qualifications grid
- ☐ Staff meeting agendas and notes from six meetings within the last year
- ☐ Forms for staff hiring (should be blank templates), to include job descriptions, performance review, application, emergency contact , etc. Any form EXCEPT tax documentation that you require at hiring.
- ☐ Staff guidelines - see checklist for Staff Guidelines and attach appropriate documentation
- ☐ Family guidelines - see checklist for Family Guidelines and attach appropriate documentation
- ☐ Program budget, to include a narrative describing how the budget supports the mission and goals of the program
- ☐ Forms for children, to include registration form, emergency contact and drop-off/or pick-up authorization forms (should be blank), incident/accident report, medication consent form, photo / media release and field trips (if applicable) and any additional forms that are required as part of program registration.
- ☐ Completed self-study tool including printed program improvement plan and the date of last completed assessment. Assessment does not need to be printed.
- ☐ Youth and staff attendance records, to include one-month's worth showing totals for attendance each day and wellness checks
- ☐ Site Specific Daily Schedule
- ☐ Sample lesson plan
- ☐ Sample curriculum
- ☐ Sample menus for meals and snacks served (one-months worth)
- ☐ Copy of license, or other documentation of compliance with local health and safety regulations
- ☐ Outdoor/Indoor safety checklists; 3 lists form the last six months with corrective activity.
- ☐ Certificate of insurance (copy of liability, auto, etc)
- ☐ Documentation of shared space agreement, if applicable (letter and / or contract with host)



- ☐ Letters of recommendation from any three of the following (only one from each category):
  - o Executive Director or Owner
  - o Board member
  - o Parent
  - o Principal
  - o Community member
  - o Business leader
- ☐ Family survey, if done (collected and analyzed—samples available)
- ☐ Youth survey, if done (collected and analyzed—samples available)
- ☐ Host survey, if applicable and done (collected and analyzed—samples available)
- ☐ Staff survey, if done (collected and analyzed—samples available)
- ☐ Sample communication with families (could include emails, newsletters, and fliers)
- ☐ Any additional documentation that may be unique to your program but will assist the evaluator in his/her assessment