

# CALIFORNIA CORE COMPETENCIES

FOR BEFORE AND/OR AFTER SCHOOL PROFESSIONALS



guide  
resource  
framework  
checklist

**asap**  
**connect**

California's link to quality  
After School Assistance Providers

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The California Core Competencies for Before and/or After School Professionals (or Core Competencies) is one of the deliverables created through the Technical Assistance for Program Effectiveness (TAPE) Project. This project involves the collaboration of the before and after school program Regional Leads from Regions 3, 5, 10, and 11<sup>1</sup>. The goal of this project is to increase the effectiveness of service delivery provided by the Regional Leads. The TAPE Project has been funded through the After School Assistance Providers Connect (ASAPconnect) grant with support from The David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the California Department of Education (CDE) After School Division.

**CREDITS:**

The TAPE Project is a collaboration among the after school technical assistance units of the Los Angeles County Office of Education, the Monterey County Office of Education, the Sacramento County Office of Education, and the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools Office. TAPE Project members include Mary Jo Ginty, Kathe Gonsalves, Karen Greer, Martha Lilia Hall, Ellen Hancock, Gina Koency, Damian Maldonado, Barbara Metzruk, Frank Pisi, Matthew Tinsley, and Mara Wold.

<sup>1</sup> Region 3 includes Alpine, Colusa, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sierra, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties. Region 5 includes Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz counties. Region 10 includes Inyo, Mono, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties. Region 11 includes Los Angeles County.



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## PURPOSE

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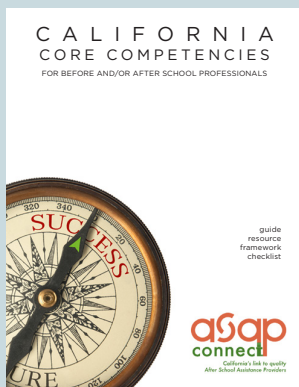
# CALIFORNIA CORE COMPETENCIES

## FOR BEFORE AND/OR AFTER SCHOOL PROFESSIONALS

The Core Competencies provide a list of the recommended knowledge and skills for professionals in the After School Education and Safety program (ASES), 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC), and After School Safety and Enrichment for Teens (ASSETs) Before and After School Programs. These state- and federally-funded programs serve preK-12

students and their families. The programs receive technical assistance from the Regional After School Technical Assistance System (RASTAS) and other service providers. The Core Competencies document applies to before and/or after school program professionals or stakeholders who hold a variety of positions. See the Stakeholder Definitions, on page

6, for the position titles used and their operational definitions. These competencies are research-based and were created from several documents listed in the References section on page 18.



## CALIFORNIA CORE COMPETENCIES

TAPE Project members determined the skill levels and applicability of the competencies using their expertise, as well as data from pilot focus groups conducted with professionals representing all four positions throughout the state. [READ MORE ON PAGE 6](#)

## USES AND INTERPRETATION OF THE CORE COMPETENCIES

For each competency and each stakeholder position listed in the Core Competencies, there is an X indicating the skill level required to carry out the responsibilities of each position. In some instances, a competency may be marked as not applicable for a position. TAPE Project members determined the skill levels and applicability of the competencies using their expertise as well as data from pilot focus groups conducted with professionals representing all four positions throughout the state. While the TAPE project members attempted to make the competencies as comprehensive as possible, they are not definitive nor are they exhaustive. The members recognize that there could be other competencies applicable to the profession. The uses for which the Core Competencies are intended are listed in Table I. This table also addresses non-intended uses of this document.

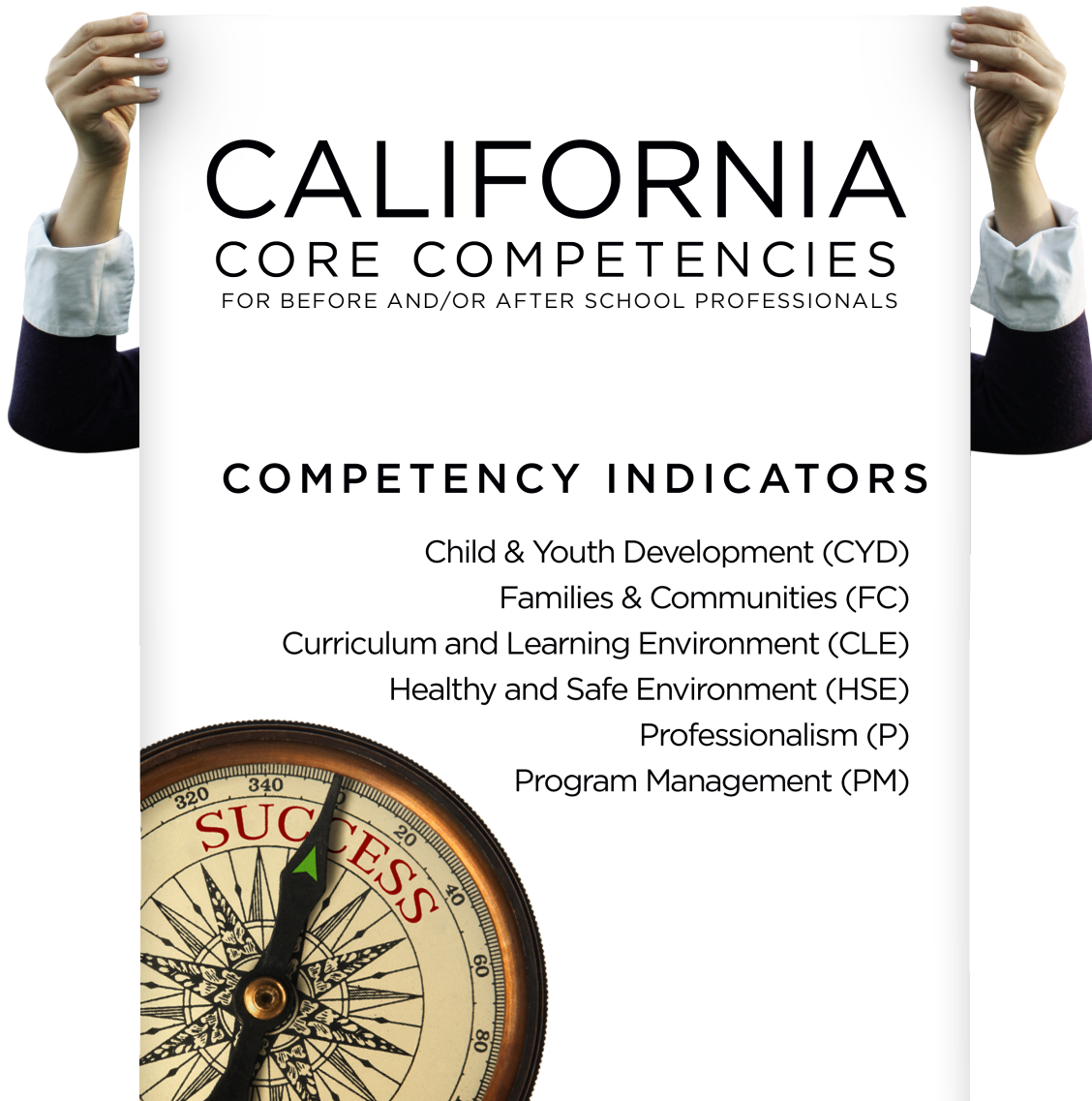
*Table I. Intended and Non-Intended Uses of Core Competencies*

The Core Competencies are intended to be used as:	The Core Competencies are not designed to be used as:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A <b>checklist</b> to review existing technical assistance offerings;</li> <li>• A <b>framework</b> to inform the selection and design of future professional development activities;</li> <li>• A <b>guide</b> for developing tools to assess needs and evaluate technical assistance;</li> <li>• A <b>resource</b> for developing job descriptions and other aspects of personnel management;</li> <li>• A <b>reference document</b> for CDE After School Division staff, Grant Managers, Program Directors, Regional Leads and other stakeholders to use to collaborate on training and technical assistance processes for improved program design;</li> <li>• A <b>general guideline</b> for staff (see stakeholder definitions on page 6) to assess their strengths and learning needs rather than as a rigid and categorical way of evaluating professional performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An instrument for personnel performance evaluation;</li> <li>• A tool for evaluating before and/or after school programs;</li> <li>• A tool for observing personnel or program performance;</li> <li>• The sole source for developing job descriptions.</li> </ul>

The Competency Indicators are categorized into six skill areas:

- (1) Child and Youth Development;
- (2) Families and Communities;
- (3) Curriculum and Learning Environment;
- (4) Healthy and Safe Environment;
- (5) Professionalism; and,
- (6) Program Management.

Under each **Competency Indicator** are Examples of **Observable Behaviors** that serve as a description of how these competencies might be demonstrated. The examples are not exhaustive, but are designed to help illustrate the Competency Indicator through adult behaviors that could possibly be observed in the work setting.



## ORGANIZATION

### ***Stakeholder Definitions:***

For the purpose of the Core Competencies, the following operational titles and definitions are used to describe the main stakeholders in before and/or after school programs.

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (CDE) AFTER SCHOOL DIVISION (ASD)** is the state-level administrative body that provides funding, oversight, and technical assistance for ASES and 21st CCLC before and after school programs.

**REGIONAL LEAD** is the CDE contracted county office of education representative(s) in each of the eleven service regions of the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) and who is the primary local technical assistance support contact for ASES and 21st CCLC programs.

**INSTRUCTIONAL-DAY TEAM MEMBER** is a district or school-site administrator, teacher, paraprofessional (i.e., instructional aide), or categorical program personnel.

**PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS** are the parents of students served by before or after school programs or representatives from the community in which the students reside.

**STUDENTS** are the intended public and private school students who are eligible to be served by a before or after school program.

The Core Competencies were developed for professionals or stakeholders who work in before and after school programs in a variety of positions. The position titles used are defined below:

**GRANT MANAGER** is a district, county, city, or community-based organization (CBO) staff member who is ultimately responsible for grant oversight, operations, and overall program direction including ensuring grant compliance, meeting certified assurances, developing or managing budgets, and submitting required reports.

**PROGRAM DIRECTOR** is someone who oversees two or more site-based programs and may evaluate staff.

**SITE COORDINATOR** is someone who oversees a program at one site and has responsibility for the supervision of the frontline staff.

**FRONTLINE STAFF** is someone who works directly with students in before and/or after school programs.

In cases where positions are combined, such as Grant Manager-Program Director, the competencies for both positions are applicable.



For each Competency Indicator and Stakeholder, there are three skill levels that indicate the depth to which each stakeholder needs to be effective in their positions.

**N/A (NOT APPLICABLE)** refers to Competency Indicators that, given the diversity of the before and/or after school program field, may not apply to some.

**AWARENESS** (*What is it?*) refers to Competency Indicators where general information or a basic level of information is sufficient for a stakeholder. The stakeholder can describe the skills associated with the competency in general terms. It is worthwhile for the stakeholder to be familiar with the knowledge underlying the competency but deeper knowledge and application are not essential to his/her job

**APPLICATION OF SKILL** (*How do I do it?*) refers to Competency Indicators that comprise a stakeholder's ongoing work. These competencies are essential to their job and require deeper knowledge than awareness. They are demonstrated by action. They are acquired through ongoing professional development and on the job work experience.

**MASTERY OF SKILL** (*How do I teach others?*) refers to the Competency Indicators in which before and/or after school program stakeholders consistently demonstrate expertise. The ability to teach and demonstrate to peers is a hallmark of the Mastery level. Examples of activities that stakeholders at this level demonstrate are coaching, mentoring, modeling, and creating resources for the benefit of others.

c. When an individual student is having a problem, staff pay attention and try to assist.









Competency Indicators	Levels															
	Grant Manager				Program Director				Site Coordinator				Frontline Staff			
Note: Refer to page 7 for descriptions of skill levels (i.e., N/A, Awareness, Application, Mastery). These are skill levels required to carry out the job.	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery
<b>CLE 5 Designs or selects lessons/activities aligned with program goals that ensure the academic success of all students.</b>	X						X					X		X		
Examples of observable behaviors: a. Articulates how the schedule and purpose of activities (i.e. daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually) support the program goals. b. Designs or adjusts lessons/activities and materials to ensure they are appropriate for the academic level of students. c. Designs or selects lessons/activities that are challenging, engaging, or that promote inquiry. d. Purposefully incorporates tutoring and homework time to meet the individual needs of students. e. Solicits and incorporates student input on program design while maintaining a balance with program requirements and quality.																
<b>CLE 6 Conducts lessons/activities aligned with program goals that ensure the academic success of all students.</b>	X					X						X				X
Examples of observable behaviors: a. Implements planned lessons/activities as intended by the program. b. Follows the comprehensive schedule as intended by the program. c. Uses materials appropriately to deliver and reinforce the lesson or activity. d. Communicates lesson/activity objectives or outcomes to students. e. Conducts or adjusts lessons/activities and materials to ensure they are appropriate for the academic level of students. f. Conducts lessons/activities that are challenging, engaging, or that promote inquiry. g. Uses a variety of strategies (e.g., peer tutoring, one-on-one assistance, small group) during the tutoring and homework time to meet the individual needs of students. h. Purposefully incorporates tutoring and homework time to meet the individual needs of students.																
<b>CLE 7 Designs activities that expand the students' knowledge and understanding of their own immediate community and the larger global community.</b>	X						X					X		X		
Examples of observable behaviors: a. Uses community resources to design activities that expand students' knowledge and understanding of their home and larger community. b. Facilitates opportunities for students to interact with community members to share knowledge and talents. c. Provides opportunities for students to participate in service learning and other activities that contribute positively to their immediate and/or larger global community. d. Conducts activities that allow students to learn about their everyday world.																
<b>CLE 8 Conducts activities that expand the students' knowledge and understanding of their own immediate community and the larger global community.</b>	X						X					X			X	
Examples of observable behaviors: a. Uses community resources to conduct activities that expand students' knowledge and understanding of their home and larger community. b. Carries out opportunities for students to interact with community members to share knowledge and talents. c. Carries out opportunities for students to participate in service learning and other activities that contribute positively to their immediate and/or larger global community.																

Competency Indicators	Levels															
	Grant Manager				Program Director				Site Coordinator				Frontline Staff			
Note: Refer to page 7 for descriptions of skill levels (i.e., N/A, Awareness, Application, Mastery). These are skill levels required to carry out the job.	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery
<b>CLE 9 Uses strategies to promote student learning.</b>	<b>X</b>						<b>X</b>					<b>X</b>			<b>X</b>	
<p>Examples of observable behaviors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides individual, large and small group activities.</li> <li>Maintains a schedule that can be flexible.</li> <li>Uses technology (e.g., television, video, computers, the internet adaptive) that support student learning.</li> <li>Develops and implements strategies for facilitating smooth transitions.</li> <li>Capitalizes on teachable moments in all activities.</li> <li>Uses strategies to meet the needs of all students.</li> </ol>																

Competency Indicators	Levels															
	Grant Manager				Program Director				Site Coordinator				Frontline Staff			
Note: Refer to page 7 for descriptions of skill levels (i.e., N/A, Awareness, Application, Mastery). These are skill levels required to carry out the job.	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery
<b>HSE 1 Ensures the health and safety of students.</b>			X				X					X				X
Examples of observable behaviors: a. Prepares the environment to be free of foreseeable hazards. b. Intervenes when potentially unsafe situations occur. c. Have skills in basic first aid. d. Ensures the program has a written physical activity, health, and safety plan(s) that are implemented.																
<b>HSE 2 Follows safety and emergency procedures.</b>			X				X					X				X
Examples of observable behaviors: a. Understands legal requirements and responsibilities when a person may do harm to him or herself or another. b. Understands when it is appropriate to inform and involve supervisor. c. Implements key aspects of site safety plan.																
<b>HSE 3 Maintains accurate program records and follows reporting procedures.</b>				X				X				X				X
Examples of observable behaviors: a. Keeps accurate program attendance. b. Follows procedure for reporting incidents, as required by the program policies (e.g., accidents, criminal activity, serious violation of program rules). c. Understands legal requirements and responsibilities for reporting child abuse.																
<b>HSE 4 Ensures that the program incorporates activities to promote physical fitness and health.</b>			X				X					X				X
Examples of observable behaviors: a. Promotes an attitude and environment that embraces wellness. b. Incorporates physical activities into the program. c. Conducts activities to expand knowledge and understanding of good nutrition and healthy behavior. d. Conducts activities that promote healthy choices and the avoidance of risky behaviors.																



## Professionalism (P)

Competency Indicators	Levels															
	Grant Manager				Program Director				Site Coordinator				Frontline Staff			
Note: Refer to page 7 for descriptions of skill levels (i.e., N/A, Awareness, Application, Mastery). These are skill levels required to carry out the job.	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery
<b>P 1 Strives for self-improvement including knowledge and skill development.</b>			X				X				X				X	
Examples of observable behaviors: a. Attends professional workshops, trainings, and conferences to increase competencies. b. Applies new learning to everyday work practices. c. Is open to new ideas and learning opportunities. d. Actively expands personal knowledge and takes advantage of educational opportunities. e. Uses the internet as a research tool to access field knowledge and locate appropriate resources.																
<b>P 2 Demonstrates a positive work and team ethic.</b>			X				X				X				X	
Examples of observable behaviors: a. Supports colleagues and takes initiative to assist co-workers. b. Is punctual and dependable. c. Participates in required meetings. d. Dresses appropriately. e. Respects physical environment, equipment, and supplies. f. Works collaboratively with peers, shares program-related information, and shares in collective tasks. g. Takes initiative to correct immediate problems. h. Models professional behavior in conducting activities and when working with students.																
<b>P 3 Communicates with staff and stakeholders.</b>		X					X				X				X	
Examples of observable behaviors: a. Protects and appreciates the need for confidentiality when appropriate. b. Participates in program, staff, and team meetings. c. Uses a variety of methods to communicate with program staff and stakeholders in a professional manner. d. Fosters good relations between before and/or after school program and instructional day staff through positive interactions.																

- a. Knows where to access legislation, grant assurances, and answers to questions about mandated requirements.
- b. Complies with requirements and timelines for mandated reporting tools such as the audit reports, attendance reports, expenditure reports, performance reports, as well as those used for Federal Program Monitoring.
- c. Establishes systems to ensure all staff understands their roles and responsibilities with respect to the federal and state grant mandates.

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Competency Indicators	Levels															
	Grant Manager				Program Director				Site Coordinator				Frontline Staff			
Note: Refer to page 7 for descriptions of skill levels (i.e., N/A, Awareness, Application, Mastery). These are skill levels required to carry out the job.	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery	N/A	Awareness	Application	Mastery
<b>PM 6 Uses a variety of resources, tools, and documents that impact before and/or after school program quality and compliance (e.g., California Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSAT), Federal Program Monitoring (FPM), grant assurances).</b>				X				X				X				X
Examples of observable behaviors:																
a. Uses appropriate tools for reporting, program planning, meeting compliance requirements, providing key information such as legislation, and evaluating programs.																
b. Knows how to access and use the before and/or after school program resources, tools, and documents (e.g., CDE Web site, Regional Lead).																
c. Uses the resources, tools, and documents to ensure the before and/or after school program meets mandated requirements (e.g., FPM, fiscal audit).																
d. Uses the tools and documents for ongoing program evaluation and continuous program improvement (e.g., QSAT).																
e. Knows how the tools and documents align with the key elements of quality before and/or after school program.																
f. Stays informed about updates and changes to the before and after school program tools and documents.																
<b>PM 7 Manages fiscal resources, financial and other program records at the program or site level.</b>				X				X				X				X
Examples of observable behaviors:																
a. Develops a balanced budget with input from appropriate stakeholders.																
b. Has a systematic process for review of expenditures against budget and makes revisions, as necessary.																
c. Has a thorough understanding of the cost factors involved in running the program.																
d. Establishes and implements a sustainability plan.																
e. Has a system in place for tracking financial transactions and other records.																
f. Has a system in place for tracking in-kind and other contributions.																

## REFERENCES:

The documents below were used to inform the development of the Core Competencies.

*After-School Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool.* Prepared by The California Afterschool Network Quality Committee. Davis: University of California at Davis School of Education and The After School Programs Office, California Department of Education, 2009.

*Core Competencies for Afterschool Educators.* Prepared by the Afterschool Professional/Staff Development Working Group. Flint, MI: C. S. Mott Foundation, 2009.

*Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals.* Prepared by the Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center. Montpelier: Vermont Child Development Division, 2007.

*Core Competencies for Program Directors.* Prepared by the Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center. Montpelier: Vermont Child Development Division, 2009.

*Community Programs to Promote Youth Development, Executive Summary.* Prepared by the Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth, edited by Jacquelynne Eccles and Jennifer Appleton Gootman, and the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2002.

*Desired Results Developmental Profile-School Age.* Sacramento: California Department of Education, 2009.

*Bridge Matrix.* Compiled by the Technical Assistance for Program Effectiveness (TAPE) Project Collaborative, 2010.





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