

**Expanded Learning in California
Grantee Orientation Video
CQI- Continuous Quality Improvement
Audio Transcript**

Hello and Welcome to the Expanded Learning in California Professional Development and Grantee Orientation video on Continuous Quality Improvement or CQI. This video is brought to you by the California Department of Education's Expanded Learning Division and the California AfterSchool Network. This video will examine Expanded Learning program requirements to implement a Continuous Quality Improvement process.

Let's begin by providing some context for Data-Driven Continuous Quality Improvement. California Education Code 8484(a)(2) states, Programs shall provide evidence of a data-driven program quality improvement process that is based on the department's guidance on program quality standards. Programs begin this improvement process by doing an initial scan of their program quality by collecting data on how well the program is doing. This can be done in various different ways such as through surveys, observations, and formal and informal discussions with program stakeholders. After the initial scan is complete, programs will begin the creation of a site level continuous quality improvement plan and submit an annual Outcome Based Data Report each October, that summarizes the CQI process they engaged in during the year.

On this screen now, is the cover of the Quality Standards for Expanded Learning in California. The Quality Standards describe high levels of quality in Expanded Learning programs and are the foundation for the CQI process. They provide a vision for success, help to create a shared language among stakeholders, and likely describe things you are already doing.

On this screen now, you will see an image of the Continuous Quality Improvement process cycle. The CQI process consists of three steps: Assess, Plan, and Improve. The intention behind the CQI process is to improve your program quality by identifying areas for improvement, creating a step-by-step plan, and reviewing that plan's effectiveness to improve on a continual basis. The CQI process is really something that empowers a site level practitioner to try things to improve their program and see what works and what doesn't.

The first step in the CQI process is Assess. In order to know how to improve your program, you must first establish where your program is initially. This is done through collecting data about your program in relation to the 12 Quality Standards. Your

assessment planner process should include a variety of tools, instruments and strategies, engage diverse stakeholders, and allow for time to analyze and reflect on the data collected. The assessment process does not need to be complicated. Improvement strategies can be simple and easily embedded into everyday programs. Some common strategies include; Beginning and end-of-year surveys, observations, focus groups, student voice post-it quotes, and questionnaires to complete while parents wait for program to end. Stakeholders that are important to gather data from in your CQI process can include: Youth, Program managers and administrators, Parents, Principals and teachers, and community partners.

The second step in the CQI process is Plan. After gathering and analyzing data, you will begin the creation of your site level improvement plan. Three things that will help you during the planning phase are; include stakeholders and staff in the planning process, reflect on the data gathered, and use that data to determine the quality standard or one thing to improve on; and make sure that that one thing or focus for improvement contains a goal, objectives, and activities to outline how you plan to improve your program quality.

Let's take a moment to talk about CDE Guidance for creating your improvement plans. It is important to CDE that the CQI be a low stakes for high impact process, and they advise that programs start with one quality standard area to work on at a time. They recognize that if your program is focused on improving multiple areas simultaneously, it may not result in significant improvement in any single area. It is recommended for sites engaging in the process for the first time, to only address one standard. Mature programs that have been practicing CQI for many years may choose more than one area to focus on further improvement efforts.

Here are some promising practices when creating your improvement plan. Begin by focusing on one thing, keep it simple and make it attainable. Remember the CDE guidance for low stakes, high impact. Identify a CQI coach for additional support. Include a variety of stakeholders in that planning process. Use language from the Standards. Remember, the standards describe what high quality programs look like. The language in the standards can help guide you during your planning process, and lastly, One plan is completed for each individual site. The third step in the CQI process is Improve. As part of the improvement process it is important that all levels of staff are actively engaged in the improvement process and understand the program priorities and know the content of their CQI plan. Staff should review progress towards objectives as a team and make adjustments when needed. Milestones and lessons learned should always be documented and most importantly, staff should take time to reflect on program impact and celebrate achievements together.

Let's take a look at some best practices about Improvement that we have gathered from the field. Inform stakeholders of your program goal. Assign responsibility to stakeholders. Pay attention to what support or technical assistance is needed for your team to be successful. Support your staff to be successful through coaching. Establish communication strategies to share ideas, challenges, and solutions. Make changes as needed and don't get stuck on something that isn't working. Keep your CQI plan on site for reflection and record and keep absolutely everything.

Now, we are going to discuss the process for creating a site level CQI Plan. On your screen is the CDE created Program Improvement Plan template. This template was created to help you design a plan that works for your program. It includes the aligning Quality Standard, improvement goal, objectives, activities, individuals responsible, important dates or deadlines, and support or resources needed, to be successful. After gathering data about your program, you can use this template to map out your program's CQI plan. Your plan is going to contain three components; Goals, Objectives, and Activities. Each improvement plan will have one goal. Goals are broad, overarching, and intentional targets directly related to the quality standard each site commits to improve. Your goal is something that won't be achieved in the next week or even month. It is an aspirational target to consistently strive for each day. The language and the quality standards can actually help you craft your goal statement. An example of a goal that is focused on Healthy Choices and Behaviors would be, Create a culture of Health and Wellness in Program.

Improvement plans should also contain three objectives. An objective is a specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound benchmark, that will take you one step closer to achieving your goal and is directly related to your identified areas for improvement, during the assessment phase. An example of an objective would be, by the end of the year 75% of our students will participate in at least three physical activities each week. Each objective will include several activities. An activity is a task or action to complete in order to achieve an objective. Activities have list-like features and can include the individuals responsible, deadlines for completion, and materials, resources, or training needed. So for example, one activity would be, the Site Coordinator needs to select fall, winter, and spring physical activity curriculum before the start of the school year. Now, wouldn't it be amazing if the improvement plan you created was achieved without any hiccups or setbacks? Sadly that rarely happens, and that's okay. If you feel that your plan is not working or if it's off a little bit it's okay to stop, re-evaluate, and adapt your plan in order to move forward with achieving your goal.

Also, if you have questions or concerns regarding your CQI plan, each Region has a California Department of Education Expanded Learning Division Consultant, Analyst, and County Leads, to answer any questions and provide assistance with your improvement plan process.

Michael Funk, Director of the California Department of Education's Expanded Learning Division would like to share a message about the Continuous Quality Improvement process. So California's commitment to quality through the CQI process is really ensuring that our children have the best high quality opportunities that we can give them. They deserve the best, our very best. But the CQI does not have to be intimidating for you, it's a matter of just being reflective and thinking about what can you do to make your program a little bit better. It's that intentionality behind that reflection and it could be done with knowing the fact that if you give it your best effort there's really no way to fail, because we don't come to grade these plans, we don't come to judge you on how well you did the plan. What we're concerned about is that you and your team, at your school, work together to really think through a process of how can we make our program just a bit better, that's really all it is and by doing so intentionally you really can't fail. So I just want to take a second and close by saying thank you! Thank you for you, your staff, for all you do to serve the children and families, and the school, in your community.

This video is one of six videos providing information regarding Program Requirements and Expectations. Other Expanded Learning in California topics that you can access include; Grants 101, Federal Program Monitoring, Quality Standards for Expanded Learning, Grant Modifications, and 85/15. Thank you for watching. This video has been brought to you by the California Department of Education's Expanded Learning Division and the California AfterSchool Network.