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**Afterschool in ESSA**

**Feedback Template for GA’s Draft Plan**

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the new K-12 federal education law that reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and replaces No Child Left Behind. The Georgia Department of Education recently released a draft of [**Georgia’s state plan**](http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/communications/Documents/ESSAConsolidatedStatePlan%20--%206-14A.pdf) and is now asking for stakeholders to submit feedback on the state plan **by July 14th.**

Georgia’s draft plan includes opportunities to leverage supports and partnerships beyond the school day, but there are still many opportunities to leverage afterschool and summer learning in the plan. The time to engage is now!

**Steps to Submit Feedback**

1. To access the feedback form, go to: **http://bit.ly/2sWfSJP**
2. Complete the four questions on the first page and click next.
3. The next page is where you can submit your specific feedback on Georgia’s draft plan. Below is some suggested language you can copy and paste into the corresponding question on the feedback form. Be sure to personalize the highlighted text to your program!

**Suggested Feedback**

#### *Note: You do NOT have to answer every question.*

#### ****Q3) ACCOUNTABILITY****

#### My colleagues and I at [program name] in [city], GA appreciate that Georgia’s draft plan takes a holistic approach to student success and well-being. At [program name], we serve [*description of who you serve (e.g. ages, demographics, total enrollment)]*

#### High-quality afterschool and summer programs provide evidence-based supports for the academic, physical, social, and emotional well-being of Georgia’s children that are related to school quality and success including academic achievement, attendance, behavior, health and wellness, STEM, and literacy.

#### This sentiment was shared by many who took part in the advisory groups and listening sessions across the state. For example, both the Laurens and Gordon county listening sessions emphasized the importance of access to afterschool programs and activities in supporting children. In addition, the teacher, middle-school, and high-school student advisory groups emphasized the importance of fostering enrichment beyond the school day and access to project-based learning that helps prepare students for college and career.

#### To better support Georgia’s youth, the accountability section of Georgia’s ESSA plan should: (1) include access to and use of extracurricular and expanded learning opportunities as a separate indicator, (2) capitalize on the opportunities to provide students with a well-rounded curriculum outside of the normal school day, and (3) specifically mention that many afterschool or summer programs incorporate work-based learning for high-school students.

#### *[Talk about an innovative practice or activity that your program uses to expose students to new subjects or improve academic achievement.]*

#### ****Q5) SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS****

#### **We sincerely appreciate the emphasis on strengthening communities and building partnerships to support the whole child in the school improvement efforts section of Georgia’s ESSA plan. For decades, schools and districts have worked with afterschool and summer providers at the local level to coordinate services for youth.**

*At [program name], we proactively reach out to partners to improve the quality of services we provide and better support our students. [Share some of the community partners you’ve engaged and the impact of those partnerships on your program.]*

To better support Georgia’s youth, the school improvement section of Georgia’s ESSA plan should: (1) specifically mention high-quality afterschool and summer programs as an evidenced-based intervention schools and districts can use to improve student outcomes including attendance, academics, and behavior, (2) state that afterschool and youth development providers are crucial partners for teachers and leaders within the community, and (3) emphasize the importance of engaging partners, communities, and other state agencies in supporting youth both in and out of school.

#### ****Q13) ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT****

#### **We strongly appreciate the GaDOE’s commitment to strengthening efforts to support the whole child through the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants. This section of Georgia’s ESSA plan provides many opportunities to capitalize on the benefits of high-quality out-of-school time programs. As out-of-school time providers, we are uniquely positioned to provide students with personalized learning experiences that help students develop their interests, confidence, and experience in career building pathways.**

#### **The importance of individualized learning and a well-rounded education were emphasized in many of the ESSA listening sessions and advisory groups, particularly the parent and teacher advisory groups. We strongly encourage the GaDOE to specifically recognize high-quality afterschool and summer programs as an evidence-based, data-informed support in this section of Georgia’s ESSA plan.**

#### ***[Consider sharing any results you’ve seen or a story of a particular student, parent, and/or family.]***

#### ****Q14) 21st**** ****CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS****

#### Georgia’s 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program provides over 27,000 of Georgia’s youth with a safe and enriching place to go after school and during the summer. **Mycolleagues and I appreciate GaDOE’s commitment to this program and supporting Georgia’s youth outside of the normal school day.**

#### **In particular, we support the GaDOE’s partnership on the Georgia Afterschool and Youth Development (ASYD) Quality Standards that were released in December 2015 in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Public Health, Division of Family and Children Services, and the Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network. The Georgia Afterschool and Youth Development Quality Standards support the continuous quality improvement of all out-of-school time programs in Georgia. We also support the GaDOE’s commitment to providing statewide professional learning including a biennial conference and workshops across the state through the Georgia ASYD initiative.**

#### To better support Georgia’s afterschool and youth development field, this section should: (1) specifically list the Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network as a potential partner that the GaDOE will collaborate with to provide statewide professional learning and (2) specifically mention engaging with other state agencies to coordinate high-quality afterschool and youth development programming in Georgia.