



UTAH
Afterschool
Network

The Utah Afterschool Credential

Portfolio Requirements

Created 2025



In partnership with

**WORKFORCE
SERVICES**
CHILD CARE



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Acronyms to Know

The following acronyms are used throughout this document. Understanding these terms is essential for interpreting the contents of this guide.

- **Utah Afterschool Network (UAN):** A statewide organization that supports afterschool professionals and programs through advocacy, professional development, and quality improvement initiatives.
- **Utah Afterschool School-Aged Credential (Credential):** A state-recognized achievement that demonstrates a professional's competence in delivering high-quality school-age programming. For the purpose of this document, the Utah Afterschool School-Aged Credential will hereby be referred to as “the Credential.”
- **Professional Development Afterschool Incentive (Incentive):** A financial reward offered to afterschool professionals who complete approved training hours and meet additional requirements. For the purpose of this document, this will be referred to as “the Incentive.”
- **National Afterschool Association (NAA):** The national professional membership organization for those who work with and on behalf of youth during out-of-school time.
- **Core Knowledge Skills and Competencies (CKSC):** A framework developed by NAA that outlines essential knowledge and skills for afterschool professionals.
- **Utah Registry for Professional Development (URPD):** Utah's centralized registry and tracking system for early childhood and afterschool professional development.
- **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound (SMART):** A structured method for setting clear and attainable goals.
- **School-Age Program Quality Assessment (SA-PQA):** A validated tool used to assess and improve the quality of afterschool programs for school-aged youth.

Why a Credential?

This statewide credential not only sets a high standard by requiring professionals to complete 120 hours of targeted professional development and undergo rigorous observation, but it also demands a comprehensive portfolio that demonstrates their competencies across ten critical areas. By implementing such a credential, we ensure that those who are most engaged with our children are equipped with the latest skills, knowledge, and best practices in the field. This structured approach guarantees that the professionals working with kids are not only experienced, but also continuously advancing their expertise, ultimately enhancing the quality of afterschool programs and fostering better outcomes for the children they serve.

Portfolio Requirements	Complete Credential Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authenticity Statement• Professional Statement• 16 Demonstrated Competencies Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 120 total professional development training hours: 10 hours in EACH of the 9 required NAA CKSC areas + 30 additional hours in any CKSC area over the last 5 years logged on the Credential Training Log. All Certificates MUST be uploaded to your URPD Profile.• 480 hours of work experience in a center-based or licensed, licensed-exempt school-age setting with K–12 youth listed on the Credential Work History Log.• Completed, passing supervisor observation with UAN Credential Observation Tool• Current NAA Membership• Completed, passing portfolio <p>More information about the NAA CKSCs can be found at https://naaweb.org/</p>

Portfolio Timeline Recommendations and Disclaimers

The Utah Afterschool School-Aged Credential can be completed at any time of the year as long as you meet all the requirements. If you do not meet the required training hours, do not complete a qualified observation, and/or fail to submit all necessary portfolio documents, your Credential application will be rejected.

*See next page for special instructions on using the Utah Afterschool School-Aged Credential to fulfil the Utah Professional Development Afterschool Incentive. Anyone, at any level, may apply for the Credential as long as they meet all the requirements. However, it can only be used for the Level 6 Incentive, meaning, if you complete the Credential while at a Level 2, you will still only receive the Level 2 Incentive award.

Utah Professional Development Incentive

Level 6 Requirement

If you are using the credential to meet the **Level 6 Professional Development Incentive** demonstrated competency requirement you must receive the credential **BEFORE** the Incentive April due date. If you do not have the Credential or an associates degree or higher by the Incentive due date then you **WILL NOT** be eligible for the Level 6 Incentive for that year. If you have 6 or more years of experience, you cannot remain at Level 5 to skip the Credential. If you receive the Utah Afterschool School-Aged Credential **AFTER** the Incentive deadline, you can apply it towards the next year's Incentive.

It is your responsibility to work with your supervisor to schedule and complete the required observation before the Incentive deadline. Applicants who do not have a direct supervisor can request a UAN staff member to conduct their observation. If you require an external observation by a UAN staff member or an approved observer, we recommend reaching out to schedule three months before the deadline as it can take time to arrange.

Due to the intensive nature of the Credential process, it is advised that you begin approximately 6 months before the Incentive due date if you wish to use the Credential as your Level 6 Professional Development Incentive.

Recommended Timeline:

November:

- Schedule your observation (allow 2-3 months for completion).
- Begin compiling your professional development hours, assigning CKSCs, and gathering certificates. (120 hours total).

December:

- Begin developing your portfolio.

January:

- Work on completing your observation and prepare for the feedback session.
- Continue refining your portfolio.

February:

- Upload certificates to your [URPD profile](#). Be sure the title of the certificate is in the saved file name.

March:

- Finalize and submit your portfolio for review. *Portfolios **MUST be received by March 19th** in order to be accepted for the Level 6 Incentive for that year.

April:

- Submit your completed Credential application by the Incentive deadline.

****The revised Incentive format now creates a pathway to the Credential. You will now be able to track your professional development trainings each year in a manor that will allow you to quickly copy and paste the trainings from previous incentives, starting in 2025, and place them in the [Credential Training Log](#). Additionally, the revised Incentive Professional Activities, starting in 2025, requires the completion of two portfolio documents. Those that start the Incentive at Level 1, starting in 2025, will have a guided pathway to the completion of the Credential by the time they reach Level 6.**

Work History

As part of your application for the Credential, you must provide a detailed record of your work history, including at least the past five (5) years of experience, along with any gaps in employment. This information helps verify your professional background and experience in the field. To be eligible for the Credential you must have 480 hours of work experience in a center-based or licensed, licensed-exempt school-age setting working with K–12 youth.

To make this process easier, enter your work history on the [Credential Work History Log](#). The sheet is designed to automatically calculate your total experience.

Instructions for completing your Work History:

1. Access the [Credential Work History Log](#)
2. Enter Your Information – List each job you’ve held over the past five years.
3. Verify Your Entries – Ensure all information is accurate and complete.
4. Download and Attach – Once completed, download the sheet as an Excel file and attach it to your portfolio submission.

Failure to submit your complete work history in the required format may result in delays in processing your application or denial.

Training Hours

To qualify for the Credential, you must complete 120 hours of training from the [approved training list](#). These trainings must be properly documented on the [Credential Training Log](#) and verified before submitting your application.

Training Hour Requirements:

- You must complete a minimum of 10 hours in each of the required 9 NAA Core Knowledge and Skills Categories (CKSC). The remaining 30 hours can be in any category of your choosing.
- Non-UAN conferences can only be counted toward CKSC 10: Professional Development and Leadership.
- UAN conferences and workshops must include each individual session name and the associated CKSC on the tracking form.

How to Document Your Training Hours:

- Use the [Credential Training Log](#) – This sheet will help you track:
 - Course Name
 - Number of Hours
 - Associated CKSC Category
- 1. Ensure All Minimum Requirements Are Met – Double-check that you have at least 10 hours in each of the 9 required CKSCs and that your total equals 120 hours or more.
- 2. Gather Your Certificates – Collect a certificate of completion for each training hour you claimed.
 - a. Certificates must include your name, the title of the session, the date the training was completed, and the number of hours. Incomplete certificates will be rejected, and training hours will NOT be counted.
- 3. Upload Certificates to [Your URPD Profile](#) – Every certificate must be properly named with the course title before uploading. Certificates that are not correctly named will not be counted.
- 4. Confirm Completion – It is your responsibility to ensure all training certificates are correctly named and uploaded before submitting your application.

Failure to follow these instructions may result in delays or disqualification from receiving the Credential.

Demonstrated Competency Rubric

Rubric for Demonstrated Competencies

- Writing samples should be between 400-500 words, unless otherwise specified.
- Writing samples should be typed in Times New Roman or Arial, 12 pt. font, and single spaced. Examples of lesson plans, flyers, brochure, etc. can be in whatever format fits the need of the design.
- Writing samples should be written in clear, concise, and complete sentences, free of spelling and grammatical errors. Examples of lesson plans, flyers, brochures, etc. should be clear and easy to follow for someone unfamiliar with your program.
- Writing samples follow the guidelines and answer the question for the demonstrated competency. Examples of lesson plans, flyers, brochures, etc. should follow the guidelines for their content area and should easily show the reviewer which content area they are representing. Examples such as lesson plans, flyers, brochures may have an additional scale vs writing samples.
- Writing samples and examples should be your original thoughts and can not be repeated in any section or across other applications.

****Some sections may allow you to use the NAA CKSC Skills Assessments in order to fulfill the required or optional sections. You may not use the same NAA CKSC Skills Assessment to fulfill more than one requirement. Example: If you chose to do the Skills Assessment for CKSC 5 Youth Engagement, Voice, and Choice, you can not use that same Skills Assessment to meet the requirement for CKSC 10 Professional Development and Leadership.**

Basic Rubric - Specific rubrics for each demonstrated competency can be found on our website.

Criteria	1 (Unacceptable)	2 (Needs Improvement)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Exemplary)
Grammar and Clarity				
Formatting (Single Spaced, 12 pt, TNR, Word Count)				
Content (All questions answered)				
Originality (Not replicated)				

Authenticity Statement

Utah Afterschool School-Age Credential Portfolio Authenticity Statement

I, _____, affirm that all materials submitted in this portfolio are my own original work and accurately reflect my knowledge, skills, and experience in the field of school-age afterschool programming. I certify that:

1. All written reflections, responses, and supporting documents have been created by me and are based on my professional experiences.
2. Any resources, citations, or references included have been properly credited, and no part of this submission constitutes plagiarism or unauthorized copying.
3. All information regarding my work experience, training, and accomplishments is truthful and accurate.
4. I have not used artificial intelligence, unauthorized assistance, or misrepresented my qualifications in any way.

I understand that any instance of plagiarism, falsification, or misrepresentation will result in immediate disqualification from receiving the Utah Afterschool School-Age Credential. If awarded the credential, I acknowledge that any discovery of dishonesty after the fact may result in revocation.

By signing below, I acknowledge and agree to the above terms and confirm that my submission upholds the integrity and professional standards expected for this credential.

Applicant Name (Printed): _____

Applicant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Philosophy Statement

Reflective Statement Instructions

As part of your application for the Credential, you are required to submit a 400-500 word reflective statement that describes your beliefs, values, and practices as an afterschool professional. This statement should provide insight into your philosophy of education and how it influences your work with school-age children.

Writing Guidelines:

- Your statement must be between 400 - 500 words in length.
- Use Times New Roman or Arial, 12 pt. font, and single spaced.
- Clearly organize your reflection into paragraphs with an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Proofread your work for grammar, spelling, and clarity before submission.

What to Include in Your Reflective Statement:

Your statement should be personal, thoughtful, and specific to your experiences as an afterschool professional. Consider addressing the following questions to guide your writing:

1. Your Educational Philosophy

- What are your core beliefs and values about education and working with school-age children?
- What role do you believe afterschool programs play in child development?

2. Your Approach to Teaching and Learning

- How do you create a safe, engaging, and inclusive learning environment?
- How do you support social, emotional, and academic growth in children?
- What strategies do you use to encourage positive behavior and participation?

3. Your Role as an afterschool professional

- How do you build relationships with students, families, and colleagues?
- What professional experiences have shaped your approach to teaching?

4. Reflection and Growth

- How do you assess your effectiveness as an afterschool professional?
- What steps do you take to grow professionally and improve your practices?

If you have any questions about this requirement, please reach out to professionallearning@utahafterschool.org before submitting your application.

Child/Youth Growth and Development

NAA Content Area 1: Knows the typical benchmarks for growth and development and uses this knowledge to provide a program that meets the multiple needs of children and youth.

Rationale: The growth and development of a child or youth is optimized when afterschool and youth development professionals know and apply the fundamental principles of human development. Understanding the benchmarks for child and youth growth and development as well as individual and developmental variations, including cultural differences and special needs enables the afterschool professional to develop healthy relationships with each child and youth that supports his/her development and learning. It enables the professional to design activities and environments that encompass developmentally appropriate practices, establish foundations for future growth, and engage young people in building social skills and knowledge. By integrating current knowledge about development and learning into their daily practice, afterschool professionals provide beneficial interactions and experiences for children in a safe, nurturing, and challenging learning environment.

Required portfolio work samples:

- Using the [NAA Core Knowledge and Competencies self-assessment tools](#), complete CKSC Content Area 1 Child/Youth Growth and Development. Complete the self-assessment summary, reflection, professional plan, and action plan included in the NAA Self-Assessment Tool. Each section should be 150-250 words and goals should follow the SMART goal format.

In addition to the required portfolio element listed above, you MUST choose and complete one of the following requirements:

- **Option 1**
 - In 400-500 words, describe the different areas of development (physical, behavioral, social-emotional, and cognitive) of development including the typical progression of the age group you typically work with, and how you use this information when designing your environment and activities for youth.
- **Option 2**
 - Locate or create development chart(s) for the school age group you work with. The chart(s) should include the following areas of development: physical, behavioral, social-emotional, and cognitive. Describe in 400-500 words why you feel this information is important to understand. Include your graphs.
 - If you are working with Teens (ages 12-18), the chart should include developmental areas of physical, social-emotional, and language/cognitive development. Describe in 400-500 words why you feel this information is important to understand. Include your graphs.
- **Option 3**
 - [The Science of Learning and Development \(SOLD\)](#) has determined several key findings, potential, malleability, individuality, context, relationships, integration, continuum, and meaning-making, in how young people learn and develop best. Select two of the key findings and describe the information in your own words. In 400-500 words, give examples of practices that you use in program that support your understanding of this key principle.

Learning Environments and Curriculum

NAA Content Area 2: Creates a high-quality learning environment and implements age-appropriate curricula and program activities.

Rationale: Afterschool and youth development professionals provide critical supports for children, youth, and families by fostering positive growth through social interactions, stimulating physical environments, and enriching intellectual opportunities. They understand and utilize strategies that are characteristic of high-quality environments such as consistent schedules and routines, transition activities for moving from one activity or place to another, offering interesting materials and activities appropriate to the age group, and arranging the space to enhance learning. They know and understand how to implement a variety of developmentally appropriate curriculum models to promote physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development, communication skills, and creative expression. Children benefit from high-quality experiences and environments in immeasurable ways, including improved self-esteem and personal control, better life skills, enhanced communication between peers and within families, a genuine sense of purpose, a deeper understanding of diversity, and advancement in developmental outcomes and academic achievement.

Required portfolio work samples:

- Provide three lesson plans (for three different subjects) that include, at minimum, the name of the activity, the subject/topic, the goal or learning objective, scaffolding techniques, the supplies needed, and the steps youth take to complete the activity. Subjects include but are not limited to, STEM, geography/social studies, life skills, literacy, physical activities, health and wellness, or service learning. (UAN has a lesson plan format that you may choose to use, but it is not required.)

In addition to the required portfolio element listed above, you MUST choose and complete one of the following requirements:

- **Option 1**
 - In 400-500 words, evaluate how your program utilizes its physical space—especially if it operates in a shared or limited-control environment (e.g., cafeteria, gym, classrooms). Share strategies for creating a welcoming space despite space or mobility limitations. Describe how the materials (both currently in the program as well as those listed as needs) support the development of youth.
 - Conduct an inventory of your current spaces and physical materials, and develop creative solutions to ensure your space remains engaging, functional, and welcoming. Identify 2–3 material improvements (e.g., rolling carts, labeled bins, collapsible furniture) to make the environment more engaging or efficient. Include photos, or a layout sketch of your setup and storage systems, as well as your inventory list.
- **Option 2**
 - Create a survey for the youth in your program to obtain the youth's opinions about the program space, emotional and physical safety, as well as engagement. Have youth complete the survey. Analyze the data. Determine items that need attention. Create a SMART goal for one or two items on how you address the youth's feedback. Provide a blank copy of the survey you created, charts/graphs with the results of the survey (keep participants anonymous), and a short (100-200 word) summary of your data, and your SMART goals.

More options on next page

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- **Option 3**

- Conduct a structured walkthrough of your program space with a colleague or site visitor using a quality standards checklist. This peer observation provides an external perspective to help identify strengths and areas for growth related to environment, safety, and engagement. Create or adapt a checklist using elements from a quality framework (e.g., NAA, UAN, CLASS, etc.). Focus on areas like accessibility, youth ownership, and safe transitions. In 400–500 words summarize the walkthrough findings, including direct feedback or quotes from the peer observer. Highlight 2–3 strengths and areas for growth. Select one priority area to improve and outline a specific change you will implement. Share how viewing the space through another professional’s eyes deepened your understanding of how environment supports learning and behavior.

Child/Youth Observation and Assessment

NAA Content Area 3: Understands and applies observation and assessment techniques and tools to meet individual needs.

Rationale: Systematic observations, documentation, and other effective and appropriate assessment strategies—in partnership with families and other professionals serving the same children—positively impact the development and learning of children and youth. Well-prepared practitioners understand the goals, benefits, and uses of individual observation and assessment. They know how to use information gathered from these tools and techniques to adapt the program to meet the needs of each child and youth. This may include learning more about children’s unique qualities, developing appropriate goals and plans, making referrals as appropriate, and implementing and evaluating effective curriculum.

Required portfolio work samples:

- Within four weeks, complete three separate observations of the same youth. Observation can be completed using any style (anecdotal, running record, etc) and for any reason (behavioral, physical, relational, etc). Provide a copy of each detailed observation (using only initials or unique identifiers), a 2-3 sentence statement on your findings, and a plan (200-300 words) on what you will do or provide to support their success. (Example: What materials or experiences do they need access to? What changes does the program space need? What will you do differently or more to support them?)

No other requirements for this section.

Relationships and Interactions with Children and Youth

NAA Content Area 4: Recognizes the importance of relationships and communication in the practice of quality child and youth care, and implements guidance techniques and strategies to support children and youth individually and in group experiences to develop self-regulation, self-concept, coping mechanisms, and positive interactions with their peers and adults.

Rationale: Afterschool and youth development professionals recognize the critical importance of relationships and communication in the practice of quality child and youth care. Practitioners have realistic and developmentally appropriate expectations regarding the behavior of children and youth, and understand developmentally appropriate guidance techniques. They are aware of factors that may impact behavior and implement strategies to support children and youth individually and in group experiences to develop self-regulation, self-concept, coping mechanisms, and positive interactions with their peers and adults.

Required portfolio work samples:

- Complete the [“Staff and Youth Relationships” Domain in the Quality Tool](#), include ratings and answer the question, “How are you implementing or working to implement this practice,” for each indicator of quality. Once done, complete a 200-300 word narrative around your scoring. Include a copy of your Completed Quality Tool form.

In addition to the required portfolio element listed above, you MUST choose and complete one of the following requirements:

- **Option 1**
 - Provide a copy of your program’s behavior policy and procedures. This might include a policy on respect, safety, and following rules. It may include provisions for addressing misbehavior, such as verbal warnings, parent communications, etc.
 - Identify the behavior guidance strategies/systems used in your program and discuss in 400-500 words the advantages and disadvantages and any modifications you would recommend.
- **Option 2**
 - Make a list of each youth in your care (using initials or unique, anonymous identifiers). Note all the things you can think about for each youth (favorites, family dynamics, strengths, etc.). Identify 3-5 youth that you know less about than others. Determine three strategies you will use to build stronger relationships with those 3-5 youth. Provide the list of 3-5 youth you have identified and the three strategies for each youth you are committing to utilize. Your strategies document with all 3-5 youth included should be between 400-500 words.
- **Option 3**
 - Determine the various ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, family dynamics, developmental difficulties, (etc) of the youth in your program. In 100-200 words create a summary of the diversity in your program. With that in mind, create a list of 8-10 books that represent those youth. Books should be age-appropriate for the youth represented in your program. Include the title, author, publication year, topics, and a 100-200 word summary of the books in your own words, including how it would support the youth in your programs.

Youth Engagement, Voice, and Choice

NAA Content Area 5: Acts in partnership with children and youth to foster appropriate child and youth leadership and voice.

Rationale: Youth engagement is both a goal and a practice through which young people gain the knowledge and skills that support their ability to create change in their lives and the world in which they live. Afterschool and youth development professionals work with children and youth to cultivate personal, cultural, social, or institutional relationships through supporting child-and youth-led efforts, creating partnerships and providing formal and informal mentoring. This includes fostering appropriate child and youth leadership and seeking out child and youth voice. Youth engagement is important at all age levels but will look different depending on participants' ages and developmental stages.

Required portfolio work samples:

- In your own words, describe youth voice and choice, why it is important, what the youth gain from it, and how you currently implement it in your program. Set one SMART goal on how you will better implement youth voice and choice into your program. 400-500 Words.

In addition to the required portfolio element listed above, you MUST choose and complete one of the following requirements:

- **Option 1**
 - Create a youth survey regarding your program environment (emotional, physical, etc) and the curriculum (activities, etc). Include a copy of the blank survey, charts/graphs with the results of the survey (keep participants anonymous) and 100-200 word reflection of the data. Choose one data point to create a SMART goal, within the credential timeline, about how your program will make changes to incorporate the feedback from the youth into the program. Include your original SMART goal and a 100-200 word reflection on the results from your SMART goal.
- **Option 2**
 - Complete a Service Learning Project with youth and provide pictures. Include 200-300 word description about the details of the project and what you noticed about the youth before, during, and after the project. Additionally, in 200-300 words, describe what service learning is, why you feel service learning projects are beneficial and to whom, and what youth learn from service learning projects.
- **Option 3**
 - Using the [NAA Core Knowledge and Competencies self-assessment tools](#), complete CKSC Content Area 5 Youth Engagement - Voice and Choice. Complete the self-assessment summary, reflection, professional plan, and action plan included in the NAA Self-Assessment Tool. Each section should be 150-250 words and goals should follow the SMART goal format.

Diversity and Inclusion

This section does not have any required elements.

Family, School, and Community Relationships

NAA Content Area 7: Builds on respectful, reciprocal relationships across settings to promote optimal development for children, youth, and families and to enhance the quality of afterschool and youth services.

Rationale: Afterschool and youth development professionals understand that children and youth live and learn within a continuum of settings including their homes, schools and other learning environments during the school day, afterschool and youth development programs, and a variety of other community settings. Research indicates that successful afterschool programming depends on partnerships with families, schools and communities that are built upon ongoing, interactive communication and a commitment to confidentiality. Practitioners build on respectful, reciprocal relationships across settings to promote optimal development for children, youth and families to enhance the quality of afterschool and youth services. This includes implementing culturally competent practices, knowing about and connecting families to community resources, and taking advantage of opportunities for appropriate positive collaborations with other family, school and community services.

Required portfolio work samples:

- Provide a 400-500 word reflection on why communication with families is important and the avenues your program currently utilizes to communicate with families (newsletters, text messaging, etc). Reflect on which avenues are most and least successful, and why, and explore avenues that may be better choices for the families in your program.

In addition to the required portfolio element listed above, you MUST choose and complete one of the following requirements:

- **Option 1**
 - Design, plan, and implement a family night or event (any type of activity is acceptable). Provide a parent/family sign-in sheet from the event, 2-3 pictures of the event, and the steps involved in the planning (e.i, budget, flyers, etc). Provide a 200-300 reflection on what went well and what changes should be considered next time.
- **Option 2**
 - Provide a copy of your program's most recent Align for Success: Out of School Time Partnership Rubric, completed in collaboration with a member of your school day administration. In 400-500 words, describe how utilizing the best practices listed in the Align for Success: Out of School Time Partnership rubric has assisted your program and school day teams in developing an integrated partnership. Please include any examples from your program this year, including information on collaborative partnership meetings, shared resources and/or professional development opportunities, alignment of curriculums, etc.

More options on next page

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Option 3

- Gather and analyze demographic data and community characteristics to better understand the families your program serves. Use publicly available data (e.g., U.S. Census, local school district reports, city data) to summarize key facts about your program's surrounding community: Languages spoken, Income levels, Education levels, Cultural or ethnic makeup, Common occupations or industries, Family structures or housing characteristics. Use this information to identify community-based organizations or services in your program's neighborhood. In 200-300 words reflect on how this information might influence program decisions (e.g., communication methods, event planning, curriculum, food at events, language access, etc.).
- Community Resource Map: Create a map (hand-drawn, digital, or screenshot) of your program's neighborhood. Mark the location of at least 5-7 community-based resources, such as: Libraries, Faith-based organizations, Health clinics, Cultural centers. Food pantries, Local businesses, Nonprofits or social service agencies. For each one, list the name and type of support they offer. Identify one organization or resource you'd like to build a relationship with. Write a SMART goal to creating the partnership.
- Write a 100-200 word reflection on what you learned about your community that you hadn't considered before? How can a deeper understanding of family and community context shape program planning, engagement strategies, or curriculum? What excites or challenges you about forming new partnerships?

Safety and Wellness

NAA Content Area 8: Ensures the safety and wellness of children and youth by implementing prevention, preparedness, and health and safety practices.

Rationale: The physical and emotional safety and wellness of young children and youth are vital for fostering development in all areas. Children and youth are better able to fully develop socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically when their health, safety and nutritional needs are met. Afterschool and youth development professionals ensure safety, promote sound health practices, recognize and respond to child abuse and neglect, and provide nutritional meals and snacks. They know and implement a broad array of prevention, preparedness, and health and safety practices. Practitioners communicate information regarding the health and safety of children and youth to families while maintaining confidentiality. Afterschool and youth development professionals—working in partnership with families, schools, and communities—have a key opportunity and responsibility to provide relationships, environments, and experiences for all children that guide them on a pathway toward lifelong health and well-being.

Required portfolio work samples:

- Provide a copy of your program's safety policies and procedures.
- Provide a copy of one week's meal/snack menu, including serving sizes by age group as per USDA guidelines.

In addition to the required portfolio element listed above, you MUST choose and complete one of the following requirements:

- **Option 1**
 - Using the new [NAA Standards for Physical Activity](#) and taking into consideration the increased national concern about childhood obesity, the rise in childhood illnesses such as diabetes, asthma, and allergies, and decreased physical activity and outdoor recreation, discuss how your school-age program can play a role in assuring the overall health and well-being of children? Give specific examples. 400-500 words.
- **Option 2**
 - Review and evaluate a specific section of your program's Emergency Preparedness Plan such as fire evacuation, shelter-in-place, medical emergencies, intruder/lockdown, or allergy response. Review the clarity of roles and responsibilities, accessibility for all youth, including those with disabilities or language barriers, communication plan (who contacts whom and how), adequacy of supplies and emergency kits, gaps in staff knowledge or confusion points. In 200-300 words identify 2–3 improvements that could be made (e.g., clearer maps, more inclusive instructions, regular drills, updating contact lists, or using visual cues for younger children). Include a copy the Emergency Preparedness Plan you are evaluating.
 - Emergency Response Case Scenarios (200-300 words): Choose two of the following scenarios and write a short paragraph for each, describing the step-by-step response you would take. Include who you would notify, how you would care for the child, and any documentation needed.

More options on next page

Safety and Wellness

NAA Content Area 8: Ensures the safety and wellness of children and youth by implementing prevention, preparedness, and health and safety practices.

Rationale: The physical and emotional safety and wellness of young children and youth are vital for fostering development in all areas. Children and youth are better able to fully develop socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically when their health, safety and nutritional needs are met. Afterschool and youth development professionals ensure safety, promote sound health practices, recognize and respond to child abuse and neglect, and provide nutritional meals and snacks. They know and implement a broad array of prevention, preparedness, and health and safety practices. Practitioners communicate information regarding the health and safety of children and youth to families while maintaining confidentiality. Afterschool and youth development professionals—working in partnership with families, schools, and communities—have a key opportunity and responsibility to provide relationships, environments, and experiences for all children that guide them on a pathway toward lifelong health and well-being.

Scenario Options: 1) A child suddenly starts vomiting and says they feel dizzy. 2) A fire alarm goes off during an outdoor activity. 3) A child with a nut allergy eats something questionable and says their throat feels funny. 4) A parent who is not on the authorized pickup list shows up insisting on taking a child. 5) A youth becomes extremely upset and tries to run out of the building. 6) There's a power outage during a storm with 20 kids still in the building.

- Reflection (100–200 words): What did this process teach you about your program's level of readiness? How did writing out your response to scenarios help you identify what to review or reinforce in practice? How will you ensure staff and youth are prepared, calm, and informed in real emergencies?

- **Option 3**

- Create a plan outlining how your program supports the mental and emotional well-being of youth. In 200 - 300 words describe 3–5 specific strategies your program uses to support emotional safety and mental wellness. These may include: Daily check-ins or mindfulness practices, Calm-down or regulation spaces, SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) activities or curricula, Restorative practices, and Trauma-informed approaches. Explain how each practice supports youth development and creates a safer, more emotionally supportive environment.
- Describe in 200-300 words how staff are trained or supported in recognizing and responding to emotional or behavioral health needs. List any partnerships with mental health professionals, school counselors, or community agencies (if applicable).
- Write a reflection (200–300 words) describing how your program helps youth feel seen, heard, and valued? How do you ensure youth feel emotionally safe and supported while in your care? Provide an example of a time your program successfully supported a child's emotional need.

Program Planning and Development

NAA Content Area 9: Supports staff and serves as a role model around professional development plans by building healthy relationships with colleagues and families, providing developmentally appropriate practices, and connecting with and utilizing resources.

Rationale: Program managers understand planning, organizing, and implementing best business practices. Additionally, practitioners understand the importance of relationships and positive communication among colleagues, especially those working together to create a nurturing learning environment for all children and youth. Developing a shared understanding with staff and families of regulation, applicable laws, policies, staff supervision, and quality standards, as well as how to meet regulations and standards, is essential to quality environments for children. Management supports staff and serves as role models around professional development plans, building healthy relationships with colleagues and families, providing developmentally appropriate practices and connecting with and utilizing resources.

Required portfolio work sample:

- 1. Provide Your Organization's Mission and Values: Share the foundational principles that guide your organization's purpose and goals.
- 2. In 200-300 Words describe the culture you envision for your organization and compare it to the current workplace culture. Highlight any gaps or areas for growth. Engage employees by soliciting their perspectives and feedback on the existing culture and potential improvements.
- In 200-300 words offer actionable recommendations to strengthen relationships, communication, and collaboration, ensuring alignment with the organization's mission and values.

In addition to the required portfolio element listed above, you MUST choose and complete one of the following requirements:

- **Option 1**

- Please include your most recent program assessment tool (SA-PQA, Y-PQA, internal observation, etc.). Based on the assessment results, create a comprehensive improvement plan for the program.

The plan should address the following key areas:

- 1. Staffing: Evaluate current staffing levels, roles, and professional development needs. Identify any gaps or additional personnel required to support improvement efforts.
- 2. Resources: Assess the availability of materials, equipment, and funding. Propose strategies to acquire or allocate necessary resources effectively.
- 3. Services: Analyze the quality and scope of services currently offered. Provide recommendations for enhancements or new initiatives to better meet the program's goals and participant needs.
- 4. This detailed plan should align with the program's mission and vision to ensure meaningful and sustainable progress.

More options on next page

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- **Option 2**

- Provide a copy of your most recent SA-PQA or Y-PQA observation. In 400-500 words, reflect on your program's strengths and opportunities for growth. Focus on what you have the ability to improve, personally, based on your role within your program. Create a SMART goal based on an opportunity of growth.

- **Option 3**

- Develop and implement a plan for better tracking and allocating resources, ensuring that materials are used efficiently.
 - Create a list of resources and materials either in a classroom, or program site.
 - Conduct regular check-ins with the team to evaluate the use of time and identify areas for improvement in resource allocation.
 - Explore and introduce new tools or strategies for managing resources more effectively, such as digital tracking systems or time-management techniques.
 - Submit your resource and material list, and a detailed paper reflecting the process you used for step 2 and 3 in 400-500 words.

Professional Development and Leadership

NAA Content Area 10: Acts ethically, is committed to continuous learning, and advocates for best practices and policies for children and youth.

Rationale: Each afterschool and youth development professional is a member of a larger community of professional practice. Practitioners understand that their profession originates from a history and a core base of knowledge rooted in research that together serve as a foundation for the profession. Practitioner's behavior and actions must be grounded in a professional code of ethics and other professional standards related to their practice. The profession as a whole is elevated when each professional adopts the responsibilities of the profession regarding ethical behavior. Practitioners are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate and share knowledge, reflect on and have a critical perspective of their work, and make informed decisions. When afterschool professionals are equipped with specialized education and training, and continue to learn and develop as professional they are better able to provide experiences and environments that support every aspect of children's growth and learning. They are role models and advocates for best practices and policies, able to effectively communicate the importance of high-quality programming.

Required portfolio work sample:

Self-Assessment & Improvement Plan

◦ Option 1 - Frontline Staff

- Using the [NAA Core Knowledge and Competencies self-assessment tools](#), choose one of the following:
 - CKSC Content Area 2 Learning Environments and Curriculum
 - CKSC Content Area 4 Relationships and Interactions
 - CKSC Content Area 5 Youth Engagement, Voice, and Choice
 - CKSC Content Area 7 Family, School, and Community Engagement
- Complete the self-assessment summary, reflection, professional plan, and action plan included in the NAA Self-Assessment Tool. Each section should be 150 - 250 words and goals should follow the SMART goal format.

◦ Option 2 - Supervisor of Frontline Staff

- Using the [NAA Core Knowledge and Competencies self-assessment tools](#), complete CKSC Content Area 10 Professional Development and Leadership. Complete the self-assessment summary, reflection, professional plan, and action plan included in the NAA Self-Assessment Tool. Each section should be 150 - 250 words and goals should follow the SMART goal format.

As part of the Credential application process, you must have an observation performed by your direct supervisor using the UAN-provided observation form. This observation evaluates your performance in a real-world setting and ensures you meet the required standards.

Observation Process:

1. Schedule Your Observation – Arrange a time for your supervisor to observe you in your role.
2. Supervisor Completes the UAN Observation Form found on our website – Your supervisor will assess your performance based on the criteria outlined in the form.
3. Review Your Observation Results – After the observation, you must schedule a review meeting with your supervisor to discuss feedback and performance.
4. Submit Required Documentation – You must include:
 - The completed observation form with your scores.
 - A signature from your supervisor confirming that the observation was conducted in good faith.

If You Do Not Have a Direct Supervisor:

- You may arrange for a UAN staff member or a UAN-approved observer to conduct your observation.
- This process can take up to 3 months, so it is your responsibility to schedule it in advance to avoid delays in your application.

Failure to complete and submit a valid observation form will result in your application being denied. If you have questions or need assistance arranging an observation, please contact UAN as soon as possible.

Checklist

Here is a simple checklist to ensure you have all the documentation and necessary steps completed for applying for the Credential.

- ☐ Signed the Authenticity Statement and Attached it to My Portfolio
- ☐ Completed My [Work History Form](#)
- ☐ Wrote My Philosophy Statement and Attached it to My Portfolio
- ☐ Completed CKSC 1 Demonstrated Competency Required + Chosen Option Document
- ☐ Completed CKSC 2 Demonstrated Competency Required + Chosen Option Document
- ☐ Completed CKSC 3 Demonstrated Competency Required Document
- ☐ Completed CKSC 4 Demonstrated Competency Required + Chosen Option Document
- ☐ Completed CKSC 5 Demonstrated Competency Required + Chosen Option Document
- ☐ Completed CKSC 7 Demonstrated Competency Required + Chosen Option Document
- ☐ Completed CKSC 8 Demonstrated Competency Required + Chosen Option Document
- ☐ Completed CKSC 9 Demonstrated Competency Required + Chosen Option Document
- ☐ Completed CKSC 10 Demonstrated Competency Required Document
- ☐ Submitted My Completed Portfolio by **11:59 PM on March 19th** if using for the Level 6 Incentive
- ☐ Scheduled My Observation
- ☐ Completed My Observation
- ☐ Reviewed My Observation
- ☐ Attached My Observation Results
- ☐ Entered ALL My Trainings into the [Training Log](#)
- ☐ Assigned ALL My Trainings to the Appropriate CKSC Using the [Approved Training List](#)
- ☐ Ensured I have 120 Qualified Training Hours, With at Least 10 Hours in Each of the required 9 CKSCs
- ☐ Collected ALL My Training Certificates
- ☐ Named ALL My Training Certificates with the Title of The Course
- ☐ Uploaded ALL My Training Certificates to my URPD File
- ☐ Have a Current Membership with The National Afterschool Association
- ☐ Saved all my demonstrated competency documents into one PDF with my name and the year as the title
- ☐ Submitted all of my documents by **11:59 on the April due date** if using for the Level 6 Incentive.

Submitting Your Portfolio

To submit your Credential application, you must properly format and organize your documents before emailing them. You should have the following documents:

- Your portfolio must be saved as a single PDF file and include the following sections in order: your authenticity statement, philosophy statement, and all 16 demonstrated competencies samples. The file should be named using the format **FirstName_LastName_Year_Portfolio** (for example, Jane_Doe_2025_Portfolio.pdf).
- Your Credential Training Log **MUST** be submitted as an Excel File. Name the file in the format **FirstName_LastName_Year_Training Log** (for example, Jane_Doe_2025_Training Log.xls).
- Your Credential Work History Log **MUST** be submitted as an Excel File. Name the file in the format **FirstName_LastName_Year_Work History Log** (for example, Jane_Doe_2025_Work History Log.xls).
- Your observation must be saved as a single file, including the completed form and supervisor signature. Use the naming format **FirstName_LastName_Year_Observation** (for example, Jane_Doe_2025_Observation.pdf).

Once all documents are correctly formatted and named, submit them via email to professionallearning@utahafterschool.org. Be sure to check that all files are complete before sending, as incorrect formatting or missing information may delay the review process.

Next Steps

Once you have submitted your complete application, including all required documentation, your Credential will go through a review process, which can take up to two (2) months. If your Credential is approved, you will receive an official certificate with the date your Credential was awarded and the expiration date of your Credential.

If Your Credential is Not Approved

If your application does not meet the necessary requirements:

- You will receive feedback outlining what went wrong and how to improve.
- You will have one opportunity to resolve any issues by resubmitting the necessary corrections within 7 days of receiving feedback. Failure to resubmit within the 7 day window will result in a denial.
- If your application is still not passing after the resubmission, you will not receive the credential and must wait six (6) months before reapplying.

Using the Credential for the Level 6 Incentive Requirement

- If you are applying for the Level 6 Incentive, your portfolio must be submitted by **11:59 PM on March 19th** to be reviewed in time for the Incentive due date.
- The observation and training hours documentation can be submitted separately, but no later than **11:59 PM on the Incentive due date**.

If you have any questions about your application status, submission deadlines, or next steps, please contact UAN at Professionallearning@utahafterschool.org for assistance.

Maintaining Your Credential

Your Utah Afterschool School-Age Credential is **valid for three years**. To remain in good standing, you must renew your Credential before it expires. If you fail to renew by the required time, you will be required to complete the entire credential process again before becoming eligible for the Level 6 Incentive.

While your Credential is valid for three years, you will need to complete the Level 6 Incentive Verification Form each year to continue receiving the Incentive. Level 6 is the final level of the Incentive and can be repeated annually as long as all requirements are met. This includes completing 30 hours of **new** professional development training each year and participating in two new professional activities, as outlined in the Incentive guidelines. When applying each year, you'll also need to submit proof that your Credential is still current.

Staying up to date with your renewal and training requirements will ensure you maintain your Credential and continue qualifying for the Incentive.

Renewing Your Credential

To renew your Utah Afterschool School-Age Credential, you must submit updated documentation demonstrating continued professional growth and competency.

Your renewal application must include **a new observation** completed by your supervisor within the last 12 months and **60 additional professional development training hours** that align with the CKSCs from the previous 3 years. These training hours must be documented using the designated [Credential Training Log](#) and certificates for each completed training must be uploaded to URPD. If you fail to renew your credential before it expires you will be required to start the entire process from the beginning.

If you are renewing your Credential for the Level 6 Incentive, your renewal information must be submitted and accepted before that year's Incentive due date to qualify. Failure to meet this deadline may result in ineligibility for the Incentive.

For submission instructions and formatting requirements, follow the same guidelines as the initial application. If you have any questions, please contact UAN for assistance.