



Georgia



How did you engage stakeholders in the process of creating statewide quality standards?

From the onset, Georgia’s state agencies were instrumental in providing thought leadership and funding to create Georgia’s quality standards. Georgia’s process of development began with a convening of approximately 50 stakeholders representing state and local government, the afterschool and youth development field, and other youth-serving organizations. At the initial convening, stakeholders read a landscape assessment of quality standards from other statewide and city systems, and teams reviewed the various quality standards to determine which elements aligned with Georgia’s priorities. This discussion shaped the first draft of Georgia’s quality standards. Beyond this initial feedback, stakeholders had opportunities to review drafts and revise language.



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After the Georgia Afterschool & Youth Development (ASYD) Quality Standards were approved by the stakeholder group, a collaborative group of state agencies, which included the Governor’s Office for Children and Families, Georgia Department of Education, and Georgia Division of Family and Children Services, guided the creation of a self-assessment tool that serves as the primary mechanism by which quality standards are implemented.

Since the release of the Georgia ASYD Quality Standards in 2015, the Georgia ASYD Initiative, a collaborative led by GSAN and GUIDE, Inc., has led the promotion and adoption of the quality standards through the development of the Georgia ASYD website, provision of professional development including the Georgia ASYD Conference, resource identification, and quality coaching opportunities. The Georgia ASYD Initiative continues to provide opportunities for stakeholder feedback through focus groups and targeted engagement in the rollout of the quality standards.



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What advice do you have for other states before they start to develop or implement their own quality standards?

There is no need to recreate the wheel! Many states and cities have very thoughtfully taken on the development of quality standards and have terrific products. There may not be one tool that meets your state’s specific needs, so be sure to complete a thorough landscape assessment of what is out there and take the elements that best align with your state’s needs and priorities.

Think about utilization from the beginning. How will the quality standards be used in the field? Is there a self-assessment or will you be promoting another assessment tool? How will you support the field in understanding and in the adoption of the quality standards? What is your communications strategy and what training or tools will be provided? Additionally, engage state and local government in the process from the beginning to facilitate a smooth rollout of your quality standards.

Please share your thoughts with us via e-mail at SANSupport@air.org. We look forward to hearing from you.



What challenges did you encounter and how did you overcome them?

A challenge that we encountered after the release of the Georgia ASYD Quality Standards was a lack of clarity about and prior discussion of how partnering state agencies would be using the self-assessment tool for quality improvement with their grantees. When this challenge arose, our strong partnership with the state agencies allowed us to have open conversation and provide suggestions to the agencies on how they could incorporate the quality standards into their granting requirements to best promote program buy-in and continuous quality improvement.

Another challenge that continues to be a conversation for us in Georgia is how to create, promote, and support the implementation of a tool to a field with vastly different experiences with, and readiness for, continuous quality improvement efforts.



What successes are you most proud of?

Since the release of the Georgia ASYD Quality Standards in 2015, the Georgia ASYD Initiative has grown into a larger movement that offers tools and strategies for the field to support adoption and implementation. Supports that are now offered include the following:

- Professional learning opportunities, both in-person and online
- A statewide conference with all workshops aligned to the quality standards
- Quality coaching
- An online resource hub

This growth has brought more state agency partners to the table; five state agencies endorsed the Georgia ASYD Quality Standards and two state agencies (Georgia Department of Education and Georgia Division of Family and Children Services) use the Georgia ASYD self-assessment in their granting requirements.



Who did you work with to create your quality standards?

Today, the ASYD Initiative is led by the Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network and GUIDE, Inc. and by partnerships with the following state agencies:

- Georgia Department of Education
- Georgia Division of Family and Children Services
- Georgia Department of Public Health
- Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
- Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Throughout the creation of the Georgia ASYD Quality Standards, a variety of other stakeholders were engaged including the United Way of Greater Atlanta, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCAs, and afterschool and youth development providers from school-based, community-based, and faith-based environments.