

DOINGWHATWORKS



Presentation

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

Evaluating Implementation and Performance to Improve Program Quality

April 2010

Topic: Increased Learning Time: Beyond the Regular School Day
Practice: Evaluate Program

Highlights

- To ensure that an expanded learning day or out-of-school program is operating as designed and achieving its desired goals, it is essential to routinely conduct evaluation to assess program implementation and student outcomes.
- Developing an evaluation plan is a critical initial step to help guide the evaluation process and ensure that it produces accurate and informative results. An evaluation plan should have measurable goals, clear research questions, a data collection plan, a data analysis plan, a dissemination plan, and a timeline.
- Through discussions around evaluation results, districts, schools and program providers may decide what additional support for the program is needed, such as professional development or helping the program better align its curriculum with that of the regular classroom.

Full Transcript

Slide 1: Welcome

Welcome to the overview on Evaluating Implementation and Performance to Improve Program Quality.

Slide 2: The need for evaluation

To ensure that expanded learning time schools and out-of-school programs are operating as designed and achieving their desired goals, it is essential to routinely conduct evaluations to assess quality of implementation and student outcomes. Schools, districts, and program providers can collaborate in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the evaluation results to inform decision making.

Slide 3: Formative and summative evaluations

Experts suggest using both formative and summative evaluations to monitor implementation and assess performance.

Formative evaluations can help determine which elements of implementation are working well and where changes need to be made.

Summative evaluations are good for determining how effective an intervention or a program has been in accomplishing its goals, such as improving student reading, writing, or math performance.

Slide 4: Components of evaluation

A rigorous program evaluation involves:

- Developing an evaluation plan,
- Collecting program and student performance data,
- Analyzing the data to determine program impact and identify areas for improvement,
- Sharing evaluation findings with program providers, and
- Taking steps to ensure the quality of the evaluation itself.

Slide 5: Developing an evaluation plan

Developing an evaluation plan is a critical initial step to help guide the evaluation process and ensure that it produces accurate and informative results. All stakeholders, including teachers, parents, school and district leaders, and program administrators and staff, should be involved in this process.

An evaluation plan should have:

- Measurable goals,
- Clear research questions,
- A data collection plan,
- A data analysis plan,
- A dissemination plan, and
- A timeline.

Slide 6: Collect program and student performance data

Schools and districts need to develop, adapt, or select reliable instruments for measuring fidelity of implementation, student outcomes, and stakeholder satisfaction.

Slide 7: Program implementation data

Program implementation data can be gathered on curriculum content, instructional delivery, staff-student interaction, and behavior of staff members including instruction in the classroom, teacher collaboration, and planning practices. Observation checklists can be used for collecting program monitoring data.

Slide 8: Student performance data

Out-of-school providers and schools can share information collected locally. For example, out-of-school program staff can provide data on student attendance and behavior while they are in the program as well as the results of any academic assessments conducted by program instructors. Schools and districts can compile course grades or provide access to data systems.

They can also provide the results of state and district standardized tests.

Slide 9: Stakeholder satisfaction

Additionally, key stakeholders, including principals, classroom teachers, parents, and students, can provide important information on how well the program is meeting everyone's needs. This information can be gathered by phone, focus groups, or surveys.

Slide 10: Eliminating duplicate efforts

While collaborating in data collection, schools, districts, and program providers can coordinate their

activities to eliminate duplicate data collection efforts.

Slide 11: Analyze data

Schools and districts can carefully analyze the data collected and use the findings to improve program quality.

Analysis strategies should:

- Identify any inconsistencies between what the increased learning time model was designed to do and how it is actually operating,
- Determine which aspects of the model are working well and which are not,
- Compare the model outcomes with outcomes of other models operating in comparable schools or with comparable student populations, and
- Look for performance patterns in the data to identify subgroups of students that benefit from the model the most, as well as any contextual factors that facilitated or impeded implementation.

Slide 12: Share evaluation findings

Sharing evaluation findings and conducting discussions about these findings with expanded learning day school staff or out-of-school program instructors can greatly help to improve the quality of those models.

Through discussions around data, districts, schools, and program providers may decide what additional support for the program is needed, such as professional development or helping the program better align its curriculum with that of the regular classroom.

If the data consistently show that students are not improving, districts, schools, and providers might consider choosing a different program model or ending the current program.

Slide 13: Ensure rigor

Rigorous independent evaluations provide the best measurements of a program's ability to raise student achievement. Positive findings from such evaluations can greatly boost both participation in and funding for the program.

By hiring an external evaluator to conduct the evaluation, schools and districts can help ensure the credibility of the evaluation and its findings. If this is not an option, experienced evaluators can be consulted about the plans and methods being considered.

Slide 14: Utilizing existing resources

If access to experienced external evaluators is not possible, schools and districts can consider using existing staff members who have expertise in evaluation and data analysis. These in-house experts may also help program providers understand evaluation findings and use these data to develop program improvement plans.

Local colleges and universities or parent teacher associations may also provide data collection and analysis services. In addition, the federal government, state education agencies, and private foundations may help identify funding sources to support the evaluation.

Slide 15: What the district can provide

Districts play a vital role in ensuring that extended learning time programs effectively advance student achievement. By initiating, supporting, and facilitating program evaluation efforts, districts are well informed on whether specific interventions or practices need to be revised, replaced, or replicated at additional sites.

Slide 16: Learn more

To learn more about Evaluating Implementation and Performance to Improve Program Quality, explore the additional resources on the Doing What Works website.