

PROGRAM EVALUATION: BUILD IT FROM THE BEGINNING

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Why is evaluation planning important?

- ✓ Careful, collaborative evaluation design can focus program design and implementation
- ✓ It helps program leaders know their evaluation needs for partnership or contracting expertise
- ✓ Can provide feedback along the way for program adjustments
- ✓ Can establish the merit or worth of the program

High-quality evaluations involve many important decisions

- 1) Determining the purpose of the evaluation (users and uses)
- 2) Selecting the methods to be employed in the evaluation
- 3) Identifying/collecting the data to support the evaluation
- 4) Deciding how the results of the evaluation can be shared effectively

Evaluation design should be conducted with a clear purpose in mind

- 1) Determining the purpose of the evaluation
 - a. Who is the audience, or which key stakeholders are the intended users of the evaluation?
 - b. What are the goals of the evaluation?
 - c. What are the key research questions of interest?
 - d. How will the findings be used and by whom?

The methods should be tailored to the key research questions

- 2) Selecting the methods that best serve the research questions
 - a. Are descriptive, quasi-experimental, cost-benefit methods, or other methods required to address the question(s)?
 - b. What outcomes or measures should the study focus on?
 - c. What is the appropriate time frame for the evaluation?

Data availability is critical to ensuring the analyses can be done

3) Identifying the data to support the evaluation

- a. What data are required for various aspects of the evaluation?
 - To describe the program (e.g. implementation, participants, costs)
 - To assess outcomes
- b. How will these data be collected? Who will collect it? From where?
- c. What is the sample for the data? Which students? Which districts? Which years?

Sharing the findings to maximize use is also important

- 4) Deciding how the results of the evaluation can be shared effectively
 - a. Which stakeholders need to know what?
 - b. When are the findings needed given stakeholder decision-making needs?
 - c. What is the best format for sharing and engaging each stakeholder group?

the pittsburgh promise

UNIVERSITY OF
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Pittsburgh
Public Schools

EXCELLENCE
FOR ALL

The Pathway to the Promise.™

“Promise Ecosystem”



Pittsburgh Promise Theory of Change

FINANCIAL AWARD
\$\$\$

- AWARENESS
- FOCUSING POWER
- MEDIA ATTENTION

DIRECT EFFECTS

- Increased access
- Increased range of IHE options (fit/match)
- Reduced financial reasons for dropping out
- Reduced debt load

ECOSYSTEM RESPONSES

STUDENT RESPONSES

- ✓ Increased hope/aspiration/effort
- ✓ Improved attendance

FAMILIAL RESPONSES

- ✓ Increased hope/aspiration
- ✓ Increased awareness of aspects of college readiness
- ✓ Increased academic monitoring
- ✓ More choose to live in city and enroll children in PPS

PPS SYSTEM RESPONSES

- ✓ Tool for student motivation for attendance and effort
- ✓ Teacher expectations for college-going are raised
- ✓ Improved college-readiness curriculum
- ✓ Improved monitoring of student college-readiness
- ✓ Improved support for college planning and transition
- ✓ Increased coordination with IHE systems

IHE RESPONSES

- ✓ Increased attention to/interest in PPS graduates
- ✓ Intentional support systems for Promise Scholars
- ✓ Increased coordination with PPS

COMMUNITY RESPONSES

- ✓ Increased material and human investment in PPS/Scholars by local businesses
- ✓ Increased non-profit and governmental agency support for college readiness
- ✓ Increased media attention to issues that influence college readiness

1. Increased high school graduation rates
2. Increased rates of college readiness of high school graduates
3. Increased rates of college enrollment
4. Increased college retention rates
5. Increased college degree attainment

College graduates find employment in the region

More educated regional workforce; Increased appeal of city living and education system

The Pittsburgh Promise Evaluation

Approach: DESCRIPTIVE

PURPOSE	AUDIENCE	METHODS	EXAMPLE INDICATORS
Monitor PK-12 and postsecondary performance indicators	Promise program; PPS; Fundors	Annual descriptive statistics of PPS and Promise data Trend analyses	FAFSA completion HS graduation PSE enrollment patterns PSE persistence Degree attainment
Understand how PPS supports students in postsecondary planning	PPS; Promise program	Qualitative study of high school supports (<i>observation, interview, survey, document review</i>) from counselors, teachers, students	College Board's 8 components of college and career support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools • Messages • Structures • Resources

The Pittsburgh Promise Evaluation Approach: IMPACT ASSESSMENT

PURPOSE	AUDIENCE	METHODS	EXAMPLE INDICATORS
Assess impact of the Promise on college-going outcomes of PPS students	Promise program; PPS; Funders; National research community	Regression discontinuity using eligibility requirements as analytic lever Differences in differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seamless college enrollment• Enrollment patterns: in-state, 4-year college• Year 1 to Year 2 persistence• Degree attainment

The Pittsburgh Promise Approach: KEY LESSONS

- ✓ Traditional external evaluation not the only beneficial approach
- ✓ Build trusting partnerships
- ✓ Establish data sharing agreements
- ✓ Build and maintain data infrastructure (in all relevant systems)

Breakout Activity

1. Break into groups depending on which aspect of evaluation planning you are most interested in
 - Topic A: Purpose, audience and sharing of results
 - Topic B: Methods
 - Topic C: Data
2. Spend 25 minutes working on the task assigned to your group
3. Come back together to large group to report findings/ troubleshoot anticipated challenges