

“Rough Road” Evaluation: The Benefits and Consequences of Supporting the Primacy of Stakeholders

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Background and framework

- The inspiration for this presentation: AEA President Jennifer Greene's question:

Which stakeholder interest should be given priority in an evaluation study, and how is this determination made?

- Conference theme focus on 'values and valuing'

Project Context

- What is the project all about?
- Who are the stakeholders?

Evaluation structure of the project

- Internal evaluation
 - Led by a professional evaluator
 - Joined by project staff
- External evaluation
 - A team of state-wide external evaluator

The emergence of the project model and program evaluation

Logic Model – Theory of Change

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Measurable Short term Outcomes (Year 1)	Projected Medium term outcomes	Projected Long term outcomes	Projected Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding and material resources • Needs Assessment results • Staff/Leadership Team • Project staff, HCSEC, and UC faculty as facilitators • Lead teachers • Administrators • Facilities • ODE and OMSP Cross-Eval Team • Moodle learning/communication application • NSTA SciPacks • Participation of all 12 5th and 6th science teachers, 5 MS teachers, and 6 HS teachers in all activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly full day release days for Learning Teams by grade band (60 hours) • Weekly teacher Learning Team meetings during common planning times during school days (30 hours) • Individual and Team content study work (30 hours per teacher) • Individual teacher classroom support (10 hours per teacher) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers trained in energy and matter content through 8 cross-disciplinary workshops • Teachers trained in tested classroom units/lessons related to energy and matter • Teachers engage in Learning teams (by grade band) • Teachers engage in Moodle and NSTA SciPacks on energy and matter • Teachers implement one tested unit/lesson related to energy and matter at some point during school year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deeper teacher content (energy and matter) understanding • Increased instructional use of inquiry • Use of Learning Teams to improve teacher content knowledge and student learning of energy and matter • Independent development of deeper content knowledge on energy and matter supported by the use of Moodle and NSTA SciPacks • More engaged learners • Increased student learning in energy and matter understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved instruction of content • Curricular coherence • Increased student authentic learning • Improved student understanding of inquiry • Better teaching and learning of science content through learning team efforts • Sustained “habit of mind” of the teachers in the independent development of deeper content knowledge • Generalized use of inquiry in teaching of content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved student achievement in science • Sustained professional collaboration to improve teaching and learning of science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific literate graduates • Positive school professional culture where collaboration and learning communities are part of the norm

Emerging Process Outcomes

- Openness to ask for help
- Trust that they are supported by the administration in their decisions re: instructional practices
- Teachers within and across grade levels working and learning together
- Teachers volunteering to do extra work to learn beyond regular work hours
- Organizational adaptation and support: scheduling, resources

The “rough road” tensions and dilemmas

- Accountability
- Priorities
- Timelines

Grounding on some theoretical frameworks

- Guskey, T. R. (2000). Evaluating professional development. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- House, E. R. (2007). Regression to the mean. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Kundin, D.M. A conceptual framework for how evaluators make everyday practice decisions. American Journal of Evaluation, 31 (3), pp. 347-362.
- Patton, M.Q. (2011). Developmental Evaluation. NY: The Guilford Press.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002). Qualitative research and evaluation methods. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Schwandt, T. A. (2005 March). The centrality of practice to evaluation. American Journal of Evaluation, 26, (1), pp. 95-105.

Patton's focus on process and adaptation to complex issues

- Active involvement of people as end in itself
- Toward building a “community”
- Challenge of doing process evaluation
- Situational sensitivity, responsiveness, adaptation

Kundin's framework for everyday practice

Three elements:

1. Evaluation context and situation awareness
2. Practical reasoning
3. Action reflection

Schwandt's centrality of practice to evaluation

- Understanding views of “evidence-based”, “practice”, and “evaluation”
- Addressing practice in evaluation

Emerging internal evaluation process – the structure

- Involvement of project staff and an insider-outsider evaluator
- Strong involvement of the school leadership team
- Internal evaluation and organizational development

Emerging internal evaluation process – communications and interactions

- Vertical
- Horizontal
- Network

Emerging internal evaluation process – decision making

- Reflective
- Collaborative
- Supportive
- Proactive

Upholding the primacy of stakeholders

- Which stakeholders?
- What are the benefits?
- What are the consequences?

The “road” now trodden

- The “smoother road” ahead
- The project as a model in the state
- The greater challenges ahead

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