



The ECB Checklist

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Volkov & King (2007)

<http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/evaluation-capacity-buildinginstitutionalization/>

This morning's content

- Theoretical and empirical background
- The organizational model informing our understanding of evaluation capacity building
- The evaluation capacity building instrument
- Strengths and weaknesses of the instrument
- How we are using it to build evaluation capacity in MN's largest school district

Theoretical and empirical background

- **Interactive evaluation practice (IEP)**
 - Participatory evaluation
 - Evaluation use
 - Social interdependence theory
- **Three ECB case studies in 2005**
 - A large school district
 - A museum
 - A settlement house/NGO

Organizational model informing my understanding of ECB

- **Organizational and school change
literature**



The purpose of the ECB checklist

“To provide a set of guidelines for organizational evaluation capacity building (ECB), i.e., for incorporating evaluation routinely into the life of an organization”



Three broad categories of content

Category	Overarching Activity
Organizational context	Be aware of the internal and external organizational context, power hierarchies, administrative culture, and decision-making processes
ECB structures	Purposefully create structures-- mechanisms within the organization-- that enable the development of evaluation capacity
Resources	Make evaluation resources available and use them

Organizational context

1. Cultivate a positive, ECB-friendly *internal organizational context*
2. Understand and take advantage of the *external environment* and its influence on the organization

ECB structures

3. Develop and implement a *purposeful long-term **ECB plan** for the organization*
4. Build and reinforce ***infrastructure** to support specific components of the evaluation process and communication systems*
5. Introduce and maintain ***purposeful socialization** into the organization's evaluation process*
6. Build and expand ***peer learning structures***

Resources

7. Provide and continuously expand
*access to **evaluation resources***
8. Secure ***sources of support for
program evaluation in the
organization***

Assessment of the instrument



Strengths

- It is a checklist (easy to understand, simple)
- Based on “the literature” and on data from 3 organizations
- Easily adaptable to different program contexts
- Reportedly makes sense and is usable

Weaknesses

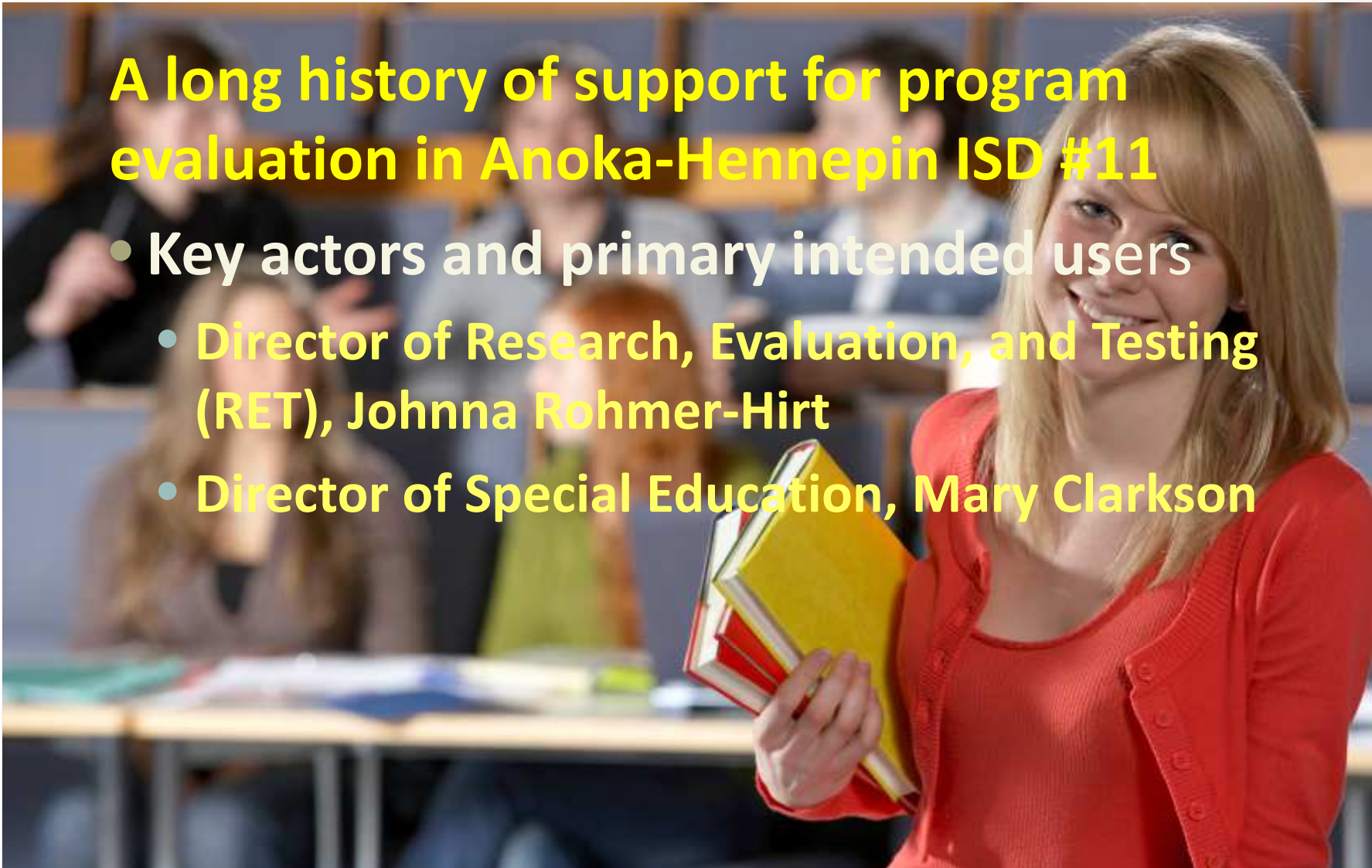


- It is a checklist (necessarily simplifies what is complex)
- No unifying theoretical grounding
- Doesn't address the “how” of implementation
- Process takes time that practitioners may not have

How we are using it to build evaluation capacity in MN's largest school district

A long history of support for program evaluation in Anoka-Hennepin ISD #11

- Key actors and primary intended users
 - Director of Research, Evaluation, and Testing (RET), Johnna Rohmer-Hirt
 - Director of Special Education, Mary Clarkson



On-going evaluation in A-H



- Capacity building model
- Additional resources through stimulus funding
- Special education focus to begin. . .
 - Early Childhood Special Education
 - Setting IV EBD
 - Center-based programs

Rationale for beginning in special ed

- All areas of the educational organization affected
- An identified area of concern for multiple stakeholders
- Significance of the barriers for this population of students in reaching proficiency

ECB activities (2009-present)

- Continuing support for ECB
 - Outside evaluation coach (JAK) using the checklist to analyze progress
 - Two evaluation consultants with expertise in special ed *and* evaluation
- Evaluation training and ongoing reflection for all special ed managers
- Expansion to non-special ed programs
 - Middle school program
 - English Language Learning program

ECB activities (2009-present)

- Coaching as managers develop criteria and standards for their programs
 - Stakeholder summit to develop criteria
 - Collaboration in developing “vision cards”
 - Data collection using the criteria and standards
 - A second stakeholder summit to reflect on the data and plan what to do in response

We ARE using it to build evaluation capacity in MN's largest school district



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