

Ensuring Program Quality: Lessons Learned from Implementation Evaluation of the KACSE (Kentucky Alternative Certification in Special Education) Program

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Presented at the Annual Meeting of the
American Evaluation Association in San Antonio, Texas
November 10–13, 2010

KACSE: Presentation Agenda

1. Brief Overview/Program Background
2. Program logic model/theory of change
3. The use of implementation evaluation
(focus on Patton's five types of
implementation evaluation)
4. Summary of points

KACSE: Brief Program Background

- The first Campbellsville University TTT grant (Teachers Route to Alternative Certification-TRAC)
- The second Campbellsville University TTT grant (Kentucky Alternative Certification in Special Education- KACSE)
- Overall goals

KACSE Logic Model/ Program Theory

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Measurable Short term Outcomes	Projected Medium term outcomes	Projected Long term outcomes	Projected Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant funding • University institutional infrastructure and support • Program personnel and Mentors; LEAs; school coaches • Partnerships: Kentucky Department of Education; Community, social agency, and community college partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment • Selection • Training and preparation • Teacher Placement • Support through the Induction model (Planning, Mentoring, Networking, Assessment, Professional development) • Certification • Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants who enrolled and successfully completed the program • Cohort networking • Partner support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of qualified participants from the program placed in high-need LEAs • Participants' belief in the program efficacy • Participants' knowledge of best practices in special education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of teachers who are LBD certified • Number of teachers from the program who are certified and are still employed in high-need LEAs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of teachers who are still employed and/or remained for three or more years in high-need LEAs • At least 60% of the partner districts hired teachers from the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than half and increasing proportion of students from south central Kentucky are part of regular education program
Assumptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The partner districts will hire the projected staff in accordance with their projected enrollment increase and increase of students that need special attention. • Campbellsville University, being the Kentucky district higher education partner, will be the source of qualified personnel in special education. 						

Changes Affecting KACSE

- **Economic Downturn**
 - Funding cuts; districts not hiring
- **Market Saturation**
 - 13 current partners are the same partners in previous grant; already have teachers; low retirement
- **Additional Institutions Offering a Similar Program**
 - From 7 in 2002 to 17 starting in 2007

What Implementation Evaluation Offered

Five types of implementation evaluation

[Patton, M.Q. (2008). *Utilization Focused Evaluation*.
Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.]

- Effort, input, access
- Monitoring programs
- Process evaluation
- Component evaluation
- Treatment Specification

What Implementation Evaluation Offered

- Lessons learned from effort, input, access evaluation
 - Recruitment, Selection, and Training: 59.02% regular students; 39.34% mid-career
 - professionals; only 1.64% para-professionals
 - Placement: limited to a few LEAs

What Implementation Evaluation Offered

- Lessons learned from monitoring programs
 - Software and systems
 - Initial Excel spreadsheet; data in different areas and files
 - Comprehensive Excel spreadsheet
 - Use of ACCESS database
 - Personnel training and ability

What Implementation Evaluation Offered

- Lessons learned from process evaluation
 - Recruitment
 - KDE not a big part of it anymore
 - More of other community parts like Chamber of Commerce [for all three groups of participants]
 - Articulation Agreement with the Kentucky Community Technical College Systems (KCTCS) [for more para-professionals]

What implementation evaluation offered

- Lessons learned from process evaluation

- Selection

- Learned from previous grant - need for high quality persons to be admitted
 - Initiated interview process
 - Learned from evaluation and others – strengthened admissions; the University wanted to implement strengthened admission process

What Implementation Evaluation Offered

- Lessons learned from process evaluation

- Training

- Learned from data: candidates not prepared for licensure
 - Training modules being developed

What Implementation Evaluation Offered

- Lessons learned from process evaluation

- Placement

- Data showed narrow placement availability due to economy and increasing competition from other institutions
 - Hired placement specialist to focus placement strategies and strengthen partnerships

What Implementation Evaluation Offered

- Lessons learned from component evaluation
 - Time spent on the five aspects of the induction model
 - Need for and emergence of three-tiered mentoring process
 - Technology and development of collaboration and networking
 - Cost/benefit components

What Implementation Evaluation Offered

- Lessons learned from treatment specification
 - Clarification of program independent and dependent variables for what outcomes
 - Clarification/commitment to what the program produces...quantity vs. quality of participants
 - Making the most out of the economic “slump”
 - Webbed vs. the linear connectedness of inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes

Program Challenges and Future Implications

- Decreased Funding
- Program accountability vs. economic reality
- Program personnel – continuous
- Training/keeping up with developments
- Maintaining participants' commitment to program goals vs. actual life situations

Critical KACSE Program Planning and Adjustments

- Effort, input, access (perspectives in terms of what, who, when)
- Monitoring programs (use of updated and appropriate database system)
- Revisiting Process and Components (recruitment, training, induction, placement; cost/benefit program review)
- Treatment Specification (the webbed vs. linear one-directional connections of components)

Use of Implementation Evaluation in the KACSE Program

- Program dynamic contexts and value of implementation evaluation
 - Continuous learning, even with similar programs, is important because of changing contexts.

Use of Implementation Evaluation in the KACSE Program

- Implementation evaluation and acceptable rationale for program changes
 - Review of efforts, inputs, access, process provided useful program adjustments.
 - Appropriate and up-to-date monitoring process is critical in program implementation.

Use of Implementation Evaluation in the KACSE Program

- Implementation evaluation and backing for program accountability
 - Component and treatment reviews provide better sense for program effects and direction.

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