

Evaluation is an essential step in the equity planning process. It examines what changes have occurred, what has worked, and what remains to be achieved.

The evaluation process can provide information on the effectiveness of the school's equity program, and in doing so, can help to ensure that programs and curriculum are responsive to the needs of students, staff members, parents, and community members.

When one discusses how to evaluate sex-equity efforts, it is critical to look at two forms of evaluation: formative and summative. Formative provides a constant look at what is happening and may provide guides to what could be altered, adopted, or eliminated on an ongoing fashion. It helps identify "what is" at the moment and what could be easily or readily reworked. Formative is part of a short-term process.

Summative evaluation, on the other hand, provides clues to effects over the long term (for example, at the end of a funding year or a series of funding years). It provides that all-important "snapshot" of what has resulted from a concerted effort to affect equity status within a school or a district. Summative evaluation is often used as a way to determine whether a particular program or practice ought to be continued or eliminated.

Both summative and formative evaluation processes are important to a district. We are really looking for systemic change within a district and that does not occur over the short term. We need to examine how committed a district is to ensur-

ing an equitable environment for *all* students within that district. Is that commitment to equity infused into the complete educational system (staff members, students, parents, curriculum, administration, and so forth)?

The Importance of Evaluation

- Evaluation can provide information needed for making decisions about a program—how to improve it, what to leave out, what to add to it.
- Evaluation provides documentation for the funding source for the present program as well as future programs.
- Evaluation provides a basis for comparison allowing us to judge programs.
- Accumulated results can serve as a basis for conclusions about how the needs have been met and what works best to meet those needs. Needs that have not been met also are documented.
- Evaluation is a formal record of accomplishment and serves to answer questions from peers, constituents, supervisors, and the community.

Organizing Questions

The following questions will help evaluate the program planning:

- What was the district already doing regarding sex equity before this program was implemented?
- What other program-improvement issues are being initiated by the district?
- What equity issues or activities currently exist in the community?

- How will each strategy tried be evaluated for effectiveness?
- How will the program as a whole be evaluated?
- How will actions taken be measured for effectiveness?
- What can be learned from those strategies that didn't work?
- How can the district infuse new assessment practices into the program planning (see Figure 18)?

Assessment is considered the process of gathering data and then using that data to make judgments about particular strategies. Normally, assessment is conducted before any final decision-making in evaluation.

When deciding what information to collect

- focus the data collection where you are most unlikely to uncover program effects as they occur.
- collect a variety of information.
- gather information to show that the program has had a positive effect.
- collect what you think others will want and need to know about the program.

Key Elements in the Evaluation Process

The evaluation process is comprised of the following four key elements:

Clearly defined program goals. Make certain that the program's goals are justified and responsive to the needs of the people being served. Base goals on local needs assessment data. (See Phase II, Chapter 3.)

Measurable outcomes. In order to evaluate success, identify specific, measurable outcomes. These outcomes are based on student competencies

and school actions/standards that are selected and discussed in the equity plan. (See Phase III, Chapter 4.)

Documentation. Keep records to determine if and how goals, objectives, and timelines were met and to provide information about related outcomes or events.

Evaluation design. Determine specific evaluation strategies, such as when to conduct the evaluation and who will be responsible for it. Follow up with reports to specific people and committees. Student competencies and school actions/standards provide a standard for measurement. Student and staff survey findings also provide a baseline to measure progress in future years.

Evaluating the Local Sex-Equity Program

Evaluating a program involves collecting evidence to demonstrate the program's effects. Consider the program's objectives, the staff's role, and the defined purpose of the evaluation while making decisions about what to evaluate. Involve the equity planning team when considering evaluation alternatives and directions.

Program outcomes will measure the extent to which goals have been achieved. The types of outcomes measured should include those described by the original program objectives and should include outcomes that can be measured immediately and at some point in the future.

In addition, consider evaluating and documenting the process. While the model has been designed to produce a document, the local sex-equity plan, the process of developing that prod-

■ Figure 18

Conventional practices:	New assessment practices:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are annual ● Are multiple choice ● Are based on a single setting ● Are norm-referenced ● Are teacher-proof 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are ongoing, cumulative ● Use open-ended formats ● Draw upon a variety of settings ● Are theory-referenced ● Are teacher-mediated
Source: Chittenden, 1991	

uct is critical. People's attitudes, knowledge, and skills are enhanced through the assessment, planning, and implementation process.

Decisions about what information to collect and what to evaluate will depend on each particular plan. Involve the local planning team in these considerations. Every program has different goals, objectives, and strategies built into the local equity plan. In determining how to evaluate the local plan consider these general components.

Collect statistical information. Examine student enrollments and participation in student organizations by male/female involvement. The data collected in the assessment phase are designed to help look at patterns and to what extent they have changed. While these statistics are an indicator of change, they are only one measure. It is relatively easy to look at present numbers and compare them with figures of five years ago. The same is true for evaluating staffing patterns and advisory/community committee membership. Be sure the patterns are considered as part of a larger whole and not alone. Keep in mind that the complexity of change should be measured by more than just numbers. See Chapter 3 and Appendixes E, F, and G for additional information and for data collection charts.

Follow up on student and staff surveys. Plan to survey students as they progress in their education. Use the student surveys as a longitudinal tool (survey the same students as they move through grades 3, 6, 8, 10, and 12). This will help assess changes in the students' vocational equity knowledge and skills and address how effectively equity competencies are being met.

Monitor each equity strategy or activity. What was tried? What was successful? What should be done differently? What additional problems, issues, or needs emerged as a result?

Review the program periodically. Identify a specific time, perhaps annually, when goals, objectives, and timelines are reviewed for progress and reported. Consider how this is best communicated and who should be informed.

Look for similarities. Identify common features among the sex-equity assessment and planning process, the equity plan, and other eval-

uation systems, such as the School Evaluation Consortium (SEC), the School Vocational Evaluation Program (SVEP), curriculum evaluation, and Wisconsin's educational standards. Consider the results and report.

Apply the findings. This might involve actions to improve performance, such as formulating a new set of goals and objectives or selecting an alternative program approach.

Summary

In considering your evaluation plan, evaluate the goals, objectives, and activities of the plan as well as the process. Decide, with the local planning team, how and what will be evaluated as well as how it will be communicated to others. The evaluation should be ongoing and lead directly into the phase of the model providing direction for further planning and action.

Suggested Resources

- Chittenden, Edward. "Authentic Assessment, Evaluation, and Documentation of Student Performance." In *Expanding Student Assessment*. Ed. Vito Perrone. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1991, p. 31.
- Cronbach, Lee J. *Designing Evaluations of Educational and Social Programs*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1982.
- Keyes, Melissa. *Measuring Changes in Educator Attitudes as a Result of Technical Assistance in Sex Equity*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1992.
- Patton, Michael Quinn. *Creative Evaluation*. 2nd ed. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1987.
- Perrone, Vito, ed. *Expanding Student Assessment*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1991.
- Rossi, Peter H., and Howard E. Freeman. *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*. 4th ed. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989.

