Developing Evaluation Evidence:

A Formative and Summative Evaluation Planner for Educational Leadership Preparation Programs

This publication was developed and produced by the **National Center for the Evaluation of Educational Leadership Preparation and Practice** (NCEELPP) (www.edleaderprep.org). The purpose of the center is to make available valid and reliable evaluation research tools, methods and training materials and strategies for leadership preparation programs as well as a systematic process for collecting and analyzing state data on degrees and certification by institution, and career advancement and school progress by graduates and institutions. The center provides tools, training, technical assistance and support for leadership preparation programs.

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Formative and Summative Evaluation Planning for Leadership Preparation Programs

Educational leadership preparation programs are currently engaged in formative and summative evaluation of their candidates and graduates for a variety of purposes and uses. These include:

- *Provide relevant and timely information on graduates and alumni outcomes to ascertain program effectiveness*
- *Compare groups of graduates' experiences to determine benefits of program differences*
- *Compare program features and delivery type with other programs regionally and nationally for benchmarking*
- *Identify areas for program and course improvement*
- *Make the case for program resources and support*
- *Research the relationship between program design and delivery, graduate outcomes, and school improvement work*

To facilitate planning and data collection, this formative and summative evaluation planner has been created. The planner is organized according to how program inputs and outcomes have been conceptualized and validated in the evaluation research on leadership preparation programs. This program evaluation has multiple uses, including those cited in the text box.

The Planner includes:

- *A conceptual model of the link between leadership preparation and outcomes.*
- *A guide for identifying evaluation evidence.*
- *An evaluation planning worksheet.*

> ### *Program Evaluation Uses*
>
> Identify Formative and Summative Assessments
>
> Identify Measures and Outcomes (e.g., program and participant outcomes)
>
> Evaluate the Relationship between the Program Attribute and the Outcome
>
> Use Data for Preparation Program Improvement

Each program is guided by its own theory of action or program theory, which connects its choices in program content, delivery, and design to expected outcomes. Weiss (1988) defines program theory as "the set of beliefs that underlie action" (p. 55) and explains that these represent the mechanisms that mediate between delivery of a program and the intended outcomes (Weiss, 1998). In planning for evaluation, program officials, therefore, will need to determine both the outcomes they expect as well as the attributes of the program they think are most influential. This planner should help program officials make these selection decisions by identifying what they want to measure and the sources of evidence they plan to use. As well,

the recommended evaluation evidence categories may help program officials consider evaluation options they had not anticipated.

Figure 1 below illustrates an *Evaluation Pathway for Preparation Programs*. The Pathway was constructed using available evaluation research validated through several studies. As indicated in the Pathway, there are two categories of program input, three categories of initial graduate outcomes, and two categories of expected school outcomes. This model serves as a blueprint for evaluation planning, as explained below.

Figure 1. Evaluation Pathway for Preparation Programs Preparation Programs

| Preconditions: Program Participants Prior Experiences | Program Quality Features: Leadership Program Experiences | Formative and Summative Learning Outcomes | Career Outcomes | Leader Practices | Leadership Impact on Staff, School Practices, and School Community | Leadership Impact on School and Student Performance |

Programs need a way to measure and track each program attribute and outcome of interest. This planner enables programs to identify what they want to measure and how these sources of evidence relate to their program as they select their formative and summative evaluation assessments.

Evaluation Planning Guide
The Evaluation planning guide includes a set of recommended sources of evaluation evidence for each kind of measure, as indicated in Figure 1. It includes types of data to be collected and recommended or available sources of evidence, including the School Leadership Preparation and Practice Survey (SLPPS), which was specifically designed for these purposes. (See http://www.edleaderprep.org/). The planning guide also includes suggested timing for data collection.

The categories and their definitions are as follows:

Pre-Conditions. For the purposes of evaluating leadership preparation, the pre-conditions are the characteristics and qualities that candidates have prior to their program experience. Some programs establish selection criteria that set limits on these pre-conditions (such as the number of years of prior teaching, the instructional effectiveness, and prior leadership experiences). Some programs strive to recruit candidates that help to diversify the field or create more equitable access to leadership preparation, based on gender, race, or ethnicity. A final typical pre-condition has to do with the candidates' affiliation with a local district and that district's relationship with the leadership preparation program (in the form of referral, collaboration and financial support). Thus, primary pre-conditions include:

- *demographic characteristics of the candidate.*
- *educational and leadership experiences and accomplishments.*
- *district support.*

Program Quality Features. Prior research has underscored the quality features of leadership preparation programs and their influence on graduate outcomes (Darling Hammond, Meyerson, La Pointe, & Orr, 2009; Jackson & Kelley, 2002). These in turn represent program dimensions and can be used to measure how they vary their content, delivery and quality. These dimensions include:

- *philosophy or theory of action*
- *curriculum and course content (relationship to national standards, focus on instructional leadership and other program priorities)*
- *instructional approaches (such as use of problem-based learning, case studies and action research; technology supported learning)*
- *internship (length, focus and quality)*
- *candidate support and development (including cohort structures and advisement)*
- *assessments (including exams, portfolio assessments, culminating projects, and state certification assessments)*
- *post-program support (such as seminars, mentoring and coaching, and job placement assistance).*
- *faculty (whether dedicated to the program, tenured, research-engaged, and having school and district leadership experience)*
- *organizational supports (logistics and ease of use).*

Formative Assessments of Candidate Learning. As candidates progress through their course of study, program faculty and officials need to assess learning and skill development for feedback and continuous improvement. Formative and interim assessments provide

information that can be used to identify candidates' skills and competencies that may need further development as well as ways in which to support such development prior to completion of the program. These can include course-related or internship-related assignments. It is also important to determine how these assignments are evaluated (such as with a rubric or other rating tool), and how results are tracked.

- *course-related knowledge assessments*
- *skill specific assessments*
- *dispositional assessments*
- *internship-related assessments*
- *standards-based tasks and projects*
- *mid-program assessments.*

Summative Assessments of Candidate Learning. At the completion of a program, candidates' learning and skill development can be assessed through a variety of culminating assignments and products, which are then evaluated using a rubric or other rating tool, and through standardized leadership assessments such as state and national exams. Summative assessments are designed to asset candidates' attainment of program defined competencies and readiness for licensure or certification and for initial leadership positions. The results can be compiled as part of tracking individual candidates and summarized by group and program.

Career Outcomes. A primary intention of educational leadership preparation programs is to influence the career advancement of candidates, including the nature, timing and efficacy of such advancement. Depending upon a program's mission and purpose, the focus should be on the extent to which candidates become school and district leaders and are able to advance fairly rapidly into such positions. Programs need to track graduates' careers over time for the types of leadership positions assumed, the length of time in and between positions, and the ease or challenge of gaining advancement, and to explore the extent to which programs are yielding equitable outcomes based on gender, race/ethnicity and other relevant demographic characteristics. This can be through self-reported information or as obtained from district or state employment information, and should include both school and district, and supervisory and nonsupervisory leadership positions. Such measures include:

- *type of position*
- *length of time to advance to each leadership position*
- *retention in leadership position*
- *ease of advancement into leadership positions.*

Leader Practices. By definition, leadership preparation programs are designed to develop the skills and capacities of educational leaders, which become most evident in their practices as school and district leaders. While some leadership skills and capacities are

developed by all programs (particularly those defined by national leadership standards), some programs emphasize certain skills over others and develop additional skills through their program content and delivery. Various principal assessment tools and surveys are designed to document principals' use of effective leadership practices, as reported by themselves or others, and can be used as part of a program evaluation system. These include:

- *principal practice surveys*
- *supervisor satisfaction surveys*
- *360-degree feedback assessments on leadership practices by supervisors, teachers and others*
- *Principal evaluation systems, such as Val-Ed (http://www.discoveryeducation.com/products/assessment/val_ed.cfm) (Goldring, Porter, Murphy, Elliot, & Cravens, 2007)*

Their use, however, should reflect alignment with the preparation program's priorities and design, and be used to illustrate strengths and gaps in programs.

Staff and School Practices. As research on effective leaders shows, principals have their greatest effect on student learning through their work with teachers and in organizing school conditions to optimizing teaching and learning (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). Therefore, evaluating the effects of preparation on leadership practices should look first at changes in these areas. Such changes would include changes in teachers' instructional practices, support of struggling students, and collaborative work with each other to improve student learning. Other changes would be more organizational in terms of improving the availability of relevant instructional resources, better use of school time and facilities, staff professional development, improved use of student data to guide improvement, and coherence of programs and services in supporting student learning. Assessing these improvements can be done through principal, teacher and supervisor surveys.

Staff and School Effects. As school conditions improve and staff members make progress on improving teaching and learning, there should be cultural and climate effects on students, staff and the larger school community. These effects include:

- *student attendance and positive behavior*
- *student engagement and academic effort*
- *teacher attendance and respectful treatment of students and colleagues*
- *teacher engagement and academic challenge*
- *improved school climate*
- *distributed and collaborative leadership*
- *improved parent participation.*

Student, teacher, principal and supervisor surveys, interviews, and other feedback mechanisms are among the best methods for determining these effects.

Student Outcomes. The ultimate impact of leadership preparation on leadership effectiveness is determined by the degree to which student achievement improves. Such improvements, however, are usually mediated first in the areas of teaching and school organization, as noted above. These improvements take time to affect positively student learning gains, which currently are best measured through standardized tests. Thus, student performance levels should be tracked and evaluated longitudinally to gauge the impact of leadership both prior to and during a principal's tenure. Implementation experts, however, suggest that student achievement gains as a result of leader actions will not be apparent for at least 3-5 years after improvement work begins (Fullan, 2001).

Evaluation Planning Guide Alignment to National Accreditation Evaluation Expectations

This planner is aligned to recommended evaluation outcomes for programs seeking national accreditation through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Under NCATE, individual educational leadership preparation programs within colleges or schools of education are reviewed for recognition status by a specialized professional association (SPA) using nationally recognized standards. The Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) is the NCATE-SPA for leadership preparation and is governed by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA – www.npbea.org). ELCC provides both standards and guidelines to programs for the preparation of educational leaders, including expectations for program evaluation. Together, these standards and guidelines clarify expectations against which individual programs can be compared and the kinds of data and outcomes for program implementation and impact assessments.

The School Leadership Preparation and Practice Survey (SLPPS) has been designed to provide measures for most of these evaluation categories. The original SLPPS survey was developed by the UCEA/LTEL-SIG Taskforce on Evaluating Leadership Preparation Programs. The survey has been field tested with a variety of leadership programs nationally. The survey items have demonstrated validity and reliability. For more information on SLPPS see http://www.edleaderprep.org/

ELCC requires seven types of assessments and recommends specific evidence:

- *state licensure assessment or other content-based assessment;*

- *assessment of content knowledge in educational leadership, using comprehensive examinations, essays, and case studies;*
- *assessment of ability to develop supervisory plan for classroom-based instruction, such as school improvement plans, needs assessment projects, and faculty intervention plans;*
- *assessment of internship/clinical practice using faculty evaluations of candidates' performances, internship/clinical site supervisors' evaluations of candidates' performances, or candidates' formative and summative logs and reflections;*
- *assessment of ability to support student learning and development, such as post-graduate 360 surveys, employer satisfaction surveys, and community feedback surveys of candidates or graduates;*
- *an assessment of the candidates' application of content knowledge in educational leadership (such as action research projects and portfolio tasks); and*
- *an assessment of candidates' abilities in organizational management and community relations (such as, school-based strategic plans, school simulations, and school intervention plans).*

When reviewed by ELCC, programs are rated on their use and quality of these seven types of assessment. Quality is determined by:

- *the extent to which the assessment description and scoring guides are aligned to specific ELCC standard elements;*
- *how the scoring guide is used to measure progress;*
- *how aggregated data are aligned to specific ELCC standards and the assessment scoring guide; and*
- *whether results show both areas of candidate success and provide an improvement plan for areas in which candidates are not successful.*

To encourage that evaluation data are used for program improvement and improved graduate preparation, ELCC requires that programs describe how their faculty "are using the data from assessments to improve candidate performance and the program, as it relates to content knowledge; pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions; and student learning"(National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2008) (p. 2). Thus, data collection, analysis and use must be documented and their relationship to program decisions should be noted.

Evaluation Planning Worksheet

The second component of the evaluation guide is a worksheet for programs to complete in their evaluation planning, see Table 1 below. Importantly, program officials should identify one or more sources of evidence for each category. A blank form is provided as Table 2 to be used for program evaluation planning purposes.

Table 1. Evaluation Planning Guide Worksheet

COMPONENTS	POSSIBLE MEASURES And ASSESSMENTS	DATA SOURCE	TIMELINE	Relationship to NCATE/ELCC Requirements
PRE-CONDITIONS		SLPPS survey Enrollment documentation Observations/ coded with rubrics	Before or at beginning of program start	Documentation needed
	Prior educational and leadership experience			
	Instructional effectiveness			
PROGRAM FEATURES		SLPPS-Program features survey SLPPS—Graduate survey Program documentation	During the program	ELCC evaluation requirement
	Evidence of program features			
	Candidate feedback on their experience with selected program features			
FORMATIVE LEARNING		Grades Program developed rubrics On-line management program	Throughout/at regular intervals throughout the program	ELCC evaluation requirement
	Portfolio of accomplishments			
	In-basket sorting activity to assess problem solving			
	Conduct and write up of a teacher observation, assess with rubric			
	Case study or school improvement plan analysis, assess with rubric			
	Interns' documentation of			

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COMPONENTS	POSSIBLE MEASURES And ASSESSMENTS	DATA SOURCE	TIMELINE	Relationship to NCATE/ELCC Requirements
	their accomplishments for schools and student learning			
	Course performance/ Grades			
	standards-based tasks and projects			
SUMMATIVE LEARNING		SLPPS survey Standardized assessments NASSP assessment center	At the end of the program and regular intervals after program completion	
	State or national leadership assessments			
	Self-reports on learning efficacy by leadership area (SLPPS)			
	Pre-post assessment of leadership knowledge gains, using a knowledge assessment tool			
	Assessment center evaluation			
CAREER ADVANCEMENT OUTCOMES		SLPPS survey Employment documentation	At regular intervals after program completion	ELCC evaluation requirement
	Whether advanced to a supervisory school leadership position (assistant principal or principal)			
	Whether advanced to other leadership positions (district or nonsupervisory)			
	Length of time to advancement			
LEADERSHIP PRACTICES		SLPPS survey Principal evaluation systems VAL-Ed	At regular intervals after program completion, such as annually or biennially	
	Amount of time spent on effective leadership practices			
	Perceived efficacy as school leader			
	Supervisor rating of principal efficacy			
	Teacher rating of principal efficacy			
STAFF AND SCHOOL		SLPPS survey	At regular intervals	

COMPONENTS	POSSIBLE MEASURES And ASSESSMENTS	DATA SOURCE	TIMELINE	Relationship to NCATE/ELCC Requirements
PRACTICES		District climate surveys	after program completion, such as annually or biennially	
	New teacher retention			
	Distributed leadership/teacher role in policy making			
	Teacher collaboration (PLCs)			
	Changes in school conditions to support student learning			
	Changes in how staff work to improve instructional effectiveness			
STAFF AND SCHOOL EFFECTS		SLPPS survey District annual reports on staff District climate surveys	At regular intervals after program completion, such as annually or biennially	
	Teacher engagement and effort			
	Student engagement			
	Academic rigor or press of school			
	Reduction in school problems that interfere with learning			
	Staff attendance			
	Positive working conditions			
	Parent assessments of the school			
STUDENT OUTCOMES		SLPPS survey District assessments and reports on student performance	Track annually, but look for effects after longitudinally (every three years) in a school leader position	
	Reduction in student problems that interfere with learning (student-related)			
	Student achievement			
	Student attendance			
	Credit accumulation (hs)			
	Retention (hs)			
	Graduation (hs)			

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Table 2. Evaluation Planning Guide Blank Worksheet for Program Use

COMPONENTS	POSSIBLE MEASURES AND ASSESSMENTS	DATA SOURCE	TIMELINE
PRE-CONDITIONS			
PROGRAM FEATURES			
FORMATIVE LEARNING			
SUMMATIVE LEARNING			
CAREER ADVANCEMENT OUTCOMES			
LEADERSHIP PRACTICES			
STAFF AND SCHOOL PRACTICES			
STAFF AND SCHOOL EFFECTS			
STUDENT OUTCOMES			

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The National Center for the Evaluation of Educational Leadership Preparation and Practice

High quality leadership preparation is essential to educational reform and improved student achievement. To support high quality leadership preparation, the UCEA National Center for the Evaluation of Educational Leadership Preparation and Practice provides:

1. Survey and evaluation research for program benchmarking and analysis of program features, graduate career and leadership practices, and related school and student outcomes.
2. A systematic process for collecting and analyzing state data on degrees and certification, career advancement, and school progress by graduates.
3. Technical assistance and support for leadership preparation programs, including regional train-the-trainer opportunities to increase evaluation capacity locally.
4. A sustainable system for evaluation research to support program improvement.
5. Policy analysis and policy development support.

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