

EVALUATING SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE PROVIDERS: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES



Under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, schools or local education agencies that haven't made adequate yearly progress (AYP) for three or more consecutive years must provide supplemental educational services to eligible students. In the Northwest region, each state has successfully complied with this requirement. However, the states now face the challenge of monitoring and evaluating their supplemental service providers.

The law allows flexibility in designing and implementing this process, but developing a set of successful practices is just the beginning. Ensuring that eligible students measurably benefit from supplemental educational services will require states to be innovative in fulfilling their responsibility.

This Topical Summary focuses on evaluating supplemental service providers, but some general information about the requirements is needed to provide context. The following information is summarized from NCLB—available at www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml—and the U.S. Department of Education's *Supplemental Educational Services Non-regulatory Guidance*, www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/suppsvcsguid.doc.

DEFINING SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Supplemental educational services are academic interventions such as tutoring and remediation that take place outside the regular school day. Supplemental educational services must be consistent with the content and instruction used by the local education agency (LEA) and must align with the state education agency's (SEA) academic standards. In addition, supplemental services must be of high quality, research-based, and designed to increase academic achievement.

Students eligible for supplemental services attend Title I schools that haven't made AYP for three consecutive years *and* opt to stay at the school rather than enroll in another one under the choice provisions of NCLB. Supplemental service providers apply to the SEA, which creates a statewide list of approved public and private providers. Local education agencies must notify parents that their child is eligible to receive services and give them a list of approved local providers.

What's Inside

3—EVALUATION ISSUES

3—RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICES

4—EVALUATION PROMPTS

6—EXISTING MONITORING PRACTICES

7—SUMMARY

8—BIBLIOGRAPHY

9—RESOURCES

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STATES

States are required to do the following:

- Consult with parents, teachers, LEAs, and interested members of the public to identify a large number of supplemental service providers so parents have a wide variety of choices
- Broadly disseminate an annual notice to potential providers that outlines the process for obtaining approval
- Develop and apply objective criteria for approving potential providers

- Maintain an updated list of approved providers
- Give school districts a list of available approved providers in their general geographic location
- Develop, implement, and publicly report on standards and techniques for monitoring the quality and effectiveness of services offered by approved providers

- Provides services that are consistent with the instructional program of the LEA and with state academic content and achievement standards

- Is financially sound
- Provides supplemental educational services consistent with applicable federal, state, and local health, safety, and civil rights laws

At least once a year, the state must update its list and notify current and potential providers of the procedures to be used for approval.

Local education agencies have their own responsibilities under NCLB, but they must also assist the SEA with gath-

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

It is important to note that since NCLB was authorized in 2001, only a relatively small number of schools have been identified as not making AYP. Consequently, the need for providers is not as great as it will be in later years.

In its report, *From the Capital to the Classroom: State and Federal Efforts to Implement the No Child Left Behind Act*, the Center on Education Policy states “since supplemental education services are only one part of the educational process that could affect learning and achievement, it will be difficult to identify whether a particular service actually improves student achievement, and if so, to what extent. States face a challenge in figuring out how to isolate this part of the educational process.”

The Council of Chief State School Officers has drafted an SEA toolkit on supplemental educational services, which is available at www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/SSPToolkit.pdf. This toolkit offers many resources for approving supplemental service providers, but the draft document doesn't directly address the need to evaluate providers once they are approved. The process for approving applications can certainly inform evaluation, but it is more concerned with technical compliance. Evaluating an operating service provider requires data from multiple sources. Also, during the approval process, the onus is on the provider to meet application requirements; during evaluation, the onus is on both the provider and the LEA to report to the SEA both compliance by providers and indicators of quality and effectiveness.

In formulating provider evaluation plans, SEA personnel should consult the CCSSO toolkit. The Resources

Surveying the parents and teachers of children receiving supplemental educational services will increase the reliability and utility of the evaluation.

The relationship between the process for approving providers and evaluating them as they deliver services will be discussed later in this Topical Summary. States are encouraged to be innovative and flexible in the approval process, with strong participation from LEAs, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders. However, NCLB requires SEAs to ensure that each approved provider meets the following criteria:

- Has a demonstrated record of effectiveness in improving student academic achievement
- Uses instructional strategies that are high quality, research-based, and designed to increase student academic achievement

ering information to evaluate and monitor supplemental service providers. Specifically, LEAs must:

- Notify parents, at least annually, about the availability of services
- Help parents choose a provider, if requested
- Determine which students can receive services, if all students can't be served
- Enter into an agreement with a provider selected by parents of an eligible student
- Assist the SEA in identifying potential providers within the LEA
- Protect the privacy of students who receive supplemental educational services, according to the

section (Page 9) may also be helpful as you begin the process of evaluating supplemental service providers.

EVALUATION ISSUES

To develop successful practices and a research base for evaluating supplemental educational service providers, SEAs and LEAs should start with a look at program evaluation research, existing Title I monitoring practices, and after-school/out-of-school time programs. Using information from existing knowledge bases is desirable for several reasons: providers will be recruited from existing after-school and out-of-school time programs and will likely be familiar with that evaluation process; using common vocabulary and language will help facilitate reporting; and there is an existing record of successful and unsuccessful programs.

Deciding what to use from these sources depends on the type of provider, the services offered, and the specific objectives and outcomes contained in the contract with the provider and the parents of eligible students. Also, there are several key components that must be considered when evaluating supplemental service providers. These include complying with NCLB and other laws; documenting student achievement outcomes; determining stakeholders' satisfaction with the providers; assessing the extent of communication and collaboration among key parties; ensuring appropriate administration by the LEA; and making certain that student needs are met.

It is important to point out the difference between quality and/or effectiveness of providers and technical compliance. The SEA may approve providers based on their compliance with NCLB. However, LEAs—working

with stakeholders—must develop quality and effectiveness indicators for evaluating the providers. As LEAs are required to develop contracts with providers, the contract performance objectives can be used to write the quality/effectiveness indicators.

RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICES FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The NCLB Act requires supplemental educational services to be “high quality and research based.” Scientifically-based research is defined as “research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs” (Beghetto, 2003). During the application process, the provider should submit information about the relevant interventions that it plans to use with the student. The Council of Chief State School Officers' *SEA Toolkit on Supplemental Educational Services* provides excellent tools for determining if the evidence submitted in the provider application meets this requirement. These indicators can also be used to evaluate providers once they are operating. For example, if a supplemental service provider tutors a student to increase achievement in reading, the provider should utilize the findings from the National Reading Panel and other successful practices in reading research. Although standardized test scores are useful in measuring a student's achievement, there is a danger when those are the only criteria used to evaluate an educational program or supplemental educational service provider (Beswick, 1990).

When an SEA evaluates the provider, the provider should be

responsible for reporting the effectiveness of the intervention and its research base. States can ensure the accuracy of the provider's claims of research-based interventions by using resources such as the What Works Clearinghouse at www.w-w-c.org/index.html or the National Reading Panel at www.nationalreadingpanel.org/.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The field of program evaluation offers a long and lengthy research base on which to draw. *The Program Evaluation Standards* (1995), an ERIC digest from the ERIC Clearinghouse for Assessment and Evaluation, states that sound program evaluation should have four basic attributes: utility, propriety, feasibility, and accuracy.

- **Utility** means the evaluation will serve the information needs of intended users. State education agencies should ensure the process for evaluating supplemental service providers is not cumbersome and will gather the necessary information. The process should be accomplished in a relatively short time period since lists of approved providers must be updated annually.

- **Propriety** ensures that evaluations are conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard to the welfare and privacy of both the student and the provider.

- **Feasibility** means that the evaluation will be realistic and within the means of the SEA.

EVALUATION PROMPTS

EVALUATION PROMPT	EVIDENCE/ INDICATORS	QUALITY INDICATOR	COMPLIANCE INDICATOR
Is the provider a legal entity and approved to provide services?	Business license, 501(c)3 determination letter, etc.		Yes
Does the provider offer services consistent with applicable federal, state, and local laws?			Statement of assurances
Is the provider financially sound?	Financial statements, audits performed by state auditor, bank letters of reference		
Are the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act followed in all transactions and communications while planning, delivering, and monitoring supplemental educational services?			Survey instruments
If the provider is a faith-based organization, are its services secular, neutral, and nonideological? How does the faith-based organization maintain financial records on the supplemental services contract?			
Are the services consistent with the LEA's instructional program and aligned with the state's content and academic achievement standards?		Sample descriptions of services, surveys	
If eligible students have limited English proficiency or disabilities, does the provider contract contain provisions to address these needs as appropriate?		Student pre- and post-data, writing samples	
Has the provider developed specific achievement goals for the student in consultation with the parent, child, and LEA?	Provider assessments, school assessments, portfolios of student work	Contract language, contract performance objectives	
How does the provider measure and document student progress?		Criterion-referenced assessments, student portfolios, district assessment data	
Does the provider regularly inform parents and teachers of the student's progress?		Letters, Web page communications, individual contact	
Has the provider developed and adhered to a timetable for improving the student's achievement in consultation with the parents and LEA?			
Are the methods used to deliver supplemental educational services based on research?			

EVALUATION PROMPTS

EVALUATION PROMPT	EVIDENCE/ INDICATORS	QUALITY INDICATOR	COMPLIANCE INDICATOR
LEA . . .			
Has the LEA notified parents at least annually of the availability of services?	Legal notices, newsletters, Internet sites		
What mechanisms are in place to assist parents in choosing a provider?			
How has the LEA determined which students receive services if demand is greater than available resources?			
What mechanism is in place for the LEA to help the state identify potential providers?			
Does the agreement between the LEA and the provider contain the following:			
1. Proper accounting of funds for supplemental educational services			
2. Proper accounting of payments for supplemental services			
3. Specific achievement goals for the student developed in consultation with the student's parents			
4. A description of how the student's progress will be measured, and how parents and teacher will be informed			
5. A timetable for improving the student's achievement			
6. Provisions for terminating the agreement if the provider fails to meet student progress goals and timetables			
7. Provisions for payment of services			
8. Provisions for protecting student privacy and nondisclosure of information without parent's written consent			
9. Assurances that services will meet all applicable health, safety, and civil rights laws			

- **Accuracy** ensures the evaluation reveals adequate information to determine merit.

All these attributes help the SEA design an evaluation system that guards against hasty judgments, lets providers know exactly how they will be evaluated, and links expected outcomes to increased student achievement.

Incorporating multiple sources greatly increases the accuracy and usefulness of the evaluation for stakeholders, policymakers, and providers.

AFTER SCHOOL/ OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME EVALUATION TOOLS

When evaluating supplemental service providers, it is critical to document individual student achievement. However, the importance of evaluating a provider in a larger context should not be overlooked. Many providers will come from existing after-school and out-of-school time programs, and there are excellent evaluation tools available in this field. Two examples are Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's *Out-of-School Time Program Evaluation: Tools for Action* (Geiger & Britsch, 2003) and Harvard

Family Research Project and the Finance Project's *Documenting Progress and Demonstrating Results: Evaluating Local Out-of-School Time Programs* (Little, DuPree, & Deich, 2002). These publications provide useful information about designing and implementing evaluation systems, including collecting multiple data sources and effectively using stakeholder surveys to enrich the evaluation. Surveying the parents and teachers of children receiving supplemental educational services will increase the reliability and utility of the evaluation.

Studies have shown that when existing after-school programs seek to become supplemental service providers, states will recruit better applicants if the providers are informed about the requirements (Flynn, 2002). Faith-based and community organizations are eligible to become supplemental service providers, and they face specific requirements. States should encourage these organizations to consult the *Toolkit for Faith-Based and Community Organizations to Provide Extra Academic Help* available at www.ed.gov/admins/comm/suppsvcs/toolkit.pdf.

EXISTING TITLE I MONITORING PRACTICES

Evaluating supplemental service providers is just one part of overall Title I monitoring. Consequently, states should integrate the evaluation of providers into existing practices, thus saving time and money. For example, the SEA is responsible for determining if the LEA is in compliance with Title I. While performing this monitoring, the state should also make certain that the LEA is meeting its responsibilities in terms of supplemental service providers. State and local education agencies must work together to ensure that the supplemental service requirements are met.

The table on pages 4–5 is a summary of the basic prompts that states can use when designing the summative component of the supplemental educational service evaluation system. For each prompt, states should identify various types of evidence and key indicators that will document whether the prompt has been met. The columns in the table for evidence and indicators have been left blank intentionally, except for a few examples. States should determine their own indicators and standards for acceptable evidence. To enrich the evaluation, it is desirable to use other data such as parent and student surveys, standardized test scores, and assessments administered by the provider. Incorporating multiple sources greatly increases the accuracy and usefulness of the evaluation for stakeholders, policymakers, and providers.

SUMMARY

Evaluation of supplemental educational service providers is one of many responsibilities that SEAs and LEAs now must fulfill under the No Child Left Behind Act. Perhaps more important, evaluation is a way to determine if stakeholder needs are being met. To successfully meet this challenge and ensure that eligible students are receiving high-quality supplemental services, SEAs and LEAs should work together, collect and analyze data from multiple sources, and borrow from the best practices of other program evaluations.

Northwest states have always been known for their ability to meet new challenges with innovation and thoughtfulness. By demonstrating leadership in evaluating supplemental service providers, the Northwest region can inspire others to not just comply with the requirements of NCLB, but to ensure quality and make the intent of NCLB a reality.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alexander, J., Hornbeck, M., Stumbo, C., & Fleischman, S.W. (2002). *SEA toolkit on supplemental educational services in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (Draft Version No. 1.3). Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers, & Washington, DC: Education Quality Institute. Retrieved January 29, 2004, from www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/SSPToolkit.pdf

Beghetto, R. (2003). *Scientifically based research* [ERIC digest]. Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. Retrieved January 29, 2004, from www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed474304.html

Beswick, R. (1990). *Evaluating educational programs* [ERIC digest]. Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. Retrieved January 29, 2004, from www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed324766.html

Center on Education Policy. (2003). *From the capital to the classroom: State and federal efforts to implement the No Child Left Behind Act*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved January 29, 2004, from www.ctredpol.org/pubs/nclb_full_report_jan2003/nclb_full_report_jan2003.pdf

ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation. (1995). *The program evaluation standards* [ERIC digest]. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved January 29, 2004, from www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed385612.html

Flynn, M. (2002). *Title I supplemental educational services and afterschool programs: Opportunities and challenges*. Washington, DC: Finance Project. Retrieved January 29, 2004, from www.financeprojectinfo.org/Publications/suppsvc.pdf

Geiger, E., & Britsch, B. (2003). *Out-of-school time program evaluation: Tools for action*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. Retrieved January 29, 2004, from www.nwrel.org/ecc/21century/publications/ost_tools.pdf

Little, P., DuPree, S., & Deich, S. (2002). *Documenting progress and demonstrating results: Evaluating local out-of-school time programs*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Graduate School of Education, Harvard Family Research Project, & Washington, DC: Finance Project. Retrieved January 29, 2004, from www.financeprojectinfo.org/Publications/OSTlocalevaluation.pdf

U.S. Department of Education. (2003). *Supplemental educational services: Non-regulatory guidance*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved January 29, 2004, from www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/suppsvcsguid.doc

RESOURCES

ALASKA

State of Alaska, Department of Education and Early Development
www.eed.state.ak.us/

Title I programs
www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/migt1/

Supplemental educational services, frequently asked questions
www.eed.state.ak.us/nclb/sesfaq.html

Approved list of providers
www.eed.state.ak.us/nclb/providers.html

Application for providers
www.eed.state.ak.us/nclb/pdf/SSP_REA.pdf

Schools not meeting AYP and/or with students eligible for services
www.eed.state.ak.us/nclb/silist.html
www.eed.state.ak.us/nclb/districtchart.html

IDAHO

Idaho State Department of Education
www.sde.state.id.us/dept/

Title I programs
www.sde.state.id.us/sasa/

Application for providers
www.sde.state.id.us/sasa/docs/resources/SupplementalServices.pdf

Approved list of providers
www.sde.state.id.us/sasa/docs/resources/SupplementalServiceProviderslist.htm

Schools not meeting AYP and/or with students eligible for services
www.sde.state.id.us/sasa/resources.asp#Supplemental

Tool for evidence of effectiveness for scientifically-based research
www.sde.state.id.us/sasa/docs/resources/SBR.pdf

MONTANA

Montana Office of Public Instruction
www.opi.state.mt.us/

Title I programs
www.opi.state.mt.us/TitleI/index.html

Approved list of providers
www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/TitleI/ApprovedProvider.pdf

Application for providers
www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/TitleI/SupServPacket.pdf

OREGON

Oregon Department of Education
www.ode.state.or.us/

No Child Left Behind, Consolidated programs
www.ode.state.or.us/iasa/

Supplemental services information
www.ode.state.or.us/iasa/supped/index.htm

Supplemental services provider criteria list
www.ode.state.or.us/iasa/supped/providercriteria.pdf

Approved list of providers and application (Word document available on this Web page)
www.ode.state.or.us/iasa/supped/index.htm

Schools not meeting AYP and/or with students eligible for services and sample parent notification letters
www.ode.state.or.us/nclb/

WASHINGTON

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
www.k12.wa.us/

Title I, Learning assistance program, approved list of providers, and application for providers (Word document available on this Web page)
www.k12.wa.us/TitleI/default.aspx

Supplemental educational services information (Word document available on this Web page)
www.k12.wa.us/TitleI/NCLB.aspx

Schools not meeting AYP and/or with students eligible for services
www.k12.wa.us/ESEA/Contact.aspx

Sample parent notification letters and sample contract
www.k12.wa.us/ESEA/ModelLetters.aspx

FEDERAL RESOURCES

U.S. Department of Education, Cross-site search indexing
<http://search.ed.gov/csi/>

- This is an excellent resource in searching for resources across many federal agencies, including the REL network.

U.S. Department of Education, NCLB Web site
www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml

U.S. Department of Education, Supplemental educational services, Frequently asked questions
www.ed.gov/parents/schools/choice/choice.html

Keeping schools open as community learning centers: Extending learning in a safe, drug-free environment before and after school, by U.S. Department of Education, Partnership for Family Involvement in Education
www.ed.gov/pubs/LearnCenters/index.html

- A good resource for informing the evaluation of existing programs that become supplemental services providers.

Supplemental educational services: Non-regulatory guidance, by U.S. Department of Education
www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/suppsvcsguid.doc

- Released in August 2003, this document is the most comprehensive information on supplemental educational service requirements, and addresses many issues not included in this Topical Summary, such as funding.

The program manager's guide to evaluation, by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families
www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/core/pubs_reports/prog_mgr.html

- Good program evaluation tool.

Toolkit for faith-based and community organizations to provide extra academic help (supplemental educational services), by U.S. Department of Education
www.ed.gov/admins/comm/suppsvcs/toolkit.doc

NATIONAL RESOURCES

Education Commission of the States, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) database
www.ecs.org/html/offsite.asp?document=3A%2F%2Fwww%2Eecs%2Eorg%2FNCLBsurvey

- A searchable database of resources on NCLB.

Finance Project, Information for decisionmaking
www.financeprojectinfo.org/

Finance Project, Out-of-school time

www.financeprojectinfo.org/OST/default.asp

- Excellent source of various resources on after-school and out-of-school time programs.

Harvard Graduate School of Education, Harvard Family Research Project

www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/

Harvard Family Research Project, out-of-school time program evaluation database

www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/evaldatabase.html

- A searchable database of program evaluations—worthwhile to inform the design process.

National Institute on Out-of-School Time

www.niost.org/

Accountability for after-school care: Devising standards and measuring adherence to them, by M. Beckett,

A. Hawken, & A. Jackowitz, RAND

www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1411/

- Advocating comprehensive program evaluation.

Documenting progress and demonstrating results:

Evaluating local out-of-school time programs, by P. Little, S. DuPree, & S. Deich, Harvard Family Research Project

www.financeprojectinfo.org/Publications/OSTlocalevaluation.pdf

- An excellent tool for developing comprehensive program evaluation.

From the capital to the classroom: State and federal efforts to implement the No Child Left Behind Act, by Center for Education Policy

www.cep-dc.org/pubs/nclb_full_report_jan2003/nclb_full_report_jan2003.pdf

Making the case: A fact sheet on children and youth in out-of-school time, by Wellesley College, National

Institute on Out-of-School Time

www.niost.org/publications/Factsheet_2003.PDF

SEA toolkit on supplemental educational services in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Draft Version No.

1.3), by J. Alexander, M. Hornbeck, C. Stumbo, & S.W. Fleischman, Council of Chief State School Officers
www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/SSPToolkit.pdf

- The most comprehensive toolkit on supplemental educational services. Excellent process design tools. Draft document, but still very useful.

Statewide educational accountability under NCLB: Central issues arising from an examination of state accountability workbooks and U.S. Department of Education reviews under No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, by W.J. Erpenbach,

E. Forte-Fast, & A. Potts, Council of Chief State School Officers
www.ccsso.org/publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=215

Title I supplemental educational services and after-school programs: Opportunities and challenges, by M. Flynn, Finance Project

www.financeprojectinfo.org/Publications/suppsvc.pdf

REL RESOURCES

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 21st Century Community Learning Centers Web page

www.nwrel.org/ecc/21century/

Literacy program evaluation tool, by North Central Regional Educational Laboratory

www.ncrel.org/literacy/eval/

Out-of-school time program evaluation: Tools for action, by E. Geiger & B. Britsch, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

www.nwrel.org/ecc/21century/publications/ost_tools.pdf

- An excellent resource and tool for designing comprehensive evaluation systems.

“ By demonstrating leadership in evaluating supplemental service providers, the Northwest region can inspire others to not just comply with the requirements of NCLB, but to ensure quality and make the intent of NCLB a reality. ”



Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500
Portland, Oregon 97204
Telephone: 503-275-9500, Fax: 503-275-0458
E-mail: Info@nwrel.org
NWREL's Web site address is www.nwrel.org

Office of Planning and Service Coordination

Director: Dr. Steven R. Nelson

Writer: Clayton Connor

Editor: Rhonda Barton

Design and Production: Paula Surmann

Technical Editor: Eugenia Cooper Potter

Comments or queries may be directed to
503-275-9500 or 800-547-6339 ext. 720,
Amy Steve, stevea@nwrel.org.

This publication has been funded at least in part with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education under contract number ED-01-CO-0013. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.