Program Evaluation in Stafford County Public Schools

Refocusing Our Efforts
The Office of Assessment, Accountability and Program Evaluation is responsible for ensuring that the mission, vision, and goals of Stafford County Public Schools are implemented with fidelity through oversight of a robust program evaluation process.
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What is Program Evaluation?

There are a number of different ways to classify program evaluation. Leading definitions include the following:

*Program evaluation is “the determination of whether a social intervention is producing the intended result” (Babbie, 2008, p. 385).*

“Program evaluation is the use of social research methods to systematically investigate the effectiveness of social intervention programs in ways that are adapted to their political and organizational environments and are designed to inform social action to improve social conditions” (Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, 2004, p. 16).

“Evaluation is the systematic assessment of the operation and/or the outcomes of a program or policy, compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards as a means of contributing to the improvement of the program or policy” (Weiss, 1998, p. 4).

In essence, program evaluation seeks to understand whether various programs are accomplishing what they set out to do. When applied to school systems, program evaluation is a useful tool to ensure that the various programs in which the school system has invested time, funding and human capital are leading to an improved educational system for students. Program evaluation might be used in education to examine program implementation, process and outcomes; it might be formative or summative. Program evaluation can be used to improve program adoption and execution, analyze program results, and provide suggestions for program improvements.

While similar to research, program evaluation and research have different foci:
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<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Focused on broad theories and constructs across multiple contexts.</td>
<td>Focused on the application of theories and constructs in a specific context.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focused on contributing to a generalizable knowledge base.</td>
<td>Focused on determining if a specific program is achieving its goals.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Key Question:</strong> Will this work wherever it is applied?</td>
<td><strong>Key Question:</strong> Is this working in this context?</td>
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(Fiero and Orians, 2010)

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) notes that research is focused on studying techniques and approaches across multiple settings and building a generalizable knowledge base, while program evaluation is focused on considering whether and how an approach is working in a specific context and how that approach is or is not contributing to organizational goals and objectives. Patton (1990) summarizes the difference between research and evaluation this way: “Research seeks to prove...evaluation seeks to improve” (p.532).

Why Program Evaluation?

Program evaluation provides value to organizations seeking to have an impact. It allows organizations to:

- **“To gain insight about a program and its operations”** – to see where we are going and where we are coming from, and to find out what works and what doesn’t.
- **To improve practice** – to modify or adapt practice to enhance the success of activities.
- **To assess effects** – to see how well we are meeting objectives and goals, how the program benefits the community, and to provide evidence of effectiveness.
- **To build capacity** - increase funding, enhance skills, [and] strengthen accountability.”

(Center for Disease Control, 1999)

There are a number of ways in which a school system can benefit from conducting program evaluation. A few benefits might include:
• Improved stakeholder involvement and experiences
• Better utilization of resources
• Support for program implementation
• Improved understanding of program capacity
• Increased alignment to the strategic plan
• Improved student learning
• Enhanced educational experiences and outcomes

Ultimately, utilizing program evaluation helps school districts ensure that they are meeting their missions, visions, and priorities as laid out in their strategic plans. Stafford County Public Schools has recently adopted a new strategic plan, with specific objectives and metrics, as noted in Appendix A. Program evaluation will seek to support those objectives through its research, findings and recommendations.

The SCPS Approach to Evaluation

The Office of Assessment, Accountability and Program Evaluation (OAAP) consulted program evaluation literature, organizations and other school systems in developing a system for program evaluation in Stafford County Public Schools. As seen in the chart, three of the nine comparison school divisions for SCPS have formal program evaluation in place. The OAAP set up in-person meetings with all three of these comparisons. In addition, the OAAP met with staff from the program evaluation department from Fairfax County Public Schools and Virginia Beach City Public Schools. Of the divisions with whom the OAAP met, each district had a slightly different approach based on their particular district culture and climate, yet common themes emerged. Appendix B has a breakdown of program evaluation in the various districts with whom the OAAP met.

In addition to conferring with different school divisions’ evaluation teams, the OAAP also consulted a variety of literature on evaluation in formulating program evaluation in SCPS. We considered the works of key evaluation and social researchers such as Carol Weiss, Michael Patton, Earl Babbie, Peter Rossi, Mark Lipsey and Howard
Freeman. We also examined the work of organizations in developing models and theories of program evaluation, particularly the work done by the CDC and the U.S. Department of Education. The OAAP recommends an approach to evaluation grounded in the framework created by the CDC in 1999 as well as an approach recommended by the Education Department.

The CDC invested significant time and energy in developing a framework that has become a guiding process for many evaluation organizations. This process involves the following cycle of steps:

In the first step, “Engage Stakeholders”, the CDC advocates getting the input of as many stakeholders as possible to inform the program description and evaluation design. Without stakeholder involvement, the evaluation study risks being both irrelevant and misrepresentative of the program. The next task of the evaluator is to generate a program description. This involves identifying the need for the program, the activities, strategies and costs of the program, and a logic model. The logic model provides a visual representation of the goals, strategies and specific actions of a program, connecting the individual program components to the overarching objectives. The program description should provide a thorough overview of program processes and implementation.

Input from the stakeholders and program description assists the evaluator in the third step of focusing the evaluation design. In this step the evaluator considers what questions the evaluation will seek to answer, based on input from stakeholders and the program description. Under the CDC’s process this step also involves determining methodology and data collection. In the fourth step, the evaluator gathers appropriate evidence. In the fifth step, “Justify Conclusions”, the evaluator analyses the data, draws conclusions and makes recommendations. In the final step, the evaluator seeks ways to disseminate the evaluation findings and encourage their use. This takes the evaluator back to engaging the stakeholders, as the information is shared and hopefully used to shape the program’s direction.
The U.S. Department of Education (USED) also has created a process for embedded program evaluation. Designed primarily with the practitioner in mind, the process provides a useful lens with which to compare and contrast the CDC model.

As seen in the figure to the right, the USED’s model focuses on embedding evaluation into the implementation of a program. In the USED’s model, the evaluation process involves describing the program, then developing a logic model. From there, their process involves designing the evaluation, considering research questions and methods. The “Evaluation” stage involves gathering and analyzing data. Lastly, the results are considered and used to refine and inform the program.

The OAAP proposes a model largely based on the approach of the CDC, with elements of the USED embedded, particularly in the approach for new programs. The model also incorporates the values of Stafford County Public Schools and the nationally recognized evaluation standards; while the entire model centers on the Stafford County Public Schools’ mission to “inspire and empower all learners to thrive”:
The Evaluation Process model illustrated above involves a set of six broad progressions that will constitute the methodology of evaluation in SCPS. The following descriptions explain each stage:

**Stages of Evaluation:**

**Stakeholder engagement** refers to the process by which input is sought from a range of stakeholders to inform the evaluation questions and process. The OAAP will engage stakeholders throughout the evaluation process, first by incorporating the input of the Superintendent, the school board, and a selected committee in selecting an evaluation schedule. Throughout the evaluation process, the OAAP will seek to include various stakeholder perspectives as it designs the evaluation, gathers and analyzes evidence and provides recommendations.
Program Description and Logic involves providing an overview of the program as it currently exists. The OAAP will review (1) program goals and logic models; (2) program funding: funding source(s), operational costs, human capital costs, and indirect costs; (3) an overview of the program status and operations; and (4) any routinely collected data. During the Program Description and Logic phase, the OAAP will gather information on what an existing program is, how it operates, its goals, costs and other descriptive information. From that information, the OAAP can generate the specific design of a particular program evaluation, gather and analyze evidence, assemble conclusions and make recommendations to the stakeholders.

Evaluation Design involves constructing, specifying and outlining the evaluation type, questions and process to be followed in a particular evaluation as a result of the stakeholder engagement, information from the program description and logic, and guiding evaluation construct theories using a mixed-methods approach of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Ethical considerations will be incorporated in the design process, and the OAAP will remain conscious of fiscal feasibility in evaluation design.

Evidence Collection and Analysis involves carrying out the evaluation as designed, collecting the relevant qualitative and quantitative data. Data will then be analyzed through appropriate coding and statistical analysis. Evidence collected will likely include gathering information from stakeholders through quantitative and qualitative methods, program financial information, outcomes and results from the program, and other pieces of evidence as warranted.

Conclusions and Recommendations: Based on data collection and analysis, conclusions and recommendations will be drawn and made to the superintendent and school board. Recommendations will include: (1) Continue the Program; (2) Continue the Program with Modifications; (3) Discontinue the Program/Phase Out. Specific recommendations corresponding to these broad recommendations will be included based on the information gathered during the evaluation.

Communication and Use of Lessons Learned: The final stage of the evaluation process seeks to ensure that the information and knowledge gained from the evaluation are communicated to various stakeholders. Additionally, the information should be used to inform, improve and revise the program evaluated. Working with
the Department of Learning and Organizational Development and Office of Strategic Communications will ensure evaluation results are effectively communicated, organizational learning occurs, and effective strategies are implemented.

**Program Evaluation Standards**

In conducting any evaluation involving human subjects, it is of utmost importance that careful precautions be taken in study design, data collection and analysis. The OAAP will maintain adherence to all federal, state and local legislation concerning program evaluation in educational settings, and like the CDC and other school systems, the OAAP will utilize the standards set forth by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, focused on utility, feasibility, propriety, accuracy, and evaluation accountability. A complete listing of those standards can be found in Appendix C.

**SCPS Values and Mission**

In adopting an evaluation process, the OAAP wants to consistently consider the mission and core values of SCPS as program evaluation is carried out. The ultimate goal of program evaluation is to aid the school system as it seeks to “inspire and empower all learners to thrive”. The core values focused on learners, community, excellence, respect and integrity will also heavily influence the ethical construct of program evaluation in Stafford County. In essence, the model for program evaluation in SCPS will incorporate the process established by the CDC, the embedded evaluation process advocated by the USED, the evaluation standards established by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, as well as SCPS’s own mission and values.
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Evaluation Types
Types of Program Evaluation:

The Office of Assessment, Accountability and Program Evaluation (OAAP) will provide various types of program evaluation using a mixed-methods approach for new programs and existing programs. As mentioned, the following recommendations are based on the information gathered from program evaluation teams at different school systems, as well as the literature on evaluation. The specific type of evaluation will depend on program adoption, implementation, process and outcomes. Appendix D provides a breakdown of evaluations for existing and new programs. In addition to new and existing program evaluation the OAAP will compile Program Profiles to provide a directory of existing programs in the division for stakeholders. Ad Hoc requests from school and district leadership will also be handled by the office to further support the school system in its endeavors, as time allows.

Evaluation of Existing Programs:

All existing programs will undergo an initial status and process assessment. Due to the large number of existing programs in Stafford County, a committee will be formed to select the most critical programs for initial evaluation, with a new set of programs selected each year. Annually, existing programs will be selected in a given year for a status and process assessment to be conducted. Based on the results of the status and process assessment, the program will be recommended for either an evaluation readiness process or comprehensive program evaluation. The following descriptions define these various evaluation stages.

Stage 1: Status and Process Assessment

During the first few years of adopting a process of program evaluation in Stafford County, existing programs will go through a program evaluation process to examine a program’s current status and readiness to undergo a comprehensive evaluation. The program status and process evaluation will consider the following:
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- Does the program have stated goals and objectives? If so, what are they?
- Does the program have a logic model or program theory? If so, what is it?
- How does the program currently operate?

Stage 2: Evaluation Readiness or Comprehensive Evaluation

If the status and process assessment determines a program does not currently have identified goals, objectives and/or a logic model, the program will automatically be slated to go through an evaluation readiness process. Through this process, program coordinators and other key stakeholders will work with the OAAP to determine measurable program goals and objectives, create a logic model and/or program theory, and establish baseline data on the program’s status. Once measurable goals and objectives have been identified and defined, and a logic model created, an existing program will be ready for a comprehensive evaluation. The comprehensive evaluation will take an in-depth look at a program including its operations, cost, process, implementation fidelity, outcomes, and other factors as warranted. This evaluation may be a one-year or multi-year evaluation depending on the nature of the program and the specific evaluation questions.

New Programs:

The OAAP also proposes a process for the proposal, adoption and initial evaluation of new programs within the district. The multi-stage process will help ensure that new programs consider what they are trying to achieve, provide feedback on implementation, and help measure outcomes to adjust program processes. The following stages outline the process that OAAP proposes to be used with all new programs. It is important to note that all new programs will be required to go through Stages 1 through 3. Stage 4 may be recommended depending on the results from Stages 2 and 3 or mandated if full implementation is a multi-year process.

Stage 1: Program Proposal

If an individual or group wants to propose a new program to be implemented in Stafford County Public Schools, they will need to complete and submit a program proposal. The proposal process will assist those initiating the program to consider:
OAAP staff will be available to support individuals through the program proposal process. The complete proposal process is detailed in Appendix E.

**Stage 2: Implementation Evaluation**

During the first year of a new program’s adoption, the OAAP will conduct an implementation evaluation to examine how the program is being adopted. This will be a largely descriptive study involving a literature review on similar initiatives, base-line data and implementation methodology and fidelity. The report will be a formative tool to guide and support the second year of the program.

**Stage 3: Outcome Evaluation**

In year two of a new program, the OAAP will measure outcomes from the first year of program implementation, using a mixed-methods approach. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected and analyzed, according to the specific program initiative.

**Stage 4: Comprehensive Evaluation**

For new programs that take more than one year for implementation, a comprehensive, potentially multi-year evaluation will be recommended to begin in the third year of program implementation. Other programs might be recommended for the comprehensive evaluation based on the evaluation and outcome evaluations.

The infographic above illustrates the progression of the three to four stage process of program evaluation for new programs.
Evaluation Recommendations:

Each evaluation will conclude with a set of recommendations. Recommendations will include: (1) Continue the Program; (2) Continue the Program with Modifications; (3) Discontinue the Program/Phase Out. Specific recommendations corresponding to these broad recommendations will be included based on the information gathered during the evaluation.

Program Profiles:

Program Profiles will provide various stakeholders with a listing of existing programs and initiatives in the school division, as well as a brief description of the program. The OAAP will work to assemble the initial set of program profiles for existing programs in the first two years of program evaluation work, with additional profiles created as new programs are adopted. Appendix F provides the template that will be used for the program profiles to provide consistency and readability.

Ad Hoc Requests:

Division leadership might request that the OAAP conduct basic evaluations on individual projects on a smaller scale. As time allows, the OAAP will assist the various schools and departments in developing and administering surveys and basic analysis on small scale projects such as professional learning events, school-based events and one-time projects.
Evaluation Process
Program Criteria and Selection Process

The Program Evaluation Selection Committee will be assembled with various stakeholders to determine which existing programs will be slated for evaluation in a given year. The Program Evaluation Selection Committee will consist of the Supervisor of the OAAP, the Accountability Specialist for Program Evaluation, a representative from the Department of Instructional Services and leadership of the following departments, or their selected designee:

The Program Evaluation Selection Committee will meet twice a year to make recommendations to select (1) which new program initiatives will move forward and (2) which existing programs will undergo the evaluation process. A fall meeting will review new program proposals, and a spring meeting will set the program evaluation schedule for existing programs.

Fall Meeting

At the fall meeting, the committee will review proposals for new programs. The following questions will guide the committee in deciding whether to recommend a new program:

1. Are the program goals, objectives and logic model clearly stated?
2. Is it clear how the program intends to operate?
3. Will data collection on the goals and objectives be feasible?
4. Does the proposed program align with and support the goals expressed in the strategic plan?
5. Is the implementation timeline realistic?
6. Is there a demonstrated need for the program?
7. Is the budget realistic? Has it been approved by the Finance Department?
8. Is there a plan for initial evaluation that has been developed with the OAAP?
If the committee finds that the answer is a negative for any of the above questions, the committee will return the proposal for amendments and revisions. Once all of the above questions have been satisfied, the program or initiative will be recommended to the Superintendent for final approval.

**Spring Meeting**

In early spring, the committee will meet for a second time to consider a docket of programs for evaluation. The following criteria, developed by Virginia Beach City Schools, will be used as a basis for which programs will be selected for evaluation:

- Alignment with the school division’s strategic plan and school board goals
- Program cost
- Program scale
- Cross-departmental interest
- Availability of information on the program’s effectiveness
- Date of most recent evaluation

The Program Evaluation Selection Committee will make recommendations for which existing programs will undergo evaluation in the following school year. Once selected, the Superintendent will review and either approve ‘as is’ or make recommendations for adjustments to the committee’s initial selection. Once superintendent approval has been obtained, the recommendations will be presented to the School Board for their approval.
Annual Process

As illustrated in the diagram below, the work of the OAAP in program evaluation will operate on a cyclical process, with adjustments made for individual evaluation differences.

At any point during a calendar year, the OAAP will be reviewing program proposals, evaluating new and existing programs, collecting data, writing literature reviews, and supporting schools and programs through ad hoc data requests. The above yearly timeline simply provides an idea of the cyclical nature to be expected in conducting the program evaluations. Final evaluation reports will be modeled off of the template found in Appendix G.

External Collaborations

The OAAP might periodically consider partnering with educational institutions in conducting program evaluation work. This would provide an opportunity for community partnership and efficient utilization of resources to support the work of program evaluation. The OAAP will work closely with the Department of Human Resources and any external Institutional Review Board (IRB) process in ensuring that any such partnerships are conducted with ethical research principles.

Longitudinal Data Collection

As a part of initiating a process of program evaluation in SCPS, the OAAP will also work with the Department of Technology and Information to develop the capacity to store data collection carried out as part of program evaluation. A centralized, longitudinal storage capacity will be developed to better facilitate data analysis.
Glossary and References
Glossary of Terms

**Ad hoc:** A Latin term, ad hoc is often used in English to denote a context specific purpose. In regards to evaluation in Stafford County Public Schools, the term is used in reference to small-scale evaluations conducted for specific, formative or summative feedback.

**Comprehensive evaluation:** An in-depth evaluation focused on operations, process, implementation fidelity, outcomes and other factors as warranted. The evaluation might take anywhere from one year to three years to complete, based on the extent of the evaluation and size of the program.

**Costs:** References to costs refer to the various expenditures involved in carrying out a program. These include, but are not limited to building and utilities resources, staff, materials, training and professional development. Discussion of program costs might include an analysis of having the program versus not having the program.

**Descriptive information:** Information providing an overview of everyday program proceedings, leadership, finances, and day-to-day operations.

**Evaluation readiness process:** This refers to a process for assisting a program with preparing for a comprehensive evaluation. The process will involve the OAAP working with a specific program or initiative to identify measurable program goals, create a program theory and logic model, and establish baseline data on the program's status.

**Implementation evaluation:** A largely descriptive evaluation with the purpose of examine the fidelity of implementation of any new program in the division.

**Implementation fidelity:** The faithfulness to the program logic model with which a program or initiative is enacted. Implementation fidelity examines whether a program or initiative is being adopted as intended.

**Institutional Review Board (IRB):** A group that reviews research proposals to ensure integrity of methodology and ethical treatment of human subjects. IRBs are found at many universities and institutions.

**Literature review:** A critical piece of research and evaluation reports, a literature review examines existing research on a topic to inform the current research or evaluation.

**Logic model:** A diagram providing an overview of how a program's goals are connected with its specific strategies and anticipated outcomes. This is often used in connection with the program theory and provides a useful tool for understanding how a
Methodology: The way in which something is undertaken. In evaluation, the specific approach and strategies used in an evaluation.

Mixed-methods: A research or evaluation approach coupling quantitative and qualitative research methodology.

Outcome Evaluation: An evaluation for new programs focused primarily on measuring the outcomes from a new program following implementation. This may lead to recommendations for a comprehensive evaluation.

Program: “A structured intervention to improve” (Weiss, 1998, p. 335) the educational process. Weiss (1998) notes that “programs vary in size, scope, duration, and clarity and specificity of goals” (p. 335). A program might be referred to as an initiative or other term, but still be classified as a program.

Program Proposal: A proposal following the criteria established by the OAAP should be completed for every potential new program.

Stakeholders: Persons with a vested interest in a program or initiative. With educational programs, this might include students, teachers, parents, administrators, community members, and school board members, among others.

Status and process assessment: A largely descriptive evaluation used to ascertain what a program is currently doing, whether any goals and logic models have been established, and any existing data correlating with the program or initiative.

Strategic plan: The overarching goals and strategies of a school division, often coupled with monitoring metrics to measure outcomes. Stafford County recently adopted a new strategic plan, as seen in Appendix A.
References


Appendices
Appendix A:
SCPS Strategic Plan

Stafford County Public Schools (SCPS) has reexamined and revised its strategic plan in the last year, as part of a process of refocus and rebranding. The strategic plan includes a new mission, vision and set of values that will provide guidance for day-to-day operations:

**Vision**
Stafford County is a dynamic, goal-oriented learning community committed to preparing our students for success in further education, work and citizenship.

**Mission**
Inspire and empower all learners to thrive.

**Values**

*Learners:*
We believe in the power of teaching and learning to develop and advance individuals and communities.

*Community:*
We work together in a safe, nurturing environment where everyone is valued and supported.

*Excellence:*
We cultivate and challenge each individual to excel through a wide range of experiences.

*Respect:*
We recognize and value diversity of culture and thought, treating ourselves and others with honor and dignity.

*Integrity:*
We are honest, open and principled.
The new strategic plan adopted for the 2016-2017 school year also includes a set of district-wide goals. They include:

**Goal 1: Student Achievement**
Engage, challenge and prepare every student for success.

**Goal 2: Work Force**
Recruit, develop, and retain the highest quality employees.

**Goal 3: Resource Stewardship**
Establish and maintain efficient, transparent, responsible oversight of resources.

**Goal 4: Communication**
Communicate effectively at all levels.

The Strategic Plan also identifies a set of priorities and monitoring metrics for each goal:

**Student Achievement**

*Board Priority 1.1:* Define, develop, implement and measure effective teaching practices that maximize rigor and engagement for all students in support of C5W.

Monitoring Metrics:

- Learning Walks
- 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th grade students participating in the PSAT 8/9 and PSAT/NMSQT

*Board Priority 1.2:* Ensure equitable access to core programs, electives, and resources.

Monitoring Metrics:

- School Quality Reviews (SQR)
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- Students participating in at least one Advanced Placement (AP) course across reporting categories.
- College and Career Graduation Profile Reports
- Percentage of students requiring services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

**Board Priority 1.3:** Close gaps in student achievement.

Monitoring Metrics:

- Comprehensive report of students participating in Early Intervening Programs (i.e. Head Start, Pre-K).
- Annual percentage of students demonstrating one growth level per VDOE growth measures
- CogAT© Test (Cognitive Abilities Test™) results for all 2nd graders
- Longitudinal Data Report for Kindergarten through eighth grade through onTRAC
- Disaggregated suspension and expulsion data

**Work Force**

**Board Priority 2.1:** Reduce class size based on Board-adopted staffing goals.

Monitoring Metrics:

- School Quality Reviews (SQR)
- Staffing Priority Process

**Board Priority 2.2:** Implement and maintain sustainable, market-based compensation and benefits models for all employee groups.

Monitoring Metrics:

- Report on SCPS compensation packages against comparable school divisions and applicable marketplace.

**Board Priority 2.3:** Develop and implement a division-wide master framework for professional learning and training that optimizes our work force and addresses the essential competencies and growth opportunities for all.

Monitoring Metrics:
• SCPS Professional Learning and Training Program
• Division Professional Development Competencies
• On-Board Employee Program
• Teacher Mentor Program (1-3 years)
• Teacher Leadership Program
• SCPS Leadership Academy

Resource Stewardship

Board Priority 3.1: Complete review of recommendations from resource utilization and shared services studies, and implement data-supported recommendations.

Monitoring Metrics:

- Reporting of resource utilization and services studies recommendations

Board Priority 3.2: Implement new enterprise resource planning system and use enhance analytics to monitor resource utilization and improve efficiency and transparency.

Monitoring Metrics:

- Instructional Program Expenditures
- Reporting of Return of Investment (ROI) data for programs and services

Communication

Board Priority 4.1: Foster and promote proactive and positive communications to ensure all stakeholders are engaged and well-informed.

Monitoring Metrics:

• Internal and External Communication Plan
• Community Partnership Plan
• Press Release and Community Involvement Standard Operation Procedures (SOP)
• Reporting of Interpreting, Translation and Transcription services
• Survey of targeted audiences that evaluates effectiveness of SCPS communications program
• Participation rates of schools and departments in newsfeeds
• Number of website visits and user satisfaction with website
• Sharing of SCPS information by key communicators
**Board Priority 4.2**: Develop and implement comprehensive and project-specific communication plans.

Monitoring Metrics:

- Implement comprehensive division-wide communication plan
- Implement project-specific communication plans on major issues: FY2018 budget, CIP, new SCPS website, back to school.
- Monitoring Project Charter Completion
## Appendix B:
### Program Evaluation in Various School Systems

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<td><strong>Chesapeake City Public Schools</strong></td>
<td>Two person dedicated team with an administrator and data analyst, with a committee of various stakeholders as active participants. Independent unit as School Improvement and Program Evaluation.</td>
<td>‘Business’ style approach to evaluation led by a team of various stakeholders who are involved in entire process. Reports given to superintendent.</td>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>Survey Monkey for digital; in-house for print surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fairfax County Public Schools</strong></td>
<td>Six person team, including a Director, Manager, three research specialists and an administrative assistant. Independent unit.</td>
<td>Evaluate programs at the direction of the superintendent; address some specific programs, but also focus on larger scale questions that arise from the strategic plan or stakeholders. Reports typically published on-line and formal presentation made to school board and published on YouTube.</td>
<td>SPSS, Excel</td>
<td>Survey Monkey for digital; Design Expert for print surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Loudoun County Public Schools</strong></td>
<td>Four person team focused on research and evaluation, with a research supervisor, program analyst, data analyst and research assistant under the broader Department of Instruction.</td>
<td>No formal process for selection of evaluation and research topics; research and evaluation approach involves a mix of comprehensive evaluations and “fast-response” evaluations produced within a few months. Reports are not automatically published, but are disseminated based on who is requesting the information.</td>
<td>SPSS, Access, Sequel Server</td>
<td>Survey Monkey; Google Forms</td>
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### Prince William County Public Schools

Five person team including a Director of Program Evaluation, Program Evaluation Coordinator, Data Analyst and two secretaries. Subunit of Accountability Department.

- Evaluate programs as directed by the school board or as the result of a ‘grass roots’ request. Process influenced by site-based management.
- SPSS
- Excel
- R
- Question Pro for digital and print surveys.

### Virginia Beach City Public Schools

Six person team (not including administrative assistants) including a director, research specialist, data specialist and two evaluation specialists. Subunit of the Department of Planning, Innovation and Accountability.

- Variety of research foci, includes status assessment, process and comprehensive evaluations on selected existing programs as well as a mandatory evaluation process for new programs. Reports are typically published online.
- SPSS
- Excel
- Survey Monkey for digital
Appendix C:
Program Evaluation Standards Statements
(Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2011)

Utility Standards

The utility standards are intended to increase the extent to which program stakeholders find evaluation processes and products valuable in meeting their needs.

- **U1 Evaluator Credibility** Evaluations should be conducted by qualified people who establish and maintain credibility in the evaluation context.
- **U2 Attention to Stakeholders** Evaluations should devote attention to the full range of individuals and groups invested in the program and affected by its evaluation.
- **U3 Negotiated Purposes** Evaluation purposes should be identified and continually negotiated based on the needs of stakeholders.
- **U4 Explicit Values** Evaluations should clarify and specify the individual and cultural values underpinning purposes, processes, and judgments.
- **U5 Relevant Information** Evaluation information should serve the identified and emergent needs of stakeholders.
- **U6 Meaningful Processes and Products** Evaluations should construct activities, descriptions, and judgments in ways that encourage participants to rediscover, reinterpret, or revise their understandings and behaviors.
- **U7 Timely and Appropriate Communicating and Reporting** Evaluations should attend to the continuing information needs of their multiple audiences.
- **U8 Concern for Consequences and Influence** Evaluations should promote responsible and adaptive use while guarding against unintended negative consequences and misuse.

Feasibility Standards

The feasibility standards are intended to increase evaluation effectiveness and efficiency.

- **F1 Project Management** Evaluations should use effective project management strategies.
- **F2 Practical Procedures** Evaluation procedures should be practical and responsive to the way the program operates.
- **F3 Contextual Viability** Evaluations should recognize, monitor, and balance the cultural and political interests and needs of individuals and groups.
- **F4 Resource Use** Evaluations should use resources effectively and efficiently.
Propiety Standards

The propriety standards support what is proper, fair, legal, right and just in evaluations.

- **P1 Responsive and Inclusive Orientation** Evaluations should be responsive to stakeholders and their communities.
- **P2 Formal Agreements** Evaluation agreements should be negotiated to make obligations explicit and take into account the needs, expectations, and cultural contexts of clients and other stakeholders.
- **P3 Human Rights and Respect** Evaluations should be designed and conducted to protect human and legal rights and maintain the dignity of participants and other stakeholders.
- **P4 Clarity and Fairness** Evaluations should be understandable and fair in addressing stakeholder needs and purposes.
- **P5 Transparency and Disclosure** Evaluations should provide complete descriptions of findings, limitations, and conclusions to all stakeholders, unless doing so would violate legal and propriety obligations.
- **P6 Conflicts of Interests** Evaluations should openly and honestly identify and address real or perceived conflicts of interests that may compromise the evaluation.
- **P7 Fiscal Responsibility** Evaluations should account for all expended resources and comply with sound fiscal procedures and processes.

Accuracy Standards

The accuracy standards are intended to increase the dependability and truthfulness of evaluation representations, propositions, and findings, especially those that support interpretations and judgments about quality.

- **A1 Justified Conclusions and Decisions** Evaluation conclusions and decisions should be explicitly justified in the cultures and contexts where they have consequences.
- **A2 Valid Information** Evaluation information should serve the intended purposes and support valid interpretations.
- **A3 Reliable Information** Evaluation procedures should yield sufficiently dependable and consistent information for the intended uses.
- **A4 Explicit Program and Context Descriptions** Evaluations should document programs and their contexts with appropriate detail and scope for the evaluation purposes.
• **A5 Information Management** Evaluations should employ systematic information collection, review, verification, and storage methods.

• **A6 Sound Designs and Analyses** Evaluations should employ technically adequate designs and analyses that are appropriate for the evaluation purposes.

• **A7 Explicit Evaluation Reasoning** Evaluation reasoning leading from information and analyses to findings, interpretations, conclusions, and judgments should be clearly and completely documented.

• **A8 Communication and Reporting** Evaluation communications should have adequate scope and guard against misconceptions, biases, distortions, and errors.

**Evaluation Accountability Standards**

The evaluation accountability standards encourage adequate documentation of evaluations and a metaevaluative perspective focused on improvement and accountability for evaluation processes and products.

• **E1 Evaluation Documentation** Evaluations should fully document their negotiated purposes and implemented designs, procedures, data, and outcomes.

• **E2 Internal Metaevaluation** Evaluators should use these and other applicable standards to examine the accountability of the evaluation design, procedures employed, information collected, and outcomes.

• **E3 External Metaevaluation** Program evaluation sponsors, clients, evaluators, and other stakeholders should encourage the conduct of external metaevaluations using these and other applicable standards.
### Appendix D:
Program Evaluation Types

#### Existing Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Status and Process Assessment</strong></td>
<td>A largely descriptive evaluation used to ascertain what a program is currently doing, whether any goals and logic models have been established and what they are, program costs, and any existing data correlating with the program or initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation Readiness Process (As needed)</strong></td>
<td>This refers to a process for assisting a program with preparing for a comprehensive evaluation. The process will involve the OAAP working with a specific program or initiative to identify measurable program goals, create a program theory and logic model, determine financing inputs and outputs, and establish baseline data on the program’s status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehensive Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>An in-depth evaluation focused on operations, finances, process, implementation fidelity, outcomes and other factors as warranted. The evaluation might take anywhere from one year to three years to complete, based on the extent of the evaluation and size of the program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### New Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Proposal</strong></td>
<td>A proposal following the criteria established by the OAAP should be completed for every potential new program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implementation Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>A largely descriptive evaluation with the purpose of examining the fidelity of implementation of any new program in the division.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>An evaluation for new programs focused primarily on measuring the outcomes from a new program following implementation. This may lead to recommendations for a comprehensive evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehensive Evaluation (As Needed)</strong></td>
<td>An in-depth evaluation focused on operations, finances, process, implementation fidelity, outcomes and other factors as warranted. The evaluation might take anywhere from one year to three years to complete, based on the extent of the evaluation and size of the program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E:

New Program Proposal Criteria

The following criteria need to be addressed in any proposal of new programs.

Program Description

The program proposal should answer the following questions, providing an idea of what will characterize the proposed program.

1. What is the purpose of the program?
2. Who will receive the services?
3. Who will provide the services?
4. How will the services be provided?
5. Where will the program be located? What will be the program’s scale?
6. Will the new program replace any existing programs?

Rationale/Program Basis

In this portion of the program proposal, a justification for the addition of the program should be provided, answering the following:

1. Why is there a need for the program? (Provide data and/or research to support your response.)
2. Is the program has been implemented elsewhere, what research exists on its effectiveness?
3. How does the proposed program align with the strategic plan and division goals?

Goals and Objectives

Each new program implemented in Stafford County Public Schools should have goals and objectives. The goals should be clear and concise, observable and measurable, supported by research and/or established need. Alignment with the strategic plan should be reiterated here.
Implementation and Operations

This section of the program proposal will provide a breakdown of the logistics involved in implementing and operating the proposed program. It should address the following:

1. What is the timeline for planning and implementing the program? When will the program be in a state of ‘full implementation’?
2. Where will the program take place? Are any special accommodations needed?
3. Who will carry out the program implementation? How?
4. Are other options available to carry out the same services?
5. Who are the key stakeholders affected by the program?

Logic Model

A logic model connects the program’s goals and objectives with the specific strategies and projects within a program. The logic model facilitates thinking about what steps need to be taken to implement and develop the program to achieve the program goals and objectives. The program evaluation team will be available for anyone needing assistance or resources in developing their logic model.

Staffing

The following questions concerning staff needs and requirements should be addressed:

1. What will the staffing needs of the program be?
2. What qualifications will the staff need to have?
3. How will the staff be selected and trained?
4. Who will evaluate, train and supervise the staff?
5. How will training be evaluated?
Budget

In this section, consideration should be made for any and all costs associated with implementing the program such as necessary staff, training and professional development, building space and utilities, and other essential items. Attention should also be given to potential funding streams. This section should be completed with input and reviewed by the Department of Finance. The finance department will consider the following in whether it issues approval:

1. Does the proposal accurately specify all anticipated expenses?
2. Are program costs realistic and reasonable?
3. Does the proposal specify funding sources?

Approval should be obtained on the financial aspects of the proposed program before the final proposal is submitted for committee review.

Evaluation

This section should be created in partnership with the Office of Assessment, Accountability and Program Evaluation and should provide a process for the implementation and outcome evaluation carried out for all new programs in the first two years. The following questions should be considered:

1. What research questions will be used to gauge program effectiveness?
2. What data will be collected? How will the data correspond to the research questions?
3. When will the data be collected?
4. How will data be analyzed?
5. What will be the indicators of program effectiveness?
Appendix F: Template for Program Profiles

Program Name

Program Coordinator:

Number of Schools and/or Students Served:

Strategic Plan Goal Addressed by Program:

This section will address the specific goal or objective from the strategic plan that the program is targeting.

Program Purpose and Description:

This section will address the following questions:

1. What is the program’s purpose?
2. What are the program’s goals?
3. What is the program currently doing?
4. How does the program currently operate?
5. What are the program expenses?

Logic Model and Program Theory:

The logic model and program theory section will provide a graphic illustrating how the program hopes to operate, if one has been created.
Appendix G: Template for Evaluation Reports

Executive Summary:
This portion of the evaluation report will provide an overview of the key findings and recommendations from the study. In essence, the executive summary will provide a brief overview of the entire report.

Introduction:
The introduction will introduce the reader to the topic of the evaluation, the purpose and rationale of the study.

Program Overview:
This section will introduce the reader to the specific program or initiative being evaluated, including the goals and objectives of the program, its alignment with the strategic plan, populations serviced by the program, program scope and program finances.

Evaluation Purpose:
This section will detail what the evaluation hopes to accomplish and why it was undertaken.

Literature Review:
In this section, the OAAP will discuss existing research on similar programs on a regional, national, and/or international level.

Evaluation Design and Methodology:
The Evaluation Design and Methodology will explain how the evaluation was structured (including stakeholder involvement), as well how data was collected and analyzed.

Evaluation Findings:
An overview of findings from the research will be discussed.
Recommendations:

Based on the findings, recommendations will be made for the program or initiative. These might include:

- Continue the Program
- Continue Program with Modifications
- Discontinue the Program/Phase Out

If a recommendation is made to discontinue a program, recommendations will be made for how to phase out the program’s use.
“Until we develop the capacity to systematically test our ideas for reform, we are doomed to continue reinventing the wheel”

(Kane, 2015).