



Evaluation Guide

This Evaluation Guide (Guide) is intended to serve as a companion piece to the [Title IV, Part A \(Title IV-A\) LEA Needs Assessment Tool \(Tool\)](#). The Tool prompts local education agencies (LEAs) to think first about the desired outcomes, then work backward to identify the programs, projects, or activities (interventions) that will best serve those outcomes under the Title IV-A statute. This Guide offers a high-level overview of the evaluation cycle and can assist LEAs in evaluating whether a selected program is meeting the needs and desired goals identified in the Tool.

While providing an overview of evaluation basics and the steps of an evaluation, the Guide utilizes sample scenarios to demonstrate what each step looks like, along with resources to learn more. The T4PA Center's goal is for this Guide to assist users in evaluating the performance of selected interventions. Additionally, this Guide will help state education agencies (SEAs) and LEAs that work with an outside evaluator to better understand the processes and procedures as they develop and execute the evaluation.

This Guide is intended to be used for interventions funded by Title IV-A; however, the information presented herein could be applied to all interventions. LEAs may use Title IV-A funds for a variety of programs, and the Guide may be used to help evaluate some or all of them.

EVALUATION BASICS

Evaluation is a means to assess the performance, merit, and worth of a program. Evaluations should be thorough and meaningful and yield actionable information to help improve the program and intended outcomes. LEAs should evaluate a program over the course of implementation.

To ensure quality evaluations, it is best to integrate them from the beginning of program implementation. However, this Guide will provide the basic steps for carrying out an evaluation that can be applied regardless of the time when the evaluation begins. It is better to integrate some aspects of evaluation along the way even if you were not able to initiate it from day one.

Evaluation starts with a question: Did the intervention achieve the expected results?

Finding the answers to this question is the essence of an evaluation.

PROCESS EVALUATION AND OUTCOME EVALUATION

This document will reference the two main types of evaluation – process and outcome. Evaluations can focus on processes, outcomes, or both. Each type of evaluation serves a different purpose. When used in combination, they provide a more detailed picture of the program.

Process evaluation answers the question “Does the intervention work as intended?” Otherwise stated, “Are teachers, counselors, or other school staff getting enough support so that the program,

