NSP Evaluation Roundtable

Promoting Evaluative Thinking in Your Organization

April 9, 2019

NSP | Nonprofit Support Program
HARTFORD FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC GIVING

Goals

✓ Promote ongoing nonprofit discussion, sharing and learning about evaluation

✓ Provide new and relevant information to meet nonprofit evaluation needs

✓ Provide a community of practice for area nonprofit and evaluation professionals

Today…

- Key components of evaluative thinking
- How to assess your organization's evaluation capacity
- Promoting and using an evaluative approach to all of your work
- Using an evaluative strategy to assess grants management
- Using evaluative approaches to ensure timely and useful data collection and analysis – beyond surveys

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Evaluation Capacity and Evaluative Thinking in Organizations

Anita M. Baker, Ed.D.
Evaluation Services

Indicators of
Organizational Evaluation Capacity

Internal Motivation

Evaluative Thinking and Competence

Mainstream Function

Strategic Use of Evaluation Results

Sufficient Quantity, Good Quality

Availability of Resources

Adapted from the Evaluation Capacity Assessment Instrument ECAI

Organizational Evaluation Capacity What Do You Look For?

Internal Motivation

- Do organization leaders want to do evaluation?

- Do organization staff want to do evaluation?

- Does the organization board want evaluation done?

Organizational Evaluation Capacity
What Do You Look For?

✓ Internal Motivation

   Competence

- Do organization leaders and/or staff know how to do evaluation?

Evaluation Strategy Clarification

▶ All Evaluations Are:

➔ Partly social

➔ Partly political

➔ Partly technical

▶ Both qualitative and quantitative data can be collected and used and both are valuable.

▶ Different evaluation needs call for different designs, data and data collection strategies.

▶ There are multiple ways to address most evaluation needs.

What is Needed to Conduct Evaluation

➢ Specify evaluation questions

➢ Develop an evaluation design

➢ Apply evaluation logic

➢ Collect and analyze data

➢ Summarize and share findings

3b

Evaluation Data Collection: 4 Strategies

► **All have limitations and benefits**

►Surveys

► All can be used to collect either quantitative or qualitative data

►Interviews

► Require preparation on the front end:

►Observations

1. Instrument Development and testing
2. Administration plan development
3. Analysis plan development

►Record Reviews

4. Report template development

3c

What Happens After Data are Collected

1. Data are analyzed, results are summarized.
2. Findings must be converted into a format that can be shared with others.
3. Action steps should be developed from findings

   "Now that we know _____ we will do _____."

Organizational Evaluation Capacity What Do You Look For?

✓ Internal Motivation

✓ Competence

Mainstream Function

- Who actually does evaluation?
    - All/any staff
    - Dedicated staff
    - External consultants

- Does leadership support or hinder evaluation?

Supportive Evaluation Environments

1. Promote evaluation capacity

   - reward learning
   - provide staff time and resources to engage in evaluation
   - conduct data collection <u>and</u> analysis
   - use data

Adapted from Kramer, 2007

4a

Supportive Evaluation Environments

2. Directly engage key decision-makers

3. Involve multiple evaluation stakeholders

4. Undertake manageable and straightforward evaluation

5. Use targeted and compelling methods to communicate results

Adapted from Kramer, 2007

Organizational Evaluation Capacity
What Do You Look For?

✓ Internal Motivation

✓ Competence

✓ Mainstream Function

Strategic Use of Evaluation Results

- Do evaluation results get used internally and with other stakeholders?

Organizations with Evaluation Capacity Use Evaluation Results:

1. To report to funders.
2. To improve services or programs.
3. To get additional funding.
4. To design ongoing monitoring processes.
5. To assess implementation of a program.
6. To assess quality of a program.
7. To improve outreach.
8. To make informed decisions.
9. To train staff.
10. To eliminate un-needed services or programs.

Organizational Evaluation Capacity What Do You Look For?

✓ Internal Motivation

✓ Competence

✓ Mainstream Function

✓ Strategic Use of Evaluation Results

Sufficient Quantity, Good Quality

- Is evaluation done according to an organizational plan?
- Are evaluations rigorous?

6

Increasing Rigor in Program Evaluation

➔ Mixed methodologies

➔ Multiple sources of data

➔ Multiple points in time

Organizational Evaluation Capacity What Do You Look For?

✓ Internal Motivation

✓ Competence

✓ Mainstream Function

✓ Strategic Use of Evaluation Results

✓ Sufficient Quantity, Good Quality

   Evaluation resources

- Are there reference materials available?

- Is there access to Technical Assistance?

- Are there dedicated funds for evaluation?

What Should Thoughtful Organizations Do to Obtain Funds for Evaluation?

▶ Usually the cost to do good evaluation is equivalent to about 10 – 15% of the costs to operate the program effectively.

- Write evaluation costs into project development budgets. Use the money accordingly.

- Set aside funds for evaluation on a percentage basis into the organizational budget. Develop and follow a plan to use these funds.

- Obtain funds solely for the purpose of evaluation.

- Consider sharing and/or pooling resources.

Indicators of
Organizational Evaluation Capacity

✓ Internal Motivation

✓ Evaluative Thinking and Competence

✓ Mainstream Function

✓ Strategic Use of Evaluation Results

✓ Sufficient Quantity, Good Quality

✓ Availability of Resources

Adapted from the Evaluation Capacity Assessment Instrument ECAI

Evaluative Thinking **is a type of reflective practice that uses key evaluation skills in areas other than programs or initiatives.**

- ✓ Mission
- ✓ Strategic Planning
- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Fund Development
- ✓ Evaluation
- ✓ Client Relationships

- ✓ Program Development
- ✓ Communication & Marketing
- ✓ Technology Acquisition & Training
- ✓ Staff Development
- ✓ Human Resources
- ✓ Alliances/Collaborations
- ✓ Business Development

Organizations that Regularly use Evaluative Thinking Will . . .

- Think carefully about developing and assessing programs/policies and procedures.

- Incorporate analytical findings into planning.

- Involve significant others in planning.

- Develop written, logical plans.

- Follow plans.

- Have strategies in place to modify plans.

Organizations that Regularly use Evaluative Thinking Will Also . . .

- Regularly conduct evaluations.

- Involve multiple stakeholders in developing evaluation designs, collecting and analyzing data.

- Share results of evaluations with multiple stakeholders.

- Use results of program evaluation to drive continuous improvement of programs and to modify policies and procedures.
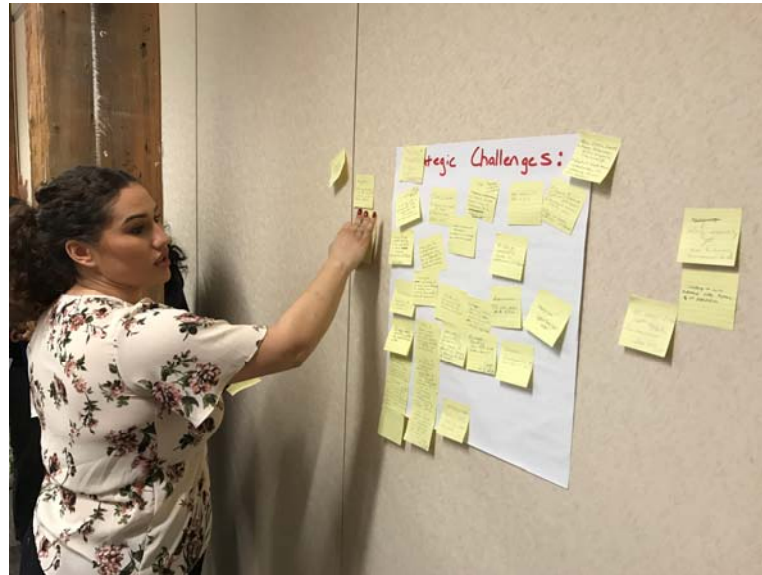
Lastly, Organizations that Regularly Use Evaluative Thinking Will . . .

- Insure that there are key staff with evaluation expertise, whose jobs or components of their jobs are dedicated to evaluation.

- Hire evaluation consultants when needed.

- Provide or obtain training in evaluation for program staff
  – current
  – well-delivered
  – provided for enough staff members to insure that evaluation use is a standard practice

- **RIPPLE (share/extend training to others)**

1. Read and rapidly assess your organization – circle practices that are regularly done at your organization.

2. Calculate a rating: e.g. 5 out of 5

3. Order them from strongest to weakest

4. Share with one or two others sitting near you – compare your results.

5. Discuss how you knew and what this might mean for your organization.

The CT Association for Human Services (CAHS)

EVALUATING A GRANTS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

CT Association for Human Services

- Vision: A Connecticut where low-income residents work with government, business, labor and faith leaders in developing policies and programs that ensure Connecticut's prosperity, as well as their own.

- Theory of Change: To effect meaningful lasting economic security for all residents, government and local systems need to work in sync with individuals and families. We believe that this can be accomplished through a mixed program and policy approach.

How do we fund this ?

- Funders are interested in specific parts.
  - Program vs Policy
  - Geographic Location
  - Goal of program (e.g. VITA, Financial Coaching)

- Result:
  - Many different funding sources (> 100)
  - Widely ranging amounts ($2,500 - $ 600,000)
  - Different deadlines, time periods, requirements

A *Grants Management system* is an essential organizational structure for maintaining contact with funders and keeping track of obligations.

Small non-profit organizations generally run lean and rely on resourcefulness to fulfil their needs. Efficiency is essential but there is usually not sufficient money for commercially available tools that systematize administrative functions.

While CAHS has created and implemented some basic structures for this purpose (e.g. a grants database), this was not sufficient to assure the accuracy and reliability of the system.

The Problem and Need

THE PROBLEM:

- Current system is not working- relies on institutional memory
- Changed and missed deadlines
- Late reports
- Inefficient use of time (High Cost/Benefit ratios)

THE NEED:

- To determine whether to pursue grants
- A reliable and accurate system to record and track grants
- Ways to maintain and sustain the system.

Evaluation Goal

Change the grant management system to increase efficiency, effectiveness and reliability.

Evaluation Questions

- What are the impediments preventing the grants management system from functioning effectively (e.g. submitting grants and grant reports on time)?

- What changes will improve the system reliability and effectiveness?

- Are the new processes, policies and procedures followed?

- Do the grant process tools improve the accuracy, consistency, and yield of our grants?

- Do the grant process tools improve the reporting process and allow us to meet the grant deliverables on time?

- Is the system sustainable and what is necessary to maintain it?

Logic Model Mapping

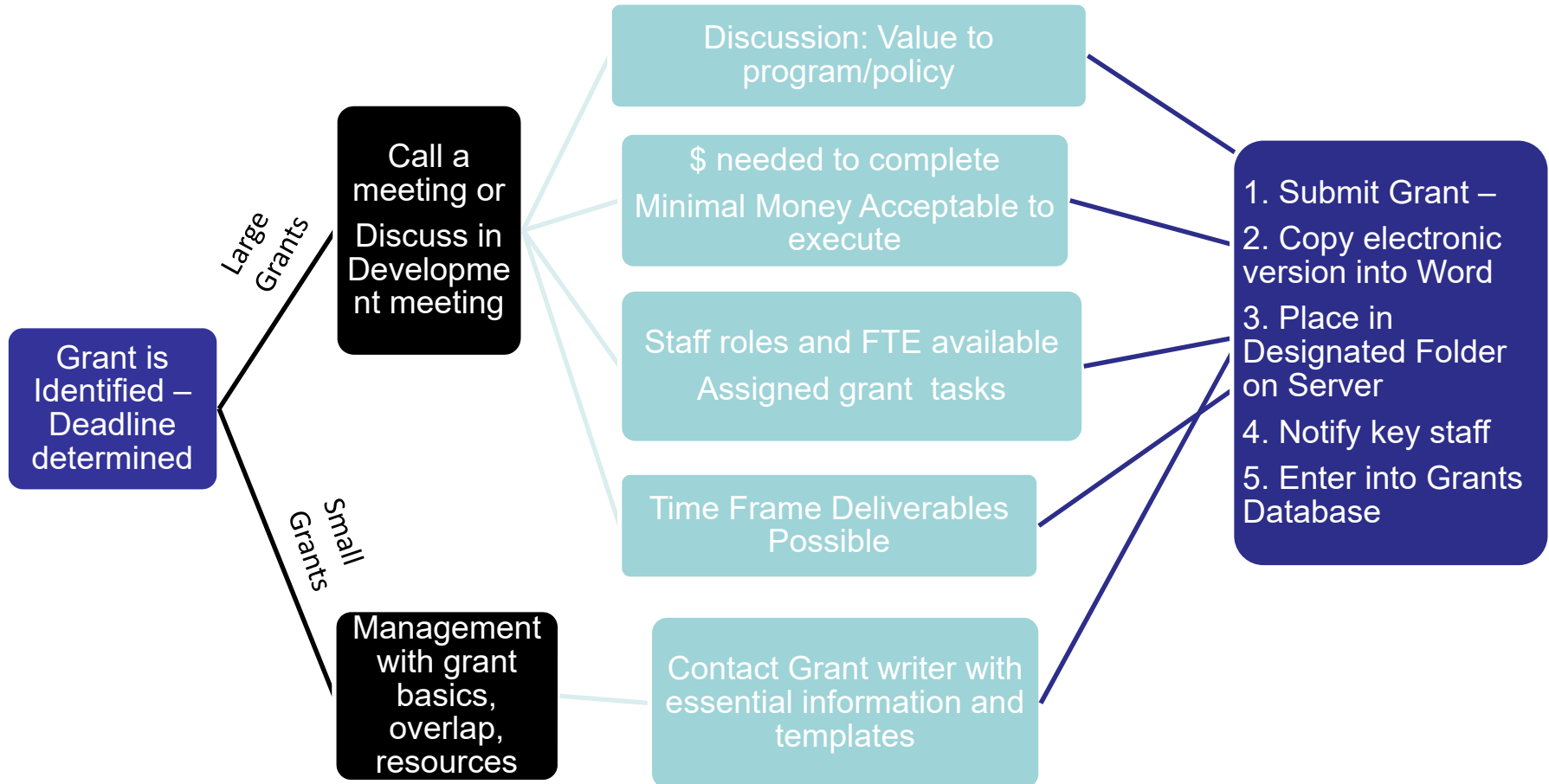| Logic Model	Evaluation Question	Indicators	Data Sources
INPUT	What are the impediments preventing the grants management system from functioning effectively	Stop/Continue Interactive Exercise	Management Retreat
OUTPUT	Are the new processes, policies and procedures followed	# of grant meetings % of files reconciled % of complete files	Meeting Minutes Reconciliation Doc Filing system, Grants Database
OUTCOME	Do the grant process tools improve the accuracy, consistency, and yield of our grants	% of grants submitted on time % of grants fully funded	Grants Database
	Do the grant process tools improve the reporting process and allow us to meet the grant deliverables on time	% of grant reports submitted on time % of deliverables achieved	Grants Database
	Is the system sustainable and what is necessary to maintain it	# of staff hours : % Database and files updated and complete	HR Grants Database, Reconciliation Doc

Data Collection Methods

DATA COLLECTION		
STRATEGY	WHO/DETAILS	WHEN
INTERACTIVE EXERCISE	Management facilitated by an Organizational Development Consultant	February
RECORD REVIEWS RECONCILIATION	Staff generates Database reports at start of project to produce a baseline, and at the end of the project to assess progress. Tools quantify accuracy.	January and May
QUALITY CHECKS	Small groups use the Plan-Do-Study-Act process to identify weaknesses in the processes and trial new approaches	As needed
OBSERVATIONS	Qualitative information on awareness and referencing the system.	Ongoing

RESULTS: Interactive Exercise-Roadmap for system changes

- Implement a vetting process (deciding on what grants to pursue)

- Develop formal structures and procedures to assess the accuracy and reliability of the working system.

- Remove barriers that lead to gaps and delays in updating information. (including the flow and connectivity between the grant filing system, and the database)

- Train staff on their grant responsibilities, how to use the tools and keep them current.

RESULTS
Vetting Process

```
                          ┌─────────────────────────┐
                          │ Discussion: Value to    │
                          │ program/policy          │
                          └─────────────────────────┘

                          ┌─────────────────────────┐
          ┌──────────┐    │ $ needed to complete    │
  Large   │ Call a   │    │ Minimal Money Acceptable│
  Grants  │ meeting  │    │ to execute              │
          │ or       │    └─────────────────────────┘
          │ Discuss  │
          │ in       │    ┌─────────────────────────┐
          │ Developme│    │ Staff roles and FTE     │
          │ nt       │    │ available               │
          │ meeting  │    │ Assigned grant tasks    │
          └──────────┘    └─────────────────────────┘
```

Grant is Identified – Deadline determined

Large Grants → Call a meeting or Discuss in Development meeting

- Discussion: Value to program/policy
- $ needed to complete Minimal Money Acceptable to execute
- Staff roles and FTE available Assigned grant tasks
- Time Frame Deliverables Possible

Small Grants → Management with grant basics, overlap, resources

- Contact Grant writer with essential information and templates

1. Submit Grant –
2. Copy electronic version into Word
3. Place in Designated Folder on Server
4. Notify key staff
5. Enter into Grants Database

RESULTS: the database

RESULTS: reconciliation

ONLY ~¼ OF FILES ARE COMPLETE

Grants Database Reconciliation	2016-2017		2017-2018		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Empty Folder	1	2%	3	7%	4	4%
Missing Application	2	4%	0	0%	2	2%
Missing Award/Rejection	2	4%	1	2%	3	3%
Missing Reports	9	17%	15	35%	24	25%
Needs review	8	15%	4	9%	12	13%
No issues	18	34%	8	19%	26	27%
Only Application	10	19%	10	23%	20	21%
Only Award /Contract	3	6%	2	5%	5	5%
Total Grants	53		43		96	

45% OF GRANTS WERE FUNDED BUT OVER ¼ DEADLINES WERE MISSED

2017-2018 Grant Yield	Foundation Grants		Corporation Grants		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Awarded	20	48%	14	42%	34	45%
Missed Deadline	12	29%	8	24%	20	27%
Pending	4	10%	5	15%	9	12%
Rejected	6	14%	6	18%	12	16%
Total	42		33		75	

Key Findings and Challenges

– Many of the issues involve person to person or role to role communication and established accountability for these actions.

– Clear channels of communication must be present between those generating ideas, writing the grants, determining the costs, implementing the activities and writing the reports. Only when these pathways are clear will the importance of these activities be recognized and their worth known.

Key Findings and Challenges

– Lack of time is the greatest contributor to entropy and disorder. This includes time to set up meetings with partners to discuss appropriate projects and time to synchronize project components.

– Flow charts and checklists are important tools that will provide staff with the detailed instructions necessary for these behaviors to occur.

– Without a quality assurance point person with dedicated time to curate the data, missing and inaccurate information can go unnoticed and lead to errors

Using Evaluative Thinking at the Hartford Foundation

Scott Gaul, Director of Research and Evaluation

Kate Szczerbacki, Research and Evaluation Officer

NSP | Nonprofit Support Program
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Timely Data Collection
& Going Beyond the Survey

Rie Poirier-Campbell, Hartford Performs

Hartford Performs
Student Programs

- 30 schools

- 13,000 students

- 800 programs

- 3,000 program hours

Hartford Performs Professional Learning

Equipping teachers

to use

arts techniques

to teach

English, math,

science &

social studies

Hartford Performs

Mission

Hartford Performs connects all Hartford Public School students to quality arts experiences that advance student learning and deepen engagement in community.

Vision

The arts are integral to student success in Hartford Public Schools.

Arts & Evaluation ??

Independent Evaluation

Great but…

- Done externally

- Not "in the moment"

In-house Evaluation

Making genuine connections
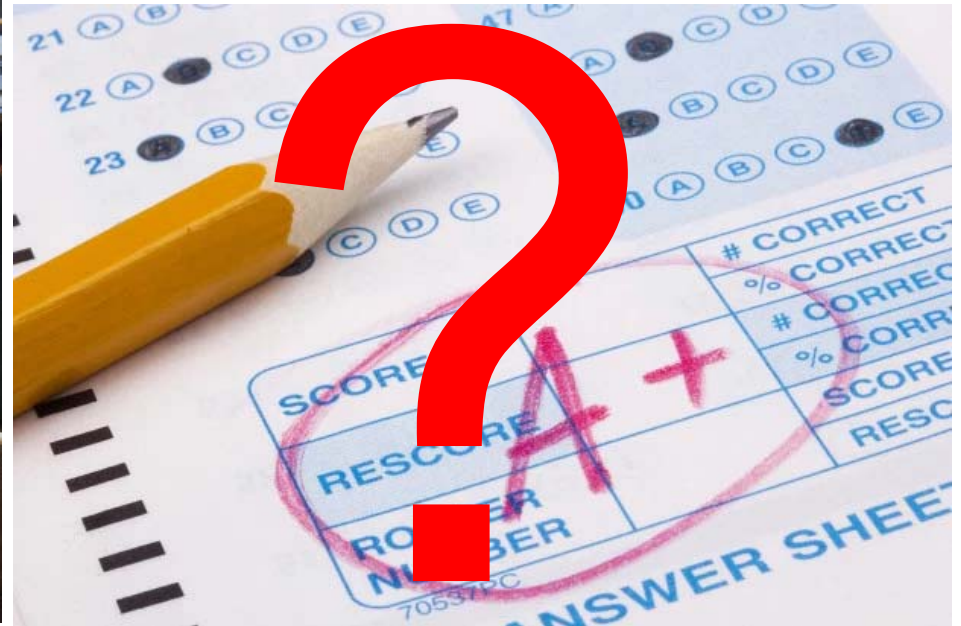
- Skills
- Attitudes
- Behaviors

Student outcomes

Please indicate how much you disagree or agree with the following statements about the contribution of this Hartford Performs program to student learning. *The Program…*

- ○ met learning goals for the grade level.

- ○ engaged students.

- ○ increased students' knowledge of the subject matter.

- ○ increased students' interest in the subject matter.

- ○ had a positive impact on students' confidence.

Student outcomes

Please indicate how much you disagree or agree with the following statements. *The Program helped participating students…*

- ○ develop/enhance their active listening skills.

- ○ with retention of information.

- ○ develop/enhance vocabulary.

- ○ think creatively.

- ○ express themselves in writing.

- ○ express themselves verbally.

- ○ express themselves artistically.

- ○ develop/enhance their problem-solving skills.

- ○ develop/enhance their critical evaluation skills.

- ○ develop/enhance social skills.

- ○ work collaboratively with other students.

- ○ try new things.

Program delivery

- Were there areas of the program that could be strengthened?

- What area(s) of the program could have been strengthened?

- Would you select this program again?

- Why wouldn't you select this program again?

April 2019

month week day

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
7a Acting and Puppetry **8a** Poetry Alive! **8:15a** Frogs Make Me Hoppy **9a** The RapOetry Workshop +3 more	**9a** The RapOetry Workshop **9a** DRUM BUCKETS **9:30a** The Science/Dance Experience **9:45a** Act Out a Folktale: The Little Red	**8a** Poetry Alive! **8:05a** GeoDome Workshop **8:15a** Frogs Make Me Hoppy **9a** The RapOetry Workshop +3 more	**7a** How Our Buildings Are LIke Bodies(**8:15a** Frogs Make Me Hoppy **9:30a** I Never Saw Another Butterfly **9:30a** Museum on the Move +7 more	**7a** Cinderella Stories: Estrellita D"Oro a **7a** How Our Buildings Are LIke Bodies(**7a** Voices of the Revolutionary War **8a** Poetry Alive! +4 more
8	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**
	8a Dimension of Hope: Social Justice T	**9:30a** Studio Programs		**9:30a** Studio Programs
15	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**
8a Poetry Alive! **8:30a** Through Your Eyes: My Neighbo **10a** The RapOetry Workshop	**7a** Esencia Española **7a** Latin American Expressions **7a** Latin American Expressions **7a** Latin American Expressions +6 more	**7a** Film Field Trips **8a** Poems for Science: Animals and Ha **8:30a** Through Your Eyes: My Neighbo **9a** Minds of the Artist +3 more	**8a** Phoneme-onal Puppets: Making an **8:30a** A Passion for Birds **9:30a** Studio Programs **9:45a** On a Wing and a Song +5 more	
22	**23**	**24**	**25**	**26**
8a Poems for Science: Animals and Ha **9a** Connections: Just Juice **9a** Claude Monet"s Impressionist Pond	**7a** Music and Cultures of The America! **8a** Dimension of Hope: Social Justice T **9a** Connections: Just Juice **9:30a** Mark Twain House Tour +4 more	**7a** Film Field Trips **9a** Connections: Just Juice **9:30a** Studio Programs **12:15p** Little Printmakers: Fun With Ge	**9a** Claude Monet"s Impressionist Pond **9a** Connections: Just Juice **9:30a** Art and Writing (Grades 3-5) **10a** My Garden Grows +3 more	**7a** Nudging the Imagination: Interactiv **8a** Poems for Science: Animals and Ha **8:50a** Wizard of Oz **9a** Connections: Just Juice +5 more
29	**30**	**1**	**2**	**3**
10a Stowe Center Experience **11a** Wizard of Oz		**9:30a** Museum on the Move **11a** Poetry Alive! **12:15p** DRUMMING ABOUT YOU **1p** Science: The Musical! **1p** Science: The Musical!	**8:15a** DRUMMING ABOUT YOU **8:45a** Improv Science **9a** Mark Twain House Tour **9:30a** Stowe Center Experience +3 more	**7a** Sleeping Beauty **7a** Sleeping Beauty **7a** Sleeping Beauty **9:15a** Through Your Eyes: My Neighbo +6 more
6	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
8a Capoeira: Brazil"s Struggle for Free(**9a** Little Printmakers: Fun With Geome	**7a** Fahrenheit 451 Theater Performan(**7a** Fahrenheit 451 Theater Performan(	**9a** Cinderella Stories: Estrellita D"Oro a **9a** Frogs Make Me Hoppy	**7a** The Art of Storytelling **7a** Zumba Gold for Young and Old	**7a** Math-terpieces **7a** Zumba Gold for Young and Old

UPGRADE   CREATE SURVEY   **HartfordPerforms** ▼

Program Response Form

SUMMARY → DESIGN SURVEY → PREVIEW & SCORE → **COLLECT RESPONSES** → ANALYZE RESULTS →

PRESENT RESULTS **NEW!**

Survey Collectors

ADD NEW COLLECTOR ▼

	NICKNAME	STATUS	RESPONSES	DATE MODIFIED	
✉	**Voucher 2/11 - 2/22** Created 2/25/2019	OPEN	7	Sunday, March 03, 2019 10:46 PM	•••
✉	**Voucher 2/7 - 2/11** Created 2/14/2019	OPEN	11	Wednesday, February 27, 2019 8:07 PM	•••
🔗	**PRF Web Link 18 - 19** Created 11/30/2018	OPEN	6	Friday, February 22, 2019 8:58 AM	•••
✉	**Voucher 12/18 - 12/24** Created 1/3/2019	OPEN	17	Monday, February 11, 2019 12:57 PM	•••
✉	**Voucher 1/31 - 2/7** Created 2/7/2019	OPEN	5	Monday, February 11, 2019 12:52 PM	•••
✉	**Voucher 1/15 - 1/23** Created 1/24/2019	OPEN	8	Wednesday, February 06, 2019 2:19 PM	•••
✉	**Voucher 1/24 - 1/29** Created 1/31/2019	OPEN	10	Monday, February 04, 2019 8:46 AM	•••
✉	**Voucher 1/10 - 1/14**	OPEN	6	Thursday, January 31, 2019 10:12 AM	•••

Timely troubleshooting

☐ The artist could have been more prepared for the sessions and been on time.

12/11/2018 8:19 AM

☐ The communication with this Art Provider was week compared to past years.

1/23/2019 10:33 AM

☐ As previously mentioned, the students were sitting for too long of a time.
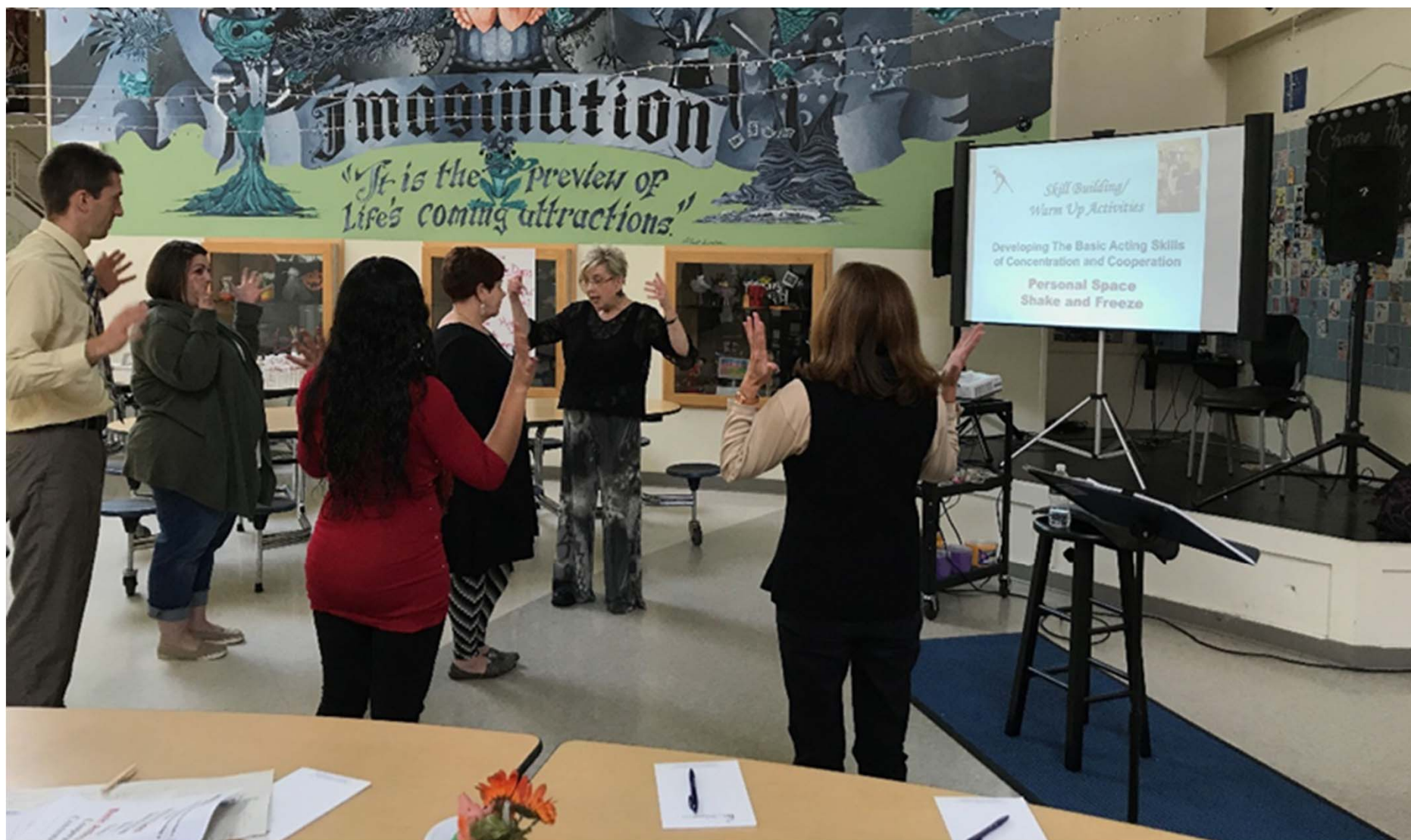
2/25/2019 12:55 PM

Pre-machine vs post-machine

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Program Response Form	184	229	293
		↑ 24%	↑ 28%

Beyond Surveys

Observation Protocol

8:45-9:30 / Activity #1 (Tableau Demo and Group Work)

Coach Practice	# of participants (circle one)	Description / Examples
Physically participates "as a student" in activities	None Some Most N/A	
Verbally participates "as a student" in activities	None Some Most N/A	
Active listening	None Some Most N/A	

Guided Listening		Description / Examples
Coach asks clarifying questions about specific activities.	Yes No	
Coach asks troubleshooting questions specific to their teachers/students/classroom.	Yes No	
Coach mentions modifications they would make in classroom.	Yes No	

Qualitative Data

- "This gives individuals a way to grow and share together."

- "This strategy is good for kids with special needs. Kids without language can pick up on vocabulary from the cues."

- "This activity builds imagination and independent thinking. Helps develop capacity to think through different scenarios."

Artifacts

Drama Station

I can use my sounds to discover words while I pretend play.

1. In your journal draw a line down the middle

M	N

2. On one side write letter _____

   on the other side write letter _____

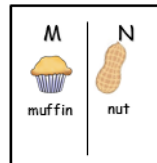3. Use the materials and pretend play with your partners

2. While you play see if you can use any words that start with the letters
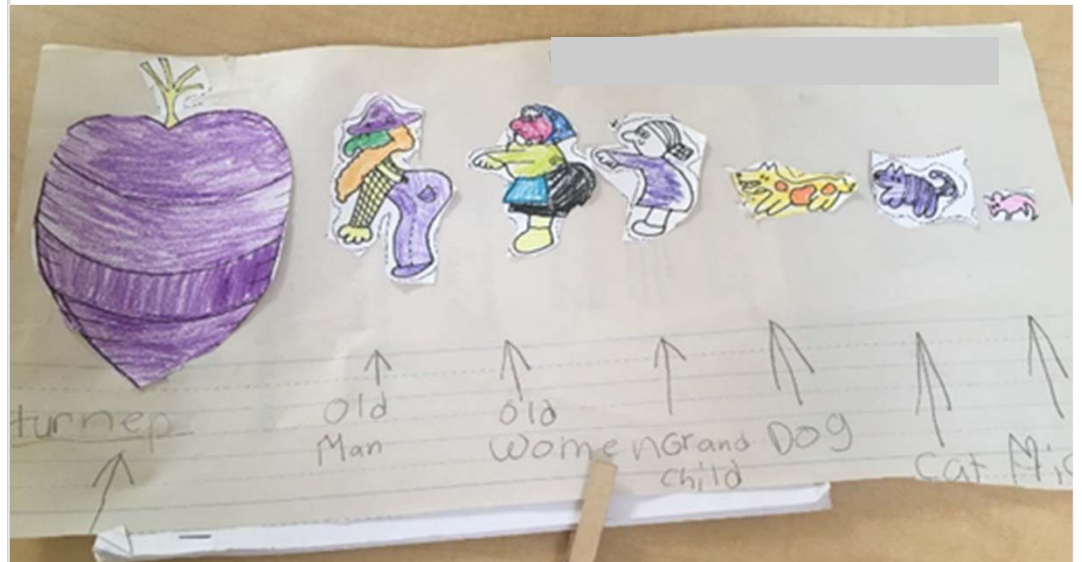
   Let's bake A muffin

3. If you use a word that starts with one of the letters draw a picture of it and label it

M	N
muffin	nut

4. Put materials back in place

turnep   Old Man   Old Women   Grand child   Dog   Cat Mi

External & internal benefits

- Makes a compelling case.
- Shows you're serious about accountability.
- Demonstrates transparency.

- Evidence of staff performance.
- Builds shared understanding & purpose.

Final Thoughts/Advice

1. Assess evaluation capacity. Get training and technical assistance as needed.

2. Document your evaluative work.

3. Assess evaluative thinking at your organization, plan to strengthen as needed.

4. Use evaluation skills in other areas of organizational work.

INTENTIONS

▶ What questions did this raise for you?
How could they get answered?

▶ What, if anything, will you do in
response to this Roundtable?

▶ What project might you undertake
using existing evaluation capacity at
your organization?

Closure

- ***Thank You!***
- For further information…visit our website
- Evaluation Capacity Grant program
- Look for our survey – we want ***your*** feedback!

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