



**Sylvia E. Lyles, PhD  
US Department of Education**

**Alaska Native Education Programs**

**October 2011**

**GPRA/Program Assessment/Evaluation**



# Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) - Background

## **Congress finds that—**

- Waste and inefficiency in Federal programs undermine the confidence of the American people in the Government and reduces the Fed's ability to address adequately vital public needs;
- Federal managers are seriously disadvantaged in their efforts to improve program efficiency and effectiveness, because of insufficient articulation of program goals and inadequate information on program performance; and
- Congressional policymaking, spending decisions and program oversight are seriously handicapped by insufficient attention to program performance and results.



# GPPRA cont'd

## **The purposes of this Act are to-**

- Systematically hold Federal agencies accountable for achieving program results;
- initiate program performance reform by setting program goals, measuring program performance against those goals, and reporting publicly on their progress;
- improve Federal program effectiveness and public accountability by promoting a new focus on results, service quality, and customer satisfaction;
- help Federal managers improve service delivery by requiring that managers plan for meeting program objectives and by providing them with information about program results and service quality;
- improve congressional decision-making by providing more objective information on achieving statutory objectives, and on the relative effectiveness and efficiency of Federal programs and spending; and
- improve internal management of the Federal Government.



## GPRA – How we got here...

- Office of Management and Budget require each agency to prepare an annual performance plan covering each program activity set forth in the budget of such agency. Such plan shall--
  - establish performance goals to define the level of performance to be achieved by a program activity;
  - express such goals in an objective, quantifiable, and measurable form;
  - briefly describe the operational processes, skills and technology, and the human, capital, information, or other resources required to meet the performance goals;
  - establish performance indicators to be used in measuring or assessing the relevant outputs, service levels, and outcomes of each program activity;
  - provide a basis for comparing actual program results with the established performance goals; and
  - describe the means to be used to verify and validate measured values;
  - Establish annual (or other specified timelines) for reporting.

HOLD THAT THOUGHT...





# Performance Objectives and Goals

## **-Each project establishes project-specific objectives**

- Objectives are specific to the type, scope, and outcomes established within each project
- Objectives should be measurable and reportable
- Objectives must have timelines and outcomes
- Objectives are considered during the review process
- Objectives must be approved by ED

HOLD THAT THOUGHT...





# Program assessment

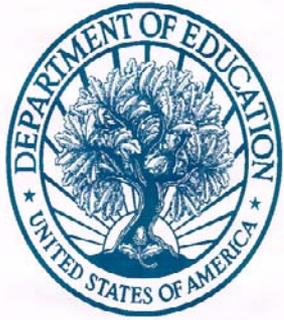
- Definition: Program assessment is defined as the **systematic and ongoing** method of **gathering, analyzing and using information** from various sources about a program and measuring program outcomes in order **to improve student learning.**



# Program Assessment/Evaluation- Purpose

The four main purposes of program assessment include:

- **1. To improve** – the assessment process should provide feedback to determine how the program can be improved.
- **2. To inform** – the assessment process should inform stakeholders and other decision-makers of the contributions and impact of the program.
- **3. To prove** – the assessment process should encapsulate and demonstrate to stakeholders and decision-makers what the program is accomplishing.
- **4. To support** – the assessment process should provide support for decision-making activities such as program review and strategic planning, as well as external accountability activities such as Congressional funding and oversight.



# Program Assessment/Evaluation

In developing project-specific objectives, several activities should happen –

- Planning (define project mission/vision)
- Needs assessment
- Tools and measures must be selected
- Stakeholder engagement
- Goals and measures considered
- Resources considered
- Return on investment is moderate or high



# Take it “Off–Hold”...the thought process

- BOTH GPRA and PROJECT-SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES ARE IMPORTANT
- BOTH ARE CRITICAL ELEMENTS THAT DEFINE SUCCESS AND SUSTAINABILITY
- BOTH DETERMINES FUTURE FUNDING



# Closing out the “thought process...”

**So, the question is –**

- How do we improve reporting?
  - Planning, planning, planning (from beginning to the end of the project)
    - Start early
    - Assign someone to the task
    - Realize that reporting on GPRA and conducting an assessment of project specific objectives is part of program management
  - Learn how to collect, analyze, synthesize, and report GPRA and project-specific goals effectively
    - Ask for help
    - Seek outside help (with grant funds)
  - Use the data to inform program improvement – show how your project activities changed based on data