

U.S. Department of Education

Charter School Program

84.282A State Educational Agency

Rigorous Evaluation Planning:

Developing Useful Project Objectives
and High-Quality Performance Measures

Center for Evaluation & Education Policy
Indiana University



WORKSHOP GOALS

- Gain knowledge and skills needed to develop strong and measurable ***project objectives*** for CSP and other ED funding opportunities.
- Gain knowledge and skills related to creating ***performance measures*** to ensure the collection of the highest quality data;
- Understand the contribution of ***project objectives*** and ***performance measures*** to a comprehensive evaluation plan.

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

1. Logic Models / Applicability to Project Objectives
2. Project Objectives of CSP Programs
3. Performance Measures: Strategies for Measuring Progress Towards Objectives

Why Is This Important?

High quality objectives and measures ...

- make it easier for you to measure your progress
- allow you to report progress easily and quantitatively
- allow ED staff to gather evidence of program effectiveness

Goals – Objectives – Measures

PROGRAM GOAL



Project Objectives:

What your project is doing to support the overall program goal



Performance Measures: How you measure your progress toward meeting your objectives (GPRA, Program, Project)

Logic Models

They really are important.

What is a Logic Model?

- A simplified picture of a program, initiative, or intervention.
- Shows logical relationships among the resources that are invested, the activities that take place, and the benefits or changes that result.
(This is often called **program theory** or the program's **theory of action**)
- It is a "plausible, sensible model of how a program is supposed to work" (Bickman, 1987).

Sample Logic Model



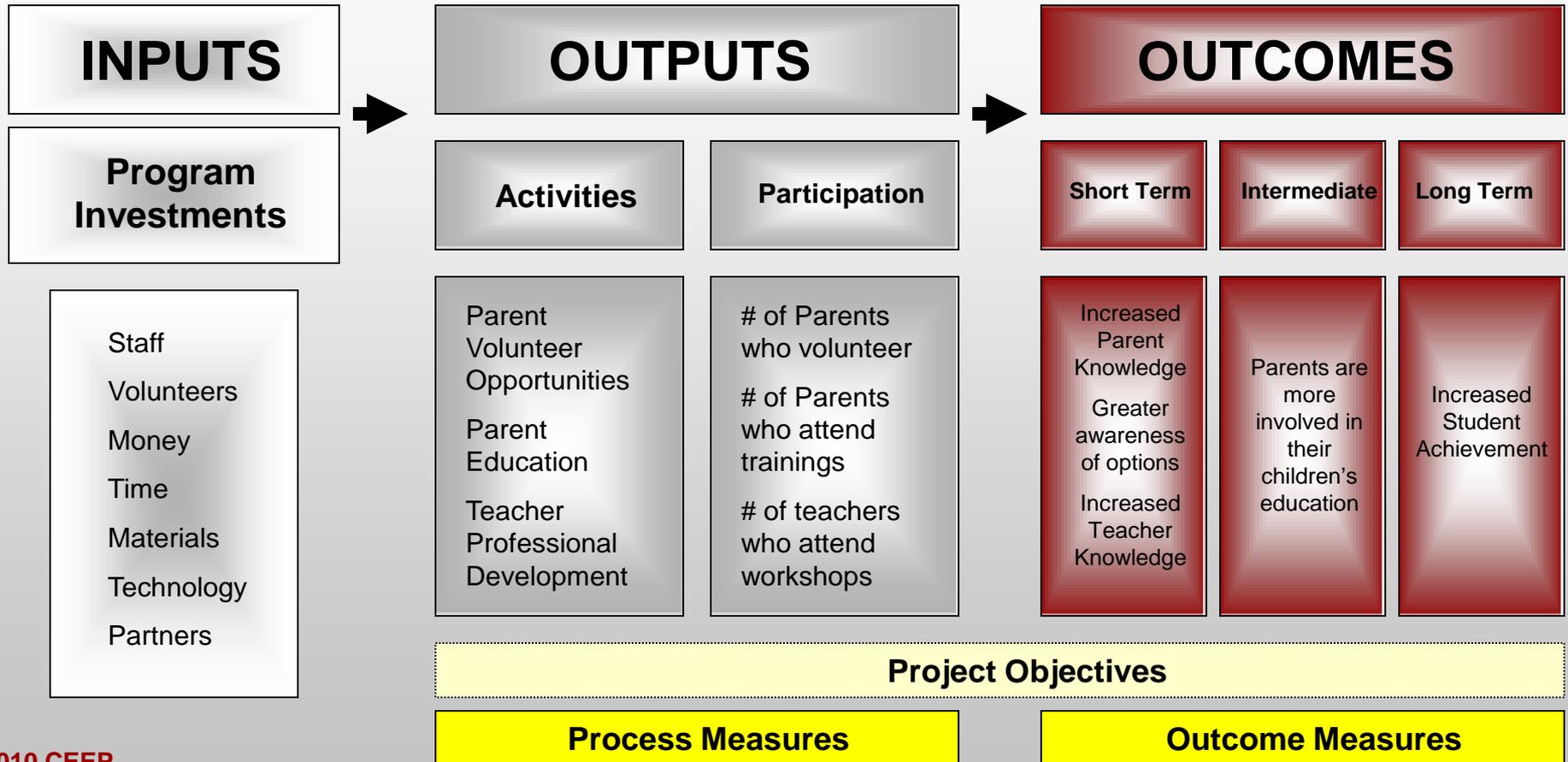
Inputs - the resources invested that allow us to achieve the desired outputs.

Outputs - activities conducted or products created that reach targeted participants or populations. Outputs lead to outcomes.

Outcomes - changes or benefits for individuals, families, groups, businesses, organizations, and communities.

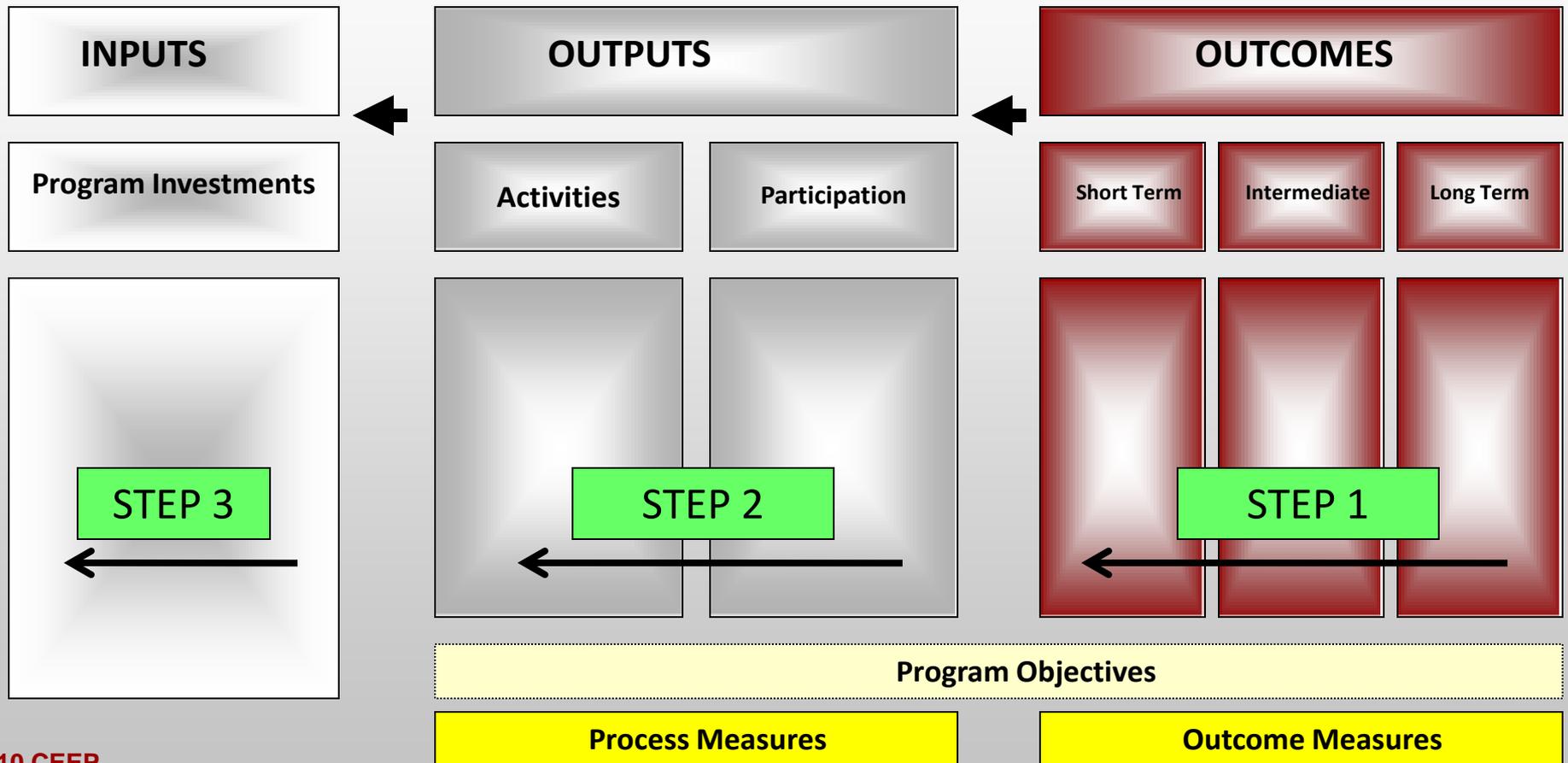
Charter School Program Logic Model

(Parent Involvement Component)



PRACTICE EXERCISE: Developing a Logic Model:

(Articulate the desired long-term outcomes and work backwards)



Project Objectives

What are you trying to accomplish?

High Quality Project Objectives

- *Relevance*
- *Applicability*
- *Focus*
- *Measurement*

High-Quality Project Objectives: Criteria #1

RELEVANCE: How relevant is the project objective to the overall goal of the program and/or the goal of your project?

- *Increase the number of high quality charter schools.*
- *To encourage dissemination of best practices within charter schools to the broader public.*
- *To strengthen the skills and knowledge of boards and authorizers to build their leadership capabilities.*

(all of these are highly relevant to CSP program goals)

High-Quality Project Objectives:

Criteria #2

APPLICABILITY: How applicable is the project objective to the specific activities that are being conducted through your particular project?

- Support charter schools' efforts to be fiscally responsible for long-term sustainability.

(Activities: workshops of fiscal management, online resources, coaching from experienced charter school personnel) - APPLICABLE

- Promote the dissemination of charter schools' best practices to other public schools and LEAs

(Activities: site visits, identification of best practices) – NOT APPLICABLE

High-Quality Project Objectives: Criteria #3

FOCUS: How focused is the project objective?

- *Evaluate the effectiveness of charter schools throughout the state and share results with various stakeholder groups to encourage effective administrative and teaching practices. (too little)*
- *Form a parent advisory council. (too much)*
- *Increase the number of high quality charter schools in Arizona, particularly those serving students most at risk in rural and urban settings. (just right)*

High-Quality Project Objectives: Criteria #4

MEASURABILITY: Are there concepts in the project objective that lend themselves to measurement? If so, is measurement feasible?

- *To build leadership capacity and professional collaborative culture.* (could be conceptually challenging to measure)
- *To increase community awareness of and support for the school.* (could be feasibly challenging to measure)
- *Improve high school student achievement and graduation rates in charter schools.* (constructs are easily operationalized)

Practice Exercise 1:

How do these project objectives measure up?

- *Provide state-level technical assistance, information and support to encourage individuals and groups to become involved in the charter school movement in order to provide better learning environments to all students, especially those considered at risk.*
 1. Relevance
 2. Applicability
 3. Focus
 4. Measurability

Practice Exercise 2:

How do these project objectives measure up?

- *Increase student achievement.*
 1. Relevance
 2. Applicability
 3. Focus
 4. Measurability

Practice Exercise 3:

How do these project objectives measure up?

- Systematize accountability procedures for charter schools in XYZ state.
 1. Relevance
 2. Applicability
 3. Focus
 4. Measurability

Performance Measures

Where the rubber meets the road.

Performance Measures

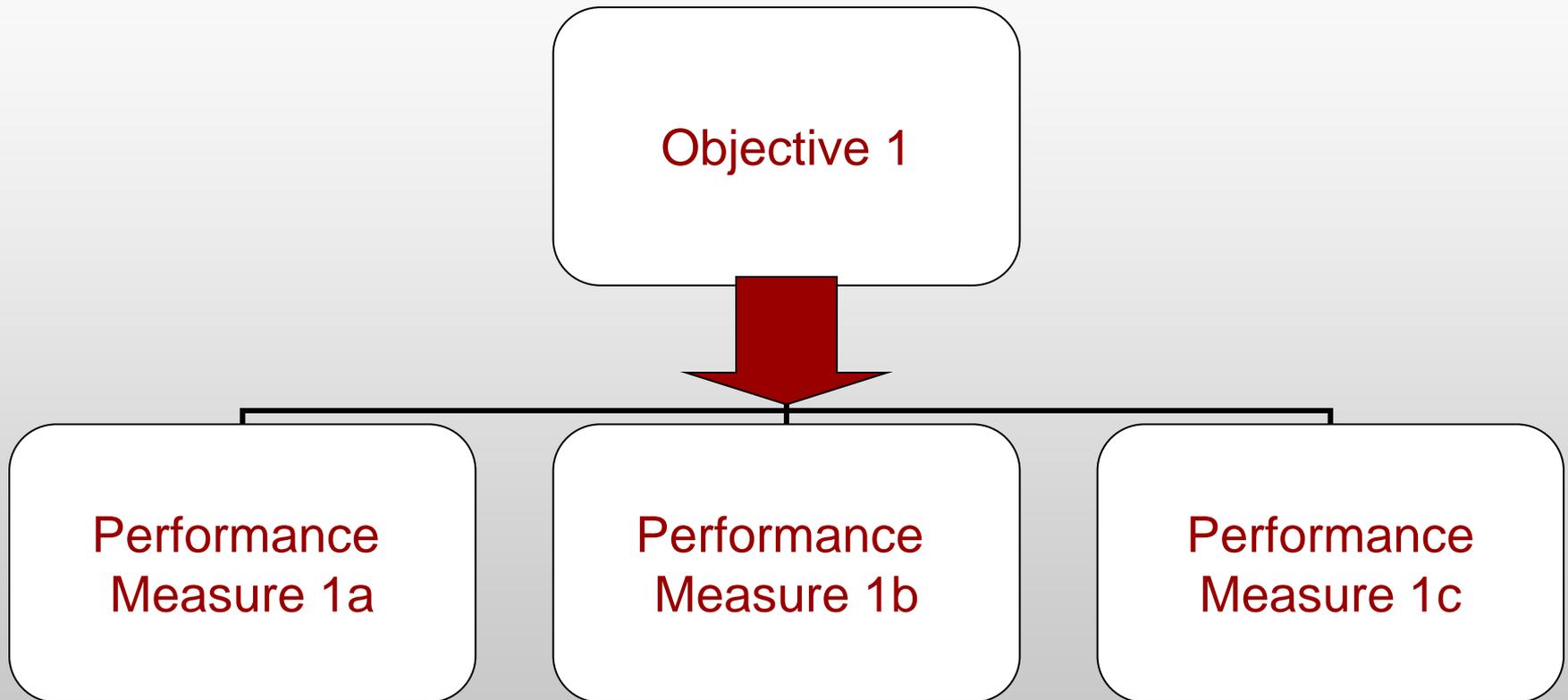
*In general terms, a **performance measure** is a measurable indicator used to determine how well objectives are being met.*

How will you assess progress?

How much progress will constitute success?

How will you know if your objective or part of your objective has been achieved?

Relevance of Performance Measures



Types of Performance Measures

GPRA: *Measures established for reporting to Congress under the Government Performance and Results Act*

Program: *Measures established by the program office for the particular grant competition*

Project: *Measures that the grantee establishes in their approved grant application to meet their project objectives.*

Components of Performance Measures

The following 4 components are necessary to ensure good performance measures.

- *What* will change (or happen)?
- *How much* change is expected? (What is the expected quantity?)
- *Who* will achieve the change (or who will the events involve)?
- *When* the change will take place (or happen)?

Performance Measures

OUTCOME PERFORMANCE MEASURE:

Five (**how much**) charter schools will be developed in geographic areas with a concentration of high priority schools (as defined by state standards) (**who/what**) throughout the state each year between 2010 and 2012 (**when**).

PROCESS PERFORMANCE MEASURE:

100% of charter school leaders and CFOs (**expected quantity**) will attend the Fiscal Review Workshop (**what will happen/who will be involved**) during years one and two of their grant period (**when will it happen**).

Academic Achievement Performance Measures

What to measure?

- *Achievement/Accomplishment*
- *Change in achievement/accomplishment*
- *Achievement/accomplishment compared with other students or schools*

Academic Achievement Performance Measures: Achievement/Accomplishment

At least 80% of 10th graders in all state charter schools will receive a score of Passing on the state high school competency test.

Academic Achievement Performance Measures: Change in Achievement/Accomplishment

Passing scores on the state high school competency test taken by 10th graders in all state charter schools will increase by at least 2% each year.

Academic Achievement Performance Measures: Comparison

A greater percentage of 10th graders in state charter schools taking the state high school competency test will receive passing scores than 10th graders in traditional state schools.

Improving Performance Measures

Original Performance Measure:

Number of charter schools that have student information software.

*What: **Increase** the number of charter schools that have student information software.*

*When: **By the third year** an increased number of charter schools will have student information software.*

*How Many: By the third year **75%** of charter schools will have student information software.*

Performance Measure Problems:

NO ACTION VERB:

- *“Number of schools that attended accreditation tours.”*
- *“Percentage of charter school students achieving proficiency in math.”*

INSUFFICIENT DETAIL FOR MEASUREMENT:

- *“Habits of mind: teachers embed habits of mind and intellectual inquiry that span all disciplines.”*
- *“Parents will be a part of all charter schools”*

Resolving the “Activity-as-Measures” Dilemma

“Hire qualified teachers.”

- *At least 80% of new teachers hired will be “highly qualified” according to state standards by the third year of the grant.*

“Create an attendance policy.”

- *100% of new charter schools will implement attendance policies that involve parent participation by year three.*

“Implement regular monitoring process”

- *A minimum of 10 best practices will be identified and shared with other schools through the monitoring process each year.*

High Quality Performance Measures (EXAMPLE):

Objective:

- To encourage dissemination of best practices within charter schools to the broader public.

Performance Measures:

- On an annual basis, 100% of charter schools will submit their best practices to the SEA for inclusion to a catalogue of innovative methods.
- During each year of the grant, at least two venues/partner organizations will disseminate collected charter school data.
- Follow up surveys attending partner organization training events will show that at least 75% of those attending dissemination workshops will implement new practices based on charter school innovations.

High Quality Performance Measures (EXAMPLE):

Objective:

- To increase the number of high-quality charter schools available to students and families.

Performance Measures:

1. Activities in support of charter applicants will lead to the submission of fifteen charter school applications annually throughout the state.
2. Increase the number of high-quality charter schools from a base of 65 in 2008 to 100 by the end of the 3-year grant period.
3. Increase the number of local district authorized charter schools from a base of 14 to 18 by the end of the 3-year grant period.
4. Facilitate the creation of 6 new charter high schools by the end of the grant period.

Comprehensive Performance Measures

Address both the *process* of working towards the objective and the *outcomes* related to meeting the objective. For example...

Objective: Promote the dissemination of charter school best practices to other public schools.

- a. By July 2010, provide support for 10 dissemination projects that meet annual competitive priorities.
(Process Measure)
- b. By July 2010, increase in the number of educational personnel in traditional public school districts that are aware of resources related to charter school best practices by 25%.
(Outcome Measure)

CSP GPRA Measures

1. The number of new charter schools that will be opened during the grant (including benchmarks for each year).
2. The percent of charter school students who will be proficient on the math portion of the state assessment exam (including benchmarks for each year).
3. The percent of charter school students who will be proficient on the reading portion of the state assessment exam (including benchmarks for each year).

SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

1. Project Objective Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

1.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
		Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

1.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
		Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

1. Project Objective Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

Promote the dissemination of charter school best practices to other public schools.

1.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
By July 2011, provide support for 10 dissemination projects that meet annual competitive priorities.	GPRA	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
		10	/		12	/	

1.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
By July 2010, increase in the number of educational personnel in traditional public school districts that are aware of resources related to charter school best practices by 25%.		Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/	25%		/	22%

Because grantees are required to report annual progress towards project objectives, performance measures should be created accordingly...

EXAMPLE - OBJECTIVE: To use chartering and the Charter School Program grant funding to improve secondary school student performance and graduation rates throughout the state.

- a. The Scholastic Assessment Test average of charter school secondary students will exceed statewide averages by **year two of the grant cycle.**
- b. Charter school secondary students will have a higher graduation rate than the state average by **year two of the grant period.**
- c. 80% of charter school secondary students will pass the High School Graduation Test (HSGT) in **each year of the grant period.**

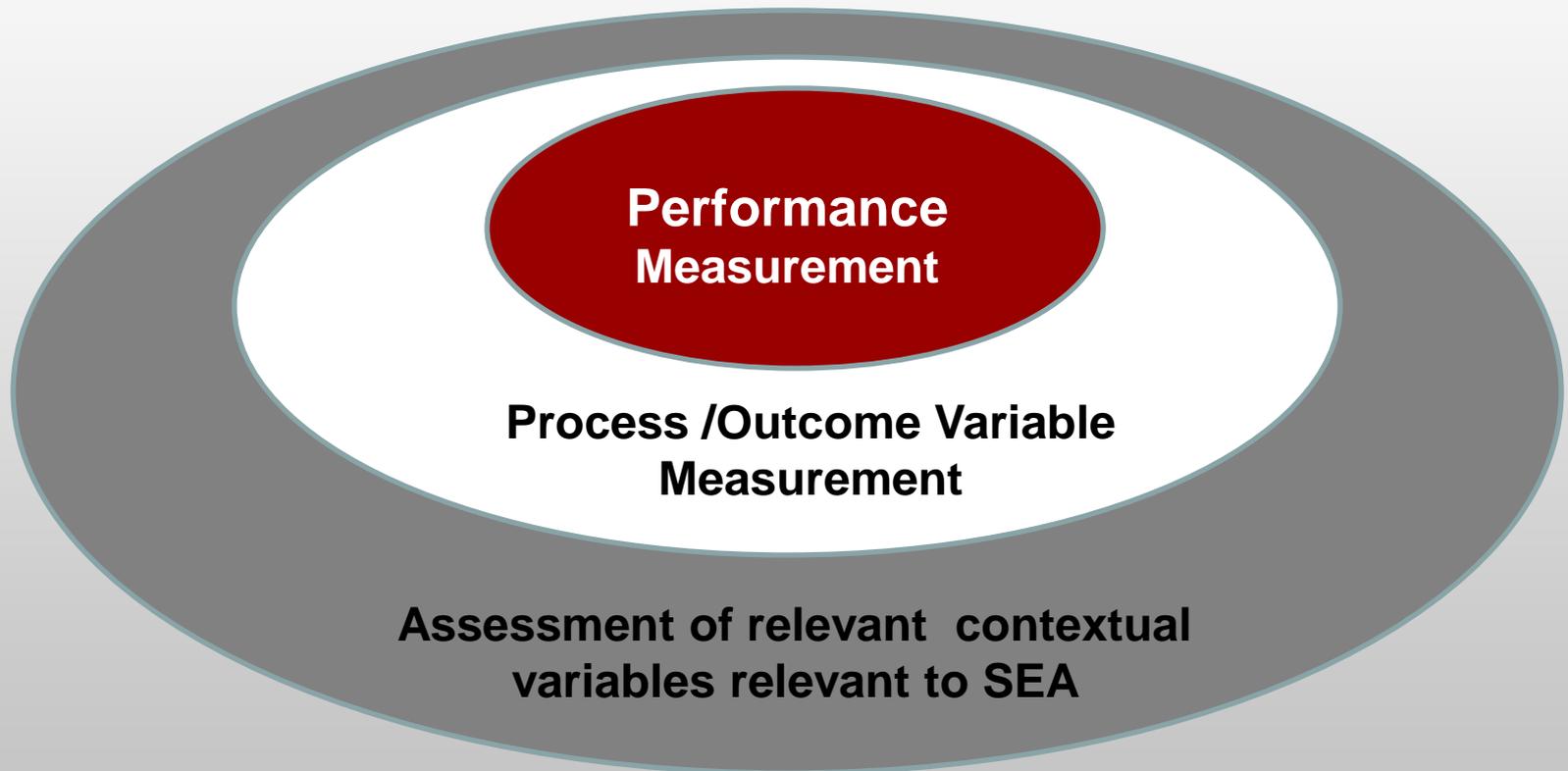
Summary:

Developing Good Project Objectives and Performance Measures

1. *Projects should create a **logic model** to illustrate a simplified picture of the components and relationships of their program;*
2. *Projects should write a **few clear objectives** that explain what the project is doing to support the overall goal;*
3. *Each objective should have a few, specific **performance measures** to demonstrate how progress will be measured toward meeting the objectives.*

...And Finally

Good performance measurement can provide a solid foundation for an evaluation, but it's only the beginning...



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