

Archived Information

APPENDIX

I

**Interim Evaluation of the Regional Educational Laboratories
Evaluation Framework Template**

Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Possible Data Sources		
			Signature Works	Additional Selected Outputs	Material for Laboratory Operation
Implementation and Management	To what extent is the REL doing what they were approved to do during the first three contract years?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executes the REL program of work as outlined in the contract and modifications Executes the REL program of work in a timely manner Uses other internal organizational resources (within the institution) to enhance the REL monies Uses external resources efficiently and effectively Establishes networks, strategic alliances, and/or partnerships with other RELs, other institutions, and key individuals or organizations in the region (e.g., CSSOs, policymakers, districts, other educational agencies) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of selected products/materials produced, from a variety of sources in conjunction with signature work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design documents - Planning documents - Curricula - Training materials - Reports, articles, papers, etc. References to work in contract/modifications References to work in annual plans and progress reports Level of effort (\$, FTEs) associated with signature work effort List of staff, partners, other resources involved in signature work Lab staff interviews Partner interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Items selected from REL inventory to be reviewed against indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Lab funding, by source OERI funding and staff allocation by task OERI site visit reports Organizational chart Original Request for Proposals (RFP) Original contract proposal Contract Modifications Annual plans and updates Quarterly reports Board minutes and agendas Board roster w/ affiliations Inventory of products and services Staff interviews OERI monitor interviews
	To what extent is the REL using a self-monitoring process to plan and adapt activities in response to feedback and customer needs and issues of the region?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements and utilizes a QA system for products and services Engages in self-assessment, utilizing results to improve performance Seeks external/independent critiques, incorporating feedback into performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of QA processes for work products QA feedback materials for selected documents Evaluations (internal and external) regarding work Feedback forms, survey results, other evaluative data regarding work Lab staff interviews Partner interviews OERI monitor interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Items selected from REL inventory to be reviewed against indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal and external evaluations Feedback forms, survey results, other evaluative data Documentation of QA procedures Relevant Board minutes and agenda Program reviews, strategic plans, similar documents Staff interviews Board member interviews OERI monitor interviews

Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Possible Data Sources		
			Signature Works	Additional Selected Outputs	Material for Laboratory Operation
Quality	To what extent is the REL developing high quality products and services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents research base for products and services Uses appropriate methodology in applied research projects Executes applied research methodology in a sound manner Applies research-based findings to field-based settings in an appropriate manner Utilizes peer review for products and services as appropriate Minimizes duplication with similar efforts Implements a coherent and sustained program of work Receives national, regional, and state recognition for products, programs, and services Employs state-of-the-art knowledge, processes, and tools to design and implement products and services Uses well tested and documented approaches for services being implemented in the field Obtains expert advice to inform products and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of products and materials produced in conjunction with signature work Design documents Methodological papers Literature reviews Web site and other electronic resources Reports of research findings External citations of work List of alliances/partners involved in work Description of fit of work into larger mission of laboratory Presentations/publications in national, regional and state outlets or journals Staff interviews Partner interviews User interviews/observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Items selected from REL inventory to be reviewed against indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of QA/peer review procedures Recognition/publication in national, regional, or state literature and referred journals Staff participation in and presentations to national, regional, or state professional organizations Evidence of alliances with other relevant organizations, centers, etc. Website and other electronic resources Staff interviews Partner interviews User interviews

Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Possible Data Sources		
			Signature Works	Additional Selected Outputs	Material for Laboratory Operation
Utility	<p>To what extent are the products and services provided by the Laboratory useful to, and used by customers?</p> <p>To what extent is the REL focused on customer needs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides products and services of sufficient size, scope, duration and intensity to produce sound guidance toward improvement/student success efforts Conducts ongoing interaction with users Develops products and services that are useful to and used by “customers” in appropriate settings Makes work available through a variety of modes, including electronic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of products and materials produced Notes/records of follow-up to work Feedback forms, survey results, other evaluative data Listing and type of users of work, products, services Review of venues employed to deliver products, programs, services to the appropriate user for work identified (print, electronic) User interviews/ observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Items selected from REL inventory to be reviewed against indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures of utilization of REL services (requests for information, web-site hits, material disseminated, mailing lists, etc.) Feedback forms, survey results, other evaluative data Inventory of documents Web-site and other electronic resources User interviews/ observations
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies customers and potential customers Assesses customer needs through a variety of methods Sets priorities in accordance with customer needs Tailors products and services to the intended audience Solicits customer feedback, including perceived value, through established systems/processes Uses customer feedback to refine products and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports on user characteristics (geography, demographics, etc.) Documentation of needs related to work Evidence of customer input in design and refinements Description of customer feedback mechanisms for work Feedback forms, survey results, tracer studies other evaluative data Description of use of customers feedback related to work User interviews/ observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Items selected from REL inventory to be reviewed against indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of REL needs assessment Documentation of REL customer feedback Institutional mechanisms to incorporate customer needs and feedback into planning Relevant Board minutes Data on non-users User interviews Board interviews

Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Possible Data Sources		
			Signature Works	Additional Selected Outputs	Material for Laboratory Operation
Outcomes and Impact	To what extent is the REL's work contributing to improved student success, particularly in intensive implementation sites?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizes a sound model to document/ support the contribution of REL work to student success over time Monitors impact over time (short and long term) Contributes to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues or effective strategies Addresses issues of national significance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data/reports measuring impact or outcomes on students related to signature work Plans to collect and analyze data to document link between activities and expected outcomes Feedback forms, survey results, other evaluative data regarding outcomes and impact of signature work Staff interviews Partner interviews User interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Items selected from REL inventory to be reviewed against indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence supporting REL contribution to improved student success Staff interviews Partner interviews User interviews
	To what extent does the Laboratory assist states and localities to implement comprehensive school improvement strategies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporates potential for scaling up into products, services Provides research-based information Formulates well-tested models and strategies Provides needed materials and assistance Facilitates widespread access to information on best practices within the region Develops appropriate strategic alliances Builds capacity of partner sites Influences policy Facilitates re-allocation of time and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of contribution of signature work to implementation of school improvement strategies in intensive implementation sites Feedback forms, survey results, other evaluative data regarding outcomes and impact of signature work Web-site and other electronic resources Staff interviews Partner interviews User interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Items selected from REL inventory to be reviewed against indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual plans and updates Web-site and other electronic resources Staff interviews Partner interviews User interviews

Standards Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Possible Data Sources		
			Signature Works (if in specialty area)	Additional Selected Outputs	Material for Laboratory Operation
Outcomes and Impact	To what extent has the REL made progress in establishing a regional and national reputation in its specialty area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishes in appropriate journals • Receives requests for services, products, conference presentations, etc. related to the specialty area—inside and outside of the region • Disseminates specialty area products and services inside and outside of the region <p>*Also refer to applicable indicators from the Quality and Utility criteria.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal publications • Conference presentations on specialty area topic(s) • Inventory and tracking of specialty area products • Other evidence of adoption of developed specialty area programs, products, or training materials inside and outside the region • Website and other electronic resources • Review of journal articles/citing of article(s) by others • Documentation of number of requests for products and services, inside and outside of region • Staff interviews • Partner interviews • User interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Items selected from REL inventory to be reviewed against indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal publications • Conference presentations on specialty area topic(s) • Inventory and tracking of specialty area products • Other evidence of adoption of developed specialty area programs, products, or training materials inside and outside the region • Website and other electronic resources • Review of journal articles/citing of article(s) by others • Documentation of number of requests for products and services, inside and outside of region • Staff interviews • OERI monitor interviews • User interviews

Interim Evaluation of the Regional Educational Laboratories Evaluation Template Companion Document

In an effort to provide further clarification regarding the evaluation indicators, DIR has developed the following document to serve as a companion piece to the Evaluation Framework Template. For each indicator, a series of questions is provided that peer review panelists may wish to consider as they review the materials provided by the Lab and conduct their independent evaluations. The questions suggest possible dimensions along which peer reviewers may choose to evaluate materials. These dimensions are not meant to be exhaustive but are provided as suggestions of some issues to consider within each indicator. Peer reviewers are in no way restricted to these areas of inquiry and are free to evaluate materials along additional dimensions they feel are appropriate within each indicator. Peer reviewers are not expected to address each of the specific questions included in this document in their written reports. Rather, reviewers will be asked to address the eight evaluation questions, considering the accompanying indicators as a whole.

Implementation and Management

Evaluation Question #1.

To what extent is the REL doing what they were approved to do during the first three contract years?

- Executes the REL program of work as outlined in the contract and modifications
 - Has the Lab conducted the activities as described in their contract, modifications, and annual updates?
 - If changes have been made, is adequate justification provided?
 - Has the Lab produced the deliverables specified in their contract, modifications, and annual updates?
 - If not, is adequate justification provided?
- Executes the REL program of work in a timely manner
 - Are products/services developed to a point that is consistent with the time and resources expended thus far?
 - Is there sufficient time remaining in the contract period for the products/services to be completed or to achieve their planned state of development?
- Uses other internal organizational resources (within the institution) to enhance the REL monies
 - Has the Lab been able to utilize other funds within the institution to supplement the work being done under the REL contract? Or have other funds enabled the Lab to reallocate REL monies?

- Has the Lab been able to utilize other internal resources (e.g., staff, technology, infrastructure, facilities) to positively impact the work conducted under the REL contract (e.g., accomplish more work, conduct REL activities more efficiently)?
- Do other programs/projects within the institution appear to compete with the REL contract for the use of organizational resources?
- Uses external resources efficiently and effectively
 - Has the Lab been able to leverage funds from other agencies/organizations to supplement the work being done under the REL contract? Or have external funds enabled the Lab to reallocate REL monies?
 - Has the Lab been able to leverage other in-kind resources (e.g., staff, technology, infrastructure, facilities) from other agencies/organizations to positively impact the work conducted under the REL contract (e.g., accomplish more work, conduct REL activities more efficiently, reallocate funds)?
 - Has the Lab been selective in seeking out and obtaining external resources to enhance their REL work?
- Establishes networks, strategic alliances, and/or partnerships with other RELs, other institutions, and key individuals or organizations in the region (e.g., CSSOs, policymakers, districts, other educational agencies)
 - Has the Lab established partnerships/collaborations with the appropriate agencies/organizations/individuals to maximize the value of joint activities/products?
 - Has the Lab been able to engage all the relevant parties that one would expect to be involved? Are there certain agencies/organizations/individuals that one would expect to be “at the table” that are not? Is there justification why these parties have not been engaged?
 - Does the Lab play an appropriate role in the network, alliance, or partnerships (e.g., convener, initiator, information provider, moderator) to accomplish the intended goal?
 - Is the level of activity and interaction appropriate to accomplish the intended goal?
 - Do the networks, strategic alliances, and/or partnerships increase the efficiency or effectiveness of the REL work?

Evaluation Question #2.

To what extent is the REL using a self-monitoring process to plan and adapt activities in response to feedback and customer needs and issues of the region?

- Implements and utilizes a QA system for products and services
 - Does the Lab have a standardized system in place to assure quality of products and services?
 - Is the QA system restricted to editorial review or does it include a broader review of all aspects of product/service development and implementation?
 - Is the system used by Lab staff on a regular and consistent basis?
- Engages in self-assessment, utilizing results to improve performance
 - Does the Lab have a system for internal evaluation in place (e.g., self-study, program reviews)?
 - Is the system used on a regular basis?

- Is there evidence that information gathered in the self-assessment process is used to refine products and services?
- Seeks external/independent critiques, incorporating feedback into performance
 - Does the Lab have mechanisms in place to obtain external/independent critiques (e.g., third party evaluations, advisory committees, peer review processes)
 - Are products and services regularly subjected to external review?
 - Is there evidence that feedback provided by external reviewers/advisors is used to refine products and services?

Quality

Evaluation Question #3.

To what extent is the REL developing high quality products and services?

- Documents research base for products and services
 - Has the Lab prepared or documented a review of the relevant literature as a foundation for developing products or services?
 - Has the Lab conducted a comprehensive, broad-based review of the existing literature?
 - Is the literature cited current?
 - Is the literature cited from reputable sources (e.g., refereed journals)?
- Uses appropriate methodology in applied research projects
 - Is the study design appropriate to address the research question?
 - Is the sample size adequate to allow for generalization of results?
 - Is the sampling technique appropriate and likely to yield a relevant sample?
 - Has randomization been used when appropriate?
 - Have human subjects' issues been addressed and approved by an Institutional Review Board or Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects?
- Executes applied research methodology in a sound manner
 - Has the Lab implemented the study design as planned?
 - Has training been provided on the instrumentation?
 - Are interview protocols followed consistently by different interviewers?
 - Has random selection/assignment been implemented appropriately?
- Applies research-based findings to field-based settings in an appropriate manner
 - Has the Lab made appropriate adaptations to a proven model to allow for field-based implementation?
 - Has the Lab maintained the core elements/concepts of the work despite the new field-based setting?
- Utilizes peer review for products and services as appropriate
 - Has the work been subject to review by individuals with relevant content area expertise?
 - Have products and services been reviewed by individuals with research methodology expertise?
 - Is peer review conducted primarily by other Lab staff or by external reviewers?
 - Has the work been published in refereed journals?

- Minimizes duplication with similar efforts
 - Has the Lab conducted a review to ensure that similar programs and services are not already available in the region or state?
 - Has the Lab checked to see if another Lab has a similar product/service available?
 - Does the Lab refer customers to the appropriate source for existing products and services?
 - Has the Lab conducted a thorough literature review before embarking on a research project to make sure that the research question has not already been answered?

- Implements a coherent and sustained program of work
 - Are the Lab's products and services interrelated and do they build on one another?
 - Are the Lab's products and services consistent with the stated mission of the organization?
 - Has the Lab demonstrated an on-going commitment to a particular area of work?

- Receives national, regional, and state recognition for products, programs, and services
 - Has the Lab been asked to make invited addresses at national, regional, or state conferences?
 - Has the Lab received any national, regional, or state awards?
 - Is the Lab viewed as a source of expert information? Is the Lab asked to provide expert consultation by others at the national, regional, or state level?
 - Has the work of the Lab been widely published?
 - Are individuals, agencies and organizations at the national, regional, or state level aware of the Lab and the products and services it has to offer?

- Employs state-of-the-art knowledge, processes, and tools to design and implement products and services
 - Does the Lab make use of the most current technology to develop and disseminate its products and services?
 - Does the Lab incorporate the latest widely accepted findings in the field into their work?
 - Are the Lab's products and services consistent with what would commonly be accepted as best practice in the field?

- Uses well tested and documented approaches for services being implemented in the field
 - Are Lab products and services based on well-tested models and approaches that have been shown to be successful?

- Obtains expert advice to inform products and services
 - Does the Lab make use of expert consultants or advisory groups when developing products or services?
 - What expertise is represented in-house by Lab staff? Are these individuals regularly called upon for advice regarding planning, development or implementation?

Utility

Evaluation Question #4.

To what extent are the products and services provided by the Laboratory useful to, and used by customers?

- Provides products and services of sufficient size, scope, duration and intensity to produce sound guidance toward improvement/student success efforts
 - Does the Lab provide an adequate level of interaction or exposure to the material to meet the intended goal? (For example, does the Lab offer on-going training and support to sites undertaking a major reform initiative? Conversely, does the Lab offer single-session training opportunities to introduce basic information that does not require follow-up?)
 - Are products disseminated to a broad enough audience?
 - Is the level of detail included in products and services adequate to meet the intended goal?
- Conducts ongoing interaction with users
 - Has the Lab established a rapport with its users that facilitates open and ongoing communication?
 - Is there evidence that the Lab offers follow-up services when appropriate?
 - Does the Lab provide new opportunities for users to take advantage of the Lab's products and services?
- Develops products and services that are useful to and used by customers in appropriate settings
 - Are products and services designed in a user-friendly way with consideration given to the resources (e.g., technology) available to the customer?
 - Do the products and services developed by the Lab appear to have practical applications in a field-based setting (e.g., classroom)?
 - Is there evidence that the Lab's products and services are actually being used/implemented by customers?
 - Are customers asked to rate the usefulness of Lab products and services? What do they say about their usefulness?
- Makes work available through a variety of modes, including electronic
 - Are Lab products and services available in a variety of modes (e.g., CD-ROM, audio, video, print, Website, in-person) so that customers have the option of selecting the one that best fits their needs?

Evaluation Question #5.

To what extent is the REL focused on customer needs?

- Identifies customers and potential customers
 - Does the Lab have a system in place to track requests for materials or services?
 - Does the system contain information about who (e.g., classroom teachers, administrators) is using which Lab services and how often?
 - Does the Lab have a system in place to identify potential customers (i.e., those not already making use of a particular product or service)?
 - Does the Lab conduct appropriate outreach and marketing activities within the region to locate the individuals/organizations/agencies that one would expect to see as customers of the Lab?
- Assesses customer needs through a variety of methods

- Does the Lab regularly assess customer needs through either formal (e.g., surveys, focus groups, advisory groups) or informal (needs sensing resulting from work in the field) processes?
- What processes are used to assess needs and are data documented in a usable manner?
- Sets priorities in accordance with customer needs
 - How are customer needs incorporated into the Lab’s planning processes?
 - Are the priorities espoused by the Lab consistent with documented needs?
 - When documented needs exceed the available resources, how are decisions made?
 - What role does the Board play in ensuring that the priorities set are responsive to customer needs?
- Tailors products and services to the intended audience
 - Are products and services culturally and linguistically appropriate for the intended audience?
 - Is the content and level of detail provided appropriate to the needs of the intended audience?
 - Are products and services provided in formats that are useful to the intended audience (e.g., CD-ROM, audio, video, print)?
- Solicits customer feedback, including perceived value, through established systems/processes
 - Is there a system in place to solicit feedback from customers on the Laboratory overall and/or on specific products and services?
 - Is the system regularly implemented?
 - Does the Lab utilize a variety of methods (e.g., surveys, response cards included in newsletters or magazines, evaluation forms at the end of conferences or training sessions) to gather customer feedback?
 - Are customers asked to rate the usefulness of the product or service in a practical setting or asked to explain/provide examples of how the product or service has helped them?
- Uses customer feedback to refine products and services
 - Does the Lab involve customers in the development process to ensure that products and services are designed to meet their needs?
 - Are products and services piloted with customers so that feedback can be incorporated before the product or service is finalized?
 - Does the Lab use customer feedback on finished products to refine later versions of the product or service?
 - Is there evidence that the Lab has refined or modified products and services to be responsive to customer feedback?

Outcomes and Impact

Evaluation Question #6.

To what extent is the REL’s work contributing to improved student success, particularly in intensive implementation sites?

- Utilizes a sound model to document/support the contribution of REL work to student success over time

- Is there documented rationale that indicates that the work is likely to have an impact on student success (i.e., on what foundation is the work based)?
- Has the Lab developed plans to examine expected outcomes at the appropriate times?
- Monitors impact over time (short and long term)
 - Are data collected on a representative sample to allow for generalization?
 - Are data collected at appropriate intervals to look at changes over time?
 - Does the Lab collect data on relevant outcomes?
- Contributes to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues or effective strategies
 - Does the Lab make its findings known through a variety of means (e.g., publications, presentations, Website, training workshops)?
 - Has the Lab contributed to expanding the knowledge base by addressing gaps in knowledge?
- Addresses issues of national significance
 - In addition to addressing regional needs, does the Lab’s work focus on issues of national significance (e.g., National Education Goals)?

Evaluation Question #7.

To what extent does the Laboratory assist states and localities to implement comprehensive school improvement strategies?

- Incorporates potential for scaling up into products, services
 - Does the Lab consider plans for scaling up during the development process?
 - Are appropriate partners brought in early in the process to discuss the possibilities for scaling up?
 - Are products and services delivered in ways that make them accessible to a wide audience?
- Provides research-based information
 - Does the Lab serve as an information resource for states and localities?
 - Does the Lab distill major findings from research-based literature and make them available in ways that are more understandable and accessible?
- Formulates well-tested models and strategies
 - Has the Lab helped states and localities review existing models to select the one most suited to their needs?
 - Has the Lab worked with states and localities to customize models to meet their specific needs?
 - Does the Lab demonstrate flexibility in adopting different strategies to meet the varying needs of states and localities?
- Provides needed materials and assistance

- Does the Lab provide technical assistance to states and localities throughout all stages of the school improvement process (e.g., planning, implementation, follow-up)?
- Does the Lab have a broad array of materials on different school improvement strategies? Are they readily accessible to interested parties in the region?
- Facilitates widespread access to information on best practices within the region
 - Has the Lab sponsored workshops/conferences where successful school improvement efforts are showcased?
 - Does the Lab’s website include useful information about comprehensive school improvement strategies?
 - Does the Lab make referrals or convene groups within the region to facilitate transfer of knowledge (i.e., learning what others are doing and what effect it has had) about comprehensive school improvement?
- Develops appropriate strategic alliances
 - Does the membership of the alliance include the right people to accomplish the objectives of the work? Are any key players missing?
 - Has the Lab made an effort to include non-traditional members in their alliance (e.g., parents, clergy, business representatives)?
 - Does the membership of the alliance ensure that the variety of perspectives in the region is adequately represented?
- Builds capacity of partner sites
 - Does the Lab provide technical assistance, training, and/or support to enable partners to identify and solve problems on their own?
 - Has the Lab demonstrated a tendency to work “with” partners rather than “for” partners?
- Influences policy
 - Does the Lab provide data to inform policy decisions?
 - Has the Lab established relationships with the appropriate individuals to be in a position to provide input in policy debates or development?
 - Do policymakers call upon the Lab for information, including expert testimony?
- Facilitates re-allocation of time and resources
 - Has the Lab participated in the planning process as states consider their comprehensive school improvement options?
 - Has the Lab worked with schools or districts to examine their current budget and staffing and identify ways that changes could be made to facilitate comprehensive school improvement?

Evaluation Question #8.

To what extent has the REL made progress in establishing a regional and national reputation in its specialty area?

- Publishes in appropriate journals

- Has the Lab published in the (leading/most relevant) journals within the specialty area of interest?
- Are the journals peer-reviewed?
- Do the journals have wide readership, particularly among others working in the specialty area?
- For material that might not lend itself to journal publications, has the Lab disseminated its work through other means (e.g., book chapters, monographs)?
- Receives requests for services, products, conference presentations, etc. related to the specialty area—inside and outside of the region
 - Do individuals/agencies/organizations seek out the expertise of the Lab in its specialty area (e.g., expert consultation)?
 - Is the Lab recognized as a leader in its specialty area by other individuals/agencies/organizations inside and outside of the region?
 - Have Lab staff been asked to make invited addresses/presentations (e.g., keynote address) at major conferences in their specialty area?
 - Do policymakers seek input from the Lab (e.g., data, testimony) when considering policy issues related to the specialty area?
- Disseminates specialty area products and services inside and outside of the region
 - Has the Lab developed and implemented a dissemination plan that targets the relevant audiences?
 - Are the Lab's specialty area products and services easily accessible and available to individuals/agencies/organizations who are not currently users of these products or services?