



TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

1701 North Congress Ave. ★ Austin, Texas 78701-1494 ★ 512/463-9734 ★ FAX: 512/463-9838 ★ <http://www.tea.state.tx.us>

Shirley J. Neeley, Ed.D.
Commissioner

Texas Guidance Regarding Even Start Local Program Evaluation

The program statute, Section 1235 (15) of the ESEA, requires Even Start projects to “provide for an independent evaluation of their program that they will use for program improvement.” This requirement is further clarified in Guide to Local Evaluations of Even Start Family Literacy Programs, USDE, January 2005. “An independent evaluation is conducted by one or more individuals who are not directly involved in the project’s administration.” *Direct involvement includes participation in the implementation of the program, provision of services as a content expert and developing or delivering training to Even Start programs. Examples include developing and presenting training modules or working with projects to monitor implementation of curriculum or best practices or training programs in the use of assessment instruments. These are merely examples and are not intended to identify all possible situations.*

Independent evaluators who conduct Even Start evaluations should have formal training in evaluation design and measurement as well as experience applying those skills in evaluations of educational programs. In no instance would a person be qualified to serve as an evaluator with less than a bachelor-level degree. Graduate studies are preferred.

Responsibilities of Even Start external evaluators in Texas include:

1. Obtain contract with local Even Start Program;
2. Attend an initial state sponsored Even Start evaluation training and an annual training each year thereafter;
3. Conduct quarterly site visits with each program evaluated;
4. Provide consultation services to the local programs;
5. Provide miscellaneous services as specified in contract;
6. Provide an annual evaluation by the specified due date; and
7. Report using the designated and approved format.

Evaluators may carry out these responsibilities in addition to other employment, even if that employment is related to adult education or family literacy. Evaluation duties cannot be performed during time that is contracted to employment funded by state or federal funds. Persons who have been paid with Even Start funds to consult with a local provider regarding the development and/or implementation of an Even Start program may not evaluate the same Even Start program in Texas. This would represent a conflict of interest and compromise the “independent” evaluator requirement. It is highly recommended that evaluators maintain a time and effort log for evaluation services and perform evaluation services on days not under contract to another employer funded by state or federal funds.

Resources

U.S. Department of Education, The William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Programs Statute, Part B, subpart 3 of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Acts (ESEA), Washington, D.C., February 2002.

U.S. Department of Education, Guide to Local Evaluation of Even Start Family Literacy Programs by E. M. Appel, M.C. Dwyer, S. L. Frankel and M. B. Russell, Washington, D.C., 2005.

U.S. Department of Education, Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), 34CFR Parts 74, 75, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, (84), 85, (85), 86, 97, 98 and 99, Washington, D.C, November 26, 2003.

“Good, Better, Best—never let it rest—until your good is better—and your better is BEST!”