



Step 5: Develop the questions you want your evaluation to answer.

Now that you have identified one or more results for your evaluation, you need to form some evaluation questions to guide how you look at your data to see if your community school is producing the intended results. These questions should be tailored to fit your own school and community.

5a. Two types of evaluation questions.

Evaluations include two broad types of questions:

1. **Process Questions** – How is the program operating?
2. **Result-focused Questions** – Is the program accomplishing its intended results?

Process questions ask how a program functions, such as the number and types of people who are served by the activities, how individuals gain access to the activities, the types of activity offerings in which people participate, and how they experience the activity. You can ask process questions at any time but they are especially useful if you are in the beginning stages of developing your community school. Process questions can help highlight the effectiveness of community school components that can be improved or adjusted. The answers to process questions should be reported continuously so that you can use the answers to adjust and improve program implementation.

Result-focused questions ask about the effectiveness of the program, including whether it benefits recipients in the intended way. The best time to ask result-focused questions are when a program is fully implemented or has been in place for a while.

5b. Forming your questions.

The questions you generate should reflect the results and priorities of your community school stakeholders. As your community school evolves, you will need to revisit the evaluation questions, especially as you use your evaluation results to guide your future activity planning.

Evaluation example: Tulsa, Oklahoma

An evaluation of 18 elementary schools across two districts in Tulsa looked at trust between teachers, parents, students, and other stakeholders as a key component of the community school model.

Evaluation questions related to this area included:

- Is there mutual respect and effective collaboration among parents, families, and school staff? (*Process question*)
- Have schools fostered a safe, supportive, and respectful school climate? (*Results-focused question*)
- Is responsibility for student learning shared across different groups of school members (e.g., students, parents, and teachers)?

Many of the surveys used by the evaluators in Tulsa are available in the [toolkit](#) (see surveys 29-31 and 37-42).

Sample Evaluation Questions Related to the Result: *students are actively involved in learning and in their community.*

Top priority questions are marked with a star (*).

Process Evaluation Questions: [for an Afterschool Program]

- How many 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students participate in the after-school program? How consistently do students participate? *
- Who are the students involved in the program? *
- What types of activities take place? How often do they occur? *
- In what ways do program activities align with school science curriculum?
- Has the partnership between the program and the school been mutual and collaborative? *
- In what ways, if any, could the program or partnership be improved? *

Results-Focused Evaluation Questions:

- Do students who participate in the program show improvements in their science grades and test scores? *
- Do teachers of students in the program feel their students are more prepared to participate in class? *
- Do students who participate engage in community environmental initiatives or activities outside their involvement with afterschool program? Do their families?
- What else do students report gaining from the program? *
- What do families report their children have gained from the program?