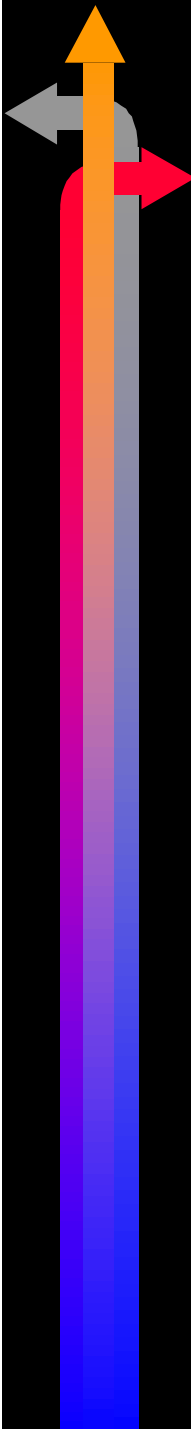# Continuous Improvement Management Guide for 21st Century Schools
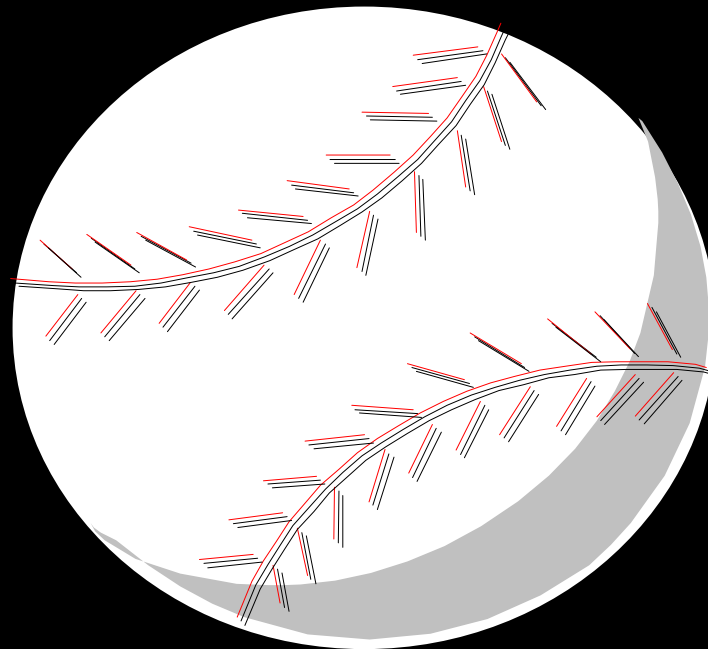
Alan Ginsburg, Director; Andrew Lauland

Planning and Evaluation Service, U.S. Department of Education

&

Natalia Pane, American Institutes for Research

If you don't set goals, you won't fail to achieve them.

-Yogi Berra

Overview

Introduction

➠ What is "Continuous Improvement Management (CIM)" and why do it?

Continuous Improvement Management

➠ The key steps to CIM: Designing Programs Around Objectives; Managing Quality; and Taking Stock of Progress and Strengthening Design

➠ Using CIM in 21st Century Schools: The CIM Guide and Tools

Next Steps

➠ Your Feedback

➠ Developing CIM Guide and Management Tools

➠ Linking to National Evaluation

Introduction

What is CIM?

➔Continuous Improvement Management is an approach to project management using:

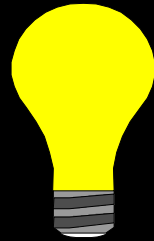➔*clear program design and well-defined goals*
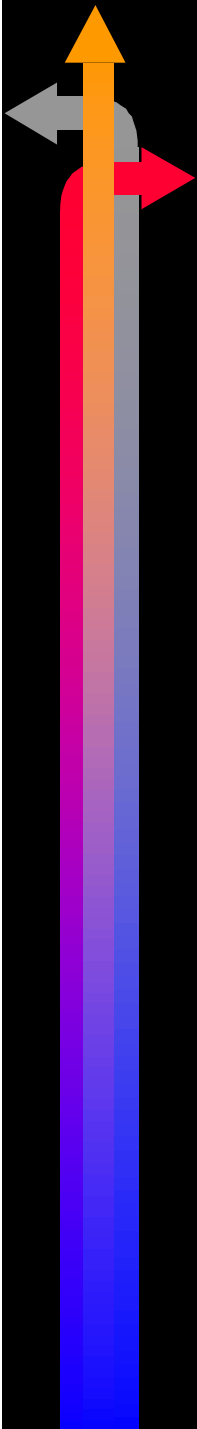
➔*managing programs for quality*

➔*continuous assessment and improvement of performance*

Each of which necessitate *measurement.*

Continuous Improvement Management Process

OBJECTIVES & MEASUREMENT
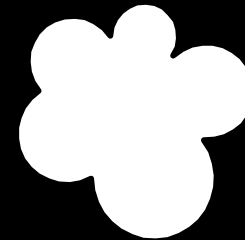
Why use CIM?

➟ *What gets measured gets done.*

➟ *If you don't measure results, you can't tell success from failure.*

➟ *If you can't recognize failure, you can't correct it.*

➟ *If you can't see success, you can't reward it.*

➟ *If you can't see success, you can't learn from it.*

From *Reinventing Government* by David Osborne and Ted Gaebler

Continuous Improvement Management

Three Key Steps:

➤ *Step 1:Designing Programs Around Objectives*
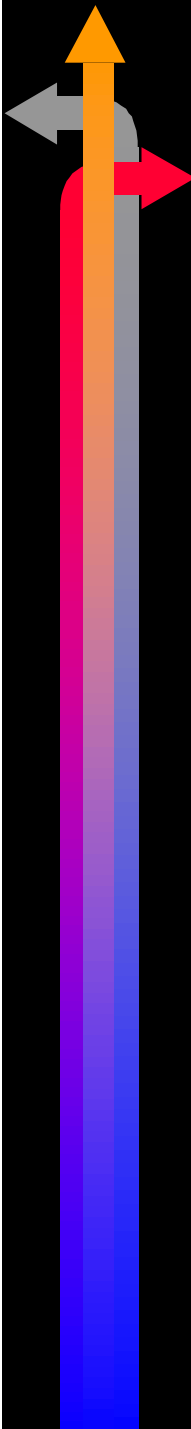
➤ *Step 2: Managing Quality*

➤ *Step 3: Taking Stock of Progress and Strengthening Design*

Continuous Improvement Management Step 1: Designing Programs Around Objectives

[PROJECT NAME]: PROJECT PLAN

I: PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

What is the overall purpose of your program?

Do your objectives include…
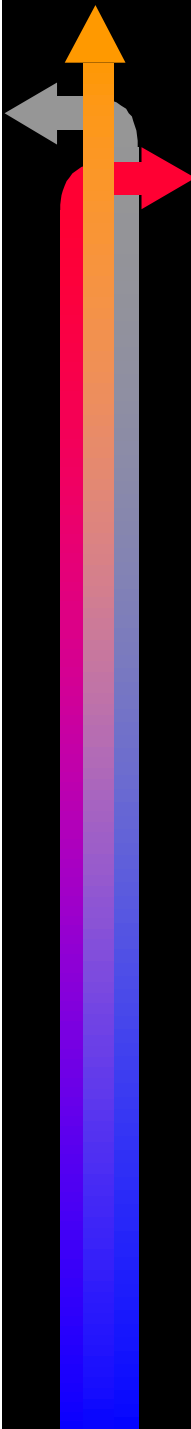
Increasing student reading skills	Decreasing juvenile crime	Decreasing teen pregnancy
Increasing student math skills	Increasing technology skills	Increasing student attendance

Summarize your objectives for:

- **Students**
- **Families**
- **Community**

For the specific objectives, see "Program Tool #1: Outcomes of Program," Column #1 "Program Objectives"

How does this effort build upon other efforts?

Make objectives as concrete as possible

➤ Improve children's reading

➤ Improve children's math

➤ All children are able to read independently by the end of the third grade.
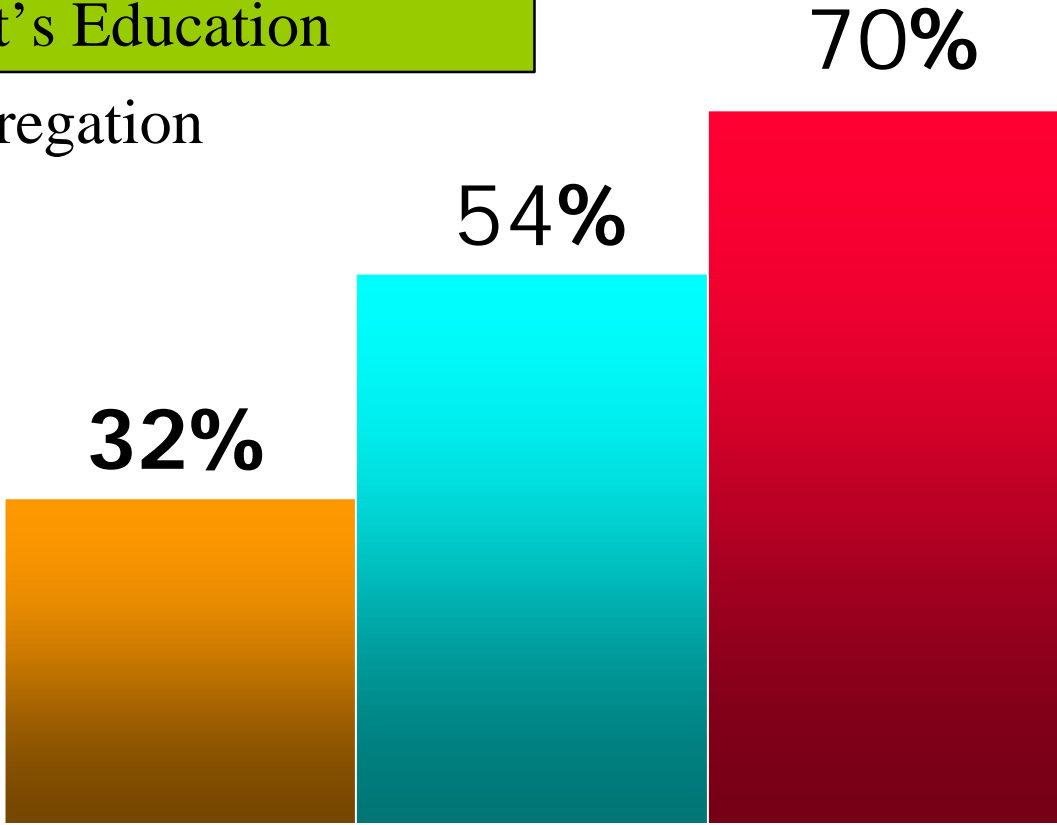
➤ All children master challenging mathematics, including the foundations of algebra and geometry, by the of eighth grade.

4th-graders at Basic Level or Above in

Math

Continuous Improvement

50% 59% 64%

100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0

1990 1992 1996
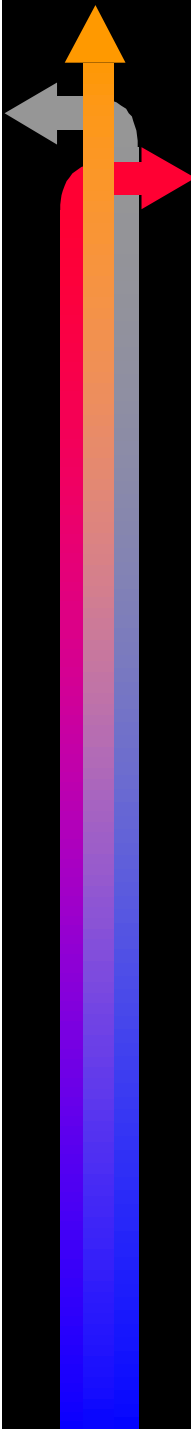
II: ACTIVITIES

How are you ensuring that this program's design and products will be of high quality?

[X each that applies.]

Expert consulting	Peer review	Customer input	Test
Pretest or pilot study	Review current literature	Studying model programs	Other

Summarize the major activities of your program.

(See "Program Tool #2: Quality of Program," Column #1, for specific activities linked to objectives)

Describe your activities components of:

- Instruction
- Enrichment
- Recreation

Summarize your plan for monitoring the quality of your activities. (e.g., reviewing activity attendance/dropout and other data weekly, surveying participants about the activity, reviewing and possibly consolidating costs)

(See "Program Tool #2: Quality of Program" for more information)

Many Program Activities

- Reading & math tutoring programs
- Senior citizens activities
- Nutrition and health education
- technology and computers
- Parent training
- Expanded library services
- Fine arts
- health education
- Sports
- community services
- Smoking abuse

- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Adult education
- Family outreach & counseling
- Mentoring
- Distance learning
- GED classes
- Employment counseling
- Job placement
- Summer camps
- Exploration workshops
- Conflict resolution training
- Leadership clubs

Questions to ask yourself:

➡ Which are your top two objectives?

➡ Which are your top four strategies to achieve those two objectives?

➡ Which few measures will show you have achieved your objectives?

III: EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Summarize the major outcomes you expect to obtain.

(See "Program Coordinator Tool #1: Outcomes of Program," Column 3, for specific expected outcomes linked to objectives).

Summarize your plan for monitoring the program's progress toward the expected outcomes.

In order to measure the progress toward the expected outcomes, summarize how you will…

- **Use baseline (pre-program) indicators of participants' performance such as school attendance, grades, test scores, and teacher ratings.**

- **Track those indicators (e.g., weekly)**

- **Develop indicators of success.**

See "Program Tool #1: Outcomes of Program," and "Individual Participant Record: Outcomes of Activities," for more information.
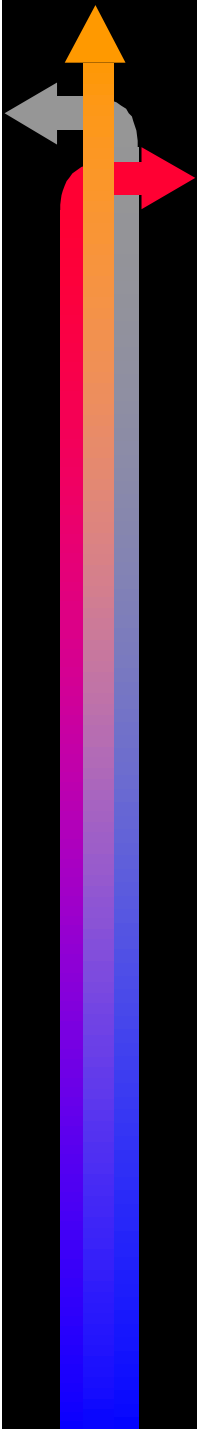
IV: COMMUNICATION

Summarize your partnerships including listing your major partners.

(See "Communication Tool #2: [Teacher/Staff/Partner] Contact Information for a contact list.)

Which modes of communication will you use with your partners, teachers, and the community? *[X each that applies.]*

Community Presentations	Mott Foundation Listserv	Newsletters	School Assemblies
Web pages	Media/ Newspapers	Letters/ Mailings	Phone calls
Flyers	Parent Meetings	E-mails	Other _____

Summarize your plan for… (Answer *who*, *when* and *about w*hat)

Communicating with parents (e.g., reaching out to community parents, identifying and (re)assessing their and their children's needs, getting feedback about satisfaction and program quality).

See "Communication Tool #1: Student Contact Information" for a parent contact list.

Communicating with community partners (e.g., identifying and soliciting partner participation, holding monthly meetings, communicating about students in multiple services and sharing participant progress information). *(See "Communication Tool #2: [Teacher/Staff/Partner] Contact Information for a contact list.)*

Communicating with teachers (e.g., identifying teachers of program participants and teachers with expertise in relevant areas, corresponding weekly with teachers about student progress including sending and receiving weekly student progress reports, setting a system for contacting a teacher to address problem areas). *(See "Communication Tool #3: Teacher Communication" for more information.)*

Communicating with staff (e.g., holding weekly staff meetings and giving staff training and professional development opportunities) *(See "Communication Tool #3: Staff Communication" for further information.)*

Communicating with partners
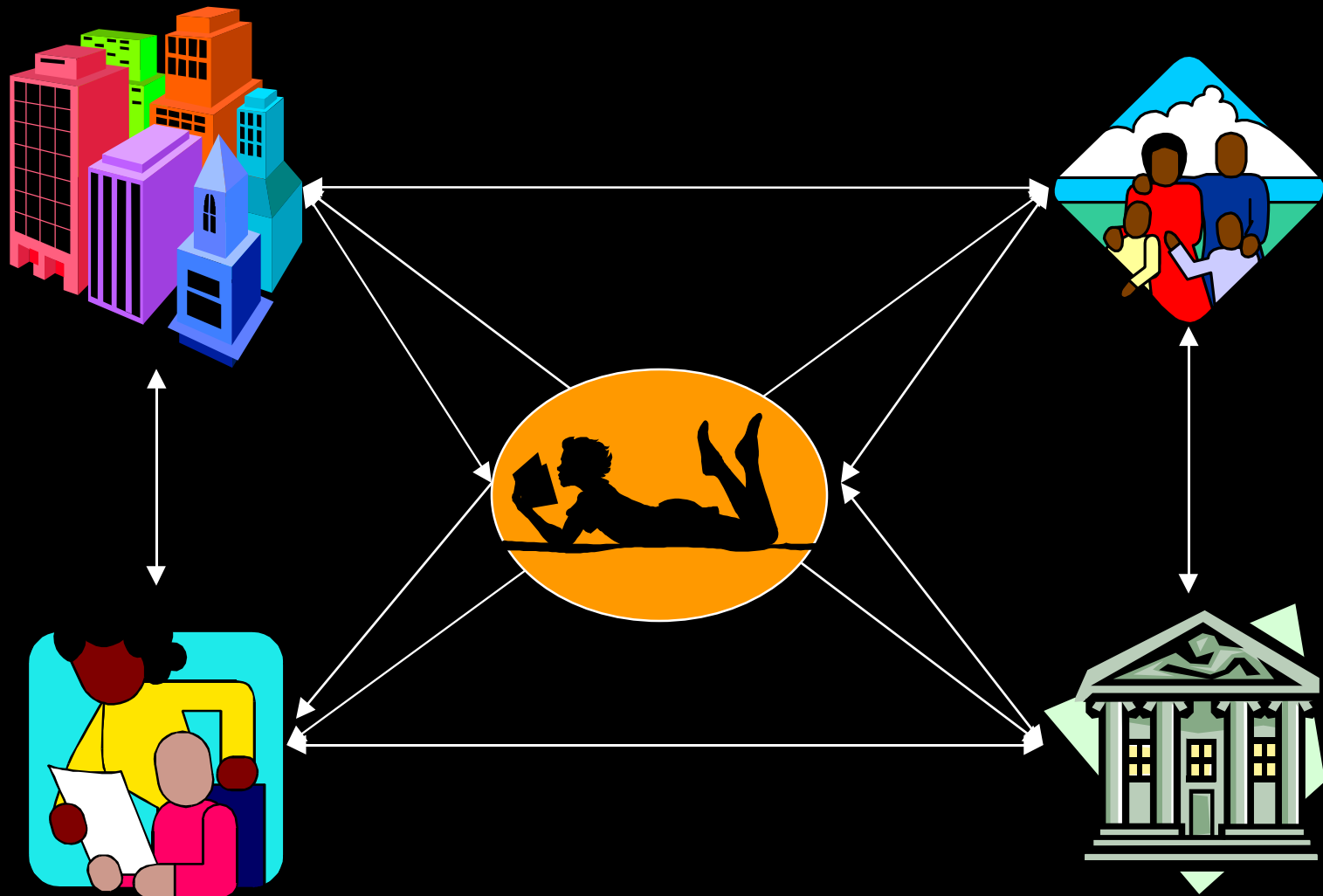
Step 2: Managing Quality

➤ Research shows that the quality of implementation is a key factor to student success in after-school care.

➤ Children attending for-profit programs have more unoccupied time, spend more time watching TV and videos and more time not interacting with anyone compared with nonprofit programs -- Vandell, 1995

Managing Quality (cont.)

➤ Wide variation is observed on factors developmental theory relates to success:

  ➤ Warm interactions between staff & children. Children in programs with more frequent negative staff-child interactions reported programs less emotionally supportive.

  ➤ Reading. Tutoring programs differ in staff training, tutor turnover and student attendance and all are associated with student reading progress in reading.

Monitoring Quality

➠ Participation

  ➠ How many opportunities for participation?

  ➠ Are you reaching your intended population? Race, language, school performance

  ➠ How well are they attending?

➠ Staffing

  ➠ Are staff ratios appropriate to service objectives?

  ➠ Do staff have service-appropriate skills? Or are they getting additional training?

  ➠ Are staff staying with the program?
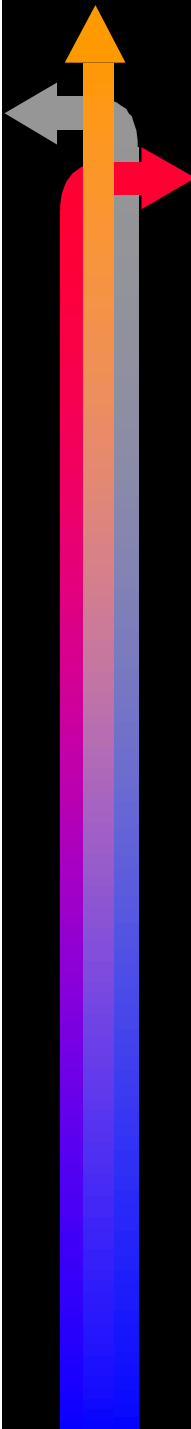
Monitoring Quality (cont.)

Activities (e.g., a reading activity)

⟫➡ Do you have baseline measure of performance?

⟫➡ Have you diagnosed reading needs?

⟫➡ Have you talked with teachers about the child's needs?

⟫➡ Does your reading instruction enforce the regular day reading program?

⟫➡ Do you ask parents about children's needs?

⟫➡ Is the reading instruction engaging?

⟫➡ Does it reinforce student strengths and address reading weaknesses?

⟫➡ Are students making progress?

Monitoring Quality

	Indicator	Status	Improvement Action
Participation			
Staffing			
Activities			

Step 3: Taking Stock of Progress and Strengthening Design

At least once a year, you will do a major stocktaking of your program. Likely, this stocktaking will form the basis of your annual report. Key components of this stocktaking process are:

➤ Project Plan

➤ Outcomes (assessment of progress)

➤ Communication of Outcomes

➤ Implementation Critique

➤ Next Steps

[PROGRAM TITLE]: PROGRESS REPORT

I: PROGRAM SUMMARY

Progress Report start date: **Progress Report end date:**

Final Cost =   **Total Federal Contribution =**

Who were your partners this year?

What were the program's purposes and objectives?

Did your objectives include…

Increasing student reading skills	Decreasing juvenile crime	Decreasing teen pregnancy
Increasing student math skills	Increasing technology skills	Increasing student attendance
Increasing literacy	Decreasing drug use	Increasing students' positive attitude toward school

What were the program's main activities?

What were the program's expected outcomes?

Who were your participants? Who was your targeted population?

II: OUTCOMES

Participation

What was the aggregated attendance information for the period?
Who benefited from the program? Who/how many people benefited?
Did some people benefit more than others did? How do those who did
not participate in the program/activity differ from those who did?

Quality

What was the quality of the service/activity? What new skills or
knowledge were developed? How satisfied were the participants?

Impact

What has changed as a result of the program (e.g., overall student
achievement level within your community, levels of safety or drug
use, school policies or procedures)? What may be the long-term impact
of the program (i.e., future outcomes)? How does this relate to the
Federal education priorities? What follow-up activities are planned to
measure the long-term impact?

Efficiency

Was the program cost-effective? What are the benefits of the program
relative to the costs?

III: COMMUNICATION OF OUTCOMES

When communicating the outcomes to others, what feedback or information did you learn about the program? (e.g., the programs was useful, the program could be implemented in another way)

When communicating with others about your program did you use… *[X each that applies.]*

Alternative Community Languages (e.g., Spanish)	Before-after comparisons (e.g., using charts)	Participants' ratings	Participant success stories

Which MODES of communication did you use when communicating the outcomes of your program? *[X each that applies.]*

Community Presentations	Mott Foundation Listserv	Newsletters	School Assemblies
Web pages	Parent Meetings	Letters/ Mailings	Phone calls
Flyers	Media/Newspapers	E-mails	Other _____

To which AUDIENCES did you send program information? *[X each that applies.]*

Partners/ Participants	Other Schools	Funding Agencies	Other Possible Funding Sources
Parents	Community Groups	News/ Media	Researchers
Policy Makers	Law Enforcement	Associations	Other _____

Explain:

How do you know that your communication was effective?

IV: IMPLEMENTATION CRITIQUE

Did you stay within your budget, work plan, time-line? If there were deviations, what were they? How did you adjust in response?

If you encountered unexpected problems of any kind, what were they and how were they resolved?

V: NEXT STEPS

Do you have suggestions for improving implementation, strengthening outcomes, or holding down costs?

What needs to be done next? How should the program be built upon?

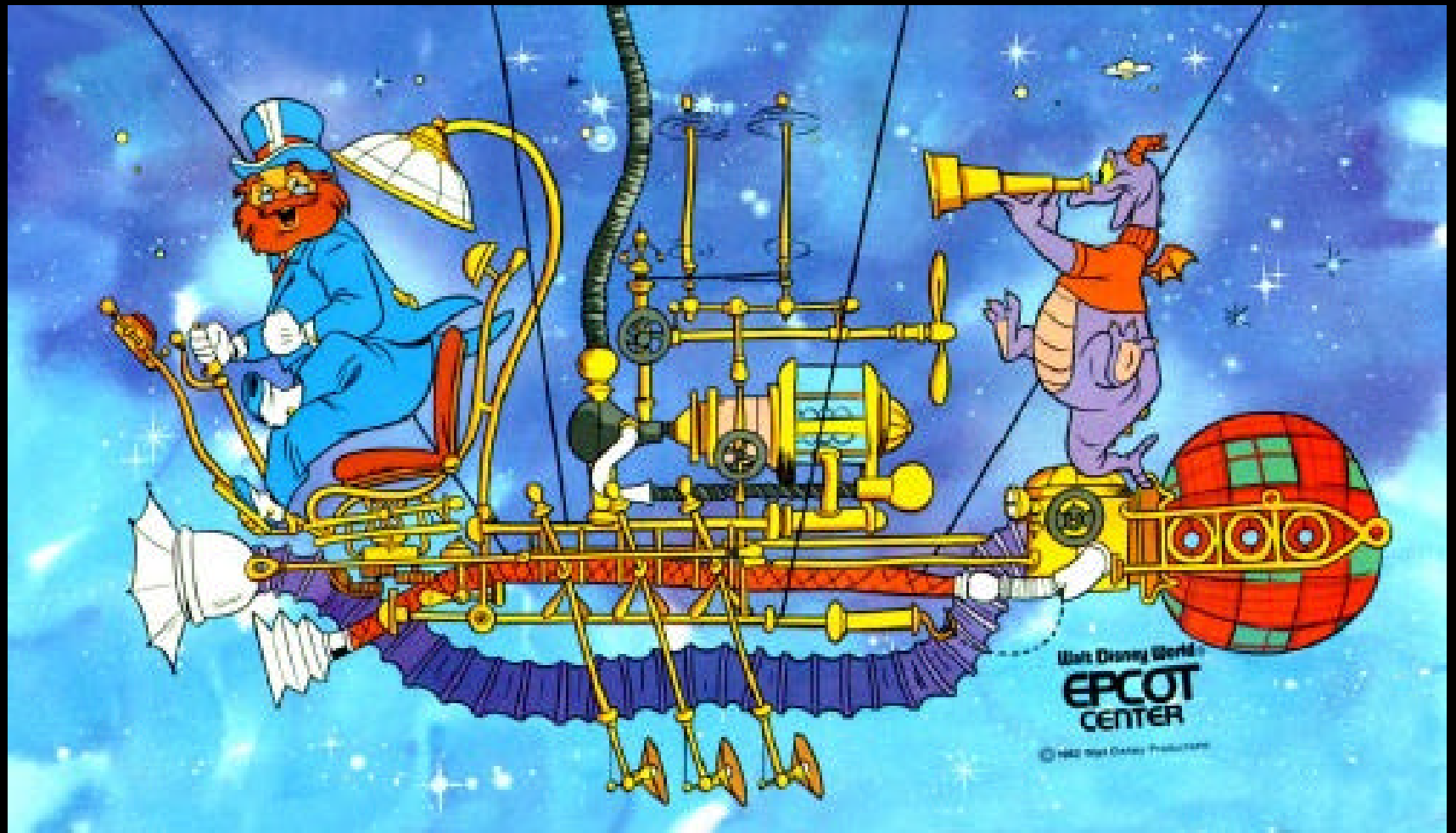**What follow-up activities have you planned (e.g., later assessment of long-term impact)?**

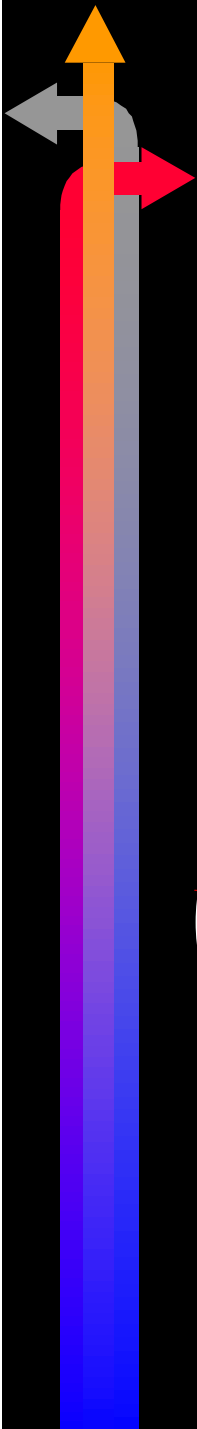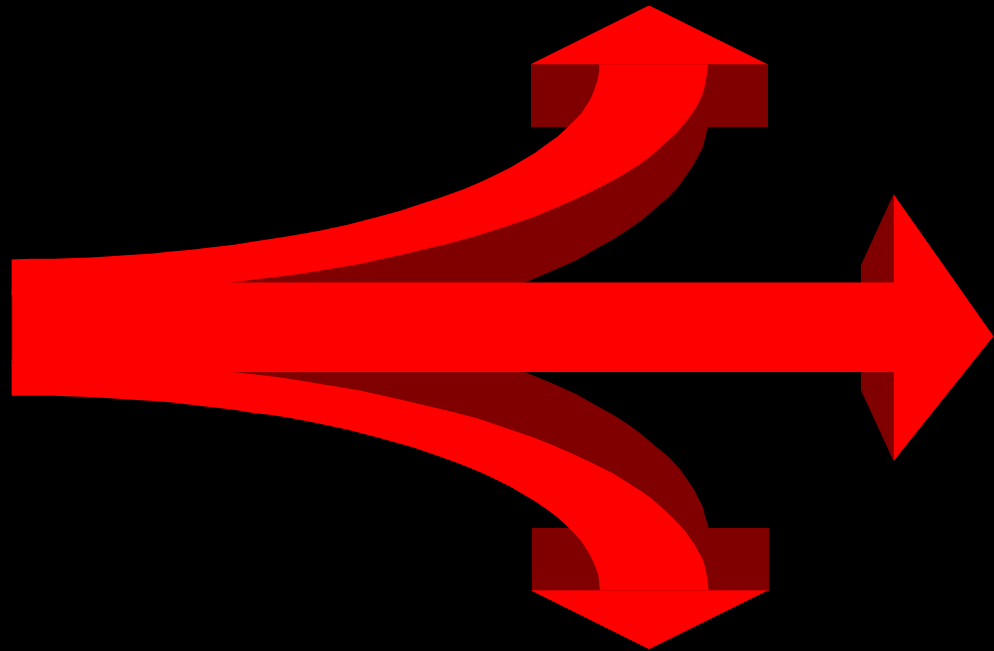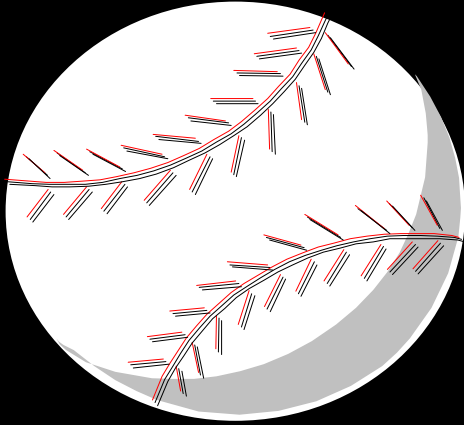**How will the program function in coming years without federal funding?**

Next Steps

➡ Your Feedback

➡ Developing CIM Guide and Management Tools

➡ Linking to National Evaluation

Imagination…

When you come to a
fork in the road, take it.

-Yogi Berra

Performance Management Tools

Over the next few months, we'll be developing Performance Management Tools, tools to help you get the most out of your program by making continuous improvement management (CIM) simple and straightforward.

If you have ideas, instruments, or procedures that you have found useful in your program management/ assessment, pass them along!

Send your suggestions, measures, ideas, instruments to…

For More Information and to Volunteer!

Alan Ginsburg

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