



# Evaluation that Makes the Case

## Evaluation of the SchoolFood Plus Initiative

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# What is Evaluation?

Systematic assessment of operation and/or outcome of a program or policy, compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards, as a means of contributing to the improvement of the program or policy.



# Why Evaluate?

- Document the **Process**
- Place program in **Context/Comparison** with other programs
- Assess intended **Effects**
- Assess unintended **Consequences**
- **Accountability**—management and financial
- Justify program existence or **expansion**
- **Improve** existing program
- Generating **support**—public relations, funding, e.g.
- **Fulfill** grant requirements
- Gain knowledge about things that work to c  
conditions/behavior
- Opportunity for **reflection**



# Evaluation Methods

## 1. Formative evaluation

- Qualitative research method
- Goal: provide feedback to program developers during implementation in order to improve the program
- Evaluators play active role in altering the results
- Regular feedback to program implementers
- Determine barriers and facilitators to implementation
- Assist with decisions to change the approach or strategy mid-stream
- Methodology: interviews, storytelling, observation

# Evaluation Methods

## 2. Context evaluation

- Also a qualitative research method
- Describes the context in which the program operates. For SFP this is...
  - national school lunch program
  - status of school building and kitchens
  - nutritional knowledge
- Keep on top of any important changes to the environment in which the program is implemented

# Evaluation Methods

## 3. Outcome evaluation

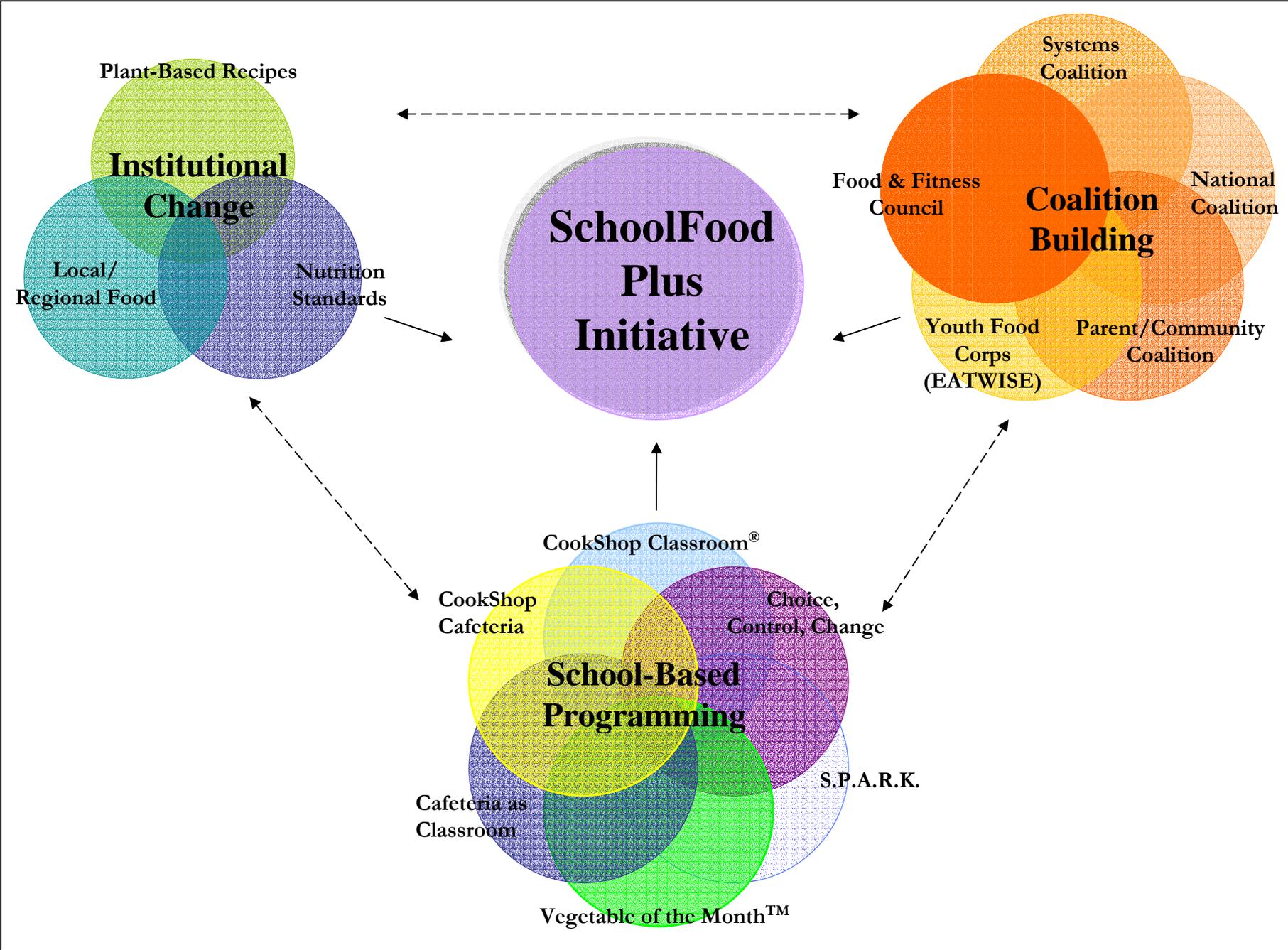
- Quantitative
- Objective measures for testing what changed because of program
- Very concerned with potential bias or impacts from researchers
- Collect data and apply statistical measures

# What is SchoolFood Plus?

**A collaborative, multi-  
agency effort funded by  
the W.K. Kellogg  
Foundation and the  
United States Department  
of Agriculture.**

**GOAL:** To improve the eating habits, health and academic performance of New York City public schoolchildren while strengthening the New York State agricultural economy.

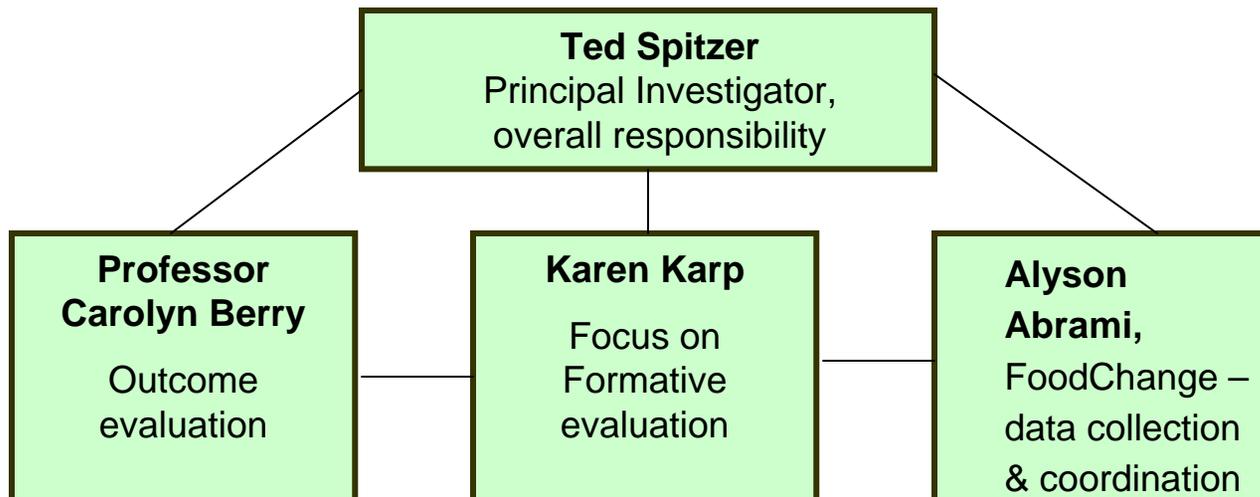




# The SchoolFood Plus Initiative Evaluation Team

Formal evaluation is Kellogg Foundation requirement

The Team: various approaches for separate evaluation components –very different skills and approaches required

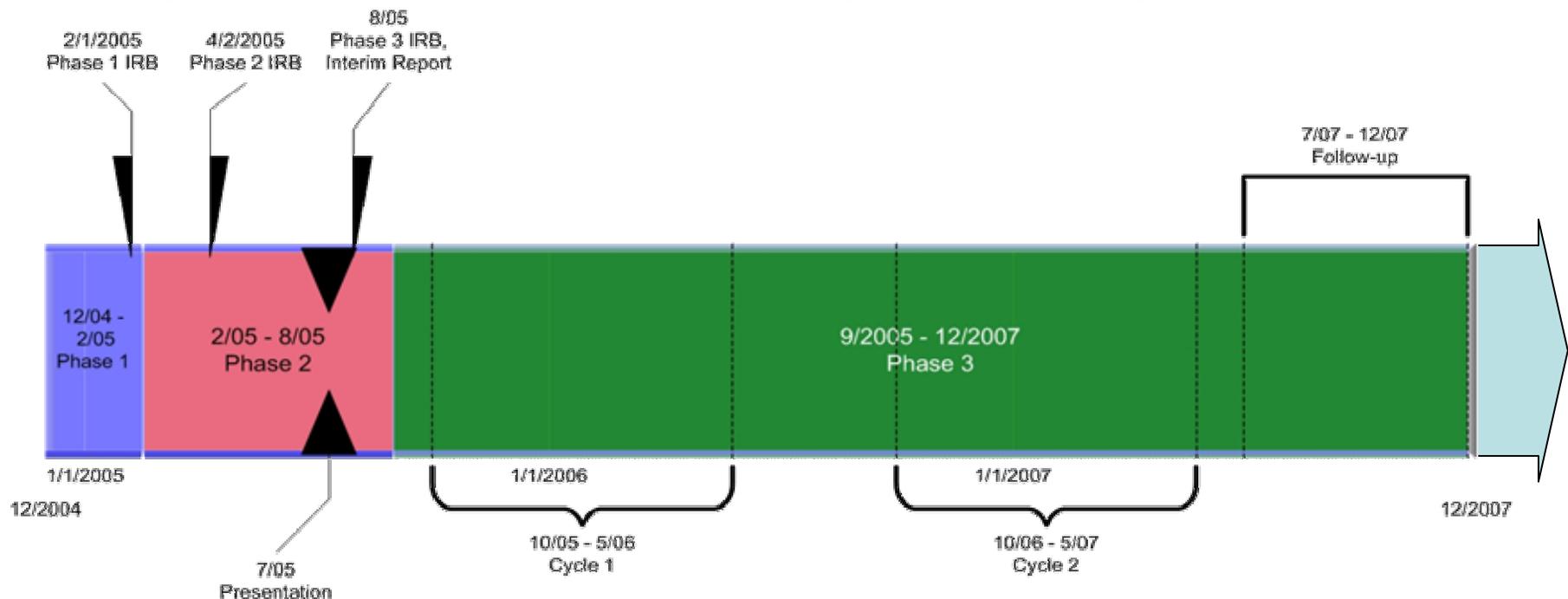


# Evaluation Timeline

Phase 1: Orientation, initial IRB proposal, and Phase 2 evaluation design

Phase 2: IRB approval, interviews and observations, instrument testing

Phase 3: Formative and outcome evaluation over two year implementation cycle and follow-up period, final report



# What are we evaluating?

## **5 PRIMARY PARTNERS—relationships and process**

FoodChange (managing partner),

New York City Department of Education Office of SchoolFood

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, and

Teachers College, Columbia University.



# What are we evaluating?

## ACTIVITIES

### Institutional Change – “big picture”

- Upgraded nutritional standards
- Procurement of locally-grown foods
- “Plant-based” recipes

### Coalitions – advocacy, communication, “movements”

- Youth-based
- NYC-based
- National

### School-Based Curricula, such as...

- Cookshop Classroom
- SchoolFood Plus Cafeteria
- Cafeteria as Classroom
- SPARK



# '05 Evaluation Focus

1. Elementary schools in three NYC low income neighborhoods
2. System-wide issues such as local food procurement and the city-wide coalition development
3. Formative evaluation
  - Describe the program and document its implementation
  - Describe environment in which SFP takes place
  - Provide feedback to program developers during implementation in order to improve the program
4. Outcome evaluation
  - Determine the effectiveness of a program
  - Survey-based, primarily quantitative analysis

What do we want to know?

***Have schoolchildren changed their knowledge, attitudes and behavior, about food, health, eating habits as a result of SchoolFood Plus?***

# 10 Research Questions

1. What is SchoolFood Plus, how was it implemented, and how did implementation vary from the plan?
2. How have SchoolFood Plus recipes been utilized by OSF and participating schools?
3. Has students' consumption of SchoolFood Plus recipes increased in participating schools, and why?
4. Has SchoolFood Plus led to increases in the number of students eating school meals?
5. How have students, teachers, administration, parents, and coalition partners responded to SchoolFood Plus?



# 10 Research Questions, con't

6. Does participation in Cafeteria Cookshop or Cookshop Classroom lead to change in KAB about food, farming, cooking, and consumption compared to non-participants?
7. Have the three different combinations of Cookshop led to different outcomes in terms of student knowledge, attitudes, behavior, and program satisfaction?
8. How has procurement of locally grown fruits and vegetables changed as a result of SchoolFood Plus and who are the participating farmers?
9. How has participating in SchoolFood Plus affected local farmers, individually and in aggregate?
10. What value have the various coalitions added to the SchoolFood Plus program?



# Some Phase 2 Findings

- **SFP a complex intervention, with accompanying benefits and challenges**
- **Significant progress made on all three levels of intervention: institutional change, school-based programming, and coalition development**
- **“Umbrella model” of integrating existing programs has extended benefits but made it hard to define program boundaries and attribute accomplishments**
- **Program communication not consistent, clear**
- **Utilization of SFP funds for OSF staff has been very effective strategy**
- **Need to reassess logic model and periodically re-strategize (especially for adding new program or components)**

# Recent Accomplishments

## SFP Outcome Evaluation

### Plate Waste Assessments – Fall 2005:

Photograph lunch trays before and after lunch; compare to assess amount eaten of SFP menu item

Rate cafeteria environment on dimensions such as how crowded, noisy, rushed, chaotic, and how attractive it is

7 schools recruited for pre-test

28 total classrooms (~ 279 2nd grade & 311 5th grade students)

3 menu SFP menu items (Green salad; Steamed broccoli and roasted cauliflower; Summer corn, tomato, zucchini & basil stew)



# Recent Accomplishments

## **Knowledge, Attitudes and Behavior Survey—Fall 2005**

Utilizes two cross-sectional samples and a non-equivalent comparison group

Second graders only

Added BMI assessment but not as an outcome

Not linked individually with plate waste study

Same 7 schools

Consent forms distributed to 28 classrooms (~560 students, 67% response rate, 57% consent rate)

~ 320 one-on-one surveys conducted

# Next Steps

1. **Plate Waste: “Post-test” late Spring 2006**
  - 2 additional schools will be recruited for a total of 9 schools (36 classrooms, 2 grades, ~720 children)
2. **KAB Survey: “Post-test” late Spring 2006**
3. **Parent survey**
  - Develop survey
  - Focus groups and/or key informant interviews
  - Pilot parent survey
4. **Data Analysis**
5. **Mid-Term Report**