Evidence-Based Policymaking: Opportunities and Challenges
Session Sponsor

This session is being sponsored by the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society.
Session Panelists

- **Beth Blauer**, Executive Director, Center for Government Excellence, John Hopkins University, Maryland
- **Jon Courtney PhD**, Deputy Director for Program Evaluation, New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee
Overview

▪ Part 1: Background on Evidence-Based Policymaking from the Panelists Perspective

▪ Part 2: Discussion into opportunities and challenges with evidence-based policymaking (audience questions are highly encouraged)
But first…

- A story.
The Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative: Using Evidence to Inform Decisions

Ashleigh Holand, Senior Manager, State Policy
www.pewtrusts.org/ResultsFirst
Definition:
Uses the best available research and information on program results to guide decisions at all stages of the policy process and in each branch of government.

**Targeted evaluation**
Rigorously evaluate programs that lack strong evidence of effectiveness.

**Outcome monitoring**
Determine whether programs are achieving desired results.

**Program assessment**
Review evidence of effectiveness of public programs.

**Budget development**
Incorporate evidence into budget and policy decisions.

**Implementation oversight**
Ensure programs are effectively delivered.
Evidence-Based Policymaking Resource Center

Online resource center includes best and promising practices, approaches and strategies, and analyses on each component of the evidence-based policymaking framework.

Program Assessment  Budget Development  Implementation Oversight  Outcome Monitoring  Targeted Evaluation

www.pewtrusts.org/ResultsFirstResourceCenter
An Introduction to the Center for Government Excellence (GovEx)

Beth Blauer
Executive Director
civicimpact.jhu.edu
About GovEx

- Helping organizations make data informed decisions to improve people’s lives
- Providing targeted training and technical assistance for civil servants
- Translating meaningful academic research for application by government practitioners
- Team of 25+ with practical government and NGO experience
Empowering Community Data

GovEx helps communities, reliably and sustainably:

- Identify, manage, and govern their data
- Understand gaps in data sources and collection practices
- Help government identify priorities
- Achieve the most with data through analytics, research, and data science
Where We Work

132
US cities

2,500+
civil servants trained
Mayor and City Manager Priority Areas (2015-2018)
Geographic Distribution of Mayor and City Manager Priority Areas (2015-2018)
Evidence-based policymaking: Legislating for Results

Jon Courtney, PhD
Deputy Director
NM Legislative Finance Committee

NCSL Summit
August 2019
Some background...

- New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee
  - Joint Interim Budget Committee
  - Makes comprehensive budget recommendations, separate from Governor, to full legislature

- Performance-Based Budgeting since 2000
  - Budget flexibility in exchange for focus on results of spending (inputs, outputs, outcomes)

- Legislating for Results Framework
  - Includes five key areas of which performance reporting, plays a critical role.
We have a lot of help

- NCSL Legislating for Results Project (2003)
- Pew Results First Initiative
- Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) @ MIT
Legislating For Results
- Data highlights need for additional oversight and attention
- Tools: Report cards
- Example: In the mid 2000’s NM took notice that student achievement outcomes and outcomes for young children needed improvement
- LFC staff research existing and potential programs and their effectiveness
- **Tools:** Starting in 2019, New Mexico requires select agencies to inventory programs
- **Example:** 2004 LFC hearing

![Home Visiting Programs Expected Return on Investment (ROI) per Dollar Spent](chart.png)
Performance info and evidence of program effectiveness are considered

**Tools:** Cost benefit analysis

**Example:** Early childhood funding history
Making sure we are implementing with fidelity to the model

**Tools:** Performance reports, quality measures, and evaluations

**Example:** State run PreK Classroom Quality
Making sure we are achieving desired results

**Tools:** Program evaluations and performance reports

**Example:** State run PreK impact
Evidence–based policymaking

Challenges
- Obtaining the data and doing the research
- Managing the expectations around moving the needle
- Competing priorities and buy-in
- “Every calculation based on experience elsewhere fails in New Mexico.” - Territorial Governor of NM Lew Wallace, 1881

Opportunities
- 3 out of 4 social programs fail
- Too often we are not looking at how we are doing
- Increasing support for conducting and using research
And now…

- Some discussion.
Questions About the Session?

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