

Quality of Education Quantitative Information Sub-Committee Progress Report
May 3, 2007

Members of our sub-committee are Kari Asmus, Bill Bender, Pamela Force, Deborah Gillespie, Bill Mlacak, Joanne Roberts and Stan Williams. We have met four times. A fifth meeting was cancelled due to snow.

The primary effort of our group has been to create a baseline catalogue of all the quantitative assessments that are currently given in or planned for each grade in each of the four schools. The initial purpose of this exercise was to help our committee identify areas in which there were either gaps or redundancies in our assessment regime.

Much of the focus of this effort is on the eleven K-12 curriculum content areas: Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Library, Technology, Physical Education, Music, Health, Art and Foreign Language. The assessments listed on these charts typically measure student learning in a given area (e.g., NECAP's), but some assessments have been included that measure the perception of the quality of a given area (e.g., Student Course Evaluations).

For each school, we also created a grid for assessments that measure other aspects of the school setting than the academic areas. These are (very tentatively) called "Climate Components," and include such items as attendance, suspensions, and our drop-out rate. Assessments which measure perceptions of quality may also be found here.

As we receive feedback, we have refined the charts, and we have recently decided to expand our effort to include a Glossary to accompany what is essentially our catalogue. Not only will it include a acronym de-coder for the usual suspects (NEASC, NECAP, AP, SAT, etc.), we want to explain what "Benchmark Books" are used for and how that differs from the Gates McGintie Reading Test. We would also like to include terms such as "rubric" and even "assessment."

A secondary interest of our group is to consider what additional measurements could be tracked by our districts to help the school community gauge the quality of our program. These measurements will be included in our interim report either as recommendations or as ideas to be considered by the school board and administration.

Finally, one of the questions that we have grappled with is what constitutes a "quantitative measure?" The answer that we have settled on for now is, "Any measurement that gets a number attached to it." So this would include items as diverse as the NECAP's, a rubric for a fifth-grade art project, or a survey that asks the respondent to rank a response on a scale of 1 to 5. We felt that it was better to overlap with the Qualitative Sub-Committee than to have items potentially fall between the planks. Moreover, it seemed that if part of our mission is to create transparency of all the ways that we assess our schools and our educational program, then it was important to include all items.

Respectfully submitted,
Kari Asmus, Facilitator