



To: Superintendent Chamberlin and School Board Members

From: Chris Sousa

Re: HSD School Board report

Date: May 28, 2010

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Over that past several years Hopkinton Middle High School has focused its attention on the development of course competencies. Along with the development of the competencies there came a need to examine our assessment practices as well. The result was the realization that we needed to assess students' progress toward achieving proficiency not only in the areas of competencies but in the overall curriculum, and this has remained a focus all year, and will continue next year as well.

This past summer the Competency Steering Committee and several members of the Administrative Team read Robert Marzano's book, *Classroom Assessment and Grading that Work*. The book, while highly technical in parts, raised awareness of the need to research and create a variety of assessment practices and tools. Some of our conversations this year have revolved around Formative vs. Summative assessments. Simply stated, Formative Assessment is assessment *for* learning, while Summative Assessment is assessment *of* learning. Our work in this area is clearly reflected in the course competency evaluations. In our classes students are assessed multiple times throughout the course to check for understanding and proficiency. This "spiraling" approach to assessment allows the teacher to use the assessment document in both a formative and summative fashion. It also provides an effective means of reassessment and allows for diagnosis of a student's remedial needs.

One of the numerous forms of assessment we collect data from is the state mandated New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP). This program assesses students in grads 3 thru 8 and in grade 11 in the areas of Math, Language Arts, and Science. The assessment questions are based on the New Hampshire State standards. Four states in New England access this program to assess their students. While it does produce data that we can examine, it does have limitations. Our leadership team has discussed how best to examine and utilize the data and I expect that this will remain a topic of conversation that will be led by our district assessment committee. Another form of standardized assessment is the Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). The MAP testing at HMHS is given in seventh, eighth, and ninth grades and focuses on literacy and math skills. This assessment gives benchmarks for student growth. The assessment is given electronically so feed back is very quick and students themselves can note their own progress.

In the 2008-2009 school year then principal, Steven Chamberlin took several staff members to hear well known educational consultant Rick Wormeli speak about differentiated instruction and assessment. Coincidentally I was at the same workshop. This year, led by Assistant Principal Christopher Kelley, we have been able to bring that workshop to other staff as well. We purchased the computer based video series of the workshop and Mr. Kelley has been leading group viewings and discussions on “Wormeli Wednesdays” throughout the spring. The workshop focuses on explaining multiple pathways to assess students. He addresses the need to make assessments, standards based, and reduce bias and increase the methods used to measure student progress and understanding. His echoing of the need to use formative and summative assessments is also a strong part of this program.

How we assess our course competencies and all aspects of our classes is integral to what we do. This has led to an understanding of the need to develop programs and procedures around reassessment, grading, and homework practices. Our Administrative Team, Competency Steering Committee, Mr. Kelley and I have spent time at workshops and meetings with other faculty and administration from around the state discussing and assessing our progress in this area. Over the summer and throughout the next year our school will be making reassessment and remediation a priority along with how we communicate our grading and assessment practices. What we have learned overall is that the connection between assessment, instruction, and curriculum are vital to ensure student learning.

Some upcoming events (for more information please check out our calendar on our website):

- May 28th Early Release
- May 31st No School Memorial Day
- June 3rd Music Awards Night 7:00 - 9:00 pm
- June 4th Step Up Day at Middle School and Step Up Social in the evening
- June 15th Spring Sports Awards Night 5:50 PM - 9:00 PM
- June 17th Senior BBQ 5:00 - 7:00 pm at the Pavilion
- June 18th Graduation 6:00 pm
- June 22nd 8th Grade Canobe Lake
- June 23rd Last Day of School