

Curriculum Matters...

Transformative Work by the Faculty and Students of SAU 21



Learning for children and adults is in full swing throughout SAU 21 schools this fall. We are continuing on our competency based educational journey with a focus on Quality Performance Assessments (QPAs). On our SAU-wide Professional Development Day on October 24, 2018, teachers teamed up to continue to learn more about what “quality” assessments look like and how to develop them with the support of our consultant Jon Vander Els with V & S Solutions.

We are offering students many opportunities to be assessed on the knowledge they obtained through a demonstration of skills. Teachers design activities and practice work on formative assessments to extend student thinking. It is important that our “tests” or assessments of knowledge truly reflect students’ abilities to transfer knowledge to real-life scenarios and applications.



QPAs intentionally engage students to think across curriculum areas and find relevant use for their acquired knowledge and skills. They must think critically to problem solve and often collaborate with one another to discover positive outcomes. This requires much more than rote knowledge or memorization.

The exciting part about QPAs is that they are not “extra” tests in addition to the big traditional ones. They are alternative opportunities for students to demonstrate what they *know* and can *do* with what they are learning.



Breaking With Tradition tells us that “developing and using performance assessments is not only a necessary component of competency-based learning but also a transformative component.” We want to KNOW when our students have learned information when we assess them formally or give them summative assessments. By collaborating with other professionals we are building a large bank of QPAs to share with one another and to provide common experiences across all of our schools. It is our goal by the end of this year to have approximately 100 QPAs in our collaborative “bank.”

District-wide 21 Professional Development goals:

SAU 21 districts will develop a fully-aligned competency-based curriculum across disciplines by collaborating and communicating with stakeholders as measured by completed common assessments, rubrics, and reporting tools to advance student learning within a growth model by June of 2020.



Staff will work collaboratively to develop, review, administrate, analyze and refine a quality performance assessment in their grade level/content area by June of 2019.

Respectfully submitted, Dr. Ronna Cadarette Assistant Superintendent

Curriculum Matters is a communication tool written by teachers for SAU 21 teachers, parents, and community members. It provides a mechanism for the grade level and content curriculum teams to share their efforts to build a coordinated curriculum that enhances the learning opportunities and performance of all students. Please learn with us as we embark on these efforts and look for opportunities that align across disciplines. We encourage our larger community to follow some of the **web** links to see how our work is influenced and to help students understand how to do their very best in learning. Please direct any questions or suggestions to the SAU 21 office at 926-8992 x105. We appreciate your input .



Administrators and teachers participated in grade level work for a session and then department and course level work across the SAU. Teachers then reconvened with their school teams to revise their work based on feedback for Quality Performance Assessments Design Protocol. Teachers will share their overviews on the following curriculum pages.

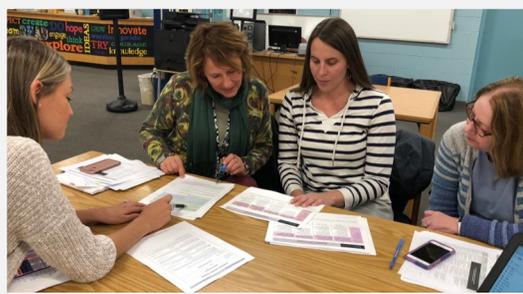
Competency-based learning or competency-based education is an approach to teaching and learning more often used in learning concrete skills than abstract learning.

It differs from other non-related approaches in that the unit of learning is extremely fine-grained. Learners usually focus on one competency at a time, which is likely a small component of a larger learning goal.

The student is evaluated on the individual competency and can only move on after they have mastered the current skill being learned. After that, higher or more complex competencies are learned to a degree of mastery.

Learning often takes place across content areas for the transfer of skills such as the ability to read and write thoughtfully about science or social studies topics in an analytical way.

Another common component of competency-based learning is the ability to advance learning if the learner can demonstrate mastery. This is determined through prior assessments.



Winnacunnet HIGH SCHOOL *Home of the Warriors*



Winnacunnet High School teachers spent the afternoon in three sessions. First, was a small group work session where teacher teams (focusing on individual QPAs) worked through the details of their assessments to determine which competency and connected standards they were assessing.

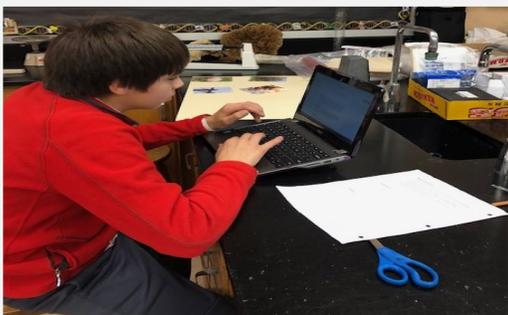
Second, the small groups reconvened department-wide in order to solicit feedback from colleagues.

Last, the smaller teams met to analyze, act on feedback, and plan future steps for revisions. All departments engaged in productive discussions based on the tasks assigned.





Family and Consumer Sciences focused their energy on food labs. Teachers specifically looked to provide a balance between meal planning and expectations of labs with the 'voice and choice' intended to personalize instruction and highlight student agency for personalization.



The Science Department primarily looked to leverage lab work and/or case studies as the focus of their QPA creation. Conversations moved from class to class, focusing on rigor, the span of particular labs and/or case studies, as well as ways to personalize these experiences for different learners in hopes of optimizing student engagement.



K-8 Science teachers discovered there was not common language on Next Generation Science Standards as far as competencies and this revealed some challenges. Also the terms were somewhat confusing with regard to 21st century practices (WHS language), Work/Study practices and schools were using different language and when comparing QPAs was apparent. SMS teachers realized alignment with regard to the expected language as an intended outcome of the professional work and collaboration.

Let's Talk ... Science



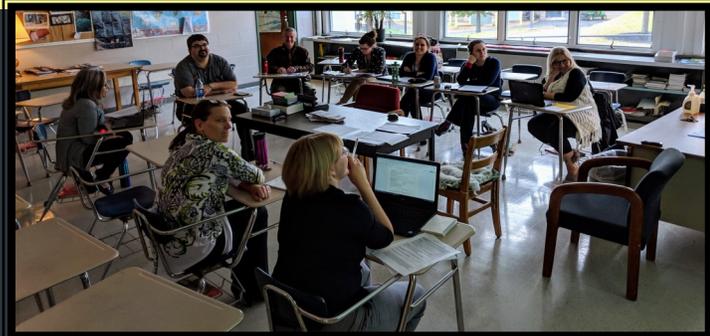


World Languages

The World Language department worked on Quality Performance Assessments (QPAs) during the October 24th SAU-wide early release day. For the first hour, WHS teachers met in four teams (Spanish 1, Spanish 2, French, and Latin). Each group worked to develop a QPA for level 1 and/or level 2 of their language and filled out the QPA template. Sending school teachers met with other Unified Arts teachers from their own schools to receive feedback for possible revisions of QPAs.

For the next two hours, the WHS teachers were joined by the Spanish teachers from Seabrook, Hampton, and Hampton Falls. WHS teachers for Spanish 1, Spanish 2, and Latin shared QPAs and received feedback from colleagues on an Assessment Validation Checklist. Conversation revolved around generating ideas for engaging assessments that link culture and content, ways to link QPAs between trimesters for year long classes, and the incorporation of multiple course competencies in QPAs.

Teachers left with examples of several types of QPAs and plan to continue either generating ideas for possible QPAs or modifying existing QPAs. The team looks forward to meeting again in the spring after QPAs have been implemented in the early part of 2019 to analyze student work and make instructional changes based on the data.



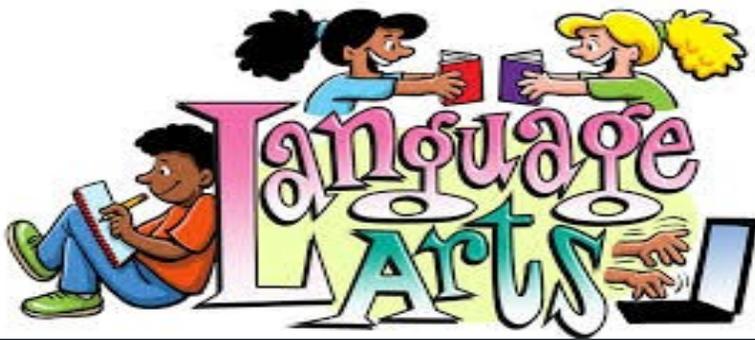


The WHS English team developed QPAs to be given at each grade level along with associated content-based rubrics. Their major task moving forward will be the collection of student work in order to create a group dialogue around performance assessments.

Teachers in the middle schools collaborated about possible QPA integration with math and social studies content. They used their time to begin gathering ideas for essential questions around the competencies regarding research in Social Studies. This matches nicely with finding different ways of representing data that is part of the expectations for math.

The plan for North Hampton middle school is to develop two QPAs this year. One in collaboration with middle school language arts centered on the Holocaust Portfolio and the other focused on gathering, representing, and analyzing data related to social studies curriculum.





Some of the K-8 language arts team collaborated with part of the social studies team to discuss QPAs. Teachers chose to explain cross-curricular QPAs they were preparing. There was particular excitement regarding environmental cross-content opportunities as well as analytical and research-based practices.

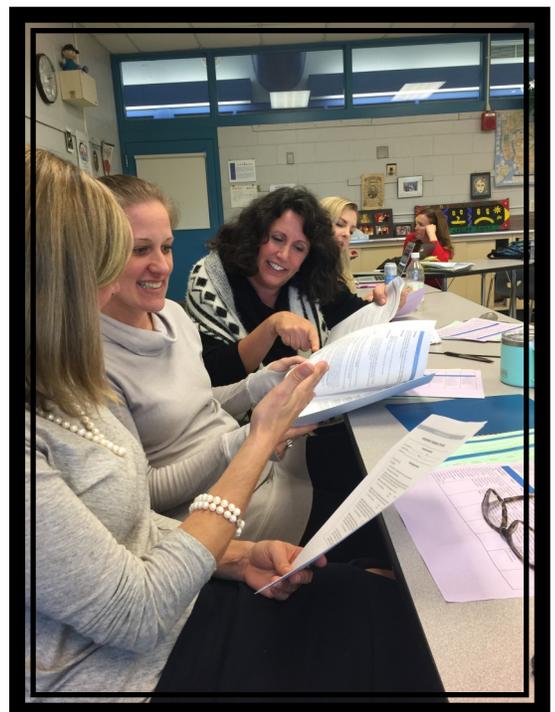
Other teams sought exemplars for QPAs in Language Arts and ELA classes. They discovered real world connection availability in Science and Social Studies. Teachers reported resources for science, math, and social studies exemplars at workshops.

Teachers also discussed the benefits of doing a QPA that assessed only language arts competency to examine the benefits of this QPAs versus assessments that are cross-curricular with social studies for example.

Dawn Olson of Seabrook Middle School shared her example of a language arts QPA which was based on students' creation of learning based on the close reading of their novels. Students had to visually (with language and illustration) show their learning on theme, characterization, symbolism, text-to-self and text-to-world connections, and other literary elements. She also discussed how she revised her QPA in order to be given in the winter to more closely align with student learning preparedness through that time period.

There was a whole group discussion regarding the connections between a Quality Performance Assessment and a regular or traditional assessment using narrative writing as an example. Narrative writing was discussed on how to carry over into a QPA and a real world connection. The discussion centered around how just writing a narrative, maybe a short story, is not necessarily a QPA, but if you were somehow able to give it a real world connection then it could be.

Teachers at all grade spans were able to collaborate thoughtfully on what literacy looks like for even the earliest learners who desire to read and write to express their thoughts and experiences. There was rich discovery around ways our youngest students can demonstrate skills.



SOCIAL STUDIES

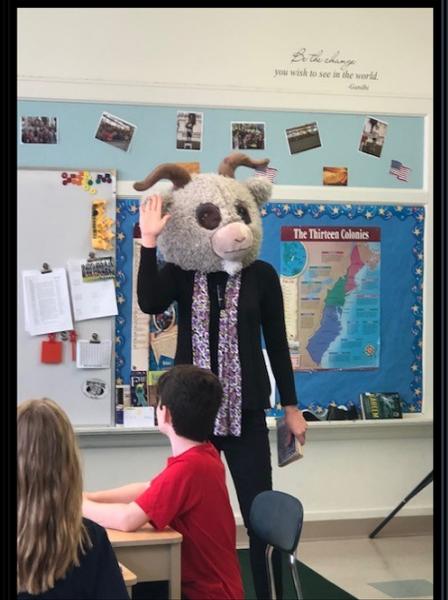
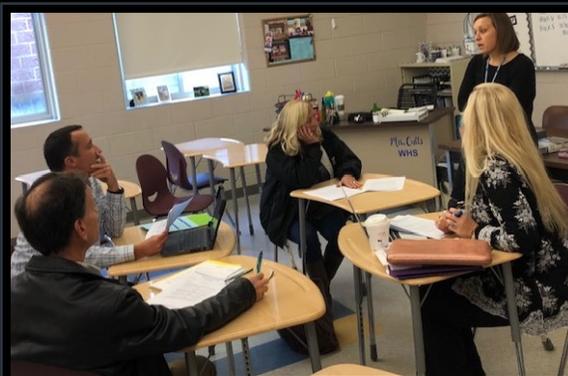
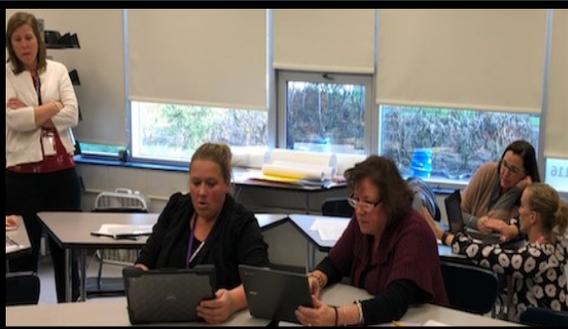
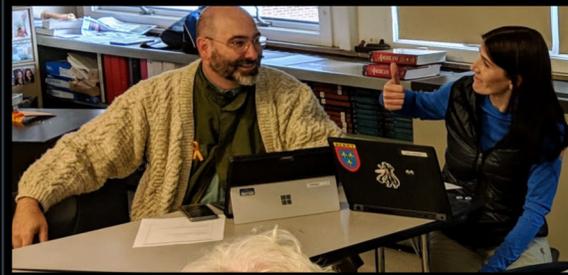


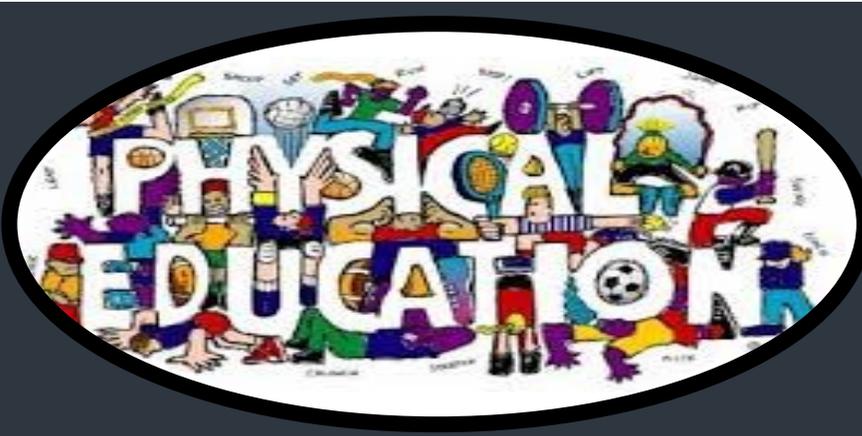
The WHS Social Studies department is in a process of vetting established QPAs being used presently in their curriculum. Department conversations involved looking at the level of Karen Hess's Depth of Knowledge and rigor associated with these assessments.

K-8 is working with a new curriculum in 6th grade Social Studies this year and identified a task within the curriculum to be used as a basis for a QPA to be administered in the time-frame of January. The competencies were identified with leverage standards that align to the task so far in this process.

Teams expressed that it was really helpful to come together not only as individual schools but also with other middle school teachers in the SAU to make sure that there is a common understanding of what a QPA is and how to use them with students.

Teams repeatedly expressed a need for and appreciation of professional development time to create and revise QPAs with one another across schools, districts, and curriculum areas in order to personalize and create common experiences for





The Physical Education and Wellness Department split into three small groups and developed QPAs for Wellness, Lifetime Wellness, and Fitness Sports and Games. Each specific content area is working towards a piece that can be used by multiple teachers across classes in order to facilitate the demonstration of knowledge and skills for particular competencies connected to standards.

Unified Arts teachers from North Hampton School are creating an integrated unit to be taught during the months of January and February. Physical Education will be focusing on Fitness with the 6th graders and will be helping them analyze their fitness test results with the outcome of creating a workout to address areas they need to focus on to enhance their level of fitness.

In Art students will be studying balance and movement and will create art based on Calder's work in balancing objects in a mobile. In Band students will be learning how to create a music playlist that will enhance their workout routine and discover how music influences the ways in which we move. In Health students will be researching types of exercise to increase their fitness levels using body weight exercises, training principles and the benefits of exercise. The opportunity to work as a team and introduce these concepts to the 6th graders was most productive and beneficial. The goal is to have students transfer their knowledge of these ideas to all of the Unified Arts classes.





Reading Literacy

The Literacy Teams collaborated in each school across content areas to determine how to provide access to the curriculum for all students regardless of reading and writing abilities. This familiarity with assessments will help to assist students in preparation of demonstrating their skills. It is desired that each child is given the opportunity to make growth and have a personalized experience suited to their individual learning needs and style.

The SAU 21 Literacy Team is focused on determining best practices aligned among the schools and with legislation, specifically:

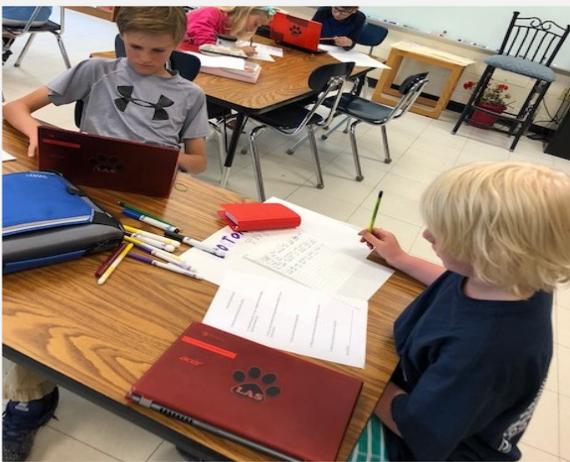
RSA 200:58 and RSA 200:59 are intended to focus on children who struggle learning to read based upon potential indicators of dyslexia and other related disorders. The RSAs define dyslexia, require public schools to screen for potential indicators of dyslexia no later than November 30th in kindergarten or first grade, and require school districts to provide evidenced-based, intervention strategies to address the child's individual needs.

RSA 200:58

www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/xv/200/200-58.htm

RSA 200:59

www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/xv/200/200-59.htm



Math

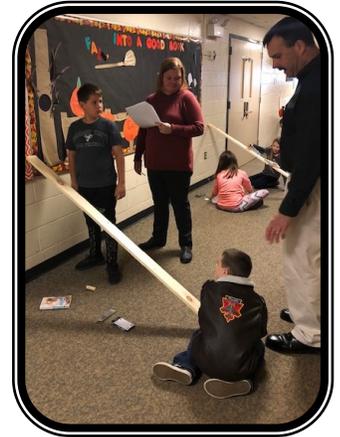
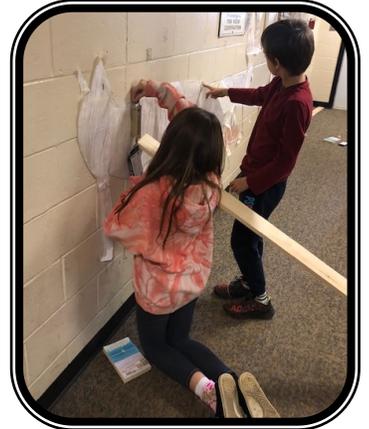
At the high school level, Math teachers worked in several groups in order to turn their QPA ideas into project based learning outcomes for four core classes.

Algebra 2 designed a graphing project whereby students would use a sketch of a character (Goofy, Tigger, etc) and use *Desmos* to graph a series of functions to recreate the character.

Likewise, Geometry designed a scaled drawing mirror activity using spoons.

Elementary students at Hampton Falls put math skills such as measurement to practical use to problem solve and make predictions for angles and slopes.

Middle school math teachers were engaged in conversations regarding ways to create common experiences for all students regardless of the school or district they attend, in order to assist students in reaching the same level of performance expectations aligned with state standards and competencies.



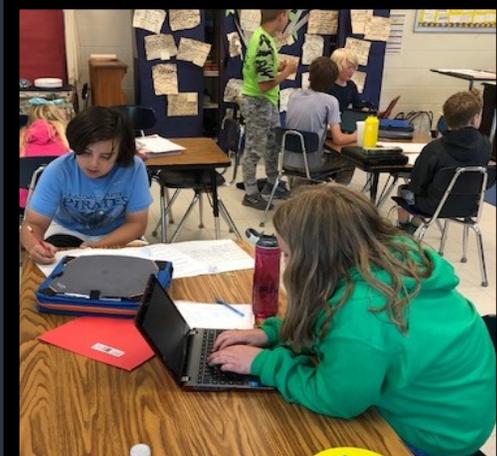
Library Media and Tech Integrator



SAU 21 librarians and tech integrators from North Hampton, Hampton Falls, Seabrook, and Winnacunnet High School met to continue working on competencies. Tech integrators referred to International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards, and librarians to the American Association of School Library national standards. Significant time was spent discussing differences in applications of these competencies and indicators at grade levels and programs as well as how to best collaborate with teachers to create authentic assessments.

As referenced by the AASL National School Library Standards, "I can" statements were incorporated into the group's shared competency document. The next step for the group will be to provide examples of evidence and assessment opportunities at individual grade span levels. The group also began work on rubrics for formative assessment as well as student self assessment.

WHS Technology education primarily worked independently as their tasks were so different in nature. However, the team developed similar expectations for content, process and product that can be used in their individual QPAs.



Student Services SPED



Educational Associates and Related Service professionals viewed the new documentary film *Intelligent Lives* by Dan Habib.

Intelligentlives.org provides the following description of the film: "From award-winning filmmaker Dan Habib comes INTELLIGENT LIVES, a catalyst to transform the label of intellectual disability from a life sentence of isolation into a life of possibility for the most systematically segregated people in America."

INTELLIGENT LIVES stars three pioneering young American adults with intellectual disabilities – Micah, Naieer, and Naomie – who challenge perceptions of intelligence as they navigate high school, college, and the workforce. Academy Award-winning actor and narrator Chris Cooper contextualizes the lives of these central characters through the emotional personal story of his son Jesse, as the film unpacks the shameful and ongoing track record of intelligence testing in the U.S.

INTELLIGENT LIVES challenges what it means to be intelligent, and points to a future in which people of all abilities can fully participate in higher education, meaningful employment, and intimate relationships.

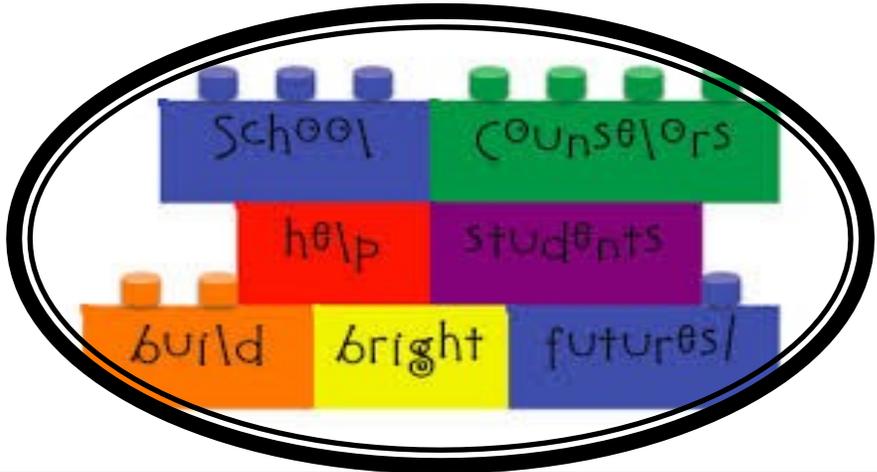
Case Managers were able to collaborate with content area teams in order to make considerations for accommodations and modifications when QPAs are administrated so that all students have access to the curriculum with appropriate services.





SAU 21 and SAU 90 school counselors continue to meet regularly with the current focus on updating the SAU 504 policy and procedures manual and the forms. The next step is to get technology support so that the 504 forms can be more user friendly. Once all the updates have been recommended the SAU leadership team will review all documents and provide their feedback. When all final updates are approved the team will host 504 roadshows at the various SAU schools in April.

Leslie Dolleman, Director of Guidance Services at Winnacunnet High School shared the timeline and new steps for 2019-2020 course selection to include transition opportunities, field trips to SST, and placement exams.

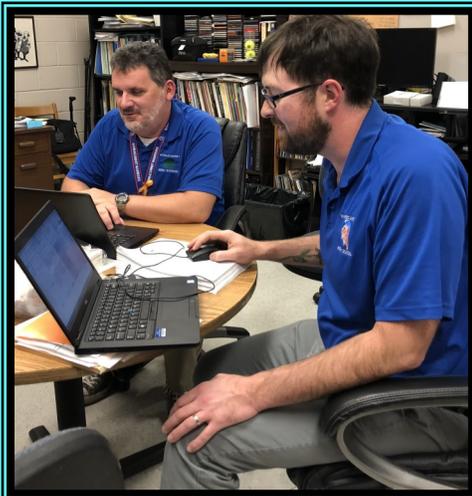




The Music department used their time to create common QPAs across grade levels and schools. The project-based activity provides an extended and relatively deep opportunity for students to analyze a given piece of music.

The assessment will task students with identifying similar pieces of music in the current repertoire of musical choices. Students will then critique the pieces through both auditory and visual means. They will also compare the identified piece to alternate arrangements.

These are the first steps in developing this QPA in order to provide opportunities to strengthen the rigor and expectations for high order thinking beyond performing pieces and thinking analytically about their construction.





ART



The WHS Art department discussed a project where students would identify locations in the building (or elsewhere) to make a piece of a displayable art installation. Students would be tasked with building a proposal, vetting locations and engaging in the actual piece of work.

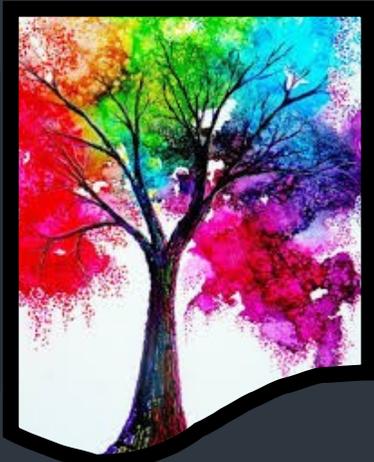


SAU 21 Visual Art K-8 overview for October 24th

Teachers shared their thoughts and plans for individual QPA's for this year.

Some QPA's are based on the individual teacher's art curriculum and standards/competencies and others are choosing to participate in a Unified arts team project.

Individual art room examples include: self portraits with 8th grade, clay sculptures with elementary students, and creating art in an artist's style with middle school students. The collaborating team project is connecting PE, Music and Art in a Fitness/Movement/Balance unit.





New Hampshire Partners in Education works to foster, support, and celebrate volunteer programs in each and every school across the Granite State since 1968.

The NHPIE Blue Ribbon Award recognizes the extraordinary efforts of school volunteers for the achievements realized during the previous school year. The 2018 Blue Ribbon Award is given to successful and effective school volunteer programs during the 2017-2018 school year.

All six of our schools received the Blue Ribbon Award to recognize the thousands of hours of time individual volunteers give to schools throughout SAU 21 for quality educational experiences for our students.

Our Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Ronna Cadarette represents SAU 21 as the Vice Chair.



The Gold Circle Award celebrates business and community partnerships to create bridges between these groups and New Hampshire's educational community.

In a typical academic year over 35,000 volunteers provide almost one million hours of service to 185+ schools in New Hampshire, as well as business partnership support.

Two of our schools were recognized as Gold Circle recipients:

- Seabrook Elementary School
- Seabrook Middle School

Thank you to all volunteer and community partners for your continued support for our schools, students, and staff.



Seabrook Elementary and Middle School PTO and Administrators receive their recognition.

Individual Volunteers

If you are interested in volunteering in a school setting or in a school volunteer program please contact the principal or superintendent of schools in your community. Your contribution of time could help local schools earn a **BLUE RIBBON** award.

Business Partnerships

If your business is interested in building a volunteer partnership in a local school, please contact the principal or superintendent of schools in your community. Established partnerships are eligible to earn a **GOLD CIRCLE** award.

Below are links to drafts of the SAU 21 Quality
Performance Assessments.

(right click and then “Open Hyperlink”)

[Library Competencies](#)

[QPA: Art](#)

[QPA: Chorus](#)

[QPA: Band](#)

[QPA: Foods and Nutrition](#)

[QPA: French 1](#)

[QPA: House Project](#)

[QPA: Into to Woodworking](#)

[QPA: MCJROTC](#)

[QPA: Music Rubric](#)

[QPA: Robotics](#)

[QPA: Science - The Changing Earth](#)

[QPA: Social Studies](#)

[QPA: Spanish 1](#)

[QPA: Spanish 2](#)

[QPA: Spanish 2.5](#)