

Approved: 3-6-98
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Michael R. O'Neal at 3:30 p.m. on February 3, 1998 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: All members present

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
Cindy Wulfkuhle, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:
Dr. Arie van der Ploeg, Principle Investigator, North Central Regional Educational Laboratory

Others attending: See attached list

Dr. Arie van der Ploeg, Principle Investigator, North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, appeared before the committee to report on the results achieved by schools that piloted the Kansas Quality Performance Accreditation System (QPA) (Attachment 1). In those Kansas QPA pilot schools where student academic performance has been rising since 1992, particularly teachers, parents and community members talk more about change and experiment more with new practices than in schools where academic performance is holding steady or declining. Schools that are improving are finding that increased, better-focused professional development supports change, as do specific instructional practices and assessment rubrics such as the six-trait writing model. However, despite their progress, most of these schools have not yet fully reached the philosophy and practice of schooling envisioned by the QPA process.

Teachers working collaboratively were at the center of the improvement. In improving schools, teaching staff realized that specific problems existed and that they had the capacity, skills, and support to attack problems. Some schools were led to this realization by a superintendent or principal; at other schools, a teacher or group of teachers reached it independently.

Schools where teachers recognized a problem existed but saw no way to fix it usually did not show improvement in academic performance. Both elements, recognizing a problem and believing it to be fixable were required. QPA provided the opportunity to see and find new support for fixing things.

The improving schools found they gained in teacher strength and pride. Staff in the improving schools reported that they possessed solid skills and important answers, and that they were neither helpless nor dependent upon outside experts or processes. Evidence suggests that smaller more isolated schools have no one to rely on but themselves and therefore have a leg-up in the process towards improvements.

QPA pilot schools perform on par with all schools in Kansas. As a group, their performance on the Kansas Assessments is not distinguishable from other schools. On the other hand, about a fifth of the 135 QPA pilot schools recorded strong, measurable improvement in student academic performance since 1992.

Staff at the improving schools over and over again pointed to two factors in their success. The first was the QPA pressure to identify, collect and analyze objective data on school, teacher, and student performance. The second was that analysis and interpretation of the data and the implementation of solutions should be a collaborative activity, led by staff and often shared with the community.

The Chairman assigned a subcommittee for the issue of cosmetology. Members include the following representatives: Shore, chairperson; Powers, Horst, Storm, and Toelkes.

The committee meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for February 4, 1998.

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: February 3, 1998

NAME	REPRESENTING
Stacy Farmer	KASB
Anthony Perez	Leg. Post Audit
Beth Hall	Annie Kuether
John Pitt	KFB
Sharon Fadden	KSDE
Hershel Boaz	cit.
Doug Glasneff	CETE, Univ of Kansas
Mark Pomplun	" " "
Cherie Mercer	KSDE
Helen Norris	Ks Farm Bureau
Steve Adams	KSDE / USD 492
Jeannette Nobo	KSDE
Donna Paris	Kansas, Inc.
Paul GETTO	KASB
William R. Madenly #	Intern for Rep. Nichols
WANDA MORRISON	ST. Bd. of ED.
Bob Vancrum	USD 229
Andy Sampkins	KSDE

A Report on Changes
in
Student Academic Performance
under the
Kansas Quality Performance
Accreditation System

Charge to the Study

- What do longitudinal data show about changes in student academic performance in the QPA pilot schools?
- What factors contributed materially to changes in student academic performance in the QPA pilot schools?

Plan of Work

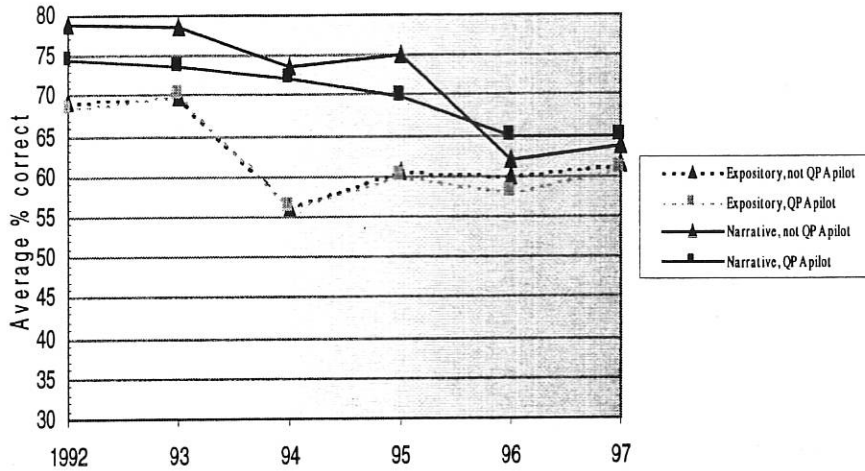
- Statewide, identify relationships between school and community demographics and trends in student academic performance
- In QPA pilot schools, analyze connections between trends in student academic performance and change in teacher practice
- Within improving QPA pilot schools, identify the changes that schools put into place

Evidence

- Data on all 1,400+ Kansas public schools
 - KS Assessment, KS QPA indicators, NCES, Census
- Documentary and survey data from 135 QPA pilot schools
 - Kansas Board of Education QPA visitation documents, reports, and memoranda
 - Principal histories
 - Teacher surveys
- Interviews, observations, and artifacts from 20 improving QPA pilot schools

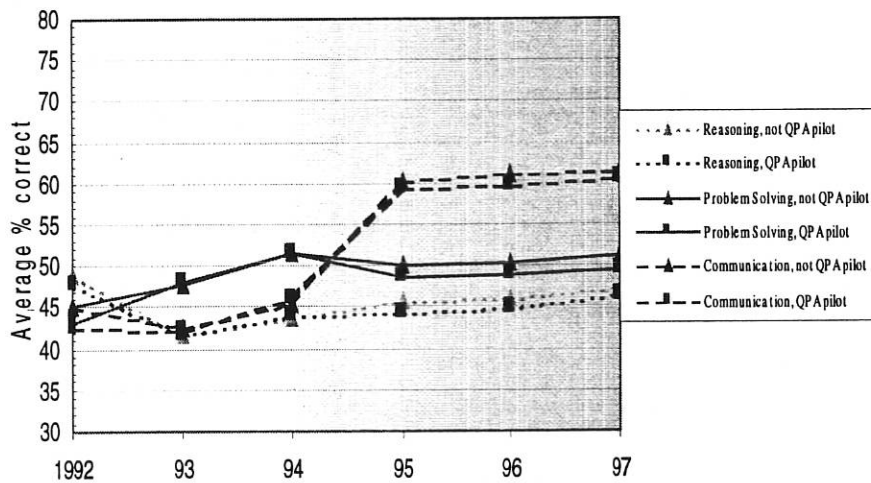
Kansas Assessment, Reading, Grade 7

QPA pilot sites compared to all other schools



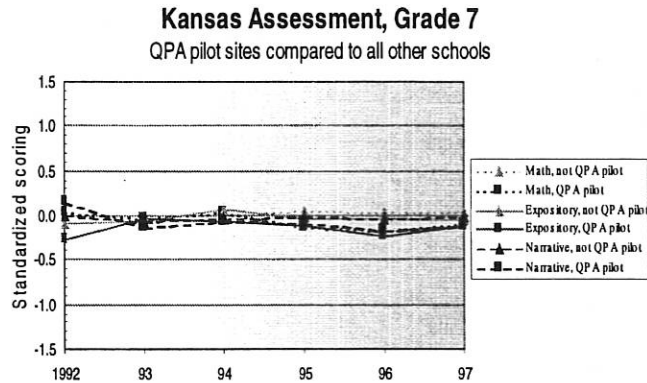
Kansas Assessment, Math, Grade 7

QPA pilot sites compared to all other schools



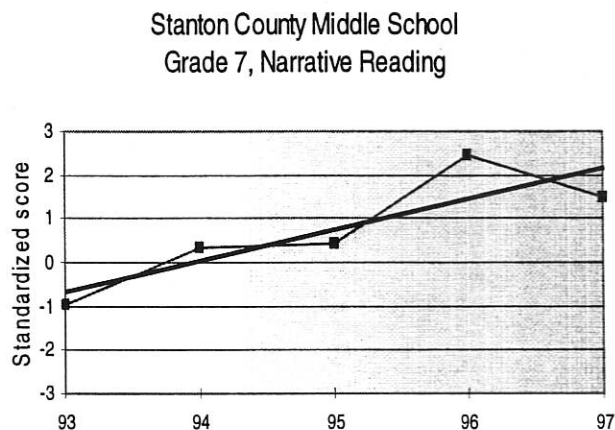
Standardized Scores

- State average each year = 0
- Most schools score between -1.5 and +1.5
- Makes visible the change in a school's performance from year to year



Measuring Improvement

- Build time series for each school, each grade tested
- "Slope" is index of average change, year to year
- Get slopes by regression, each school, each grade



Correlates of Improvement, Statewide

Characteristics outside school control

- Enrollment: no
- Pupil-Teacher ratio:
no
- Minority %: no
- Poverty: no

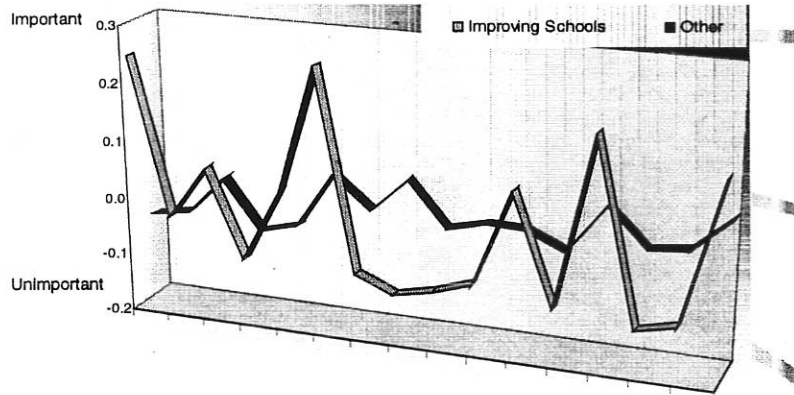
Characteristics within school control

- QPA indicators: ?
- Performance in other
grades: little
- Performance in other
subjects: minimal at
3, moderate at 7, 10

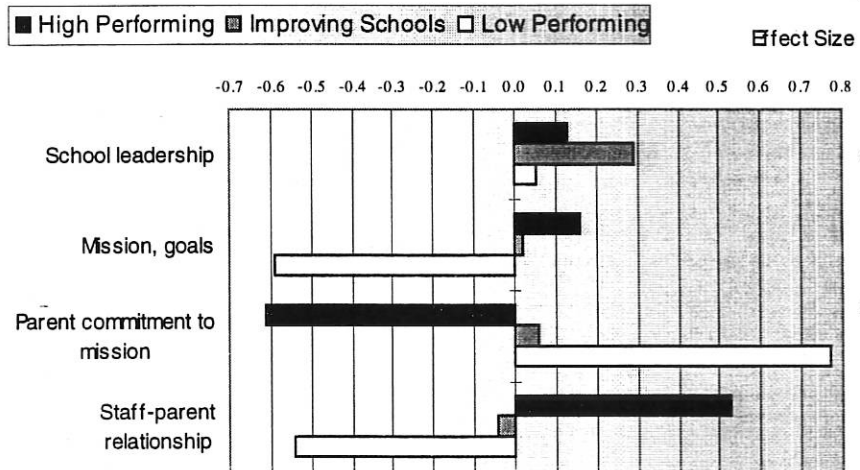
Teacher Questionnaire Topics

- Leadership and mission
- Monitoring progress
- Environment
- Staff training
- Instructional practice
- Change in instructional practice

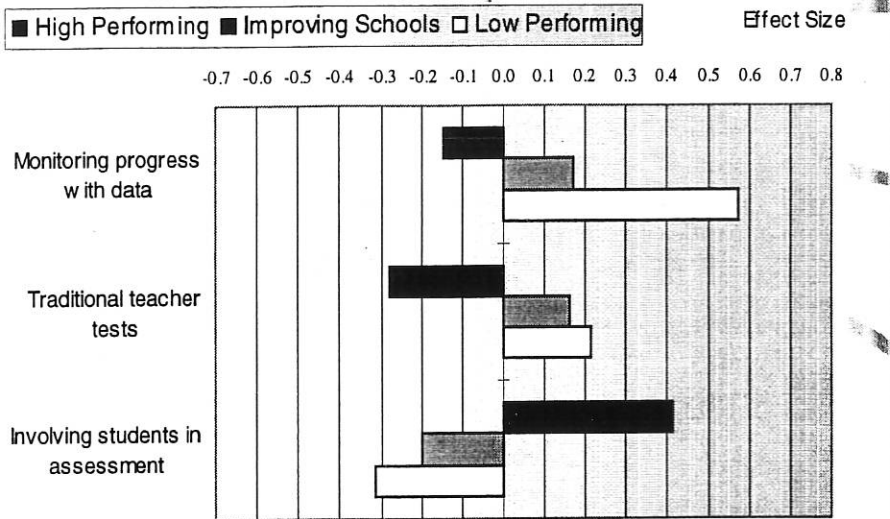
Change in QPA Improving Schools



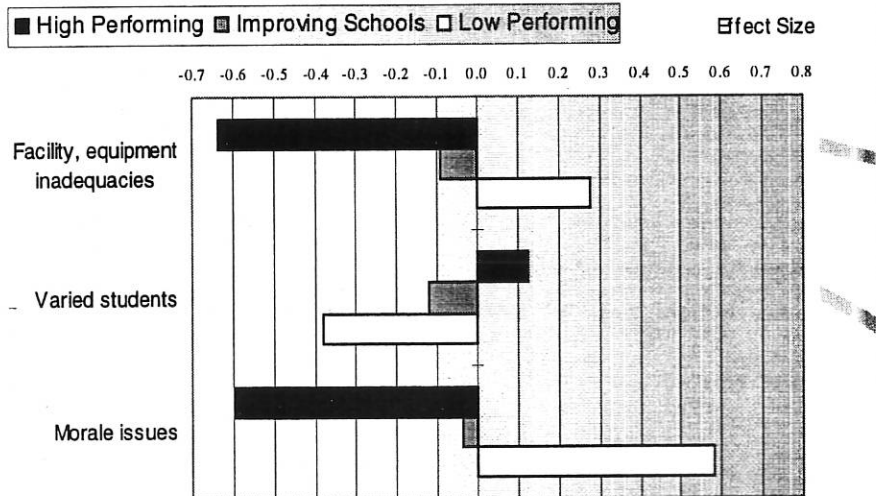
Leadership and Mission



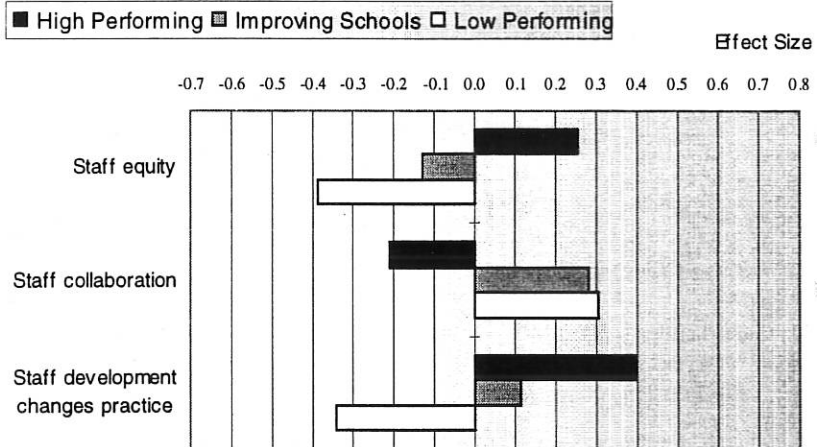
Monitoring Progress



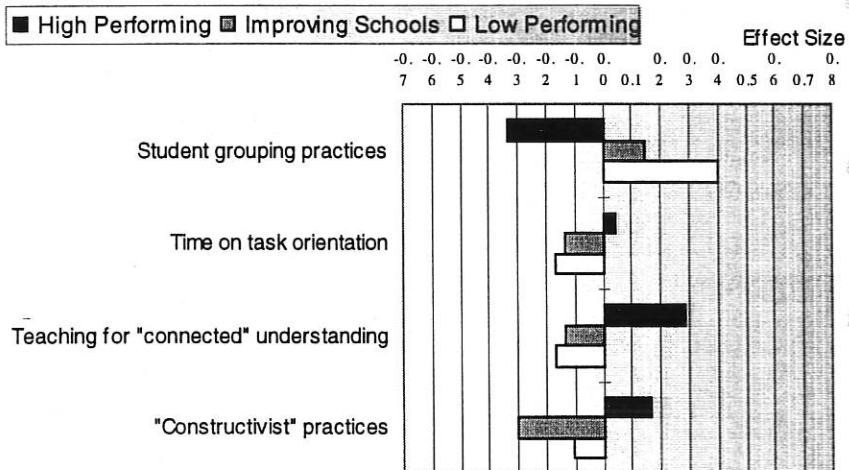
Environment



Staff Training



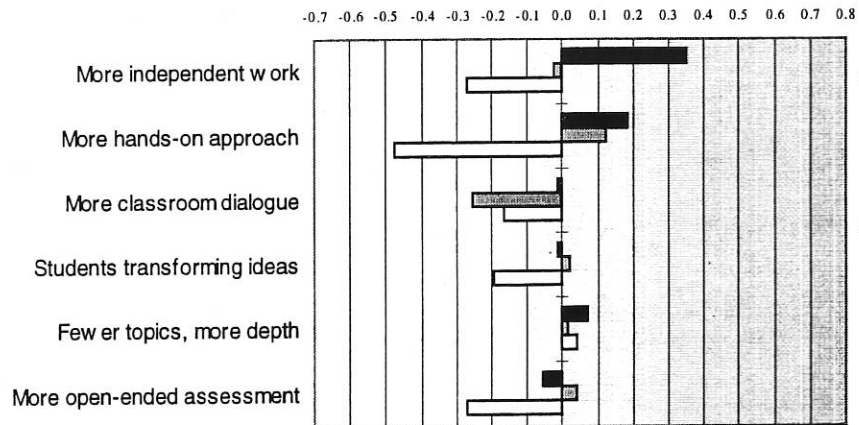
Instructional Practice



Change in Instructional Practice

■ High Performing ■ Improving Schools □ Low Performing

Effect Size



Factors Contributing to Change

- Teachers report changed practice
- The amount of change is small
- Change does not vary by school type
- Change does vary across:
 - Improving schools
 - leadership matters
 - staff collaboration matters
 - testing and monitoring data matter
 - High performing schools
 - parent-teacher communication matters
 - acceptance of more varied assessment
 - strong belief that staff training leads to change
 - Low performing schools
 - building & facility problems and staff morale disrupt
 - parent support is problematic
 - belief that staff training does not lead to change
 - testing and monitoring data matter a great deal

What Did Staff Talk About?

- Most often
 - School leadership, instructional leadership
 - Monitoring student progress
 - Home-school relations
 - Staff collaboration, collegiality, professionalism
- Fairly often
 - Training, staff development
 - Curriculum integration
 - Expectations for high student performance

What Did Staff *Not* Talk About?

- School mission, focus
 - but, most staff were focused on goals and tasks
- School environment
 - but, schools' internal and external environments were generally safe and orderly
- World class standards
- Incentives, recognition
 - but, staff development plans and "points" played a role in some schools

What Did Staff Say about . . .

Instructional leadership:

- *"[Our principal] is just so concerned about everything that goes on, not only in our building but in our classrooms and about how we as professionals are doing. That's because she trusts us, we trust her to allow us to do that."*
- *"The first principal was very much for QPA, but the two principals after that weren't that dedicated so it was more we had to push things. The fact is, we kept our team leaders, because theirs was a strong thought process."*
- *"We just kinda said, hey, let's do this. We said that's a good idea. We never met formally, it was done in the hall, in the classroom."*

What Did Staff Say about . . .

Monitoring progress:

- *"We have spent countless hours going through the objectives that we really wanted our children to achieve and master. Maybe now we know where we are to focus, what we are to do. We have more purpose, more goals."*
- *"We have objectives at each grade level. We test those objectives. We keep records of what we taught."*
- *"Well, we do our mastery test, until they master it. We just keep reteaching it, and they usually [master it]. Any good teacher a hundred years ago did that, but we are more aware and more specific. We document it, and that makes us more aware."*
- *"We seem to be assessing the children from where we get them and where they go and how they progress during the year instead of where we get them and what they should know at second grade."*

What Did Staff Say about . . .

Home-school relationships:

- *"Being a small town, there's just a really good rapport. It's always an open door around here. Parents are free to come in and visit at any time."*
- *"Now, we see a lot more responsibility in [our students] and the parents are much more comfortable. You don't hear that gasp at the other end of the phone when you call."*
- *"You need objectives to know what you're going to teach and what's important to the community. The thing QPA does is, it makes you pay attention."*

What Did Staff Say about . . .

Staff collaboration, collegiality, professionalism:

- *"Well, I think it was the QPA teams from each school that made the difference, because we saw the data, we realized what needed to be done to improve, and where we needed it to be done. So when we got together, we realized that math was somewhere where we were going to have to go and we were all behind it and we did all that together."*
- *"Probably our most productive time was when we divided into curriculum groups. I mean, every teacher in the building had a particular area they were involved in and we were working toward a certain goal. I can't say that's taking place now."*
- *We've learned that our ideas are just as good as any one else's. We might be a small town in Kansas, but we count. Our ideas work.*

Common Solutions

Accelerated Reader®

- Encourages extra-curricular reading
- Tests comprehension on computer
- Rewards more reading, better understanding
- *Very limited research base*
- *No established link to improved performance*

Six-Trait Writing

- Detailed guidelines to assess student's writing provide framework for teaching writing
- The traits mirror Kansas State writing assessment scoring process
- *Sound practice base, but little confirming research exists*

In the QPA improving schools . . .

- School change required school staff be able to “see” a need to change
- School staff believed they had the tools to “fix” the problems they “saw”
- School staff often had short horizons
- QPA provided opportunity to staff to see **school** problems, to assemble a solution they devised, and to learn about (and test) other possible solutions

Summary

- Most QPA pilot schools have shown no more improvement in measurable student academic performance than other Kansas schools.
- In some QPA pilot schools that seized the opportunity QPA provided, changes in teaching practice and staff professionalism are positively influencing student academic performance.
- Best practice as seen in high performing schools may not fit well in low performing schools.

What Matters

High Performing Schools
 Improving Schools
 Low Performing Schools

