



NEW ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING SYSTEM IS SHIFT IN PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE

Standards-based assessment and reporting allows ASD educators to focus on the instructional process, how instruction occurs and how it can be affirmed for the student, according to **Enid Silverstein**, executive director of the ASD Curriculum and Instructional Support Department.

“Students are participants and collaborators with their own learning progress,” said Silverstein.

Mardell Kiesel, ASD Language Arts curriculum coordinator, said “The SBAR pilot’s assessing and reporting system guides instruction for the teacher, motivates the student, and better informs the parent.”

Standards-based assessment and reporting argues for formative assessment rather than the traditional summative assessment, where a unit is presented, students turn in assignments and take tests, their scores are placed on a bell-curve and each student is given a letter grade based on a percentage figure.

“Formative assessment is continuous,” Kiesel said. “On-going or ‘dollops’ of feedback encourage the learner; rubrics provide the goals, and instruction targets specific skills that are necessary for increased achievement.”

According to **Dr. Robert Marzano**, a renowned education expert who has consulted with the ASD in developing its new assessment and reporting system, “classroom assessment is inherently formative.”

Averaging assessment scores makes sense from a summative perspective, Marzano notes, but the “driving force behind averaging as a way of estimating an individual’s true score” assumes that the score for a student stays constant from assessment to assessment.

“That’s not how students learn,” Silverstein said. She noted that formative assessment is also more culturally responsive. Individual variances in learning can and do change over time and are affected by a family’s culture, life-events, and socio-economic status.

Keeping the standards constant ensures the same curriculum and objectives are being taught to every child, no matter where he or she lives or attends school. The state and district standards, also known as Grade Level Expectations, objectively define what a child is supposed to be learning.

“There’s a common understanding among the parents, students and teachers, that transforms communications with families,” Silverstein said. “The whole process becomes much less subjective, which actually reduces stress on the teacher.”

The SBAR pilot leaders, **Ruth Mount, Vickie Blakeney, Trish Herminghaus** and **Kiesel**, have worked closely with the ASD Assessment and Evaluation Department to create a secure application for pilot teachers that provides a technology interface for recording assessments. A standards-based report is generated quarterly and represents benchmarking aligned with the state standards.