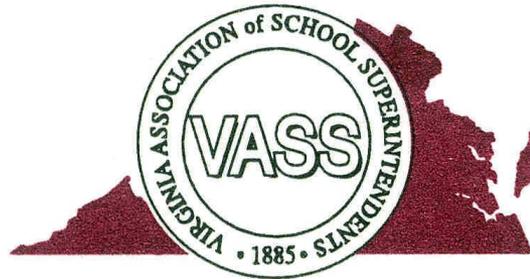


Accreditation Presentation

State Board of Education

Accountability Sub-Committee

May 22, 2013

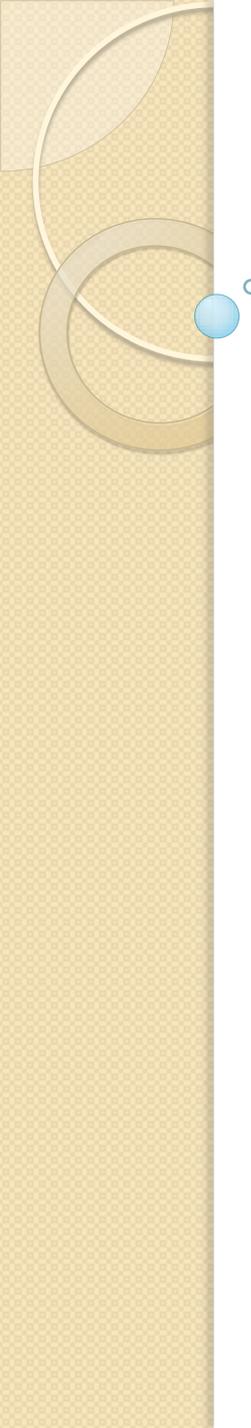


Impossible Task

- Acknowledge the “elephant in the room”
- General Assembly action requires State Board response within specific deadlines
 - Will require use of accountability components for unintended purposes
 - Validity and accuracy of “final evaluations” will be suspect
 - Use of “growth” measures will be restricted due to short deadline – no opportunity to pilot statewide measures
- We “feel your pain” – but it is going to hurt us more very soon

Two Approaches to SOA Revisions

1. Add revisions to current Standards as configured
 - Paper copy of remarks includes some specific areas of recommendation
 - Assumes “status quo” status for Standards
2. Initiate significant Revisions/reforms to Standards
 - Process
 - Transition with minor adjustments as required for interim (request extension?)
 - Commission statewide review panel
 - Allow time for thorough consideration and development of substantive recommendations



Substantive Revision Approach

General ideas to consider.....

Background Considerations

- What is the purpose of Accreditation?

“The standards for the accreditation of public schools in Virginia are designed to ensure that an effective educational program is established and maintained in Virginia's public schools.” (Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia – August 31, 2011: Page 6)

- In short, Accreditation is public policy that “insures” effective schools in Virginia
- Leads to Two Questions
 1. How do we define “effective”?
 2. To what extent have current accreditation standards accomplished this goal?

Review of Previous Revisions Process

- September, 1970 document is 26 pages long

“This revision represents the efforts of a committee of public and private school representatives appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction in December, 1966, to review, revise, and strengthen accreditation standards for secondary schools. The contents of this bulletin reflect the efforts of many educators in the State to reconcile ideas and theories of what constitutes quality with the practical application and implementation of standards that will provide a foundation on which to build a strong educational program for all students.” (Standards for Accrediting Secondary Schools in Virginia; September, 1970; Introduction, pp. V)
- Updates & revisions follow in 1974, 1976*, 1978, 1983*, 1988*, 1992, 1997, 2000, 2006, 2010, 2011
 - * indicates reference to statewide participation in development of revisions
- 2011 document includes 69 pages

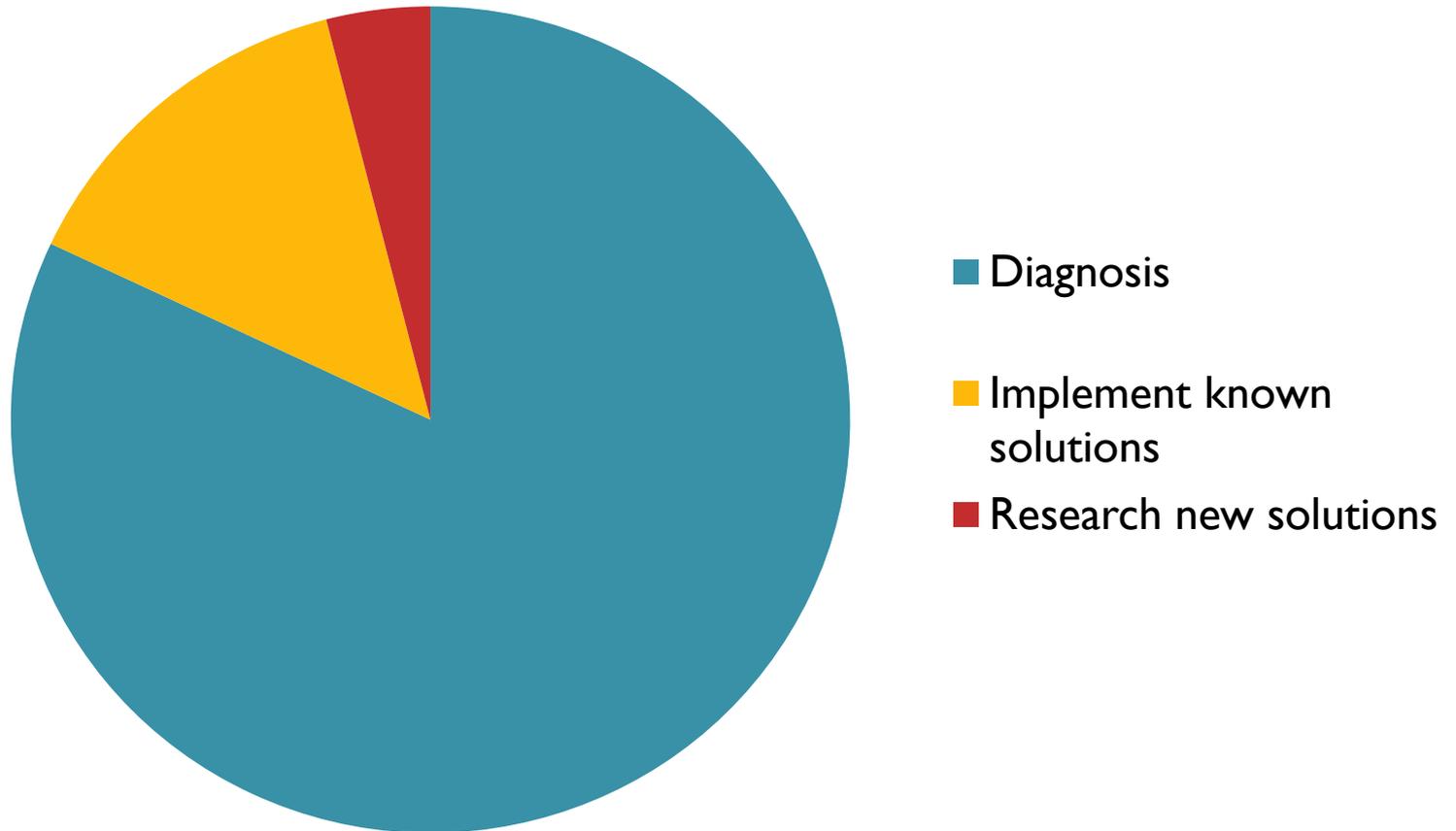
Achievement Gap Considerations

- One area of current focus for the State Board is “solving the achievement gap”
- What do current accreditation standards address? How should future standards direct action?
- How are resources distributed to support the accomplishment of this goal?

Achievement Gap

Perceived Resource Allocation

Narrowing the Achievement Gap



What counts?

- Researchers often use a “mixed methods” approach to investigate a problem.
- This approach uses a combination of quantitative (numbers-driven) and qualitative (words-driven) approaches to capture the “big picture”
- What approach should accreditation standards use to evaluate schools?

What counts?

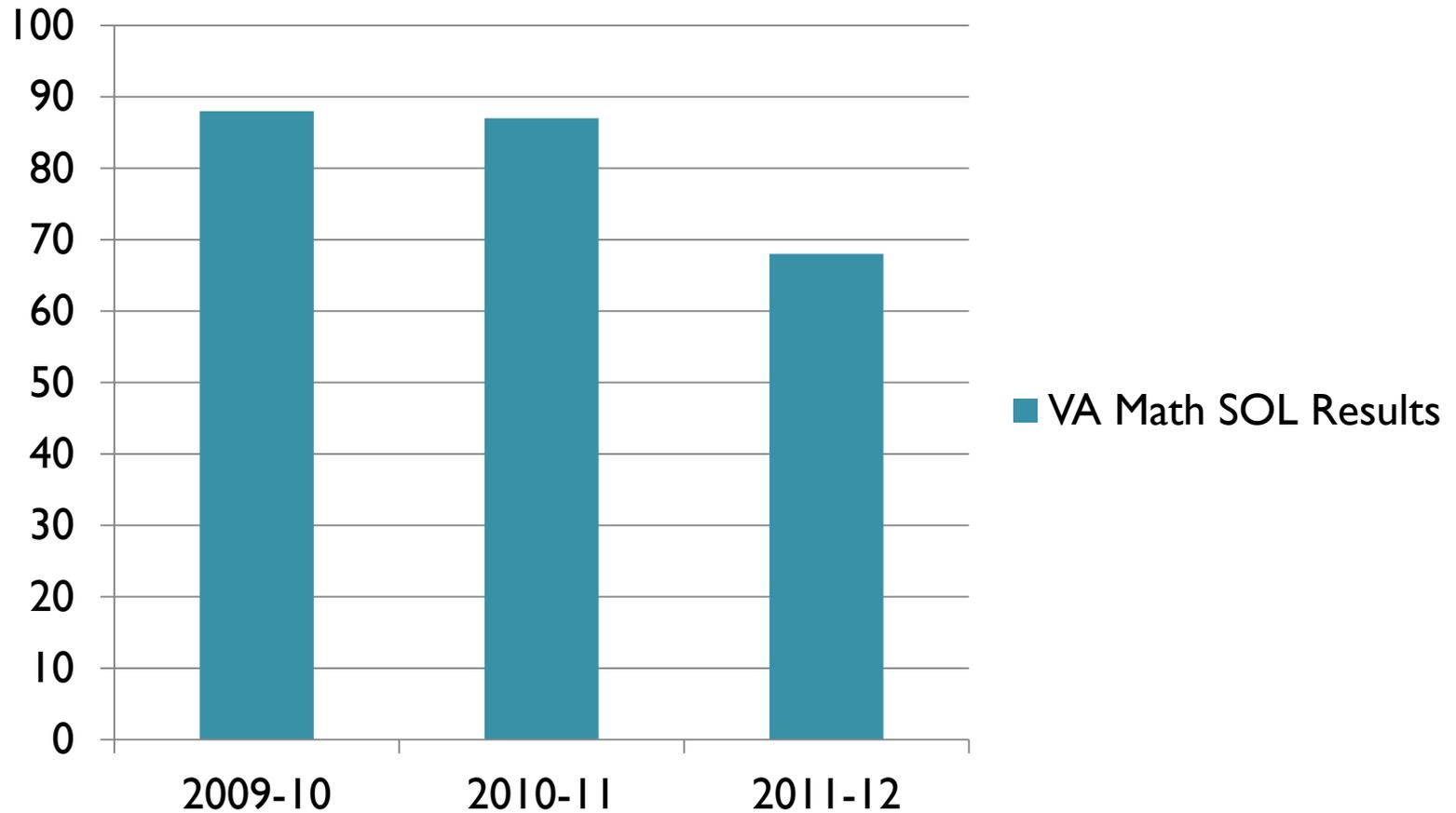
- Steve Cohen, Senior Lecturer, Tufts University
 - Washington Post article: “The Vietnamization of Education”
- Military adopted “metric” to measure success of war – quantitative assessment of success
 - “body count” used to assess effectiveness
 - Kill more enemy than U.S. lose – winning?
- What was **NOT** measured by quantitative assessments?
 - Changing nature of warfare in setting – adaptability of U.S. military
 - Emotional Commitment of opponent
 - Political capacity at home to sustain war

What counts?

- Cohen's article leads us to these questions:
 - How do accreditation standards assess both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of schools?
 - Do we believe that what we can count "counts"?
 - Do we believe that what we cannot count doesn't?
 - Are we confusing our ability to measure with what is important?
 - What isn't measured by accreditation standards that should be?
 - What data used by accreditation standards might be misinterpreted or misapplied to form an incorrect evaluation?

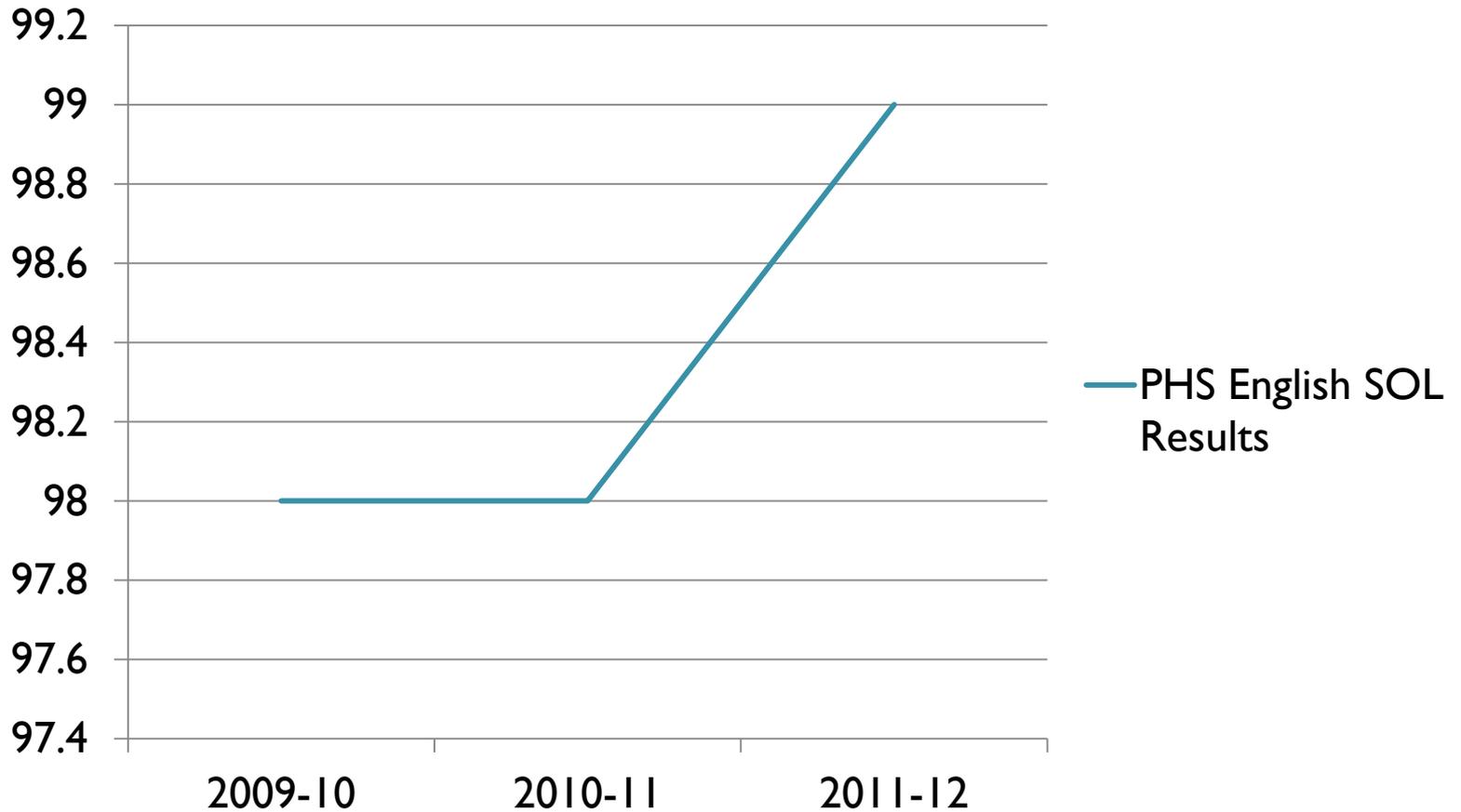
Examining Data: What don't the numbers tell us?

VA Math SOL Results



Can SOL Data Measure “Growth”?

PHS English SOL Results

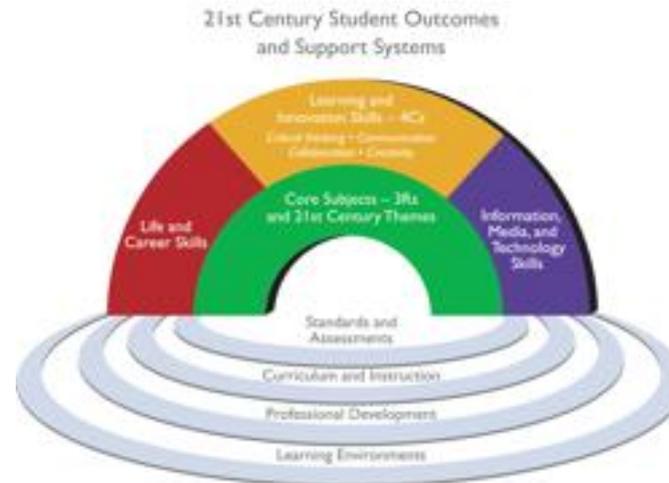


Ideas to Consider

- Implement a **Balanced** approach to assessments and accountability that includes a variety of quantitative and qualitative measures
 - Mix of:
 - Federal mandated
 - State directed
 - Local developed and/or implemented

Ideas to Consider

- Re-conceptualize “what schools should be” for 21st century (graphic from 21st Century Learning: The Partnership for 21st Century Skills)



Conclusion

- Review of Accreditation Standards can be either of two things
 1. Tinkering with “what is”
 2. Development of “what should be”
- Albert Einstein noted that:
“The only thing that interferes with my learning is education”

VASS remains committed to substantive Reform

- VASS joins with multiple other education-related organizations and associations in this effort
- VASS looks forward to on-going dialogue and opportunities to re-shape education in Virginia
- VASS encourages the State Board to choose a substantive reform of the Standards of Accreditation and not a minor editing.

