

## Training and Technical Assistance

Each year, OPE provides training and technical assistance for all program managers of newly identified programs and services for QPAS.

- As part of the training, OPE provides a training handbook with activities designed to assist program managers as they begin to collect documentation data and prepare review reports.
- OPE provides technical assistance to program managers as they document and develop review reports for their programs and services.
- OPE provides technical assistance to specific Leadership Team members in the use of a checklist to monitor the quality of review reports.

## Additional QPAS Resources

OPE has developed a variety of documents to assist staff in understanding and responding to QPAS expectations, including:

- the QPAS summary document, which describes the levels of accountability in terms of questions related to each data element;
- a QPAS training handbook, which contains background information and activities designed to help program managers as they begin documenting their programs; and
- a list of QPAS programs for the 2000-2001 school year.

Each year, the QPAS list is reviewed by the Leadership Team to add new programs and services or to delete defunct ones.

## QPAS Timeline

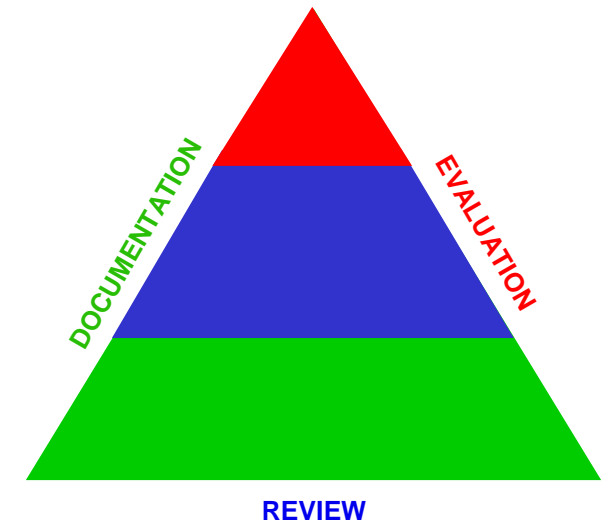
- Fall 2000: FCPS begins QPAS: Phase 1 (2000-2001 start-up) programs
- Programs identified
  - Program managers assigned and trained
  - Data collection begins
  - Scheduled evaluation reports presented to School Board
- Summer 2001: Leadership Team checks program managers' data collection progress  
Leadership Team revises (reduces/ expands list of QPAS to include Phase 2 programs
- Fall 2001: FCPS begins QPAS: Phase 2 programs
- Programs identified
  - Program managers assigned and trained
  - Data collection begins
  - Scheduled evaluation reports presented to School Board
- Fall 2002: Scheduled Phase 1 reviews reports completed and made available for audiences
- Scheduled evaluation reports presented to School Board

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## Quality Programs Assurance System

A Framework for Educational Program Accountability



## Fairfax County Public Schools

Department of Educational Accountability (DEA)  
Office of Program Evaluation (OPE)

## What is QPAS?

The Quality Programs Assurance System (QPAS) was created by the Department of Educational Accountability (DEA) in the context of a divisionwide commitment to accountability. QPAS was developed following the School Board's request for easier access to key information on all programs. As a result, QPAS was initiated by the Office of Program Evaluation (OPE) in the DEA during the 2000-2001 school year.

The primary goal of QPAS is to provide quality accountability information on programs and services in the division. To achieve this goal, QPAS defines accountability reporting as a responsibility shared among departments across FCPS. The three levels of information in QPAS are: Documentation, Review, and Evaluation.

QPAS requires each program and service to have a designated program manager who is held directly responsible for maintaining basic information about the program or service in prescribed areas.

The information collected and maintained as part of QPAS will be used to inform decisions about improvement, continuation and/or funding by program staff, and the School Board.

## Defining QPAS

QPAS defines a set of data elements that represent the types of information that are available about programs and services. QPAS also defines three levels of accountability for reporting on these data elements. Data for each of the following elements are available at varying levels of detail for Documentation, Review, and Evaluation reports.

### Data Elements

- Program purposes, goals, and objectives
- Nature of the program/intervention(s)
- Number and location of sites
- Groups targeted for impact by program
- Program staff
- Organizational structure
- Training/staff development
- Program implementation
- Program impact
- Program budget and expenditures

## Levels of Accountability

### Documentation

Program managers are required to maintain ongoing and up-to-date records on key areas (data elements) for which information is commonly requested or used. The required information is defined consistently for all programs and services involved in QPAS and is collected over the course of the school year to respond to inquiries from various audiences.

### Review

After every two year period, documentation data are analyzed for each of the data elements. The analysis compares implementation, impacts, resource requirements, and other areas over two years. The analysis is provided as a formal report to the appropriate Leadership Team member and made available to other interested persons upon request.

### Evaluation

Each year, the Division Superintendent selects a subset of all programs and services to be involved in the most comprehensive analyses, based on the interests and needs of the division. These program evaluations are conducted by OPE and focus on the quality and impact of programs over a three to five year period. Reports are presented annually to the School Board.

### Use of Data

Both review and evaluation reports yield a set of recommendations based on the data collected and analyzed annually. The recommendations are targeted at specific audiences, such as program staff, Leadership Team, or the School Board for program modification, continuation, and/or funding decisions.