Evaluating Pearson

With Improvements in Test Scores

We have invested $600,000 to purchase the Pearson reading program. *How is the board going to evaluate if this was a wise investment?* An assessment probably could not be done before three to five years (2015 or 2017.) What does the board expect to see at these two junctures? For example, 20% increased statewide scores* in 2015 and 30% increase by 2017? Or 30% increased scores in 2015 and 50% increase by 2017?

*I believe individual statewide assessment scores reflect what percentage of students met or exceeded the **state average** for that year. There's nothing in this process to assure learning quality is actually ***increasing***. For example, in 1980, 60% of School A's students met/exceeded the state average, but the state average was only a "C." That means 40% of the students were at "D" or below. Five years later, if the state average was a "D," and the school scored another 60%, that would mean 40% of the students were ***failing***—even though it looked like the students were at the ***same*** achievement level.

Another variable is the relevance and accuracy of the test itself. For example, if the test in 1980 was much "easier" than the 1985 test, that's going to further degrade the comparison.

If my assumptions about the scoring are incorrect, please advise.

Other Ways to Evaluate a Reading Program

Here are some suggestions:

- Feedback from parents regarding their impressions of their children's skills and attitudes
- Teachers' observations of increased participation or decreased complaints about required reading
- Interviews with the children to see if they like reading more than before? "Pre-" and "post-" assessments need to be thought through so we end up with valid evaluations
- An increase in books checked out of school libraries, or the public library

How do you plan on evaluating Pearson?