QUALITY SCHOOL RUBRIC

I
Student Success

IV
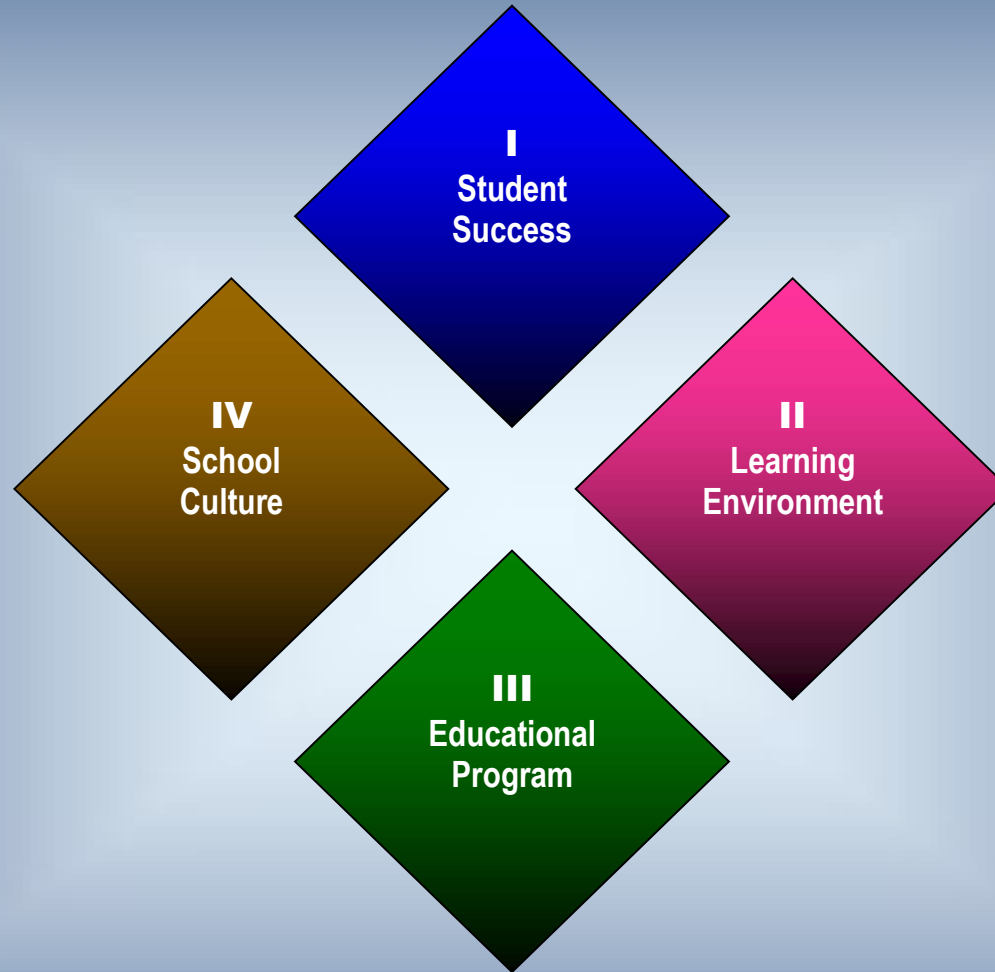School Culture

II
Learning Environment

III
Educational Program

Gates Chili Central School District

PREFACE

Defining what is a quality school, is a thought provoking task. Today that definition is often only linked to the scores achieved by a school's students on New York State tests. Test results are clearly important, but we also believe there are other attributes that need to be considered when describing a quality school. Acting on that belief, District Goal 2 for the 2003-04 school year was identified: *The District will develop a rubric that defines the significant attributes of a quality school.* The Quality Initiatives Committee, a group of parents and district educators, was charged with the task of identifying the characteristics of a high quality school and developing a rubric that could be used by School Improvement Teams to assess school quality and identify improvement goals.

The reader will find four dimensions that organize the Gates Chili Quality School Rubric: Student Success, Learning Environment, Educational Program and School Culture. Each dimension is further described by a number of elements, along with performance indicators that characterized a continuum from Exceeds Expectations to Poor.

Key steps in the development process included:
- Identification of key dimensions of school quality, as well as the elements that comprise each dimension.
- Utilization of a Focus Group strategy to obtain feedback from students and additional staff members and parents.
- Consultation with Giselle Martin Kniep, a respected consultant in the area of rubric assessment.

The Quality School Rubric is presented as a tool that will be used to guide School Improvement Teams in the identification of areas of improvement at their school.

Quality Initiatives Committee Members

| Name	Role
Chip Dolce	District Computer Teacher
Judy Guerra	Parent
Jill Heise	Teacher
Gerry Iuppa	Principal
Ellen King	Teacher
Paula LaManna	Parent
Larry Lazenby	Assistant Principal
Heather McElduff	Teacher
Lisa McGary	Teacher
Jim Miller	School Counselor
Teresa Riley	Parent
Annemarie Roney	Teacher
Patricia Schucker	Assoc. Superintendent for Instruction - Chairperson
Joy Swierk	Teacher
Kathy White	Teacher
Lisa Zimmerman	Parent

DIMENSIONS OF A QUALITY SCHOOL
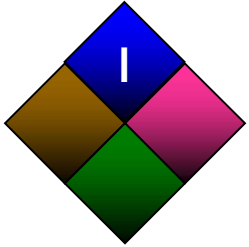
I Student Success

The school provides students with opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills that will allow them to achieve their potential. Each learner's competencies and individual attributes are developed and lead to intellectual independence, resourcefulness and self-discipline.
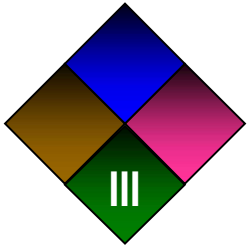
Academic Performance
Commitment to Learning
Learning Competencies
Involvement in School Activities
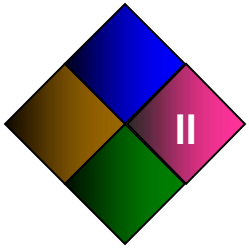
II Learning Environment

The learning environment supports staff, students, and the family in the development of the individual pupil.

School Safety
Boundaries and Expectations
Use of Time
Support Services
Physical Organization

III Educational Program

The educational program is comprehensive, challenging, meaningful, and curriculum/standards based.

Curriculum   **Assessment Practices**
Curriculum Integration   **Professional Development**
Program Opportunities   **Resources and Materials**
Instructional Delivery
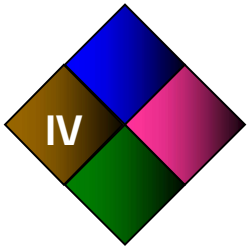
IV School Culture

The school culture is one of mutual respect, where staff, families and members of the community work together to support the development of the individual pupil; intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically.

Vision   **Empowerment**
Sense of Community   **Innovation**
Communication   **Use of Data**
Relationships between
  Students & Staff
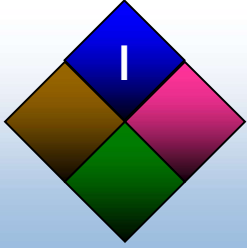
DIMENSION I: STUDENT SUCCESS

The school provides students with opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills that will allow them to achieve their potential. Each learner's competencies and individual attributes are developed and lead to intellectual independence, resourcefulness and self-discipline.
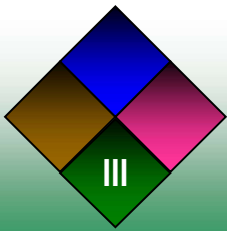
ELEMENT	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	POOR
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	Students exceed both state and district standards of excellence in academic programs.	Students demonstrate success in academic programs and meet state and district standards.	Students experience partial or inconsistent success in academic programs and meeting state and district standards.	Students fail academic programs and are not meeting state and district standards.
COMMITMENT TO LEARNING	Students are actively engaged in learning and exhibit creative, thoughtful behaviors and responses. They routinely analyze their progress against desired criteria and are motivated to reflect on their progress to set learning goals.	Students are active participants in their learning. They reflect on their progress and identify strengths and weaknesses in their work.	Students are content with doing a minimum amount of work. They analyze their own work in a cursory manner and depend on teachers for direction.	Students appear uninterested, unable to learn, or apathetic. They depend on their teachers to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their work.
LEARNING COMPETENCIES	Students feel confident and are proactively pursuing their interests and the next developmentally appropriate learning and working environments.	Students demonstrate an awareness of their strengths, weaknesses, interests, dispositions, etc; and express confidence in tackling challenges they face.	Students are unsure of themselves at times and do not self-advocate when they do not understand.	Students are unable to relate their learning to their lives and feel unprepared to tackle learning challenges.
INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	Students participate in a variety of extra curricular activities. They assist in the design, participation and support of opportunities for community service projects.	Students participate in a variety of extra curricular activities, as well as community service projects.	Student participation in extra curricular activities is restricted to a select group. Community service projects are limited.	Students are unable to participate as opportunities for extra curricular activities do not exist. Community service projects are not pursued.
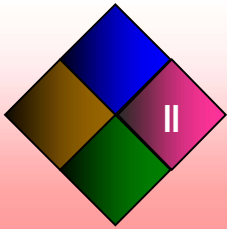
DIMENSION II: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The learning environment supports staff, students and the family in the development of the individual pupil.

| ELEMENT	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	POOR
SCHOOL SAFETY	Procedures are clearly defined, practiced and regularly reviewed for modifications. There is confidence that the health, physical and psychological safety of students, staff and visitors is a priority.	Procedures are in place and employed effectively to maintain a healthy, safe and secure environment. Staff is aware of safety procedures, but some parents and students may not be.	Safety procedures exist but are inconsistently implemented.	Safety procedures are non- existent.
BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS	Behavior standards are clear to all students and have been developed with student participation. Staff and students model positive responsible behaviors and initiate acts of recognition and support for one another. Enforcement of expectations is consistent and there are no apparent behavioral problems.	Behavior standards are in place. Most students appear to be respectful. Teachers are alert to student behavior and response to misbehavior is consistent and appropriate. Little or no serious disruptive behavior occurs.	Behavior standards are in place. However, students seem to be unclear about them. Incidents of disorderly behavior are observed, with inconsistent response by the staff.	Behavior standards do not seem to be in place. There is an attitude of indifference on the part of the staff and students. Outward displays of disrespect or dangerous misbehavior are prevalent.
USE OF TIME	Scheduling promotes optimal learning and encourages flexibility in meeting student, staff and family needs.	Schedules allow students to access a variety of learning activities and events.	Schedules create situations in which activities compete for resources/time and sometimes result in the fragmentation of the student day.	Schedules limit learning and are either rigid or disorganized.
SUPPORT SERVICES	Instructional staff members proactively incorporate support services and integration is coordinated in a mutually supportive fashion.	Instructional staff members value support services as an important part of the school day. Services are integrated within the system, although the integration could be more meaningful.	Lines of distinction exist between the instructional and support staff. Services are fragmented and viewed as separate from the essential learning that takes place.	There is rivalry between the instructional staff and support staff. Support services are not recognized as important.
PHYSICAL ORGANIZATION	The physical environment of the school/campus is aesthetically pleasing. Strategic use of the space encourages learning to occur in a variety of settings.	The physical environment of the school/campus is utilized effectively to meet the needs of the educational program.	The physical environment of the school/campus does not foster student learning.	Problems in the physical environment of the school/campus prohibit learning.

DIMENSION III: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The educational program is comprehensive, challenging, meaningful, and curriculum/standards based.

ELEMENT	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	POOR
CURRICULUM	Curriculum documents are effectively distributed and utilized in planning so that all instructional content consistently aligns with curriculum standards and across grade level/courses throughout the district.	Curriculum documents are available for use in planning. Instructional content is generally consistent and congruent with curriculum standards and across grade level/courses throughout the district.	Curriculum documents are not readily available and instructional content does not always align with the curriculum standards.	Curriculum documents do not impact planning. Instructional content varies across grade level/courses.
CURRICULUM INTEGRATION	Where appropriate, teachers collaborate regarding unit/lesson objectives to coordinate and integrate across different disciplines and grade levels, making explicit connections to the real world.	Teachers discuss opportunities for coordination and integration across disciplines and grade levels and seek to plan some unit/lesson objectives that reflect this.	Teachers make decisions about integration without collaborating with others.	Teachers identify unit/lesson objectives with little or no integration across courses or grade levels.
PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES	Program offerings provide students multiple opportunities to acquire and demonstrate required knowledge and skills. Students are able to discover and participate in experiences that cultivate individual talents.	Program offerings provide students opportunities to obtain the knowledge and skills outlined in the curriculum, and to experience success in a way that addresses multiple learning styles and intelligences.	Program offerings are basic and provide all students the same opportunities regardless of their interests or talents.	Program offerings are haphazard and students have little or no opportunity to acquire knowledge and develop their skills.
INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY	Instructional techniques and tasks are differentiated and developmentally appropriate for the cognitive, physical, social and emotional levels of the students. Learning experiences are challenging, meaningful and well aligned with students' needs and interests.	Instructional strategies are employed to maximize learning opportunities. Learning experiences are engaging.	Instructional strategies are varied, but inconsistent in responding to various abilities.	Instructional strategies are uniform for all students.

ELEMENT	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	POOR
ASSESSMENT PRACTICES	Teachers monitor student progress with a variety of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment strategies and measures.	Teachers monitor student progress using a variety of assessment strategies, although summative assessment is emphasized more than other measures.	Teachers monitor student progress primarily with summative assessment measures.	Teachers monitor student progress exclusively by summative assessment measures.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	Professional development is designed to promote the achievement of district goals and NYS Standards. The coursework is purposeful and intentional in the selection of research-based practice. A plan is in place that provides multiple opportunities for participants to engage in modeling, guided feedback and the application of learning in authentic contexts over time.	Professional development opportunities are aligned with district goals and NYS Standards. The coursework is aligned with current practices. A plan is in place to provide follow up that focuses on the implementation of newly learned ideas.	Professional development can be connected to the district goals and NYS standards, but does not serve as the anchor or framework throughout the planning phases. Participants practice the strategies independently.	Professional development is unrelated to the district goals and NYS standards. Coursework is delivered in short sessions with no formal implementation plan or follow up.
RESOURCES AND MATERIALS	All materials and resources are current, support the instructional goals, and engage the students in meaningful learning. Students participate in the selection of materials.	Materials and resources are readily available and support the instructional goals.	Some materials and resources are available, but there is no consistency across grade level, courses or schools.	Materials and resources are in short supply, outdated and not aligned with the curriculum/content.
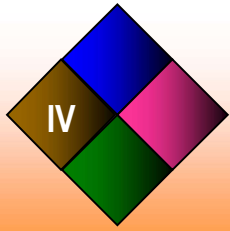
DIMENSION IV: SCHOOL CULTURE

The school culture is one of mutual respect, where staff, families and members of the community work together to support the development of the individual pupil; intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically.

Element	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	POOR
VISION	Staff, families and members of the community embrace a common vision for the intellectual, social, physical and emotional development of students. Regular review and revision takes place to maintain a dynamic vision for all students.	Staff, families and members of the community care about students and value learning. There is a vision for the development of the whole child that everyone can articulate, but this may not be common practice.	Various interpretations of the vision exist among staff, families and members of the community. Certain beliefs are emphasized more than others.	A shared vision does not exist. Teachers and parents operate independently of each other.
SENSE OF COMMUNITY	A sense of community spirit is celebrated. Staff, students and families display pride in the school community and feel respected and valued as individuals.	There is a sense of community. Staff, students and families are friendly and show respect for one another.	There is little effort to create a sense of community; feelings of anonymity exist among staff, students and/or families.	Students and staff focus only on curriculum and content. Staff, students and/or families feel alienated and disconnected.
COMMUNICATION	A comprehensive communication system is utilized to its fullest potential to provide clear and accurate information to staff, families and members of the community.	Systems are in place that promote effective communication among staff, families and members of the community.	Communication channels among staff, families and members of the community are ineffective or non-existent.	Communication is confusing and infrequent. There are instances of misinformation or lack of information among staff, families and members of the community.
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND STAFF	A variety of structured and unstructured positive, meaningful and consistent approaches are in place to ensure that all students are connected with the staff within the school.	Staff members establish relationships with students in the school in planned and informal ways.	The students find it difficult to access staff outside of structured class settings. Relationship building activities are only available to selected students.	Staff members and students interact in a way that undermines the possible connections between them.

DIMENSION IV: SCHOOL CULTURE - CONT'D

Element	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	POOR
EMPOWERMENT	The school culture encourages the active exchange of ideas and opinions among staff, students, and families. Leadership potential in others is recognized and opportunities are present to encourage ongoing growth.	Team work and collaboration are present among staff, students, and families, who are encouraged to be flexible and open-minded about accepting the ideas of others.	Input from selected staff, students, and families is solicited on an informal basis.	Decision making is autonomous with little regard for the ideas of the staff, students, and families.
INNOVATION	Staff, students, and families model life-long learning and participate in self improvement activities. A high level of intellectual energy sets a positive tone for learning. Staff members explore, question and try new instructional approaches, as well as replace ineffective or out of date practices.	There is interest in current trends and discussion takes place to assist staff, students, and families in exploring new strategies. Staff members are supported in the exploration of new knowledge and skills.	Support is provided to some staff, students, and families, but there is not a unified approach that encourages the investigation of new ideas and approaches.	New ideas and approaches are discouraged.
USE OF DATA	The detailed study of data, on individual students, state/local assessments and/or school issues is directly linked to school improvement goals.	Data on individual students, state/local assessments and/or school issues is collected and analyzed from multiple perspectives; i.e. grade level, department, to identify school improvement goals.	Data on individual students, state/local assessments and/or school issues exists but is not analyzed or utilized to make decisions that impact student achievement or school improvement planning.	Data on individual students, state/local assessments and/or school issues is not available.

GLOSSARY

Curriculum	Courses offered by an educational system.
Diagnostic assessment	Assessment that occurs before formal instruction begins to identify what the student already knows.
Differentiation	Proactive plan to address student's differences in terms of readiness, interests, and learning profiles in order to ensure that each student moves as far as possible along the learning continuum.
Extracurricular	Activities, clubs, or events that enhance the overall academic program. Most occur outside the instructional day and are not credit bearing.
Formative assessment	Assessment that occurs during the learning process, and provides clear and specific feedback to the student and/or teacher as to the student's learning.
Instructional staff	Teachers responsible for course instruction.
Real world connections	Relating school learning to life experiences.
Resources	Supplies, including innovative up to date technology.
Summative assessment	Assessment conducted at the end of a period of instruction that defines what the student has achieved.
Support services	Resources provided to students in addition to classroom instruction.
Support staff	All staff members, other than teachers, who are employed by the district to fulfill a responsibility necessary for school operation.
Vision	A shared belief in the collective responsibility for the educational and personal development of each and every student.