

6146.21 (R).

Educational tests are selected after careful review by the Systemwide Test Committee. This committee is made up of individuals from a wide variety of educational backgrounds and from all levels of the Meriden Public Schools. The membership includes, but is not restricted to, system and building level administrators, school psychologists, elementary, middle and high school guidance counselors, and teachers at the elementary middle and high school levels.

Test reviews are accomplished in several steps. The initial procedure involves a careful reading of the technical manuals of those tests under consideration. The information contained in the manuals is scrutinized to determine those areas which are evaluated by each particular measuring instrument. Reliability and validity coefficients are generally in the range of .80 to .95. Tests manifesting coefficients below this standard are disregarded.

A careful analysis of the standardization sample is undertaken as part of the review. Consideration is given to the geographic representation of the norming population, the sampling procedure employed, the characteristics of the sample, and the sample size both in total and by grade or age level.

Further analysis is done to determine the racial and ethnic composition of the norming sample as well as its social and economic characteristics to determine if minority representation has been accomplished. Equally important is the determination that efforts have been successful in minimizing racial, sexual and cultural bias so as to avoid content which is unfamiliar to the experience of these groups.

The content validity of a test refers to the extent to which test items match a curriculum. In the case of achievement tests, the issue of the content validity of an instrument requires two important steps. First, the content of the test must be examined in detail through skill outlines presented in the manuals. Second, judgment must be made whether this array is useful to the particular needs of the local situation. Input is sought from the test user, the classroom teacher. A large number of classroom teachers from the grade levels at which the test is administered examine the content of the test through an analysis of the actual test questions. They respond specifically to the appropriateness of each item in relationship to the curriculum, the format of the test, and the appeal of the test to the target populations. A high percentage of those items (approximately 85%) must be found to correspond to each curriculum.

The Test Selection Committee makes recommendations to the Assistant Superintendent who in turn submits these recommendations to the Superintendent. The Superintendent then makes a recommendation to the Board of Education for approval.