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**CONCEPT PAPER:
ONE EXAMPLE OF A MODULAR APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT DESIGN**

Modular Strands:

Definition: Content area assessments consist of test modules. Modules within a content area equal the components of the high school learning goals required within the specific content area. Test modules are stand-alone, valid, reliable tests that measure achievement. These modules may be configured differently to accommodate local instructional programs. All students must, however, pass all modules or their State Board-approved alternatives.

Modular Strand Models*:

English	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
Integrated Eng. I (1.0)	A1 = Algebra (0.4)	B = Biology (1.0)	W = World History (1.0)
Integrated Eng. II (1.0)	A2 = Algebra (0.4)	C = Chemistry (1.0)	A = American History (1.0)
Integrated Eng. III (1.0)	G1 = Geometry (0.4)	E = Earth (1.0)	G = Government (1.0)
	G2 = Geometry (0.4)	P = Physics (1.0)	
	DA = Data Analysis (0.4)		
TOTAL: 3.0	TOTAL: 2.0	TOTAL: 4.0*	TOTAL: 3.0

*Any two for 2.0

Module Design Requirements:

1. Each module would be representative of content learning goals clustered together in such a way as to be instructionally sound. An example of this might be that A1, Algebra, would contain those high school learning goals that are typically found in a first semester of Algebra 1 while A2 might contain those learning goals typically found in a second semester of Algebra 1.
2. Each module could be represented by an assessment instrument that contains not only the content goals but also the Skills for Success processes. These include, to name a few: multiple formats, writing, communication, reasoning, and technology. Each assessment instrument would be designed to measure overall performance within a content area and would be representative of sufficient rigor intended for Maryland graduates.
3. Modules could be designed to be accompanied by local assessment instruments that cover those areas of a local course not found on the State instrument. Examples of this might be the addition of content skill questions which lead up to those questions asked by the State or extended content areas beyond that asked by the State.

* Sample for definition purposes only; not endorsed by the Task Force as a recommendation.

Module Implementation:

1. Each local school district would be responsible for administering each content module at the end of a course within their own course offerings, within State guidelines.
2. Each module, administered at the end of a designated course, could be counted along with the local assessment instrument as a portion of the final grade.
3. Prior to graduation, students who wish to obtain a Maryland diploma must have taken each content module within the four content areas with their success being reported to the local school district, individual school, and parents.
4. Students who do not meet the State standard within a content module must be provided with alternative plans by the LEA to obtain this content. This plan must be contained within the student's permanent record.

Sample Implementation Models:

School District A				
	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
English	I (1.0)	II (1.0)	III (1.0)	
Mathematics	A1 and A2 (0.8)	G1 and G2 (0.8)	DA (0.4)	
Science	B (1.0)	C (1.0)		
Social Studies	W (1.0)	A (1.0)	G (1.0)	

School District B				
	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
English	I (1.0)	II (1.0)	III (1.0)	
Mathematics	A1 and G1 (0.8)	A2 and G2 (0.8)	DA (0.4)	
Science	C (1.0)	P (1.0)		
Social Studies	A (1.0)	G (1.0)	W (1.0)	