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**Regents' Value-Added Teacher Preparation Assessment Model Breaks New Ground in Education Accountability**

Is it possible to measure the relative effectiveness of university teacher training programs in preparing their graduates to help students learn? According to the results of a groundbreaking study presented today to the Louisiana Board of Regents, the answer to that question is a resounding yes. The initial results of the Regents-sponsored Value-Added Teacher Preparation Assessment Model, in development for four years, not only demonstrate that such an evaluation is possible, but that, contrary to prior research findings, some programs in Louisiana are producing new teachers who are as effective in their first and second years in the classroom as veteran teachers. The ability to quantify the impact of the instruction teachers receive in their college teacher preparation programs has enormous implications for improving education program quality and student learning across the nation.

"The most important news today is that three years of data and analysis, validated and revalidated by nationally-recognized experts in this field, show beyond a doubt that a meaningful assessment of program effectiveness in preparing teachers for the classroom is possible," said Louisiana Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. "And as we continue to gather more data each year, a clearer picture will emerge regarding what makes a given program more effective than a similar program at another university."

"Louisiana is the first in the nation to step up and do this," said Kati Haycock, of Education Trust. "Now what is important is what the institutions do over time to improve the achievement of students."

Dr. George Noell, professor of psychology at LSU and principal investigator in the ongoing study, presented the study's latest and most provocative results yet at today's regular monthly meeting of the Board of Regents. Noell's Value-Added Teacher Preparation Assessment Model predicts the academic achievement of students in grades 4-9 from the end of one year to the end of the next academic year, compares that achievement to the students' actual standardized test performance the next year, and yields *teacher preparation effect estimates* for universities, which reflect the impact of new teachers on the achievement of the children in their classes, one critical factor in student learning.

In previous years Noell has reported promising preliminary study results to the Board, but this is the first year that there have been sufficient data to fully implement the model and determine the reliability of the results. Noell reported that three redesigned alternate certification

programs produced enough new teachers who taught grades 4-9 mathematics, science, and social studies during 2004-05 and 2005-06 to be included in the study as post-redesign programs. The results for the new redesigned programs were very promising.

All other undergraduate and alternate certification programs were primarily or exclusively composed of graduates of old programs that stopped admitting new teachers on July 1, 2003, and are now being phased out. The results for these programs will be used as a baseline against which to compare future redesigned program results.

"It is exciting to see collaborative work between the Louisiana Department of Education, Board of Regents, and a research team at LSU produce the first statewide assessment of teacher preparation based on the achievement of students taught by new teachers," Noell said. "I hope that this information will ultimately contribute to strengthening teacher preparation in Louisiana so that students have increasingly effective teachers."

"Research shows that the best indicator for child's success in the classroom is a good teacher, and I can't overemphasize how important it is that we have the best possible preparation programs in our universities," said State Superintendent of Education Paul G. Pastorek. "This study is a valuable tool as we work together with universities across the state to create a new generation of teachers that will help us reach our goal of creating a world-class educational system in Louisiana."

"A significant finding from this research is that teacher preparation does matter," said Jeanne Burns, Board of Regents Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs for Teacher Education. "I'm looking forward to working with our State Research Team as we collect additional data to identify factors that are evident within those teacher education programs that prepare new teachers whose students surpass predicted achievement. These findings will help all of our programs prepare highly effective new teachers for our state."

A student's ability to achieve in the classroom is influenced by many factors: her/his home life, the school principal, the child's health, the community in which the child lives, and many others. Teacher effectiveness can partially compensate for some of these factors.

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**Note to editors: A detailed narrative description of the study is attached.**

Narrative Description of 2006-07 Value Added Study (10.24.07).pdf