

## **Proposed Models for Wisconsin's Education Accountability System**

### **What is Value-Added?**

Value-added is a statistical model that measures the contributions of schools and classrooms on student performance, over time, by taking into account current and past student performance and student characteristics. Value-added results are expressed both in terms of attainment (what are student results this year?) *and* growth (how much gain did students demonstrate from the previous year?). Value-added data is currently taken from WKCE scale scores in reading and math. Future data will be drawn from the Smarter Balanced (summative) Assessments.

### **What are Smarter Balanced Assessments?**

Balanced assessment is a term used to define a program that mixes both formative (ongoing, periodic assessments) and summative assessments (large scale, end of term assessments). The WKCE is a summative assessment that is based on the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. The Smarter Balanced Assessments will be based on the Common Core Standards and consist mainly of computer adaptive assessments given at various points throughout the year rather than once per year. The summative version of the Smarter Balanced Assessments will commence in spring of 2014-15. SMI and SRI are examples of computer adaptive formative assessments.

It should be noted that performance on the WKCE (for the time that it remains) and the forthcoming Balanced Assessments will be measured against a higher standard. This means that cut scores for what's proficient or advanced performance will be raised. Naturally, this will result in fewer students who occupy these upper ranges at least in the short term.

### **Why is Value-Added being developed and emphasized?**

Wisconsin's current accountability system does not measure longitudinal cohort growth, only status or attainment at a point in time. This is a common criticism of No Child Left Behind and represents a major reason why value-added measures have been added to the state's NCLB waiver. Another benefit of value-added is the application of results to discussions about what's working in classrooms and schools across a district.

### **Explain "student characteristics" as factors of Value-Added**

In order to identify the contributions of schools and classrooms on student growth, external factors such as ELL status, socio-economic status, race, and ethnicity are statistically controlled in order to be equitable to educators serving diverse populations of students. These are factors that schools do not control so that factors that schools *do* control can be studied. Greater validity occurs when adjusting for the impact of these factors if the sample size of students taking a test is significant enough to create predictive reliability as to their impact. The WKCE offers such a sample size of students with these external factors because several thousand students take the test under relatively controlled environments.

### **What factors does a school or classroom teacher potentially control?**

Curriculum, instructional strategies, school culture, classroom management techniques, use of instructional time, use of formative assessments, staffing, professional development, etc.

### **How will Value-Added be used?**

Using value-added measures will follow a philosophy already established with the use of current growth data from our benchmarking in math and reading. Therefore, we will continue to be interested in applying our results to discussions about what's working in our district and how we might replicate success throughout our classrooms and buildings. Having mentioned this, it must be noted that value-added measures are proposed to be part of Wisconsin's new Educator Effectiveness plan, but would amount to less than a quarter of a school's and teacher's job-performance rating. The rest would be determined mostly by classroom observations based on the *Danielson Framework for Professional Practice* upon which WUSD's current evaluation system is based.

Again, these changes represent proposals at this time. New WKCE proficiency ranges and value-added measures will be reported to districts this spring along with the usual AYP reports and will be reported publicly by 2012-13 according to DPI's Office of Educational Accountability.

