

EDUCATION DAILY®

The education community's independent daily news service

TEACHER QUALITY

Stakes high in value-added debate

States, districts must determine appropriate use of data, experts say

By Stephen Sawchuk

Value-added methods for analyzing student achievement are gaining traction in states and districts eager for tools to help identify promising practices, effective school interventions and high-quality teaching.

But even as national policymakers focus more attention on teacher quality reforms, value-added data generally are not used to inform individual decisions about teacher tenure, pay or evaluation.

Leading value-added researchers and key policymakers recently met at The Urban Institute in Washington, D.C., to discuss the use of value-added data in these high-stakes contexts but came to few conclusions about whether — or how — the data should be incorporated.

Ultimately, the experts said, it is state and local officials who must carefully determine how to use value-added data in a way that is reliable, appropriate and improves teaching and learning.

With value-added data, “you will get more of what you measure — so you’d better measure what you want,” said Anthony Bryk, the president-elect of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Conflict and consensus

At their core, value-added measures amount to a specialized way of analyzing student achievement data. State and district data systems track an individual student’s growth on tests over time, and value-added measures can be used to determine which grades, school buildings or subjects saw greater-than-average student achievement growth.

A number of states, such as Tennessee, Pennsylvania and Ohio, are in different stages of implementing value-added systems statewide.

(See **DATA** on page 4)

Today's Highlights

Vol. 41, No. 106 • Tuesday, June 3, 2008

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION
School reform may merge CTE, traditional academics **Page 2**

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
Dual enrollment provides path to college for at-risk students **Page 3**

Daily Briefing **Pages 4-5**

★ SUPERINTENDENTS

An ongoing series to examine high-profile district CEOs, or Superstars, and the challenges superintendents face.

Notter: No 'silver bullet' for sustaining reform

Key is training personnel, longtime schools administrator says

By Frank Wolfe

James Notter is a superstar anomaly — a superintendent who has spent most of his career learning the ins and outs of the system he is reforming.

(See **NOTTER** on page 6)

***Coming Thursday:** Not all superstar superintendents have short tenures. In fact, some “home-grown” superstars worked their way up through the system and have become steadying forces in the communities. They resisted the lure of the next challenge and have developed an intimate knowledge of their home districts.*

Prefer to get Ed Daily® by e-mail?
Just call LRP customer service
at (800) 341-7874

School reform may merge CTE, traditional academics

By Erin Uy

High demand for college- and career-ready high school graduates has prompted some court-ing between career and technical education pro-grams and mainstream academic programs.

States have shown signs of a potential mar-riage between the two education strategies — pro-grams that have traditionally operated in silos apart from traditional curricula — as policymakers are demonstrating greater interest in CTE. With CTE programs aiming to reach higher academic standards mandated by the 2006 Perkins Act, poli-cymakers are seemingly considering CTE as a key ingredient for high school reform strategies.

“As the high school reform movement moves towards providing more relevancy in instruction, it can learn a lot from career and technical edu-cation,” said Alan Richard, a Southern Regional Education Board spokesman.

“In a way, it’s a merging of the two.”

Groups such as SREB and the Council of Chief State School Officers are encouraging policymakers to bring CTE to the table, Richard said. A recent SREB report, *Crafting a New Vision for High School: How States Can Join Academic and Technical Studies to Promote More Powerful Learning*, highlights the potential that CTE and core academic-infused programs may provide.

Higher standards

An academic-infused approach will likely grow more popular as CTE continues to reshape its reputation from being a dumping ground for low-achieving youth to an engaging format that serves all students. New standards under the reautho-rized Perkins Act have encouraged a makeover of CTE programs, which are now accountable for student achievement in line with NCLB.

States such as Delaware have made moves to ensure that CTE programs are academically and technically rigorous, according to the SREB report. By this academic school year, the state has aimed to align all of its CTE courses to academic standards in four core subjects. The state requires all high schools to demonstrate that their CTE curricula are aligned with state academic content standards.

Also, Ohio appointed workforce and academic reform teams to create career-focused, high-rigor programs in struggling high schools. CTE and aca-demic teachers collaborate to align their curricula and meet college- and career-readiness standards.

“What we are pushing for is not your fa-ther’s vocational courses,” Richards said. “To-day’s best career and technical classes are very challenging academically.”

Bridging the gap

Those outstanding CTE classes share the com-mon and challenging strategy of drawing from the expertise of CTE and core academic instructors. The SREB report emphasizes the need to ensure that CTE teachers meet high standards — holding a bach-elor’s degree or an industry-recognized certificate. CTE programs across the nation have been criticized for having low standards for their instructors.

However, Alisha Hyslop, assistant director of public policy for the Association of Career and Tech-nical Education, said teachers of academic courses should also meet a new set of standards. Some CTE teachers are taxed with being qualified to teach high-rigor academic courses, she noted, but academic teachers should also share the responsibility of learn-ing how to integrate contextual teaching, she said.

“There has to be a fluid back-and-forth ap-proach so that teachers can provide for each other across the curriculum,” Hyslop said.

Model programs such as Project Lead The Way, a hands-on program that includes academic rigor, have encouraged that type of integration, Hyslop noted. Teachers of the program undergo intense training in academics and pedagogical practices. PLTW is neither a CTE nor traditional education program, labeling itself as one that “adds rigor to traditional technical programs and relevance to traditional academics.”

For CTE advocates, merged programs are an opportunity for CTE to highlight its often over-looked traits.

“I think this is evidence of all the work that edu-cators across the country have been doing to show that CTE programs are really on the cutting edge of helping students achieve their goals,” Hyslop said.



This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is provided with the understanding that the publisher and editor are not engaged in rendering legal or professional counsel. If legal or professional advice is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

Published every business day by LRP Publications, Inc. (ISSN: 0013-1261), 360 Hiatt Drive, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418, Editorial: (703) 516-7002, extension 21; Customer Service: (800) 341-7874; New Subscriptions: (800) 341-7874. Publisher: Kenneth F. Kahn, Esq.; V.P., Editorial: Claude J. Werder; Corporate Executive Editor: Candace Golanski Gallo; Executive Editor: Debi Pelletier; News Editor: Charlie Hendrix; Editorial Staff: Michael Brodie, Pamela Moore, Wangui Njuguna, Joseph L. Pfrommer, Esq., Stephen Sawchuk, Mark W. Sherman, Sarah D. Sparks, Jeanne Sweeney, Erin Uy, Frank Wolfe; Copy Editor: Jennifer Pfaff. Annual subscription rate: \$1,200. Single issues: \$6. Copyright

2008 by LRP Publications, Inc. Federal law restricts reproduction of material in this newsletter without written permission. Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use, or the internal or personal use of specific clients, is granted by LRP Publications, for libraries or other users registered with the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) for a \$7.50-per-document fee and a \$4.25-per-page fee to be paid directly to the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923. Fee Code: 0013-1261/08/\$7.50 + \$4.25. Requests for permission to reproduce content should be directed to LRP customer service at (800) 341-7874, fax (561) 622-2423, e-mail custserve@lrp.com. For editorial suggestions, e-mail dpelletier@lrp.com. www.educationdaily.net.

State dual enrollment programs

States using dual enrollment to boost college numbers have structured their programs in a number of ways.

- Texas moved from a voluntary dual enrollment option to guarantee that all qualifying high school students have the opportunity to earn 12 free college credits. Texas provides \$275 per student for this and other college-readiness activities.
- North Carolina's Innovation Education Initiatives Act created 75 Learn and Earn early college high schools in partnership with the state's system of community colleges. Students in 42 schools can earn free associate's degrees along with high school diplomas.
- Pennsylvania's dual enrollment program includes funding for Early College High School, Middle College High School, and Gateway to College programs. Each targets specific at-risk populations.
- Maine has opened its "early studies" options to students who are struggling academically and socially in

high school or who might face significant financial barriers to college.

- Rhode Island's statewide dual enrollment plan targets low-income students and includes a pilot "pathway," or sequence of preselected courses. Seniors take "College 101" in the fall and four courses on a neighboring college campus in the spring.
- Georgia and Utah use financial aid to reward students for earning college credits in high school. In Georgia, state scholarships cover college course costs for as many as 30 credits; in Utah, students earning associate degrees in high school pay 25 percent of upper-division tuition for completing a bachelor's degree at a Utah public college.
- In Florida, a state with a long-established program, dual enrollment is part of a state strategy. College readiness includes reducing the number of students taking developmental courses after having completed high school.

Dual enrollment provides path to college for at-risk students

By James Michael Brodie

A number of states are turning to dual enrollment programs to raise high school graduation rates and build links between secondary schools and college, according to a new study from Jobs for the Future.

The report, *On Ramp to College: A State Policymaker's Guide to Dual Enrollment*, claimed that dual enrollment policies can create a path to postsecondary education for students otherwise unlikely to attend college. JFF president and CEO Marlene B. Seltzer said dual enrollment is no longer just for gifted and talented high school students hoping to be better prepared for college.

Traditionally, states enacted dual enrollment policies to give advanced students a head start on college-level work and to keep them from being bored in their senior year. But as dual enrollment programs have become more common and a wider variety of students participate, the situation has changed.

"Statewide dual enrollment programs have given advanced students an advantage," Seltzer said. "That situation is changing, and it is not an isolated phenomenon."

Nationwide, 13 percent of high school juniors and seniors participate in dual enrollment classes. In some states, that figure is as high as 30 percent. But such programs still tend to favor suburban, white students.

"Minority student participation is at a low rate, and in some states not at all," said JFF Vice President Nancy Hoffman. "We began to see this as an equity issue."

Dual enrollment expands

Several states are creating or expanding dual enrollment plans: Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Ken-

tucky, Maine, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas and Utah.

The City University of New York's College Now program enrolls at-risk students in pre-college courses to help them develop skills and habits necessary for college success. The program has enrolled more than 180,000 New York City high school students

"We have pretty strong evidence that the program is doing what we hoped it would do," said CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein. "The gap between high school and college is the experience of the College Now student. These students are highly motivated. These are students who volunteer, and by their selection of this program, they show they are highly motivated."

Goldstein admitted that there has been some pushback from some math teachers who argue that the courses do not offer college-level rigor. But he added, "Those are a limited number of voices and are not a chorus of outcry."

The report encourages state officials to use these policies to create a continuous K-16 system. The rationale for the policies, the authors argued, is based on the data. Only 40 percent of all ninth-graders nationwide enroll in college four years later, according to the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. About 65 percent of community college students return for a second year, while 29 percent earn a degree within three years. Just more than half of all students earned a four-year degree within six years.

"Dual enrollment is emerging as one of the most promising and cost-effective strategies we have for improving college-readiness, an assessment that rigorous research is beginning to confirm," Seltzer said.

Capitol Hill Watch

Kennedy surgery successful; Mikulski may step in

Doctors at Duke University Medical Center reported that the brain surgery Monday on Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., was successful, but a possibly long chemotherapy and radiation regime remain ahead — a treatment plan that could mean the “lion of the Senate” may be away from Capitol Hill for several months.

“I look forward to returning to the United States Senate and to doing everything I can to help elect [Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill.] as our next president,” Kennedy said Monday.

With Kennedy’s absence possibly lasting several months, Sen. Barbara Mikulski, D-Md., may step in to play a leading role in House-Senate talks on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act and in any discussions about reauthorizing NCLB. Mikulski is the third top Democrat on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.

Sens. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., and Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, are higher ranked, but their legislative plates look full, as Dodd chairs the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee and Harkin chairs the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee’s Labor-HHS-Education panel.

Education Department

ED proposes new Impact Aid regulations

The Education Department has proposed new regulations regarding Section 8002 of Impact Aid to aid local tax officials in estimating the value of federal property within school districts and “to promote consistency and reliability of the estimated values (of federal property) across school districts and across states,” ED said Monday.

Enacted in the original Impact Aid legislation in 1950, Section 8002 reimburses school districts for the loss of taxable land to the federal government. The payment is in lieu of taxes that would normally be paid by the private land owner.

The new regulations could allow more districts to qualify for Impact Aid, as the new rules would permit eligibility to be based on alternatives to the original tax records now required. The proposed regulations would also require local officials to obtain a minimum sample size of 10 adjacent properties to the federal land, rather than using a lesser number.

“We do not have any estimates of how the proposed regulations would affect funding to school districts,” ED said. “We expect that most applicants will not experience significant changes in payments following the implementation of the regulations.”

TEACHER QUALITY

DATA (continued from page 1)

But value-added as a concept becomes fraught when made part of school accountability or when student gains are tied to a specific teacher.

In part, that is because the research base around the system is still developing. Researchers continue to refine the methodologies to account for factors such as the nonrandom assignment of teachers to schools, differences in schools and student backgrounds, and, in high schools, the assignment of students to multiple teachers.

In some cases, such issues can cause estimates of a teacher’s impact on student achievement to change dramatically from year to year.

Alienation or identification?

As value-added methodologies grow more complex, they also risk alienating teachers by compromising transparency, comprehensiveness and accuracy, said Leo Casey, vice president of Academic High Schools for the New York City-based United Federation of Teachers, which opposes the high-stakes use of value-added systems.

“You must stand up and have the professional integrity to say that this is educational malpractice, that this does not meet the elementary standards of accountability,” Casey implored the researchers.

In New York, UFT pressure caused the New York State Legislature to prohibit the state from using value-added data as part of teacher tenure decisions.

The prohibition will remain in place for two years while a commission weighs recommendations for the appropriate use of value-added, Casey said.

Arguing the opposite perspective, Ross Wiener, a principal partner at The Education Trust, said value-added has great potential for helping identify which teachers are most in need of professional development. It could also be used alongside qualitative measures for teacher tenure and evaluation decisions, he suggested.

Most teacher tenure and pay decisions are tied to seniority and the provisions of advanced degrees rather than student achievement, he noted.

“We’re probably spending as much to help teachers get master’s degrees as we spend targeted to help low-income students improve,” Wiener said. “That is malpractice.”

Researchers are caught between wanting more wide-scale experimentation with value-added while appreciating that value-added measures do not easily translate into workable policy.

Studies have shown, for instance, that value-added systems can identify the least-effective teachers in a district — perhaps the bottom 10 percent of the teaching pool.

But, as Duke University professor and researcher Helen Ladd pointed out, poor-performing teachers are not evenly distributed within a district, and they tend to be clumped in high-poverty schools — thus rendering a sweeping policy solution to disbar that 10 percent from teaching unfeasible.

OSERS to create new center on assistive technology

OSERS is taking applications from groups interested in creating a new Family Center on Technology and Disability.

The center will monitor the latest developments in assistive technology and will succeed the current FCTD, based at the Academy for Educational Development in Washington, D.C.

Like the current center, the new FCTD will operate a searchable database of information about assistive technology devices and services. Special emphasis will be placed on finding ways to involve parents in the use of assistive technology; without such involvement, OSERS says, "technology-supported interventions for children with disabilities may lead to disuse or misuse of promising technologies."

The center will receive \$600,000 throughout five years; no matching funds are required. Eligible groups include SEAs and LEAs, charter schools with LEA status, institutions of higher education, other public agencies, private nonprofits, for-profit groups and tribal organizations.

For more information, contact Ann McCann, (202) 245-7434, or consult the June 2 issue of *Federal Register*. The deadline to apply is July 2.

Across the Nation

Pennsylvania

City, school, business leaders want \$2.6B for education

Top city, school and business leaders from across the state are calling on the Pennsylvania General Assembly to revise the state's school funding formula to invest at least \$2.6 billion during the next six years to help eliminate a school funding shortfall identified in the legislature's Statewide Costing-Out Study.

Among the officials scheduled to speak this week about the need for such a formula revision are Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, Philadelphia School District CEO Arlene Ackerman, and Citizens Bank President and CEO Dan Fitzpatrick.

Released last December, the Statewide Costing-Out Study found that despite dramatic increases in public education under the administration of Democratic Gov. Ed Rendell, the state is still \$4.6 billion short in adequately funding education — or about 27 percent higher than current spending.

The study said the annual investment per student should be \$12,057, while the state spent an average of \$9,512 in 2005-06. The report has spurred calls for a new state funding formula to remedy the disparities between wealthy and poor school districts.

The study can be found at www.pde.state.pa.us/stateboard_ed/lib/stateboard_ed/PA_Costing_Out_Study_rev_12-07.pdf.

Texas

State antes \$5.2M for early college high schools

The Texas Education Agency will open eight early college high schools in August, bringing the state's number of such programs to 29, TEA announced.

TEA will spend about \$5.2 million for five to 10 new schools and expansion of 10-15 existing schools for middle school students. The program allows students to earn a high school diploma and two years of college credits.

The target population includes first-generation college-goers, low-income students, students of color and English-language learners. According to a 2004 study by The Johns Hopkins University, middle-class and wealthy students are almost five times more likely to earn a two- or four-year college degree than low-income students. And nearly half of the nation's black students and roughly 40 percent of Latino students in high school do not finish.

The Texas program is part of the Early College High School Initiative, a public-private partnership. Since 2002, the partnership has created almost 160 schools in 24 states and the District of Columbia.

Only North Carolina, with 42 ECHSs, has more schools than Texas.

Newsmakers

Alliance for School Choice honors advocate of the year

Iowa Alliance for Choice in Education cofounder Sara Eide has been recognized as the 2007 Advocate of the Year by the Alliance for School Choice, a nonprofit that promotes scholarship tax credit programs and parental choice in education.

The organization is honoring Eide for leading public outreach efforts that the group credits for the passage and expansion of Iowa's Individual School Tuition Tax Credit Program. The program allows taxpayers to receive a personal income tax credit of 65 percent for donations to school tuition organizations, which use the money to provide grants for students to attend the school of their parents' choice.

Iowa's Democratic governor and the Democratic Legislature expanded the program by 50 percent. The tax credit program has provided scholarships for 7,527 low-income students, according to ASC.

"Sara Eide has devoted her career to helping those less fortunate gain access to educational options that are tailored to meet the needs of several thousand individual students," said Robert Teegarden, director of the alliance.

Upcoming events

ED's Quality Committee meeting changed

The Education Department's National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity has shortened its scheduled June meeting.

NACIQI will reschedule its planned June 10 accreditation review of the American Bar Association, Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar.

What: NACIQI meeting

When: June 9, from 9:15 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Where: The Liaison Capitol Hill, 415 New Jersey Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C., 20001

For more information, contact Melissa Lewis, NACIQI executive director at (202) 219-7009 or Melissa.Lewis@ed.gov.

NOTTER (continued from page 1)

Notter had worked for just more than 20 years in Broward County (Fla.) Public Schools — the nation's sixth largest school system — before the school board named him the district's 18th CEO on Aug. 7.

Notter has served 33 years in public education, including 23 years in administrative roles and 10 years as a teacher in western New York. He joined BCPS in 1986 and served in a variety of capacities before being named the North Central Area superintendent in 1999. He became deputy superintendent in 2001, adding the chief of staff title in 2003.

Notter started as an elementary and secondary school teacher for the Orleans/Niagara Board of Cooperative Education Services in Sanborn, N.Y., from 1972 to 1982. He earned a bachelor's degree in education from the University at Buffalo and master's in administration from Niagara University in Niagara Falls, N.Y. Notter oversees 258,000 students and 283 schools in his district.

Q: What are some keys to reforming a school system?

JN: I sit with 37,000 employees, 16,000 of whom are teachers. I have 30,000 English-language learners and 37,000 exceptional student education students. We focus on technology so we can support 24/7 learning. Many schools have multiple opportunities in after-school and Saturday camps. We've implemented computers to close the digital divide for some of our families who can't afford computers. We're approaching 10,000 families in Title I schools that we've helped. We've run that program for the last few years. It engages the parents and the students. We furnish a year on the Internet through our business partners, Dell and Apple Computer Inc.

Q: Why do 17 percent of districts lack a permanent CEO?

JN: This is due to the extreme challenges of the job. You don't control the raw material coming in. You need a close connection with your board and your people. I'm at bus depots sometimes at 4:30 a.m., talking to bus drivers or going to talk to cafeteria workers.

Q: What about low pay? Is that a key factor in why more people don't choose to be superintendents?

JN: I've never been a passionate believer in that. It's a calling. It's not about hopping districts for more money. There may be superintendents who do that across this country, but for superintendents who are truly driven to make this generation better, it's a matter of paying an equitable wage determined by the school district you're in.

Q: What are the keys to making your turnaround reforms succeed?

JN: You have to inspect what you expect, and it has to be consistent. You have to share what you learn with the board and the teachers union. It's not a punishment model; it's a team-building model. You must have your corporate board on board. We bring them into the process with the data points and say, "Here's what we're going to do to go from Q3 to Q4."

Q: How do you ensure or increase the chances that your reforms are sustained after you leave office?

JN: I've never been a believer in a "silver bullet" program. The reality is you must institutionalize processes that are not dependent on the leader. I will have helped to train a board in expecting Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 reports on academic achievement, the budget and personnel, so that becomes a habit or institutionalized. Make sure you have your business community, your parental community and your board behind you.

Q: How do you scale up reforms to reach all the children in need?

JN: The real key is we kept a laser-like focus on our human resources development and our intellectual capital, training our teachers. We have used a "7-8-9" strategy. We have seven correlates of effective schools, an eight-step instructional process, and nine high-yield strategies.

Q: How different is running a school district from running a business or turning around a company?

JN: I think there's some alignment, but I think there are some significant differences. When I have 75 kids that all of a sudden show up at my door because of a revolution in Haiti, I can't turn them around and say, "Look, the inn is full." Another difference is the way we're funded. Every year, you fight with the legislature about funding dollars. You can't take that money and bank it, unlike a private sector business when there's a downturn.

Q: What was your first order of business when you took over?

JN: We were kind of at a stall. We really pulled together as Team Broward. We needed to get that inertia moving by getting people focused on teaching the Whole Child and learning through such means as Team Broward, 7-8-9, understanding diversity. It's no longer good enough to be average. You must accelerate.

Q: Do you plan on staying in the district long term — for the next five years or longer?

JN: I've been here for 21 years. I'll retire from here.