

THE STATE OF FLORIDA

Moderator: Michael Grego
August 30, 2011
10:00 a.m. ET

Operator: Good morning. My name is (Salima) and I will be your conference operator today. At this time, I would like to welcome everyone to the Value-Added Model Technical Assistance Follow Up conference call.

All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise. After the speakers' remarks, there will be a question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question during this time, simply press star then the number one on your telephone keypad. If you would like to withdraw your question, press the pound key. Thank you.

It is my pleasure to turn today's conference call to over to Chancellor Grego.

Please go ahead.

Michael Grego: Thank you. Thank you, (Salima) and good morning to all. And welcome and thank you for attending this conference call. I want to, first of all, thank the entire state and the districts for in the participating the August 1 and 2 technical assistance workshops over in Orlando.

I read firstly the evaluations of both those days and they're exceedingly positive and I do want to thank AIR and the districts – the districts for participation and also Juan and Kathy and the staff here for really taking a huge tasking and making it what I then thought was pretty (personable). And the content there was very complex.

So as we continue on, we thought it would be a great idea to follow-up that meeting with some periodic conference call depending on how this one goes and actually the need for these types of calls. We anticipate continuing these types of process really based on your needs and serving the district.

You know, based on the August 1 and 2, we were asked to produce a state average growth by grade and subject. I believe we provided that to each of the school districts. And thank you for that request. And hopefully that would be helpful. And I know Juan has some updated information on the aggregated value-added scores that was requested through AIR today.

So today's conference call, we just want to really just listen and give you an update on things and also continue this process so that we to get to the finish line. Well, there's really no finish line here. We're going to continue to improve upon this model and continue to recognize that the system we're working on certainly is an improvement on what we've been dealing with up to this point.

So, I believe I'm turning this over now to Kathy Hebda to start us off.

Kathy Hebda: Thanks chancellor. Just a quick overview of the three things we want to cover today, we know that you that sent us some questions. We've had lots of phone conversations and email back and forth, Juan and I both have and others of our staff and that's been great.

So because, as a result of that, there are a couple of frequently asked questions we wanted to take right off the top. Those will be brief and then we will have the majority of the time for your questions. We want to cover what, a few things regarding September 30th deadline, the recap of that.

Juan is going to talk about the school component and what's in the data files and review a couple of things regarding the aggregation options that you learned August 1st and 2nd and things that you received questions on since that time. And then we'll take your questions.

My part is the first part which is regarding September 30th. Just to remind everyone, by September 30th, we need two things, we need a letter signed by

the superintendent. It verifies that you are going to implement your plan for (11-12) just as it's been approved including verification of any collective bargaining or school board approval that is needed to implement for (11-12), that varies by district and so you send us whatever is necessary to show that you can do that.

September 30th is the last day of the first quarter of year two of race to top and that's where the deadline came from. We have to be able to verify to the federal government that everybody is still in and implementing. The second thing in addition to that letter is just the final version of what you sent us back on June 1st. Then maybe you've made changes since then, you verified those things via email with us, (John Moore), (Aileen), Juan, myself, others, questions back and forth.

And so we just need the final version of all those things put into one file just as you submitted June 1st. The one thing that will be new on that documentation that you submitted September 30th that wasn't done on June 1st is how you're actually using the state value-added calculation and the student growth rating criteria for all your teachers, meaning as Juan is going to discuss a little bit later, the methods of classification and aggregation that you're going to use and any performance scale or cut points that were set for various groups of teachers. Juan will discuss those in just a minute.

Lastly, some of you needed to tell us still how you're combining your student growth component with instructional practice to get a summative rating. Some of you did include that in June 1st, others of you have modified that since June 1st. And so your final version that you'll send us September 30th would tell us how you're going to do that and arrive at a summative rating.

Are there any questions, operator, just about the September 30th documentation before I turn it over to Juan.

Operator: To ask a question please press star, one. Your first question comes from (Paul Sales) (inaudible) County school.

(Paul Sales): Yes. This is – this is (Paul Sales). Do I understand that the cut point have to be set by September 30th? I thought we just had to say that we were going to be setting the cut points.

Kathy Hebda: Well, (Paul), thanks for your question. It is known that you are setting the cut points. So we know that and you need to, that's what you've been working on since August 1st and 2nd to determine what your cut points are using one of the, for example, one of the options that you learned August 1st to 2nd to actually determine what performance might look like and set a rubric or a classification scale for that side of the evaluation system.

And Juan will go into some of that in few minutes with some of the frequently asked questions. But, yes, that's your decision to make this year so we need to have that from you.

(Paul Sales): So, theoretically, we could have different cut points for different groups of teachers.

Kathy Hebda: Well yes, because in some cases you'll have different assessments for different groups of teachers (inaudible) You'll have to establish cut points (inaudible).

(Paul Sales): Let's say we're using Algebra 1 (EOC) for Algebra 1. We can't set the cut points now because don't know the passing score there yet. The standards haven't been set.

Male: (Paul), that's correct and one if I can just reiterate (Kathy's) point and (inaudible) this as well. The information that's turned in September 30th, districts will have the ability to revisit some of those decisions when new information comes on board even to be applied for the (11-12) school year.

So don't – September 30th is not, as the chancellor mentioned, is not the end of the road. It's just a key milestone that we want to get to ensure the districts are moving in the right direction to implement this beginning (11-12). But when – you're exactly right in terms of Algebra 1 end of course or perhaps you may be developing some district or local assessments so you might not have all that information in place for September 30th.

Those plans can be – can be amended to, fully effective in the (11-12) school year.

Male: So, the same thing is going to happen with these other end of courses and (inaudible) lines it truly is (inaudible) Whether it be biology or anything else. Other questions?

Operator: Your next questions comes from Mark Howard of Palm Beach.

Mark Howard: We are not an RTP school district. Does the time line apply to us?

Kathy Hebda: Right. Thanks, Mark. You did send us your documentation of the non-RTTT school district that you were – that included the student growth and also the four levels that were required. In fact, you also sent us more than that. Most districts who are non-RTTT also sent us instructional practice, too.

You do need to provide that information to us so that we can provide it to the legislature at some point. The reason for the September 30th date for Race to the Top districts is to ensure that by the end of the first quarter of this year two, they are able to continue to implement under the grant.

Mark Howard: Right. I understand that question for Race to the Top schools. Since we are not, my question is do we have to have the same materials to you by September 30?

Kathy Hebda: We haven't established a deadline for you all to do that specifically on student growth but we did say that by December 1st, you should have the other instructional practice piece submitted to us as fully revised. So I would say not later than December 1st that you would have to have that done.

Mark Howard: The whole enchilada?

Kathy Hebda: That's right, the whole enchilada. That's a good way to put it.

Mark Howard: Thank you.

Male: Thanks Mark.

Operator: There are no further questions.

Juan Copa: OK. We'll continue then. This is Juan Copa. I want to take a few moments to – this morning to go over one issue that – it's a challenging issue that we've been talking about a number of times, the whole issue of the school component.

We've received a number of questions from some districts just for clarification on the school component. I think it would be useful to go over that for the - for everyone at this point just so we're clear on how the school component is applied to a teacher's value-added score.

Using the data elements in your file and this was, of course, presented at – during the PowerPoint as well, the teacher's value-added score is the sum of the teacher effect and half of the school component - the teacher effect plus half of the school component.

But this is the part that I think gets lost many times and it's a really key part of the understanding. It's key to understand that the teacher effect is the teacher's performance relative to his or her school. Let me just repeat that, the teacher effect is her performance relative to his or her school.

The school component is the school's performance relative the state and the particular grade and subject area that the score was calculated. Of course, all these models are run by the school – by the subject level, reading and math and by the grade level. So, for example, if you have a teacher, with the teacher effect of six, the school component of two, her value-added score is six plus half of two or six plus one for a score of seven.

On the flip side, if the teacher has a teacher effect of six and her school component is negative two, the teacher's value-added score is six plus half of negative two which is negative one, so six minus one is five. With just that information that leaves the impression that a positive school component "helps the teacher's score" and a negative school component "hurts the teacher's score."

However, it's quite the opposite. Remember, the key part to understand is that the teacher effect is the teacher's performance relative to the school. It's her deviation from the school component. Thus, in the example I gave – the first example I gave, the teacher's students actually performed 8 points above said expectation.

Remember, the school component was two, the teacher's deviation from that was six so that can reference to the state expectation her students performed 8 points above expectation. In example two, the teachers performed – the teacher's students actually performed four points above state expectation.

Remember, the school component is negative two, her deviation from that is six, so thus in reference to state expectation, that teacher's students performed four points above expectations. So those two scores, eight and four would be the value-added scores if the teachers in the model – if the teachers – for the teachers if the model had fully attributed the school component to the teacher.

In other words, if the theoretical framework had been that after controlling for all the factors in the model all else is attributable to the teacher. However, the committee felt very strongly that the school itself exerts an independent influence on the student learning, that school impact is partially driven by the teachers but also partially driven by other factors at the school such as school leadership, the school environment, et cetera.

So basically, it's a question of attribution. The students' performance relative to the state is the observed outcome, but by parsing out the teacher effect and the school component, one is determining how much of the observed outcome is the teacher truly held responsible for.

So, therefore, in example one, her score, remember, is seven. Teacher effect of six, school component of two, so six plus half of two is seven. It is not eight which is the observed outcome; remember the observed outcome (inaudible) relative to the state. The performance of the student is driven by the teacher but is also impacted in part by the school.

The teacher is not fully held accountable for that. Likewise, in example two, her score is a five not a four which is the observed outcome. Again, the

performance of the students is driven by the teacher but also impacted in part by the negative school component. The teacher is not fully held accountable for that.

I think it's helpful, I would advise folks and I've advised folks when I go over this to refer back to the PowerPoint presentation from the June 7th meeting of the student growth implementation committee. It's available on our website. And I'll read you the website address right now for easy reference, www.slboe.org/committees/pdf/june7materials.pdf. That will take you straight to that PowerPoint. It provides a helpful example of the committee's deliberations that really has the impact of including all of that school component or not including any of that school component and ultimately where the committee landed is to include half of that school component.

So with that, that concludes the example of the school component.

We can go now into the different aggregation options and then open it up for the rest, for the duration of this call to just general questions that we've had. First the aggregation option...

Michael Grego: Can I interrupt you, sorry, this is (Mike Grego). I would request that if the districts have questions, I mean Juan does a great job but if you're like me, it's still somewhat confusing, so if there is some confusion out there and the best thing to do is if you still look at the website and it's still confusing is to call.

I can't emphasize that enough so let's talk about it and that's how I became a better student of this and was able to move forward with it. So create the phone call. You know, it's in our best interest as the state to have 67 different phone calls and let's continue to do that rather than increase confusion. So I encourage all of you at times to just have a key person in your district, it could be a conference call.

We've had some very successful conference calls with districts that in 15 or 20 minutes the investment is well worth it because everyone left there having a better understanding of what they got on it and that's our goal and has to be all of our goals.

It is not easy to – we want all, we want to keep everything simple but, you know, but there's some things that simple also doesn't get us to our goal, so we are keeping it simple as possible. We're also following the direct recommendations of this committee that did great work also as you saw on August 1st and 2nd.

So please do call, don't be shy and don't hesitate at all.

Male: You know, absolutely, chancellor and as the chancellor mentioned, we've have had a number of calls with districts across the state, and it is a challenging concept, it's absolutely a challenging concept, for those that were following the work of the committee you can see how that challenging concept is documented, so we understand the challenge and we're here to provide as much understanding and assistance as possible.

In terms of the aggregation options there were two basic aggregation options presented at, aggregation classification options presented at the August 1st and 2nd meetings, the first option which if you have your PowerPoint from that meeting, that discussions begins on slide 47.

That was the method that basically requires districts to standardize the scores, those value added scores on a common metric, the notion being of course for those familiar with our state assessment, growth at the different grade levels varies.

And so, a score, for example, a value added score, for example, of 10 in grade four may mean something completely different than a score of 10 in grade 10. So in order to compare all those teachers across those grade levels, it requires basically standardizing those scores, putting those scores on a common metric based upon some standard. And the data we provided on August 12 provides one option for how to standardize that and that is standardizing it based on the average amount of growth per grade level and subject.

(AIR) as we communicated on August 12 will be performing that calculation. Remember when we left off August 1st and 2nd we provided the tools

necessary to make that calculation, that was the formula necessary to actually calculate that locally but of course we can ease that burden, absolutely.

And we did hear feedback from our districts to do so and worked with (AIR) for them to provide that aggregated score for our teachers so you that you have for each teacher basically one score. Even though she may teach across multiple grade levels, across multiple years, one score that would combine everything and also one score that would combine her reading performance and one score that would combine her math performance, to provide districts that flexibility.

Now we had hoped to provide that information to the districts last week. We've run into some challenges driven in part by the events that occurred last week in the northeast, namely the earthquake, the rare earthquake that was experienced as well as Hurricane Irene, so those were added challenges to the delivery of the data, we've been assured by (AIR) that it will be delivered to the department by the close of the day so we would hope to have it out to districts by tomorrow at some time tomorrow. That is what we are shooting for at this point.

Now that aggregation option, providing everything on a common metric of course, one of the advantages of putting everything on a common metric is basically you can set one scale or one set of cut scores for all your teachers, that at least on the reading and math portion of (inaudible), that's one of the tradeoffs, or one of the advantages of the system.

The other aggregation and classification option that was given was basically to deal with the differences by grade level and subject by classifying those teachers independently in their grade level and subject. So for example if a teacher taught multiple subjects or multiple grade levels she can receive a classification for each of those grade groupings and subject groupings and then those classifications, for example, one to four scale could be put together in some sort of summative rating, basically a weighted average of all those classifications.

And I've seen examples for some districts that are moving in that direction. I think that on the face of it that seems to be a – although it does have the added complexity of the multiple scales, it does seem to be intuitively easy to understand simply, basically just classifying things independently and putting those classifications together into one scale.

The third approach that some districts are pursuing is to use - one of the pieces of data that was provided in the file that's not the value added score, but rather it's the percent of students that are meeting or exceeding their expectations.

This piece of data – some districts are deciding to go this path because it's intuitively easy to understand similar to at least in the metric sense that it's similar to the learning gain percentage that we're all accustomed to, with basically a percent of students that are meeting some sort of standard.

I will note though however that by going this route you are losing some of the information that the value added score provides, mainly the magnitude by which students are moving, so of course, the best theoretical example is you could have a teacher who has 100 percent of her students meeting or exceeding expectations but they are doing that by just barely meeting or exceeding expectations, so her value added score may be pretty low or close to zero.

On the flip side you could have a teacher where only 50 percent of her students are exceeding expectations but that 50 percent is doing it by a wide margin. So basically the point I'm trying to raise here is the score won't necessarily always correspond to the percentage but the percentage does provide some information, perhaps some can view it as a transition step to ease folks into understanding into this frame of thought.

One more point I'll raise in terms of classification before we get into the questions is of course the application of the standard error. Many folks, that information of course was presented on August 1st and 2nd and folks that have some questions about how to apply that as it relates to four different performance levels.

One approach that I believe was presented definitely on August 2nd, I'm not sure if it was presented on August 1st in the afternoon, was one approach is basically to set a cut point based on the nominal score or based on the value added score.

So basically to make your first determination, is the teacher effective or highly effective or is the teacher certainly needs improvement for unsatisfactory category. So you can look at the score itself to make that first initial cut. So basically the teacher is effective, or highly effective path, part, teachers who needs improvement, unsatisfactory part.

And then use the standard error to determine the extreme category because you want to have some degree and it makes sense to have some degree of statistical certainty in making those determinations at the highly effective group and the unsatisfactory group.

So one way of viewing it is to have that cut point to help you determine that this teacher is likely effective or highly effective and then if she still clears that cut point when you apply a standard error to it or half a standard error to it to or whatever level folks are comfortable with, then you have a better sense that this teacher is actually highly effective (inaudible) needs improvement, unsatisfactory.

So that is some thought – both that were presented August 1st and 2nd that we've feedback from districts in terms of things that they've been considering and at this point for the duration of the call, you have a little over a half hour remaining, we'd like to open it up to questions from districts and really for us to provide as much assistance and guidance as we can during this call, but also as the chancellor mentioned we'd definitely advise folks to whenever they have questions, whenever they have something that they'd like really to take some feedback on, things that they're thinking of we are here to assist, to serve as a sounding board, to really to provide whatever assistance we can to help folks get in good shape for that September 30th milestone event.

And what that we'll open it up to questions.

Operator: To ask a question please press star one. Your first question is from Mark Howard of (Palm Beach).

(Mark Baron): Yes, one, this is Mark Baron speaking. I've emailed some questions regarding more details about the mean and standard deviations and frequent distributions of the various metrics from that state level.

Would we be getting that?

Juan Copa: We can provide that absolutely and I apologize if that email has not been responded to and I will look back and see what I can do on that.

Mark Baron: I'd want more, you know, right now in the file it has a five percentile cut and all that stuff and we would like all the frequency statistics that we can get with particular issue of the frequency distribution of the entire ranges.

Juan Copa: For the state level data absolutely, because what you have, you have the ability to do that but it is only district level data, correct?

Mark Baron: Right. Thank you.

Michael Grego: Thank you, Mark.

Operator: Your next question comes from (Shelly Halstead) of (inaudible).

(Richard): I guess I won, this is (Richard) at (inaudible) County. My question is whether there are districts that are considering giving a separate rating per year and then aggregating them. And if we did that, I'm assuming we'd go through the standardization method just not across years. Does that make sense?

Michael Grego: Yes. A couple things, this again, this is sort of a hybrid between option two and option one actually.

Certainly option two and it's on its face would require folks to set different cut points for the different grade levels and subjects and possibly even across the different years absolutely.

But you could standardize each year independently so that you would only really have to set one scale for date of for the particular subject for the year. You wouldn't have to set a separate scale for each of the grades and then aggregate those across, you know, classify those independently and then aggregate those across. That would be definitely an acceptable way of doing it.

(Richard): And the only weighting we would need to do then would be, for example, if a teacher had two different grade levels in the same year.

Michael Grego: Correct and I would advise when you aggregate, of course, to not just do a simple average but to weight it by the number of students in each category, so for example if she's teaching fourth and fifth graders and if she has twice as many fifth-graders as fourth-graders, the fifth grade likely should be weighted more heavily than the fourth grade score.

(Richard): Right, that makes sense. I do have another question if I might. And I think I asked at the August 2nd workshop but just to clarify. The state has included any student associated with the teacher in survey two or survey three, correct?

Michael Grego: That's correct and that's in that historical data that you have, and that is the case definitely.

(Richard): And is that – has there been any discussion there among you all whether that's a recommended way of doing that or do we have latitude at the district to set different criteria for including students in the calculation? And if we do that, assuming we have to go back and recalculate everything.

Male: That was raised definitely August 1st and 2nd. We are working to see how best – how we could best facilitate that if we were to get in a position where districts would do that.

One thing I will note though that to keep in mind with the whole Survey 2, 3 (match issue). Remember that the model itself controls for student attendance and for mobility. So this is different than things we've done in the past with school grades which is basically a simple calculation – one standard for all.

And you had that inclusion rule just to basically level the playing field that same types of students in sense of attendance, basically that they are there the full year. But remember, the model itself controls for that, on individualized student basis.

So if you have a student that, for example, is only there Survey 2 or is only there Survey 3, that student will have attended, fewer days than the student that's there both surveys. It likely may have moved around a couple of times and would have more mobility than those students that's been there both surveys.

So that would be reflected in that student's expected score. That's one thing to keep in mind on that point. The challenge that we've run across of course and doing a statewide limitation-only Survey 2, 3 (match) students is this is driven really course level. And we have – there're a lot of courses across the state especially the high school level that are more – that are semester-driven, not school-year-driven.

So, by accepting that (full) (inaudible), that would – that's our challenge and it would potentially throw out a number of students simply by the fact that they are in semester courses. So...

Male: Juan, at this point, the attendance is not course or teacher-specific, though it's just these number of days that the student attended in the district as a whole, correct?

Male: In the school as a whole. It's daily attendance – daily attendance. So again, just as Survey 2, 3 – it's really not a course-driven metric either at this point. As we talked about August 1st and 2nd, we've already began the discussion of starting on a new collection not for the '11 – '12 school year, but a collection of attendance at the course level.

Again, all the models that were run were based on historical data which, of course, was driven by daily attendance. So that is one of the areas that we're at right now.

Male: Well, it's the attendance associated with the school, so if the student was associated with me in Survey 2, but left to go to another school, then that would show that he had very little attendance in my school.

Male: That's correct. Let me – let me get back to you Richard on that specific question on how that would specifically work. (Now), I understand your question in that would the attendance be cumulative for the whole year if the students have multiple schools. Let me verify and answer for that and get back to you.

Male: All right. Thanks, Juan.

Male: I think the other thing I'll add is that questions that we're going to put down on paper and get back we'll distribute to all districts so we'll answer for everyone.

Other questions?

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of Paul Felsch with Leon County Schools.

Paul Felsch: Hey, (Ron), I got a couple of questions – one is, could you talk a little bit about the corrections process for the data either in the past or for this year, kind of like we do for FCAT.

And second of all, a little bit about the proportional parsing, so if a student (inaudible) School A for two-thirds of the year and School B for a third of the year, is it true that that proportion of the (value) be assigned to each of the schools.

Male: First – good morning, Paul. First, on the data verification or data corrections process, we are working on a – in conjunction with Survey 2 and Survey 3 and a verification process of teacher rosters so that we know we have the right students with the right teachers going forward.

Our current thinking at this point, of course, is that the current processes that are used for school grade purposes to verify the demographic data as well as

to verify the assessment match information would continue as it has been done in the few years.

However, what we are envisioning at this point is that this roster verification system will basically serve as a membership file of sorts for this purpose so that once that we had a final sign-off, final closure of assessment corrections with for school grades purposes, the assessment match file, when that's complete that would then get matched against the verified rosters which would serve as the basis for the value-added calculations.

That would be for '11 - '12. And then of course, any refinements moving forward, we do not have any specific plans in place to go back to the historical data to verify. One thing to keep in mind and what many districts are doing across the state is since Senate Bill 736 passed and is first to be implemented in the '11 - '12 school year, many districts are treating the '11 - '12 school year as basically as year one – year one of the evaluation.

So moving most of their – or all of their teachers to the 40 percent of the evaluation and then building out from '11 - '12 going forward. Some – many districts are going that route. The historical data basically serves as a reference point to help folks get a better understanding how the model works as well as to help them form these decisions in terms of classification, et cetera.

So that's one issue. The second issue you raised – I'm sorry, Paul.

Paul Felsch: Going back to that, is the verification linked directly to the survey or is there going to be another data? In other words, will we be modifying Survey 3 to correct teacher rosters or will we be modifying, say, your assessment file – (with Survey 3).

Male: The (inaudible) that's being conceived at this point is Survey 2 and Survey 3 will feed this system, but it will be a standalone process.

Paul Felsch: OK. And also, how do you envision the teachers being involved in this? Are they going to have to interface directly with this standalone process?

Male: Great question. We – what we have envisioned right now is, again, we're part of a – this is part of a separate project with the Gates Foundation and we're working with some pilot districts.

But we've envisioned a process whereby we would create a Web application where teachers would have the ability to view their rosters and basically indicate whether the student is really with her class or not with her class.

But the final sign-off or the final correction would not take place at the teacher level. It would take place at either the school level or a district level. We've also, want to provide the functionality that the rosters could be printed and it could be hand-delivered to teachers to sign-off on.

Some districts actually use that method and prefer the method. So we want to provide that option as well. And a final option that some districts also indicate to us that they use is to provide some districts with a file format where they can handle their verifications locally and upload a new file once we give the file formats back to the state.

So these are the three options we're working on for this roster verification process. But in all three, we do not envision the teacher having the final – basically making that correction, so to speak. That correction that is submitted to the state will have to occur at a higher level, be it the school or the district's central office.

Paul Felsch: The second question I have was about the students who move around from school to school and is the value-added score for that student parsed out proportional to the time they spent in schools.

Male: We don't – the current model does not parse out this proportionally. Again, each student has different characteristics which go into their...

Paul Felsch: So it's assigned to the last teacher?

Male: It would be – in the current (weight), it would be assigned to both teachers, actually.

Paul Felsch: So it's – but it's not assigned proportionally?

Male: No. But again, this is connected to Richard's question from Lake County.

Paul Felsch: Yes.

Male: My thought is that – and my thinking on this, I just want to verify it with the technical folks, is that of course the model itself has variables for attendance, has variables for mobility.

Those would of course, take into account the amount of time that the student had been present or has been moved around a number of times which would go into the student's expectations. So again, we'll clarify that in our follow-up communications.

Male: The way I understand it, this is (Mike) (inaudible), is that if you have a student, it kind of levels the playing field if you have a student who is absent 45 days and the expected learning outcomes for students who are absent 45 days is provided, the same thing with mobility.

Those are the factors that are – that's (attempting) in the formula to be controlled for. So, you know, you would expect the student who has high mobility to not have the same learning gains as the student who is fairly stable.

So it's like (controlling) that factor, you bring that learning game to both teachers. You wouldn't be trying to divide it, but rather you'd be trying to control for the variable early on or overall.

That's how I understand it, not as a statistician.

Paul Felsch: So both teachers get complete...

Male: Right.

Paul Felsch: .. for the full gains even if the student was only there for a month.

Male: The control for that variable.

Paul Felsch: Yes. I understand that.

Male: Yes. You would control for those listed variables as the (statute). What you would anticipate as they do that, a student with low attendance is not going to obtain that same amount.

Paul Felsch: And I thought the model shows fewer days present, the lower the expectation; more mobility, the lower the expectation.

Male: The lower the expectation. So this way, we protect the teachers from being harmed from high mobility areas or students.

Another question?

Operator: Your next question comes from Owen Roberts with Saint Lucy County.

Owen Roberts: Hi, Juan. I just need a clarification, I got the word this morning that in a phone meeting with (FEA), that we will not be getting the school (inaudible) this year. Could you clarify that for me please?

Male: I am not aware of that call nor that – I'm not sure what that's about to be honest with you.

Owen Roberts: OK. So basically, we are expecting to have multi-teachers in the school (inaudible).

Male: What is the – are you asking the value-added information at the school level?

Owen Roberts: At the school level, correct.

Male: Correct, yes. That's provided. Yes.

Owen Roberts: Which is what I know we had said, but I just heard this morning that – in a phone meeting with (FEA) that – that it was said it might not be provided this year.

Male: No, that's not great. What do we – I think what Juan covered before was that the aggregated information, I think he went over the delay of that and that will be given to us at the close of business today.

But everything else is on schedule. So we're just moving forward. If you know of anything else, just give us a call or Juan a call or Kathy or myself, OK?

Owen Roberts: Thank you.

Male: Thank you.

Other questions?

Operator: Your next question comes from (Linda Baltacid) with Escambia County.

Male: Yes. This is (Raymond) with Escambia County. We're one of the districts that's probably going to go with option three, the (inaudible) meeting expectation.

Male: (Raymond), can you speak up a little?

Male: I can try. Is that better?

Male: Yes.

Male: OK. Yes. I'll explain we're one of the districts that's probably going to use the simple approach of (inaudible) of students moving the expectations as a percentage.

And one of the questions I had is, you know, we would take that back to the student file – to the student level and determine whether or not they – well, you know, there's a predicted score in there and there're an actual score so we could easily calculate that percentage.

And my question is, is that – does the predicted score have a standard error that we could maybe use to adjust that score downward so that when we calculate those percentages, we're lowering our bar a little bit?

Male: (Raymond), I'll have to get back to you on that specific question. I don't think you want to go that route. I think you want to rely on what the prediction is and whether or not that student's met or exceeded and those percentages are calculated for you.

Male: Well, after we determine those percentages as of teacher level or whatever. You know, we of course, you know, make some adjustments there to say that if you're within such and such percent of the expectation, you're considered effective or whatever. But it seems like it would be more accurate to adjust it at the student level.

Male: Let me follow-up with you, (Raymond), on that.

Male: OK. Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from (Heather Valentino) from Pasco County.

Female: Good morning. This is (Amy).

Several of us in – during the August meeting took part in a focus group related to a database that they were discussing with (inaudible) website that would provide the value-added scores for the teachers come October, is that still a plan that's going to occur?

Male: Great question. We have – as part of our contract with (AIR) of the three – over the four years of Race to the Top, one part is to develop a reporting system of value-added results.

We are moving in that direction cautiously this first year. We're not – we are not going to have a full-blown release of a statewide reporting system based on this historical data in October. That's not occurring.

We're – we are working on developing that reporting system. We want to go slow, pilot it, make sure we are – make sure issues are resolved et cetera, it's saying it's clear what it's reporting.

But yet, eventually, we will have a reporting system that provides public information not necessarily at the teacher level, you know, "Mr. Smith, this was her score," not that, but general information on how a district is doing, how schools are doing, et cetera, on the value-added piece.

And it's part of actually – Senate Bill 736 does have a number of reporting requirements for the state to report performance data as it relates to the evaluation.

Female: Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from Dr. (Sylvia Jackson) of Jackson County.

(Sylvia Jackson): Good morning, Mr. (inaudible). This is (Sylvia). I have a couple of questions.

One, did I understand you just say that the teacher (event) and school (event) scores would be provided by the state? And then the second part of my question is – can you tell us a little bit more about Approach 3? The first two approaches seem quite complicated and my fear is that we might need a full time statistician to help us figure that out.

But you mentioned Approach 3 and possibly using student – (percent) of students making gains. Can you tell us a little bit more about that and which districts are using that approach?

Male: Sure. The first question – again, the teacher value-added score is composed of that teacher effect and the school component as we went over. Those – that information is provided in the files that were received on August 1st and 2nd.

(Sylvia Jackson): Yes.

Male: And we will – again, the state will always be calculating that for the state assessment providing that to districts.

The second question about Option 3 – Option 3 is basically using – again, the model itself develops an expectation for each student in terms of how the student is expected to perform on FCAT in this particular case given the

factors or the characteristics controlled for the model given how the student performed to the prior year, given the student's attendance pattern, given the student's disability status, ELL status, et cetera.

So for each student, an expectation is calculated. And then basically what's happening is that expectation is then judged against how the student actually did. And if the student beat that expectation or met – met or beat that expectation, that would count as basically, in the language that we're familiar with, a gain.

If the student did not beat or meet that expectation, that would count – would not count as a gain. And basically, the percentage is the sum of all those students who met the gain, divided by the sum of the all the students the teacher taught (inaudible) to particular grade and subject.

So basically what it yields is a percentage similar to what we are accustomed to with learning games, you know, that is the percentage metric and it uses the value-added formula to inform that percentage.

Some districts are intrigued by that idea because, again, it's intuitive. Folks can wrap their heads around it. It's a percent. Folks are used to that.

The only issue I will raise though that – and the statisticians want me to point this out every time, is that by going that route, again, you're taking the value-added score which, you know, provides you a range in the sense of how much teachers who are moving students, you are taking that and basically (parsing) it down to a yes/no determination.

Did student make a gain or did the student not make a gain? And so you lose some information. You lose the information in terms of how far teachers are moving their students.

But you do gain some information in the sense of, you know, ease to understand. So that's the tradeoff. But again, we are aware as (inaudible) pointed out there in that – in going that route. There are – a few other districts have indicated they are planning to go that route.

So it makes sense to go as a possibility for, you know, at least to the transition to the more (inaudible) sophisticated statistically savvy value-added scores. So again, it's another option available to districts to consider and one that some have, see some appeal in because of the ease of understanding.

(Sylvia Jackson): Just one other thing, if we did go the third route, we could – could we in fact that take into consideration the attendance and mobility of students that have been assigned to the teacher.

Male: (Sylvia), it's already taken into account, because remember, based on the determination of did the student make a gain or did the student not make a gain, all that – those expectations are individualized in a sense based on those characteristics which include attendance and all the other factors in the model. So it's already taken into account.

(Sylvia Jackson): OK. And probably what I need to do is I'll, you know – I'll call in and try to have a – you know, a little bit more clarification. I'm not embarrassed to admit that this process is a little bit complicated at least for me and my team that's sitting with me.

Male: (Sylvia), we're not embarrassed either. So call in and I encourage you to – because we're learning as we go too and that's an important thing. There's no ridiculous question. So, please do.

We have an opportunity to make this work or we have an opportunity to stay confused. And let's make sure this work. It's going to be a transition year for many of us. And I want to thank the districts who have already – you know, we have a lot of great responses already.

And I think that's one of the benefits of holding off and casting everything into concrete. We're learning also as a department for ways that may not be real productive paths to go down. And it wouldn't then harmful if we just say, "This is it," without having really tested this model out and tried various ways before we can cast something in stone.

So there is a benefit of having a little pain through this first transition year, learning a lot together, and then coming out of the end with some prescribed

best practices, what we'll call it. So, Florida is not going to go all the way back to the starting line. That's what we've done in the past.

So I'm encouraged by the involvement, the engagement of districts and also the thought process because it's helping us all. Trust me. It's not like we're sitting here with all these answers. Every great question, we're really somewhat – having to check on it and it's a good process to go through.

I know it could be a little bit uncomfortable, but it's one that I think will make this model stronger in the end. So stay with it. Don't give it up.

Any other final questions as we – I know we're running out of time with the (hour). And Kathy has one more announcement. So think about if you have any other final questions as she does the announcement.

Female: I just want to let everybody know that we are taking notes and have been taking notes – Holly has been – throughout the call and we'll send those to you so you have the questions and the answers that were provided today.

We also have a couple of things we have to follow-up on that will eventually add to – to that information, but you will be getting those notes later today. Also Holly wanted me to remind you that when you send your documentation in September 30th, because it is the deliverable, you send it to the Race to the Top email address as per usual.

Male: These deadlines are established by the – by us and the federal Department of Education. So I appreciate your understanding. I mean, it's like anything else – is when you establish deadlines, we just got to buckle down and make every effort to get that information and get this stuff done.

Our original deadline, I think if I remember, was September 1. And when we determined with the USDOE that we could, you know, get to the end of that first quarter, we took advantage of it for great reasons because we wanted to provide you with all the time in the world.

But, you know, if there has to be some established timelines on this until we appreciate the districts and we're under the same types of timelines, it's amazing what you get done when you establish deadlines.

So let's keep moving and let's keep moving together and let's keep asking the great questions.

Any final questions?

Operator: Your next question is from (Jason) (inaudible).

Male: Hi. Can you provide an update on when and how we might receive value-added data for teachers who don't necessarily teach an FCAT subject, but have students who did take the FCAT test?

Male: In terms of moving forward, we have had discussions with (AIR) and a process to do that whether it's some sort of application or mechanism that would allow you to basically apply the value-added results or expectations for all – for those students to come up with a score for those teachers.

Likely, we're – those discussions are focusing on the '11 - '12 results. So that's pretty much where we stand right now in that regard.

Female: And we'll provide you an update on that as soon as we can.

Operator: Your next question comes from (Jon Boyd) of Osceola County.

(Jon Boyd): Good morning. My question is simply if you would please restate the requirements due in September 30. I understand about the letter, but the second half, I need clarified.

Female: Sure, and those will be in the (inaudible) as well, so you can see (inaudible). But we need the final version of the documentation that you already submitted June 1st. You've made some changes since then.

So another version of what you send in June 1st that reflects all those changes is needed. In addition, the new information that was not submitted in June 1st is exactly what (inaudible) was talking about just now, how are you

determining the scale or (inaudible) or criterion for student growth for all of your teachers using the value-added results.

That should be included in this documentation as well.

Male: Well, thank you very much. If you have other questions, please email them or call us. We'll pull them out and then deliver it to you back there. We're out of time.

But hopefully, this has been profitable – but it has, for us, beneficial. So I believe we'll continue this series of conference calls at least through this month and get any of these questions answered. And we'll continue it on. I think it's been good.

So thank you very much. Have a great day.

Thanks. Bye-bye.

Operator: Thank you. This will conclude today's conference call. You may now disconnect your lines.

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