

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



## STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

---

KATHLEEN SHANAHAN, Chair  
ROBERTO MARTÍNEZ, *Vice Chair*

### *Members*

GARY CHARTRAND  
DR. AKSHAY DESAI  
MARK KAPLAN  
JOHN R. PADGET

Dr. Eric J. Smith  
Commissioner of Education



June 1, 2011

Dear Student Growth Implementation Committee Members,

Let me start by congratulating each of you on the truly excellent work you have done as a part of the Race to the Top Student Growth Implementation Committee. I cannot speak highly enough of the Committee's efforts to develop recommendations for the structure of Florida's value added student growth model. Your work has been extraordinary and I have watched with great interest as you have met repeatedly and openly to deliberate on this critical matter.

As you are aware, Section 1012.34(7), Florida Statutes, requires me to select a formula by June 1, 2011, that measures individual student learning growth on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). In reviewing your recommendations I have determined that the basis of your proposed value added student growth model upholds the intent of this vital reform effort by fairly and accurately linking a teacher's performance to the academic growth of his or her students. Therefore, the formula I am selecting to measure individual student learning growth on the FCAT is the model you have recommended with a small caveat. Based on a request by your Chairman for an additional meeting of the Committee to address one specific aspect of your proposal, and my own observations concerning the Committee's deliberations on this specific issue, I am requesting additional clarification from the Committee on your "school component" recommendation. In order to provide the requested clarification I am honoring the Chairman's request and asking the Committee to meet again prior to June 8th. Following that meeting I will make a final determination on this part of the model.

Thank you for volunteering to be a part of this groundbreaking reform effort, and for your help throughout this vital process. This new model will significantly transform the education profession in Florida for the positive, and will help us create better outcomes for all our children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric J. Smith".

Dr. Eric J. Smith