

**Value Added Model Recommendation to the Commissioner of Education
From the Student Growth Implementation Committee
June 8, 2011**

The Student Growth Implementation Committee recommended a model from the class of *covariate adjustment models*. This model begins by establishing expected learning growth for each student. The expectation is estimated from historical data each year, and represents the typical learning gains seen among students who have earned similar test scores the past two years, and share the other characteristics enumerated below. Those characteristics (i.e., covariates or variables) are used to establish the expected learning growth for students. The variables recommended by the committee are:

- The number subject-relevant courses in which the student is enrolled
- Up to two prior years of achievement scores
- Students with Disabilities (SWD) status
- English Language Learner (ELL) status
- Gifted status
- Attendance
- Mobility (number of transitions)
- Difference from modal age in grade (as an indicator of retention)
- Class size
- Homogeneity of entering test scores in the class

The inclusion of these control variables effectively establish expected student scores based on typical learning growth among students who share similar characteristics.

The teacher's *value added score* reflects the average amount of learning growth of the teacher's students above or below the expected learning growth of similar students in the state, using the variables accounted for in the model. For example, if a teacher's *value added score* is 10, that means students taught by that teacher, on average, demonstrated learning growth of 10 points higher than expected for similar students in the state. In the model recommended by the committee, the teacher's *value added score* is expressed as a sum of two components: one that reflects how much the school's students on average gained above or below similar students in the state (a "school component"), and another that reflects how much the teacher's students on average gained above or below similar students within the school (a "teacher component").

On June 1, 2011, Commissioner Eric J. Smith announced his conditional approval of the Committee's recommendations for Florida's new value added student growth model; however, as part of his conditional approval, Commissioner Smith requested further clarification on the Committee's "school component" recommendation.

In response to the Commissioner's request, the Committee met on June 7, 2011, to clarify and finalize its recommendation on the "school component" aspect of the model. The Committee considered the proportion of the school component that should be attributed to the teacher. Based on the discussion of the Committee at that meeting, the Committee recommended including 50 percent of the common school component in a teacher's *value added score*. This recommendation recognizes that some portion of an independent school component may have an impact on student learning, outside of the teacher's direct control. By accounting for this, a teacher's performance is evaluated at least partially within the context of the school. With that portion clarified, Commissioner Smith fully accepted the committee's recommendations on a value added model to measure student learning growth on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) on June 8, 2011.