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Contact: Kevin Hardy (225) 342-4253

Regents Receive Positive Report on Louisiana's "Value-Added Teacher Assessment Model"

Data gathered and evaluated through Louisiana's "Value-Added Teacher Assessment Model" suggest for the second straight year that the quality of a given teacher's *preparation in college* – not just experience in the classroom – significantly affects the academic achievement of that teacher's students, and that the quality of that preparation is uneven across the state.

The report was presented today to the Louisiana Board of Regents Academic Affairs Committee by George Noell, an LSU psychology professor who has worked with the Board of Regents and the Louisiana Department of Education for two years on the ground-breaking research project. The ongoing project examines the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs by assessing student achievement growth *and* linking that growth to specific individual college and university teacher preparation programs using student achievement data for students in grades 4 through 9 from ten school districts. Last year Louisiana became the first state in the nation to embark on such an endeavor. Ohio and New York are now pursuing similar research, as well.

"Simply put, the data show that teachers matter, and, more to the point, teacher *preparation* matters," Noell said.

According to Noell, the "stability coefficients" for the two years of data from the pilot study are notably consistent, an indication of strong validity for the project's results. However, more validation is still required before it will be possible to report data about individual teacher preparation programs to the public and to share information about best practices across institutions.

The study supports the proposition that children taught by new graduates of teacher preparation programs do not generally demonstrate as much growth in student achievement as those taught by experienced teachers. But the data so far also strongly suggest that new teachers from some institutions *can be* just as effective – or more effective – than experienced teachers.

"For two years running, new teachers from one particular institution in the state demonstrated greater growth in mathematics achievement than students of experienced teachers," said Jeanne Burns, Board of Regents Associate Commissioner for Teacher Education Initiatives. "In addition, this year students of new teachers from

that institution demonstrated growth similar to those of experienced teachers in English and language arts.”

“This is a very significant work and a major contribution to educational research,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie of the study. “It gets to the heart of the issue in a way you can measure. And the interesting thing is that much of the data runs counter to traditional suppositions. It’s becoming clearer from this research that proper training *can* compensate for lack of experience. The potential impact is exciting.”

Once the study is fully validated, it is expected that the results will be valuable in establishing best practices in teacher education and improving the performance of all colleges of education in the state. For more details on the study visit the Board of Regents web site at www.regents.state.la.us.