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Regents Study Measures Effectiveness of New Teachers

BATON ROUGE, La. – Nine teacher education programs learned how well they prepare their graduates to teach students mathematics, science, social studies, language arts and reading during a presentation to the Board of Regents today. Louisiana has gained national attention as one of the first states in the country to link student achievement to teacher preparation programs.

Results revealed to the Regents showed several significant findings, including:

- Hard evidence that some teacher preparation programs prepare new teachers whose teaching effectiveness is equivalent to experienced certified teachers.
- Varying levels of effectiveness existing within and across teacher preparation programs.
- Differences in the effectiveness of teachers who are not content certified compared to those who are. The differences are particularly large for reading, language arts, mathematics and social studies.

“We are pleased that the U.S. Secretary of Education and other national leaders have requested information from Louisiana about how to redesign teacher preparation programs and measure their effectiveness,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Sally Clausen. “The teaching profession is perhaps the most essential of all professions. It simply makes all professions possible. It is important that we assure the public that new teachers can improve academic achievement for all students. The results of this study will allow our universities to use data instead of assumptions to identify their strengths and weaknesses and adjust appropriately.”

“Louisiana is the first state in the country to develop and implement a data program that measures the effectiveness of our teacher preparation programs. That will benefit the state from multiple perspectives, including our Race to the Top application,” State Superintendent of Education Paul Pastorek said. “But more importantly, from a broader perspective, teachers are one of the most powerful influences on student achievement, and this assessment will support our efforts to ensure every child receives high quality instruction from an effective teacher.”

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The Value-Added Teacher Preparation Model predicts student achievement in grades 4-9 based on prior achievement, demographics and attendance and then compares it to actual student performance using *i*-LEAP and LEAP tests. The model calculates how well students taught by new teachers did, compared to similar students taught by experienced certified teachers who had taught for two or more years. Programs are then placed in one of five performance levels:

- Level 1- More effective than experienced teachers
- Level 2- Comparable to experienced teachers
- Level 3- Comparable to new teachers
- Level 4- Less effective than new teachers
- Level 5- Significantly less effective than new teachers

“Louisiana is the first state in the nation to provide assessment data linking teacher preparation to student achievement,” said George Noell, professor of psychology at Louisiana State University and A&M College. “These data can be used to assess our progress toward assuring that all new teachers are effective.”

“We are excited that many of our redesigned teacher preparation programs are preparing new teachers whose students demonstrate greater growth in learning than students taught by experienced teachers,” said Jeanne Burns, Associate Commissioner for Teacher and Leadership Initiatives. “These new teachers are going to excel over time as they are provided opportunities to further develop their knowledge and skills.”

The study provides results for eight new/redesigned alternate certification programs (Louisiana College, Louisiana Resource Center for Educators, Louisiana State University-Shreveport, Northwestern State University, Southeastern Louisiana University, The New Teacher Project, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, and University of Louisiana at Monroe) and two redesigned undergraduate teacher preparation programs (Louisiana State University and University of Louisiana at Lafayette) that started implementing their new programs on or before July 1, 2003. They performed at the following levels:

Alternate Certification Programs

- **Level 1 and Level 2:** Northwestern State University, University of Louisiana at Monroe and the New Teacher Project prepared new teachers whose students demonstrated achievement in four content areas that was comparable to or above the growth of achievement demonstrated by children taught by experienced teachers.
- **Level 2:** Louisiana College prepared new teachers whose students demonstrated achievement in two content areas that were comparable to the growth of achievement demonstrated by children taught by experienced teachers. Southeastern Louisiana University and Louisiana State University at Shreveport prepared new teachers whose students’ achievement in one content area (language arts) was comparable or above the growth of achievement demonstrated by children taught by experienced teachers. The language arts content area was the only area in which the two universities had 25 or more new teachers in a single content area which met the requirement for inclusion in the study.

- **Level 3:** Six teacher preparation programs (Louisiana College, Louisiana Resource Center for Educators, Northwestern State University, The University of Louisiana at Lafayette, and the University of Louisiana at Monroe) produced new teachers whose students demonstrated achievement in one or more content area that was comparable to other new teachers.
- **Level 4:** The University of Louisiana at Lafayette and the Louisiana Resource Center for Educators each had one content area where student achievement was less than that of new teachers. In the content area of language arts, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette program performed at a level where new teachers were less effective than average new teachers, but the difference is not statistically significant. The same is true in the content area of reading for the Louisiana Resource Center for Educators program. These two programs will be working with other programs in the state to identify ways to enhance the performance of their new teachers in the identified content areas.

Undergraduate Teacher Preparation Programs

- **Level 3:** Both undergraduate teacher preparation programs studied (Louisiana State University and University of Louisiana at Lafayette) prepared new teachers whose students demonstrated achievement in one or more content areas that were comparable to other new teachers.
- **Level 4:** The University of Louisiana at Lafayette had one content area (language arts) where student achievement was less than that of new teachers but the difference is not statistically significant.

Louisiana's Value-Added Teacher Preparation Assessment Model has been a collaborative effort involving the Board of Regents, Office of the Governor, Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Louisiana Department of Education. The Carnegie Corporation of New York has provided \$800,000 in funding over a two-year time period, matched by \$1 million from the Board of Regents to conduct this groundbreaking research.

A State Qualitative Research Team has been gathering data to discover why students taught by new teachers from some teacher preparation programs demonstrate greater growth in learning than students taught by new teachers from other programs. Those findings will be presented at next month's Board of Regents meeting.

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