



H.B. 1033: Value-Added Assessment

Myths and Facts

The Associated Professional Educators of Louisiana (A+PEL) is finding misinformation circulating about H.B.1033. In order to better educate our members, we have created this document to answer some of your concerns.

Myth #1: *“Teacher salaries will be affected if they are tied to student performance.”*

FACT: **H.B. 1033 has no impact on teacher pay.**

H.B. 1033 identifies effective teachers and supports teacher evaluations based on facts – not just subjective observations or opinion. The proposed evaluation will measure the teacher’s effectiveness in the classroom. Teachers will undergo a yearly evaluation based on student learning gains and the work teachers do in the classroom. At the conclusion of each year’s evaluation, the evaluator or evaluators shall determine whether the teacher is *effective* or *ineffective*. These terms will replace the current ratings of “satisfactory” and “unsatisfactory.”

Current evaluation programs do not provide teachers with measures of their strengths or specific areas where they are underperforming. The value-added model of assessment offers a tool to target those areas needing more focus and will help to identify specific professional development activities to assist a teacher. This will give teachers the best opportunity to improve their instruction and enhance student learning.

Myth #2: *“This bill is unfair because teacher evaluations will be based on a single test.”*

FACT: **Teacher evaluations will be multi-dimensional and include principal observations, peer reviews, student academic growth and backgrounds, and account for the school's learning environment.**

No single test can give a complete picture of a teacher's effectiveness, but looking at how students improve over time on those tests can assist when combined with other evaluation criteria. By including student growth in test results into our current evaluation system - which now relies primarily only on classroom observations - we can ensure a more objective measure of ourselves and the schools in which we teach. Growth in student achievement will represent 50% of a teacher's evaluation and will be combined with school information, in-class observations, and other reviews. These multiple measures will provide a better understanding of how educators should focus their efforts to improve instruction for the benefit of all students.

Myth #3: *“Teachers in non-core subjects and non-testing grades have it easier than teachers in core subjects and testing grades.”*

FACT: **Student growth will be a factor for all teachers.**

While testing subjects and grades currently have clear measurements, H.B. 1033 ensures student growth will be a factor for every teacher. For subjects and grades where tests or value-added data are not available, BESE will determine other measures of student growth that will be just as rigorous and quantifiable as those in tested grades and subjects. For example, one methodology will have teachers set goals with their principals and then assess whether those goals are achieved. A+PEL believes that it is important that these

measurements have teacher input and will work with BESE to help shape assessment of student growth in non-tested subjects and grades.

Myth #4: *“Value-added model based assessment is a new concept for Louisiana.”*

FACT: **Louisiana has been using value-added model assessment for more than three years.**

Louisiana is recognized as a national leader in its use of the value-added model. Seventy-five schools in 12 districts across the state are already benefiting from this model. Louisiana’s Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) relies on value-added to guide professional development and improve teacher effectiveness. More than 77% of these schools are experiencing more than one year of growth in student achievement. The Value-Added Teacher Preparation Assessment Model, operational for more than three years, measures the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs by tying student growth measures to their teachers, and to the colleges and universities that trained those teachers.

Myth #5: *“Good teachers will be fired if this legislation passes.”*

FACT: **H.B. 1033 guarantees jobs for effective teachers and targets help to teachers with weaknesses.**

H.B. 1033 identifies effective teachers and supports employment for every teacher whose students show satisfactory academic improvement. This bill supports teacher evaluations based on facts – not just subjective observations or opinion. In fact, it ensures that evaluations now include output measures instead of only using input factors. It also offers targeted professional development for all teachers instead of the one-size-fits-all method used today. In addition, the bill phases-in over a two year period, with official evaluations beginning in 2012, giving teachers and administrators time to become familiar with the improved system and ensure student growth measures are accurate.

Myth #6: *“Teachers will be unfairly evaluated by students who are already performing below grade level.”*

FACT: **Teachers will not be penalized for students who enter their classroom performing below grade level. Teachers will be evaluated on their students' growth - not their grade level achievement.**

The key to A+PEL’s support of this bill is the inclusion of a value-added model that is used to better understand student achievement. Educators should not be held accountable for what students did not learn in earlier grade levels. The value-added assessment model takes into account important student characteristics such as eligibility for special education services, free and reduced lunch status, discipline issues, school attendance, and other factors beyond a teacher’s control so that there is a more fair method to evaluate educators who teach similar students in Louisiana. Further, the value-added model ensures that teachers and schools get credit not only for leading their students to achieve high absolute levels of academic success, but also for ensuring students continue to make positive academic gains each year.

Myth #7: *“This bill would eliminate local control.”*

FACT: **H.B. 1033 strengthens local control.**

H.B. 1033 retains current law that guarantees local control over employment decisions. The traditional observations and reviews used for teacher evaluations will continue to be performed by teachers' supervisors, as determined by local school boards. H.B. 1033 gives local school boards an additional tool to use by making data on student growth available to identify strengths and weaknesses. This data will not only be used as part of the evaluation process, but also to provide targeted, localized professional development to teachers who need it. Local districts will control the policies for rewarding and retaining highly effective teachers.

Myth #8: *“Teacher input will not be considered when designing evaluation methodology.”*

FACT: **H.B. 1033 mandates teacher input for evaluation criteria and implementation.**

H.B. 1033 requires the state superintendent of education to appoint and convene an Educator Evaluation Advisory Committee to make recommendations to the board regarding the development of a value-added assessment model, the identification of measures of student growth for grades and subjects for which value-added data is not available and for personnel for whom value-added data is not available, and the adoption of standards of effectiveness. The membership of the advisory committee shall be approved by the board, and at least 50% of the membership shall be comprised of practicing classroom educators. A+PEL is specifically listed as a part of this advisory committee.