



March 26, 2008

Kerri L. Briggs, Ph.D.
Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-6400

Dear Dr. Briggs:

The District of Columbia is pleased to submit for your review the enclosed addendum to the District of Columbia Growth Model Proposal. This submission provides additional information in response to your request of February 29, 2008.

A growth model will be particularly valuable in the District of Columbia where the majority of students historically have scored well below proficiency. This new approach will better demonstrate the progress that schools, districts, and the state are making toward the goal of 100% proficiency by 2013-2014. Over the past weeks, the District has received invaluable assistance from several experts in the area of growth and value-added models, including three of the U.S. Department of Education peer reviewers.

We are excited about this proposal and we look forward to additional feedback from the peer reviewers and to working closely with the U.S. Department of Education to continue to improve and refine the model. The District of Columbia remains committed to developing state-of-the-art systems to support high quality data-driven decision-making and improved student achievement.

If you have questions about these submissions, please contact me or Bill Caritj in the OSSE Division of Assessment and Data Reporting at 202-442-5562 or at bill.caritj@dc.gov.

Sincerely,

Deborah A. Gist
State Superintendent for Education

Attachment

cc: Kimberly Statham, Deputy State Superintendent
Susan Rigney, U.S. Department of Education
Patrick Rooney, U.S. Department of Education
William Caritj, Director of Assessment

District of Columbia
Growth Model Proposal: Supplemental Information
Response to February 29, 2008 Letter

Principle 1. Universal Proficiency

- Please provide additional information regarding how students who transition between schools are included in the growth model (i.e., how trajectories are established for students moving from elementary to middle and middle to high schools).

The table below provides the basic trajectory model. In cases where students move between school at the same level (e.g., elementary to elementary school), the trajectory targets will remain the same; they will not reset. The only case where the trajectory would reset is where students "graduate" from an elementary school and matriculate to either a middle or junior high school. If the student moves from grade 5 at an elementary school to grade 6 at a middle school, for example, the trajectory would be established using the grade 6 "earliest grade level" trajectory highlighted below.

DC understands that the expectations for meeting growth targets must be high and that the opportunities for schools to show growth must be limited to a degree. However, it is also believed that middle and junior high schools should have the same opportunities as elementary schools. By not allowing this one-time reset, the "middle" schools are put at a disadvantage. The primary benefit of growth models is at the school level and this one-time reset affords the middle and junior schools the same opportunity as the elementary schools by permitted them to maximize the number of students included in the model.

For example, without the reset, students enrolled in the state in grade 3 would not be available for inclusion in their middle school growth model. Similarly, students enrolled in the state beginning in grade 4 would only be used in the growth model calculation for one year (i.e., grade 7). These cases would dramatically reduce the number of cases permitted to determine growth for middle and junior high schools.

An analogous one reset rule would not apply at the LEA and SEA level.

Grades Used For Trajectory and Expected Gap Percentage for Each Year

Earliest Grade Level	Test Grade Used for Baseline	Test Used For Proficiency Target	Percent Of Difference Closed Per Step	Years of Steps	Steps To Proficiency
3	3	6	33%	4,5,6	3
4	4	7	33%	5,6,7	3
5	5	8	33%	6,7,8	3
6	6	10	25%	7,8,10	4
7	7	10	33%	8,10	3
8	8	10	100%	10	1

Principle 2. Establishing appropriate growth targets at the student level

- How will the District of Columbia handle fluctuating student scores? For example, how will growth be applied to students who are below proficient in year 1, proficient in year 2, and then below proficient in year 3?

The trajectory line will be unchanged whether or not a student is proficient or not proficient in a given year. It is not assumed that student achievement growth over time will be uniform or linear. Although it is assumed that growth is monotonic in relation to time and instruction, this assumption is not critical to the model. In other words, it is assumed that the magnitude of individual student growth will vary across years at all performance level. Again, the targets for an individual student's trajectory would not change in relationship to his proficiency status.

- Please supplement the information provided in Appendix B with data from prior school years to illustrate the impact of the proposed growth model, including the distribution of the number of students in each performance category and how students below the mean are impacted by the scoring distribution.

Final score distribution based on the new vertical scale will be available by mid-April 2008 after the scales are reviewed by the state Technical Advisory Committee. 2007-2008 will be the first year that DC will be

able to examine gains using a growth model. However, preliminary 2006-2007 data are presented in the tables below.

DC CAS Reading: Summary Statistics for Concurrent Calibration

Content	Grade Level	Test Length	Student Count	Mean	Std. Dev.	Q1	Q2	Q3
RL	3	47	4801	313.69	75.78	258.9	328.2	375
	4	48	4680	340.74	86.79	273.7	344.7	407.9
	5	48	4844	397.52	88.83	333.3	408.3	466.7
	6	48	4731	442.64	90.97	378.1	448.2	518.4
	7	48	5090	476.83	90.50	410.5	480.7	550.9
	8	48	4908	504.51	94.31	434.2	504.4	583.3
	10	48	3934	594.99	106.28	512.3	599.1	686

DC CAS Mathematics: Summary Statistics for Concurrent Calibration

Content	Grade Level	Test Length	Student Count	Mean	Std. Dev.	Q1	Q2	Q3
Math	3	54	4826	328.92	80.40	271.4	335.7	392.9
	4	53	4701	340.13	80.02	277	343.4	404.8
	5	53	4853	369.51	88.18	301.2	362.5	439.1
	6	54	4742	380.20	98.54	300.8	372.2	459.5
	7	53	5077	406.73	85.14	337.1	393.5	466.1
	8	54	4895	468.24	79.97	408.7	456.3	519.8
	10	54	3858	512.92	100.96	434.9	498.4	577.8

Principle 2. Establishing appropriate growth targets at the student level

- Please provide a description of how growth targets will be calculated for students scoring at or above proficiency (even if not included in a school's AYP calculation).

Growth will be measured for all students. Growth will be reported in relation to the proficiency and advanced targets and in relation to students at the same performance levels. Preliminary plans will be presented to the state Technical Advisory Committee on April 1, 2008. The attached draft growth model roster report would present data that are easily understood and show growth irrespective of the student's performance level.

Principle 4. Inclusion of all students

- Please clarify how the growth model will factor in students who are new, have missing data, or are unmatched.

For new students, a baseline will be set using the expected trajectory model outlined above. However, new students will not have a pretest that could be used for calculating growth. Similarly, growth cannot be determined for students with missing or unmatched data.

- Please clarify whether the growth model will be applied to all students in every school in the state.

The growth model will be applied and reported for all students with matched data. Only non-proficient students will be used to "adjust" AYP calculations based on the growth model, however.

- Please clarify how all schools (including charter schools) in the District of Columbia will be included in the growth model.

All public schools in the District of Columbia, including public charter schools, will be included in the growth model. All student identification numbers are obtained from a central state system. In addition, all public charter schools participate in the state assessment program. The unique student identification (USI) system also includes all schools.

Principle 5. State assessment system and methodology

- Please provide a rationale behind the District of Columbia's decision to not report academic growth to parents.

Individual student data will be reported at the school and classroom level. While there is a concern about the ease with which the new metrics can be communicated, the state is exploring ways to meet this goal. For the first year, because of the short timeline, individual student reports are not planned. Mock-up roster reports are attached. Individual student reports are likely to include similar, but perhaps less complex, information.

Principle 6. Tracking student progress

- Please provide additional information on the match rates of students by subgroup. The table below provides matching rates between state assigned unique student identifiers (USI) and the ID reported by the LEA. The process by which the state audits and corrects mismatches is outlined below.

Summary of Matches of Student Records by State Assigned USI:
Overall, Gender, and Race/Ethnicity

	2007 Audit #1	2007 Audit #2	2008 Audit #1
OVERALL			
Total	97.1%	97.5%	97.6%
Gender			
Female	97.1%	97.5%	97.6%
Male	97.2%	97.6%	97.6%
ETHNICITY			
Asian/Pacific Island.	98.2%	98.4%	97.7%
Black, Non-Hispanic	97.1%	97.5%	97.6%
Hispanic	96.7%	97.3%	97.0%
American Indian/Alaskan Nat.	93.2%	91.8%	95.2%
Other	97.8%	98.1%	98.3%
White	97.7%	98.4%	98.0%

Summary of Matches of Student Records by State Assigned USI: Grade Levels

	2007 Audit #1	2007 Audit #2	2008 Audit #1
GRADE			
01	96.9%	97.0%	96.9%
02	96.3%	96.5%	96.6%
03	95.2%	95.6%	95.5%
04	95.5%	95.4%	95.7%
05	95.9%	96.1%	96.0%
06	97.2%	97.3%	97.4%
07	97.8%	97.9%	98.0%
08	97.9%	98.1%	97.9%
09	98.8%	99.1%	99.0%
10	99.1%	99.1%	99.1%
11	98.9%	99.1%	98.9%
12	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%
Alternative Schools	96.5%	96.3%	96.1%
Kindergarten	98.4%	98.7%	98.9%
PK	96.3%	97.7%	98.4%
Private Placements	90.2%	93.4%	95.9%
Ungraded	98.2%	98.9%	97.9%

- Please provide additional information on how the current tracking system is accurate in matching student information across years.

The state assigns all valid unique student identification (USI) numbers for all students enrolled in public schools in the District of Columbia. The state audits the USI system monthly to identify student records with student numbers that have not been assigned by the state. An audit report is provided to schools and they are required to make the necessary corrections within 30 days. Funding is provided to LEAs based on audited enrollment studies conducted each year by an external auditing firm, Thompson, Cobb, and Basilio and Associates. Pre-code files are provided to the state assessment contractor using the audited USI codes and audits are conducted against the "General Research Tape" (GRT) provided by the contractor, CTB McGraw-Hill, each spring after testing is completed.

- Please provide additional information on the match rates of proficient versus non-proficient students.

A matching study by performance level will be completed by April 31, 2008. However, it should be noted that the overall match rates for 2007-2008 (for all audits) exceeded 97% (see above).

- Please provide additional information regarding how the current data system collects information on the student demographic characteristics, disability status, and socio-economic status and how this information will be used in reporting academic growth.

The schools in the District of Columbia use one of two student information systems. The public charter schools (PCS) all use a system called OLAMS and the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) use a system called DC Stars. Both systems collect and maintain all the demographic data required under NCLB including: race/ethnicity, gender, disability status, ELL status, and economically disadvantaged status, as well as daily attendance and enrollment status. In addition to annual enrollment audits in October of each year, the state conducts periodic audits to identify duplicate records and to identify any students enrolled without a state approved USI.

- Please provide an explanation of how the state will adjust for missing student data.

Under the status model, students enrolled in a school with missing data are considered to be non-participants and are classified, for the purposes of calculating AYP, as not proficient. As noted above, growth will (cannot) be determined for students with missing or unmatched data.

- Please clarify how scores will be tracked across schools and whether and how the growth trajectory follows students across schools and LEAs.

Individual student trajectories will remain unchanged for students moving from one school to another or among LEAs. The state Unique Student Identification (USI) system reliably tracks students as they move between schools and LEAs. Periodic audits check for duplicate IDs and for missing student IDs. The system also uses last name and date of birth to identify students who are entered under another student ID.