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NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND



Growth Models: Peer Review & Approval Process

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A growth model is a way for states that are already raising achievement and following the bright-line principles of the law to strengthen accountability.

-Secretary Margaret Spellings, November 21, 2005

In November 2005, Secretary Spellings announced a pilot program in which States may propose a growth-based accountability model for use in meeting the goals of No Child Left Behind. As a pilot program, the Department can test the idea that growth models show promise as fair, reliable and innovative methods to measure student improvement and to hold schools accountable for academic achievement.

- Growth models give schools credit for student improvement over time by tracking individual student achievement from one year to the next.
- A pilot program gives the Department the ability to rigorously evaluate growth models and their alignment with NCLB, and to share results with other States.

The Department received State proposals with the intent of approving no more than 10 high-quality growth models in this pilot program for 2005-06. This process, including the use of peer reviewers, will help the department select these models.

- The purpose of this peer review is to help ensure that the States accepted into the growth model pilot have technically sound growth models, a high probability of success in incorporating measures of student growth into school accountability systems, and a model consistent with *No Child Left Behind*.
- By putting a gold standard peer review method in place, we will ensure that the selection process is transparent and fair for all participating states.

State Submissions: Approval Process

- Twenty states submitted a growth model proposal by February 17, 2006. Of those, seven states have applied for the 2006-07 school year which are: Hawaii, Maryland, Nevada, New Hampshire, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and South Dakota.
- Department staff conducted an initial review to determine how each state was meeting the bright line principles of the *No Child Left Behind Act* and how each state proposed to address the seven core principles laid out by the Secretary (such as having grades 3-8 assessment system in place since 2004-05, and having an assessment and data system that tracks individual student progress).
- After the initial review, each state was contacted to ask clarifying questions. In response, states submitted either revised proposals or letters with additional information.
- Based on this information and an analysis of how each state was meeting the bright line principles of the *No Child Left Behind Act*, the Secretary has sent the following eight proposals to the peers for their review and consideration: Alaska, Arkansas, Arizona, Delaware, Florida, North Carolina, Oregon, and Tennessee. These proposals, additional information, and the Department letters to these states may be found at: <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/growthmodel/index.html>
- Peers will examine each state's proposal using Peer Review Guidance which can be found on the Department's website at : <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/growthmodelguidance.doc>
- Peers will use their evaluations of states' proposals to guide a discussion among the reviewers and build a consensus document that explains why a state's proposal is recommended for approval. These recommendations are due to the Secretary by May 2006.
- Using this information, the Secretary will decide which states to approve for the growth model pilot.

For more information, visit www.nclb.gov for more information on *No Child Left Behind*.

An essential tool in selecting the growth model states is a panel of nationally recognized experts to review and make recommendations on states' growth model proposals. The experts invited to participate represent a wide range of perspectives from academia to the private sector to state and local organizations.

They include: Dr. Eric Hanushek, Stanford University, Dr. Chris Schatschneider, Florida State University, Dr. David Francis, University of Houston, Dr. Margaret Goertz, University of Pennsylvania, Kati Haycock, The Education Trust, William Taylor, Citizens Commission on Civil Rights, Sharon Lewis, Council of Great City Schools (retired), Dr. Robert Mendro, Dallas Independent School District, Dr. Jeff Nellhaus, Massachusetts Department of Education, and Dr. Mitchell Chester, Ohio Department of Education. (Note: This list is updated from the original announcement of the peers.)

The Department will rigorously monitor and evaluate states that receive approval under the pilot this year.