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My name is Cynthia Osborne and I am a professor at the LBJ School at UT Austin and the Director of the Project on Educator Effectiveness and Quality (PEEQ). Thank you for the opportunity to provide information regarding SB 4. This bill calls for measuring a teacher's unique contribution to student performance on standardized exams as part of the teacher's annual evaluation. Currently, PEEQ is developing a teacher effectiveness metric that may satisfy this requirement.

In September 2010, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) contracted with PEEQ to develop a teacher effectiveness metric for the student achievement standard of the revised educator preparation program accountability system (formerly SB 174 standard 3). The metric specifically focuses on teachers in their first three years in the classroom (approximately 75,000), and new teachers' effectiveness scores will be aggregated to the educator preparation program that trained them. This metric can be modified to provide information on all Texas teachers (approximately 300,000).

PEEQ has convened stakeholders who represent all of the major associations and educator preparation programs. In addition, we have been working with peers from other states and districts, and we have convened a state statistical advisory group to review the metric we create. As the director of PEEQ, I feel very strongly that the state's metric must be comprehensive, useful, reliable, valid, and above all TRANSPARENT. No metric is perfect, but all groups involved must recognize what is being measured and how.

The comprehensive metric will include a value-added measure of growth in student performance on the TAKS exam (soon to be STAAR) for teachers who teach in relevant subject areas and grade levels. Although all evaluation methods have limitations, a value-added approach is fairer than merely examining student passing rates on standardized exams, because the value-added approach accounts for the student's prior achievement and abilities. In short, PEEQ will use regression techniques to predict what a student should have scored on TAKS or STAAR in the current year, given a student's prior achievement and a host of student- and school-level characteristics that affect student performance. The student's predicted score will be compared to the student's actual score on the exam, and the difference between the two (the residual) is considered the teacher's unique contribution to that student's performance. The average of these "residuals" is considered the teacher's effectiveness.

Calculating teacher value-added at the state level will be especially helpful for the smaller districts in the state (approximately 75% of districts have fewer than 1000 students and many may lack the size or capacity to conduct their own value-added calculations).

The comprehensive metric will also include observations of teachers in the classroom and the principal's overall assessment of the teacher's influence on student achievement. For first through third year teachers, this information is gathered through principal surveys that are distributed to principals as part of the new ASEP accountability system (formerly SB 174 standard 2). To be comprehensive for teachers in their fourth year and higher, districts may choose to combine their own observation-based evaluations with the value-added measure mentioned above, and PEEQ could help to provide districts with training on how to do this.

PEEQ will produce a pilot metric in March 2012 that is based on pilot teacher-student linked data and pilot information from principal surveys. A revised metric will be developed by March 2013, however this metric will be based on the first year of the STAAR exam, thus the results should be interpreted with caution.

**Note:**

SB 4 calls for teachers to receive a standard certificate on the third anniversary of their provisional certificate, if they have demonstrated effectiveness (as defined by the commissioner). Please note that data on student standardized test performance is not made available by TEA until the fall semester following a spring test date (e.g. exam scores from spring 2011 will be available for analysis in fall 2011). Therefore, if teacher effectiveness is partly measured by student performance on exams, that information will not be available on the teacher's third anniversary. This time lapse may also affect the principal's ability to develop an individualized professional development plan for teachers.



Project on Educator  
Effectiveness & Quality

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) contracted the University of Texas at Austin's Project on Educator Effectiveness and Quality (PEEQ) to develop a metric that measures the performance of new teachers in their first three years in the classroom and provides feedback to educator preparation programs (EPPs), teachers, and policymakers that will improve the quality of teaching and enhance student learning in Texas. Below are PEEQ's recommendations for the characteristics and components of a comprehensive metric.

## An Effective Metric Should Be:

- Comprehensive** – The metric should draw from multiple sources to provide a complete picture of a teacher's effect on student achievement, including growth in student performance on state standardized exams, when applicable.
- Useful** – The metric should lead to more effective training and professional development for teachers that allow teachers to modify and improve instruction and raise student achievement.
- Reliable** – Variations in a teacher's annual score should reflect true variation in a teacher's effect on student achievement; the effects of measurement error, test scaling, or poor data quality should be minimized.
- Valid** – Each instrument used in the metric should measure a teacher's influence on student achievement, and differences across student populations and school contexts should be considered.
- Transparent** – Teachers, principals, EPPs, and policymakers should understand exactly what components are included in the metric and how each component is measured and weighted.

## A Comprehensive Metric Should Include:

- Growth in Student Performance** – For subject areas and grade levels that affect performance on standardized state tests, student performance will be based on TAKS scores, soon to be replaced by STAAR exams. Growth will be measured using value-added modeling. For other subject areas and grade levels, PEEQ will work with stakeholders to identify alternative measures of student performance. Special consideration should be given to closing the achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students.
- Observations in the Classroom** – Principals, or trained delegates, should conduct multiple observations of first through third year teachers to provide evidence of the teacher's influence on student achievement. Principal surveys, required by Education Code Sec. 21.045, provide a platform for gathering data on teacher capacities that are linked to student achievement.
- Principal's Comprehensive Assessment of the Teacher** – Through the principal survey, principals will be asked to assess each new teacher's overall influence on student achievement for the first three years of teaching.
- School-Wide Growth in Student Performance** – Teaching and learning is a collaborative process, thus the metric should include consideration of overall school performance on standardized tests.

All of these components are currently available state-wide in Texas for teachers in their first three years in the classroom. The weighting of the metric's components will be determined empirically and with input from stakeholders. Components that are strongly predictive of student performance should be given more weight. Beginning teachers' performance will be aggregated and reported to their educator preparation programs. A pilot metric will be available in March 2012 and a more refined metric will be available March 2013.