

Adopting a Value-Added Frame of Mind— Notes from the Field

by Jim Lloyd



The value-added assessment system offers us tremendous leverage to begin to do many things. It will provide the fuel for Ohio's Data-Driven Decisions for Academic Achievement (D3A2) project; for without such a mechanism, a Value-Added Assessment System (VAAS) simply will not go. Such a system will provide what traditionally have been lower performing districts a way in which to stand up and be counted as demonstrating progress. A VAAS will force higher performing districts to learn the terminology of slide and glide and make sure they don't do that. Slide and glide schools are schools that add little and rely mostly on the kinds of students the community is sending (Hershberg, 2005).

VAAS has the potential to greatly impact not only our teacher evaluation system, but also our administrative evaluation system as well. Despite the information and influences of the Coleman Report almost 40 years ago, we now know that teachers and principals make an enormous impact on children. Marzano (2003) indicates that schools account for 20 percent of the variance in student achievement regardless of student background. The research is clear—effective

schools and, most importantly, effective teachers make a difference.

If you believe that you can make a difference as a building administrator and your teachers can have an impact on students regardless of background, you are beginning to adopt a value-added frame of mind. Batelle for Kids has piloted Ohio's VAAS with 100 school districts in our state. Some of those districts fully participated, whereas others partially participated. We have much to learn from those that fully participated and our goal should be to try and describe this so that all of us can benefit.

As Ohio implements its VAAS, it most likely will not go as smoothly as many would hope. There will be issues and problems. However, it will move this state forward and put us in a position to be able to educate all children. The way to get there won't be through simply adding another accountability system. It will be through a merging of the accountability system and the professional development needs of formative assessment, educating towards standards and effective teaching practices. It will help us to improve ourselves and those that we serve—children. It will serve as a catalyst by developing the need for a statewide professional learning community. If these things sound good to you, you're almost there and have begun to adopt a value-added frame of mind. ☺

COOL.

VERY COOL.

TOTALLY COOL.

COOL. VERY COOL. TOTALLY COOL.

Dr. John W. Harris Was A Pretty Cool Guy . . .

By founding The National Beta Club in 1934, Dr. Harris created an organization that has grown to serve millions of students over the years. Though he wouldn't have used the term, Dr. Harris believed that promoting academic achievement, service learning, and character development were some of the "coolest" things that teachers and administrators could do for their students.

While he wasn't a media celebrity or a cultural icon, we believe that Dr. Harris' vision for young people made him one pretty cool fellow.

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References

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- Hershberg, T. (2005). Value-added assessment and systemic reform: A response to the challenge of human capital development. *Pbi Delta Kappan*, 87 (4), 276-283.

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