

Contact:

Tim Kelso, Marketing Coordinator
Battelle for Kids
(614) 481-3141
tkelso@BattelleforKids.org

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Battelle for Kids Commissioned by Gates Foundation to Develop Growth Measures Guide for Education Leaders

Columbus, Ohio—Battelle for Kids (BFK), commissioned by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, has developed a comprehensive guide to better prepare educators and policymakers considering a growth model for their state or school district. The guide will help districts and states make informed decisions about which model best fits with their educational-improvement goals.

Propelled by growing national interest in educator effectiveness and most recently by *Race to the Top* funding, many states have passed legislation mandating that growth measures, such as value-added, be incorporated into educator evaluation systems. Nine states already have a model for measuring student growth, and 24 other states have proposed or are currently in the process of developing a growth model, according to 2010 data from the Council of Chief State School Officers & Learning Point Associates. However, state and district policymakers often lack the information they need to clearly understand differences among models.

To address this need, the Gates Foundation commissioned Battelle for Kids to collaborate with leading providers of growth measures to craft ***Selecting Growth Measures: A Guide for Education Leaders***. This resource, available to all state departments of education and school districts across the country, offers a framework for educators and policymakers to engage in discussion about selecting a model that is aligned to their individual needs and priorities. The guide walks users through “7 Key Considerations” in the selection of a growth model, including intended uses; inputs for analysis; measurement error and uncertainty; results and outputs; communications, training and support; experience, expertise and capacity; and costs.

“Growth measures can be powerful tools to help evaluate school, principal and teacher effectiveness and provide opportunities for improvement, but trying to understand the differences between the various available models can be daunting,” explained Battelle for Kids Executive Director Jim Mahoney. “The *Selecting Growth Measures* guide offers a straightforward analysis to help education leaders and policymakers make thoughtful, informed decisions.”

Several leading growth model providers and other experts in the field provided input on the development of the guide. While the publication is not designed to recommend or lead decision makers toward a specific growth model or provider, it provides a framework for discussion to help those considering implementation of a growth measure.

“There is no perfect growth model,” said John Hussey, chief strategy officer at Battelle for Kids. “The *Selecting Growth Measures* guide provides critical information that any school or government leader should consider to determine the model that most closely aligns with their state or district goals.”

Selecting Growth Measures: A Guide for Education Leaders can be downloaded at www.edgrowthmeasures.org. Visitors to this site can also access profiles of the five model providers—Education Strategy Consulting, Mathematica Policy Research, SAS Institute, Value-Added Analysis Network and Value-Added Research Center—who provided input on the guide and responded to the “7 Key Considerations,” as well as worksheets and other resources.

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About Battelle for Kids

Battelle for Kids is a national, not-for-profit organization that provides strategic counsel and innovative solutions for today’s complex educational-improvement challenges. With headquarters in Columbus, Ohio, their mission-driven team of education, technology, communications and business professionals specializes in creating strategies that advance the development of human capital, the use of strategic measures, the implementation of effective practices and communication with all stakeholders in schools.

Battelle for Kids partners with state departments of education, school districts and education-focused organizations to advance these strategies with the shared goals of: improving teaching effectiveness and student progress; informing instructional practice in real time; recognizing and rewarding teaching excellence; and aligning goals and maximizing impact in schools.

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