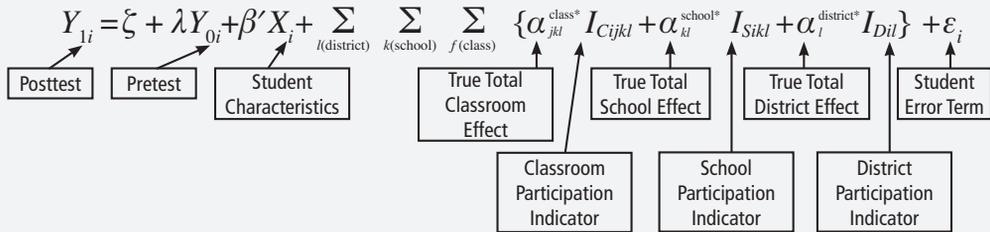


THIS IS NO WAY TO RATE A TEACHER!

Box 1. A Value-Added Model for a Given Subject, Grade and Year



The New York City Department of Education is making public some inaccurate and misleading information about New York City public school teachers.

The material – contained in what are known as Teacher Data Reports – is supposed to show how well teachers do in their classrooms compared to other teachers.

It doesn't.

In fact, the Teacher Data Reports are compiled using questionable data and employ an unproven and often inaccurate methodology.

1. The reports are based largely on multiple-choice tests, including results for school years where those tests were deemed so flawed by state authorities that they have been abandoned.
2. The methodology, a complex mathematical formula, has a huge margin of error – as much as 54 out of 100 points. This means that teachers identified as top performers could in fact be below average, and teachers identified as low performers could in fact be near the top.
3. The reports themselves are full of bureaucratic errors, including rating teachers for subjects they have not taught and for the progress of students who were never in their classrooms.
4. Even the city's Department of Education admits that these ratings should never be the primary source of judgment about a teacher's performance.

Because this procedure is highly experimental, then-Chancellor Joel Klein promised when it began that the results would be available only to teachers and their supervisors. Then the Department of Education reneged on its pledge and has released them to the public.

The teachers of this city have dedicated their lives to caring for children. They – and the city's parents – deserve more than judgments based on bad tests, incorrect data and a flawed methodology.

Sincerely,

Michael Mulgrew
President
United Federation of Teachers



United Federation of Teachers
A Union of Professionals