



ECRA Group
Educational Consultants & Research Associates

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To: Dr. Albert Roberts for the Board of Education, c/o Felicia Starks
and Harla Hutchinson

From: Kim M. Perkins, Ed.D., Senior Associate, ECRA Group

Re: Oak Park School District 97's 2013 Local Growth Model Report

Date: October 15, 2013

This report summarizes the services ECRA Group has and will provide for Oak Park Elementary School District 97. It also provides an analysis of student growth in District 97 in the 2012-13 school year using student achievement data from your 2013 Spring ISAT, MAP and DIBELS assessments.

In order to describe the student growth findings, it will include a brief synopsis of how ECRA Group's Local Growth Model is constructed, an explanation of the model's terminology, and an explanation of the data tables attached.



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October 22, 2013

**2013 Overall District Growth Summary
for
Oak Park Elementary School District 97**

ECRA Group

ECRA Group is a premier national consulting firm focused on assisting organizations in being more strategic in their quality improvement efforts. By focusing on the alignment of leadership recruitment and development, strategic planning, human resources, and analytics, ECRA helps organizations be more effective by focusing energy and resources towards what truly matters. While many of our clients are school systems, we serve many other organizations – primarily, but not entirely, in the nonprofit sector.

ECRA's headquarters is located in Rosemont, Illinois, but we also have offices in Jersey City, New Jersey, and Palo Alto, California. We have been serving school districts across the nation for more than 25 years.

One of our more popular services to school districts that are interested in school and system improvement employs Local Growth Modeling to assess student learning. Currently, about ten percent of Illinois school districts use our services for Local Growth Models.

ECRA's Contract for Services with Oak Park 97

Under our letter of agreement with the school district, ECRA Group provides:

- Consulting for service solutions and student performance
- Student achievement data warehouse development, management, maintenance, and hosting
- Online intelligence portal hosting and maintenance
- Unlimited email and phone support
- Professional development for district staff via your district-dedicated ECRA consultant
- Development and implementation of a District achievement growth model
- Achievement growth and achievement status analysis and reporting for school

- improvement and principal evaluation
- Achievement growth and achievement status analysis and reporting for program evaluation
- Achievement growth, achievement status, and achievement projection reporting for individual students
- Achievement growth and achievement status analysis for student identification (RTI, course placement, special program eligibility)

A Brief Explanation of Local Growth Models

The ECRA Local Growth Model is used to compare local district student growth with typical growth for students in the District. Growth evaluations are run for the district as well as for individual schools by grade and summarized across grades. In addition, school and district growth by student subgroup is also examined where data is available.

Growth models analyze longitudinal student achievement data using advanced statistical modeling techniques. The ECRA Local Growth Model (LGM) projects a student, classroom, or school's expected future achievement based on prior achievement and typical district growth profiles. The District test scores from prior years are entered into the model and a projection for the current year's test performance is computed. This projection is then compared to actual student achievement. The ECRA model uses a quantitative-based framework as a means to calculate a projected score. The difference between projected and actual achievement is expressed as a value-added growth score. Aggregation of the value-added growth scores provides a measure of overall student growth for any particular group of students, whether by classroom, program, school, or subgroup. (For a more mathematical and technical explanation of statistical procedures used, please contact our ECRA office.)

Computation of Value-Added Growth Scores –Value-Added Growth (VAG) scores are normative measures of growth (either positive or negative) that a student or group of students demonstrated compared to typical growth across the District in prior years. Each student's residual growth is calculated by subtracting the student's actual test score from the predicted score computed using the growth model. These residuals are then standardized to have a mean of zero and standard deviation of 1. Standardized residuals are easy to compare across grades, subjects, and tests. The standardized residual for each student is the value-added growth score. When examining student growth, each student's growth is being compared only to students with the same past performance history.

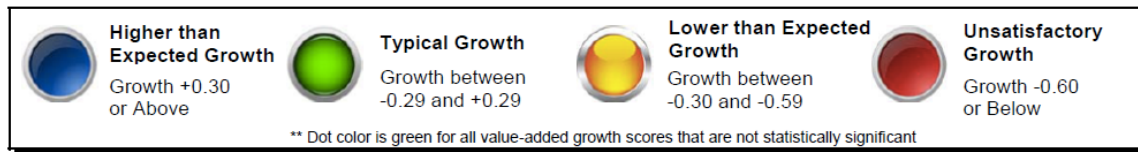
Interpretation of Growth Scores - Value-added growth can be positive (for the students who did better than expected), negative (if they scored lower than predicted), or 0 (if they hit their expected score). It should be noted that a negative growth score does not mean that the student did not learn during the school year. Rather, a negative VAG score indicates growth was not as large as would be expected for similar students across the District.

Categorization of Student Growth -- The mean Value-Added Growth statistic provides

the basis from which group growth is categorized for meaningful interpretation. Mean VAG for a group is considered typical unless the mean is statistically different from 0. Furthermore, not all statistically significant results are educationally relevant. Large sample sizes can lead to significant differences even when the magnitude of the growth is small and not very meaningful. The following two conditions must be met in order for a VAG Score to be deemed statistically and educationally significant:

- The average distance between projected and actual achievement is statistically significant.
- The magnitude of the VAG statistic is greater than 0.3 in absolute value. A value of 0.3 is chosen as the effect size based on research findings that this value indicates educational relevance.

If either of the above conditions is not met then growth is considered typical for that group of students. Growth is categorized in the reports using the following scale.



Propensity Scores -- The propensity score is a composite of individual student test scores. Propensity scores distill all of the predictive information contained in multiple past test scores into a single score and are scaled with mean of 100 and standard deviation 16 (as seen below). The propensity score is matched with the expected future achievement for a student based on his or her past performance. This provides a growth *projection* that will serve as a benchmark to determine if actual growth is greater than, less than, or equal to what was expected.

Guidance provided to Oak Park 97 to date

ECRA Group’s analytics team completed its Local Growth Model (LGM) reports for 2013 for Oak Park 97 in August. These results were then uploaded to a secure web portal specifically designed for local administrator use. On August 28th ECRA senior associate Dr. Kim Perkins shared results in a workshop with the superintendent and his cabinet. On September 17th Dr. Perkins shared results in a workshop with the district’s principals. Data coaches met with Dr. Perkins last week for a workshop on results of the LGM. Dr. Perkins also met again with principals to answer further questions and demonstrate how LGM results could be used for school improvement analysis and goal setting.

Use of Local Growth Model Results

Information generated by the Local Growth Model can be used to:

- Plan school improvement direction and areas needing attention

- Set school improvement and/or administrator performance goals
- Evaluate school curricular programs or intervention programs
- Determine individual student growth targets for student with or without IEPs
- Project individual student academic performance
- Set cut scores for progress monitoring related to Response to Intervention (RTI)
- Evaluate principal performance
- Document return on investment for instructional programs
- Support board governance

Many of our clients begin with utilization of LGM results to focus their school improvement efforts. As they continue to use these ECRA services, they build capacity to expand the use of LGM results to the other purposes listed above.

Description of Oak Park 97's 2013 Local Growth Model Results

The attached tables outline your district's growth performance for the last school year, 2012-2013, as assessed by your Spring 2013 ISAT, MAP and DIBELS tests. Each results page includes a heading that specifies: the type of results being described, the learning area (subject) being assessed, the criterion (test being described), the evaluation year, and the basis for the building of student propensities (which assessments were used in the calculation.) A four-color system is used to describe the Value-Added Growth magnitude and statistical significance. This color-coding lends itself to easier interpretation of results by users and readers of these LGM reports. In essence, ECRA Group takes the multitude of data points and assessment reports that a district receives from the State (ISAT), Northwest Evaluation Association (MAP), and DIBELS, and distills this flood of data down to a more manageable set of information for use in system improvement and performance assessment.

Dr. Perkins will elaborate more fully on these Local Growth Model report tables when he speaks with you at the October 22nd board of education meeting.

Attachment (seven pages of ECRA Group Local Growth Model tables for Oak Park 97)