UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
INSTITUTE OF POLITICS
report

BOARD OF FELLOWS NOTE

EDUCATION POLICY COMMITTEE COCHAIRS

The Honorable Jake Wheatley, Member, Pennsylvania House of Representatives; and Susan Brownlee, Executive Director, The Fine Foundation

Jake Wheatley

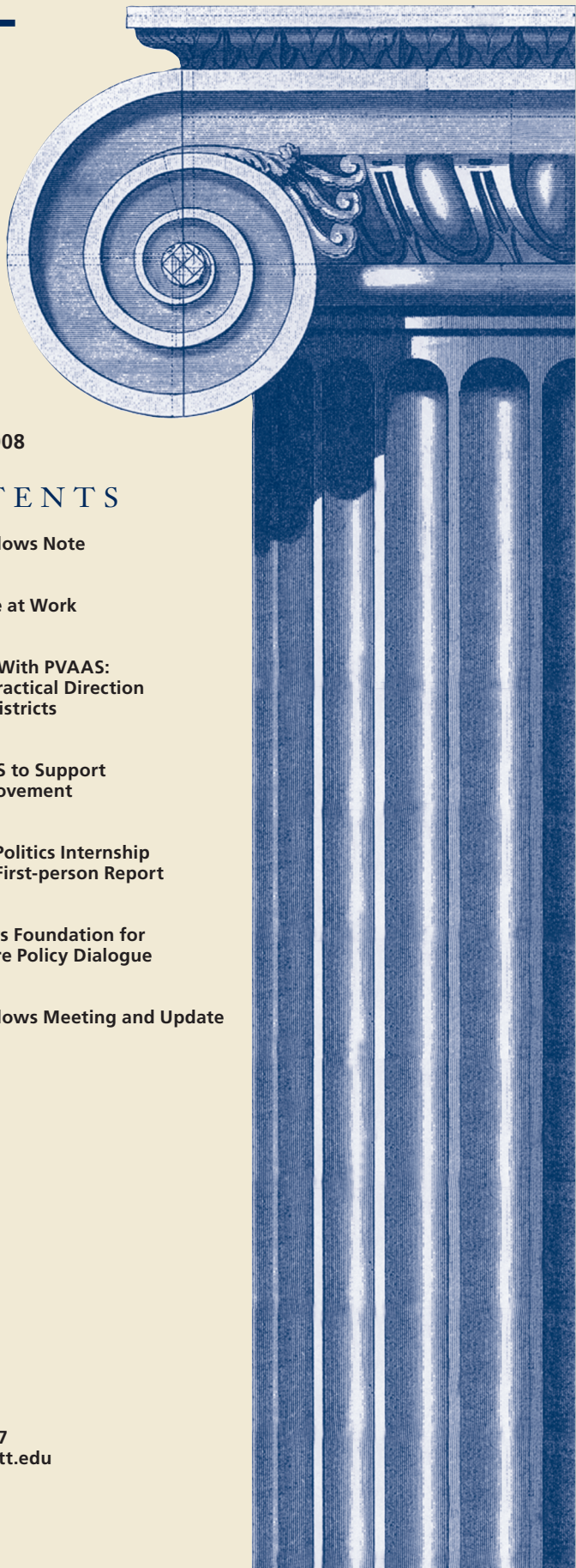
Susan Brownlee

Since the release 25 years ago of *A Nation at Risk*, in which a commission appointed by President Reagan described American schools as underachieving, public education has seen several waves of reform. Pennsylvania experienced a heated controversy over outcomes-based education in the early 1990s, followed by the relatively uncontroversial enactment of standards-based education under the administration of Governor Tom Ridge. Federal No Child Left Behind legislation, while its merits remain hotly debated, has significantly changed the way in which schools are evaluated and held accountable for student achievement.

Another important reform is quietly taking root in Pennsylvania, and the Institute of Politics Education Policy Committee believes this approach has potential to focus instruction and to improve student achievement. Accordingly, we have invested our efforts this year in promoting the effective use of the Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System, or PVAAS.

As further explained in the summaries of the two forums the Institute of Politics held this spring (see pages 3–9), PVAAS analyzes results of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) tests to determine how much a school's students have learned in the past year. Whereas the PSSA scores measure student achievement, PVAAS analysis measures student growth.

(continued on page 2)



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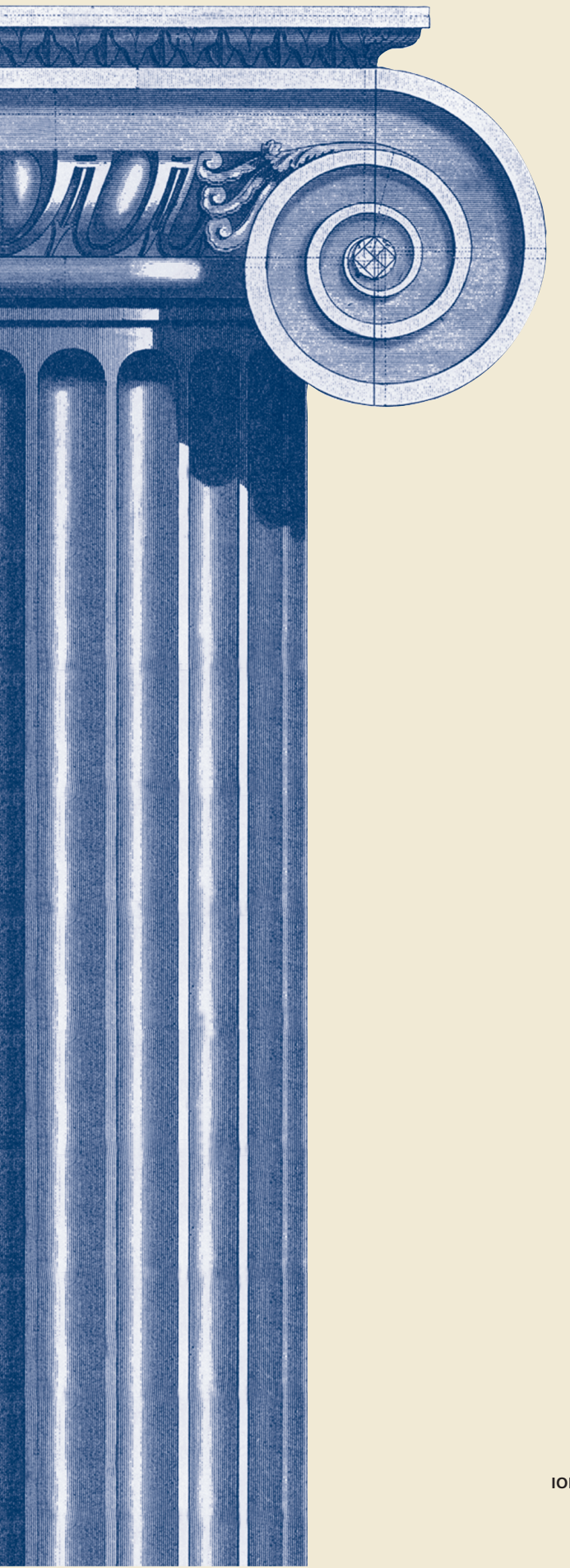

This new type of analysis has powerful implications. First, it helps to level the playing field between advantaged and disadvantaged districts by evaluating both based on their students' improvement during a school year, not the abilities their students brought to school with them.

Schools that piloted PVAAS have found other benefits. Some have identified particular grade levels where their students are not progressing. Other districts discovered that their highest-achieving students were regressing toward the middle and needed more attention. PVAAS also has provided a great morale boost for many schools working with disadvantaged students by showing that these students, even if not yet proficient on the PSSA, have made at least a year's worth of growth in a year of school.

This past school year, PVAAS analysis was provided to every Pennsylvania school district for the first time. Some districts embraced the challenge of interpreting and applying the data, but others paid little attention to it.

The Education Policy Committee recognizes that many obstacles stand in the way of effective use of value-added data, such as complexity, time limitations, discomfort in working with statistics, or embarrassment about what the data reveal. We think that all these obstacles can be overcome—in every district, not just the more affluent ones—and that PVAAS is too valuable a tool to ignore.

Toward that end, the committee held two training forums at Southpointe, Washington County, bringing in educational administrators from Cincinnati, Ohio, Williamsport, Pa., and Hershey, Pa., who take value-added data seriously and believe in sharing them widely—not just with principals and teachers, but with the whole community. Staff from three Allegheny County school districts also shared their positive experiences with PVAAS. The two events drew a combined attendance of 200 from more than 50 Western Pennsylvania school districts and numerous nonprofit organizations.

These forums have enhanced districts' capacity to analyze and use the 2008 PVAAS reports, which were scheduled for delivery in August. The committee hopes that the Pennsylvania Department of Education eventually will release PVAAS results publicly, just as it releases PSSA scores, to encourage open conversations about school improvement. In the meantime, if the districts that learned from our forums begin using and publishing their own PVAAS data, they will encourage greater awareness and application of this new measurement tool.

Our committee is blessed with impressive, committed individuals from foundations, academia, business, and community organizations, along with representation from public education and the Pennsylvania General Assembly. We enjoyed a spirited meeting with state Secretary of Education Gerald Zahorchak in April on important state-level education issues. We expect that our committee's continuing discussions will lead us to other areas where we can break new ground as we have done this year with PVAAS.

Jake Wheatley

Susan Brownlee

THE INSTITUTE AT WORK

As summer approaches, the Institute of Politics event schedule typically slows down, and the planning focus turns toward the Institute's annual Elected Officials Retreat in September. Thus, this *Report* issue features summaries of only two recent successful events, both organized by our Education Policy Committee. But the efforts of other Institute policy committees have also been bearing fruit in the months leading up to our retreat:

- The **Economic Development Policy Committee** has overseen development of a powerful status report by Jan Lauer on the potential for a carbon capture and sequestration pilot project in Southwestern Pennsylvania.
- The **Environment Policy Committee** has continued to give input toward the Regional Water Management Task Force as thatentity contemplates ways to encourage the creation of regional water planning and technical assistance capabilities.
- The **Fiscal Policy and Governance Committee**'s subcommittee on municipal pensions has continued to work through the summer in hopes of formulating ideas for discussion at the Elected Officials Retreat.
- Under the **Human Services Policy Committee**'s sponsorship, Allegheny County's experts on prisoner reintegration have delivered presentations to their peers in Chester and York counties.
- The **Workforce Development Policy Committee**'s planned forum on workforce diversity has been scheduled for October 31 as one of the keynote events of this fall's DiverseCity celebration.
- Research on national, state, and local efforts to address health disparities—a project directed by the **Health Policy Committee**—is continuing, and a policy paper on this topic should be released this fall.

WHAT TO DO WITH PVAAS: POLICY AND PRACTICAL DIRECTION FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

APRIL 25, 2008

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
JAMES W. TURNER, Director, Partnership for School District Improvement, School of Education, University of Pittsburgh

BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO PVAAS
SHULA NEDLEY, Director, Bureau of Assessment and Accountability, Pennsylvania Department of Education, and **KRISTEN LEWALD,** Statewide Project Director, Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS IN THE USE OF VALUE-ADDED ASSESSMENT DATA
PATRICIA BRENNEMAN, Superintendent, Oak Hills Local School District, Cincinnati, Ohio

A PENNSYLVANIA DISTRICT'S PVAAS STRATEGY
KATHLEEN KELLEY, Superintendent, and **JODI HARRIS,** Director of eEducational Data Analysis, Williamsport Area School District

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS, OPEN DISCUSSION, AND SUMMARY
Moderated by **JAMES W. TURNER**

WHAT TO DO WITH PVAAS: POLICY AND PRACTICAL DIRECTION FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

For decades, leaders of disadvantaged school districts have bemoaned the fate of being judged by their students' raw test scores, not by how much they have helped the students to improve.

But now the landscape of school evaluation is changing. Starting this year, the Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS) is providing every school district with data analysis that shows whether their classrooms are achieving more or less than one year of academic growth in one year of schooling.

On April 25, the Institute of Politics hosted state PVAAS leadership and school administrators experienced in the use of value-added data for a well-attended forum, "What To Do with PVAAS: Policy and Practical Direction for School Districts."

Shula Nedley, director of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Assessment and Accountability, and Kristen Lewald, statewide PVAAS project director, opened the program with a brief overview of key aspects of PVAAS. Patti Brenneman, superintendent of the Oak Hills School District in suburban Cincinnati, Ohio, described her experience in promoting school-community collaboration toward improved student achievement. Kathleen Kelley and Jodi Harris of the

Pennsylvania Secretary of Education Gerald Zahorchak (l) after a recent Institute of Politics Education Committee meeting with cochairs Susan Brownlee and Jake Wheatley.

Williamsport Area School District then explained their schools' effective use of PVAAS to improve instruction and parent communication. Summaries of their presentations follow.

Shula Nedley and Kristen Lewald: PVAAS is not another test; it is based on statistical analysis of Pennsylvania System of School Assessment data. It provides progress data to be used along with achievement data as schools examine their work with students and develop improvement plans. Other states are also using value-added data as a teacher evaluation measure, but Pennsylvania is not.

In a perfect world, all students would enter school at the same academic level and make the desired amount of progress each year. But in reality, students begin at different places and progress at different rates. To measure school effectiveness in this differentiated environment, we must pay attention not just to student proficiency levels but also to how much progress they are making each year. PVAAS makes this information available. We can now assess schools regarding both whether their students are at an adequate achievement level and whether they are making adequate growth.

Along with evaluating the growth attained by cohorts of students, such as all the sixth-grade students at a particular building, PVAAS provides individual projections indicating the probability that a given student will achieve proficiency on a future PSSA test. Its growth reports also distinguish results according to predicted proficiency level, so schools can compare growth levels for their high-achieving versus low-achieving students.

Pennsylvania has a request pending with the federal Department of Education for permission to use student growth levels, measured by PVAAS, as one way to show that schools are making adequate yearly progress. The state wishes to see PVAAS used as another tool supporting continuous school improvement.

Patti Brenneman: People tend to look at data as simply technical work [i.e., a compilation of quantitative results], but the information alone is not the important thing. After all, we've had data for years and not always used the data well. The value lies in the adult learning that comes from talking about and analyzing the data—that is, in the adaptive work of using the data to help us improve instruction for children.

Before we worry about the student learner, we have to address the adult learner—our teachers—and make sure they understand what to do with the data. Adult learning happens in a collaborative way as we discuss the data and share best instructional practices to ensure systemic growth.

Most change results from anxiety or fear, but I don't want fear in my district. We succeed when everyone is working together. I don't recommend using value-added data to evaluate teachers, because that will make them fearful of the data. Instead, give your teachers time to work together—they are social learners. Data should not be used to blame anyone, only as an opportunity for greater adult learning and therefore greater student learning.

I know it's hard to take teachers out of the classroom, but the people with the problem also have the solution. When we renovated a middle school, we created a professional development center where teachers can reserve time to meet; it's booked almost every day.

If your district is new to value-added data, you may be tempted not to share student performance data with their teachers because it might be embarrassing. But it's not productive to hide this information from teachers. We have gotten beyond that concern, because teachers are not fearful of what will be done to them. Remember, it's not your data—it's the child's data, and the taxpayers paid for it. It's our responsibility to use the data to address student needs.

In our district, we establish authentic conversation by assembling groups of 30 to 50 staff to talk first about what we are doing well, then about our challenges. We identify teachers who are having success and use them as leaders.

People often resist change because they want to protect what they like—their curriculum, for example. When they get angry, that's a good sign, because at least they've moved beyond denial. Sometimes in our district, we have a grief ceremony in which people place sticky notes on a wall to show whether they feel positively or negatively about the change. We honor the concerns raised, and then we move forward.

Kathleen Kelley and Jodi Harris: Williamsport's 5,800 students include 30 percent minorities, 55 percent economically disadvantaged, and 23 percent with special needs. We became

Shula Nedley from the Pennsylvania Department of Education presented on PVAAS at the April 25 forum.

interested in using PVAAS because of our high dropout rate. Half of our 10 buildings were not making adequate yearly progress. At one of them—Roosevelt Middle School, with 75 percent of students in poverty—the PVAAS scores turned out to be good. This result encouraged our faculty and parents, because they could see that the students were learning.

Our district has seen significant improvement, especially in math, since 2003. You can't do anything without strong commitment from the school board; despite our eroding tax base, the school board has been very supportive of data-driven decision making. We started by bringing in a consultant to develop comprehensive school review documents for all our schools; in 2004, we hired a director of educational data analysis [Harris]. We attended the Battelle for Kids value-added conference in Ohio, which we highly recommend, and created a PVAAS professional development plan. We have a teacher-driven data committee in each school building. In September 2005, we spent a whole day talking about PVAAS, with the result that we had at least one person in each building who was comfortable with the data.

Participants at the PVAAS forums gave high evalution ratings to the content, organization, and speakers.

The building-level teams meet for a day each fall to review achievement, growth, and process data and to come up with action plans for their schools.

Our district has a strong advisory group for gifted students. PVAAS data became important for this group and for their teachers, because the data showed that some of the gifted students were not progressing while teachers focused on at-risk students.

Each building was asked to share student PVAAS projection data with parents during fall conferences. Parents received color projection charts and an explanatory letter. Showing these charts helped parents see their child's progress and discuss what the parent and school could do as partners. Where the projection was going down, our message was that we are going to work together to defy that yellow line.

In using PVAAS with parents, we faced several challenges. We had to print 3,400 color charts—two for each of 1,700 students. Teachers need to understand PVAAS well enough to explain it to parents. The Department of Education's PVAAS information is geared toward educators rather than parents. Also, PVAAS information was not available for transient students.

On the positive side, PVAAS functioned like a built-in yardstick, helping us set a collaborative tone for parent conferences and helping teachers to set positive expectations for students.

Following the presentations and a question-and-answer period, participants broke into small groups to discuss what they had learned about PVAAS and how they could apply it in their own settings. Observations in these groups included the following:

- PVAAS may be overwhelming to some teachers; they need to be equipped with the capacity to perform the necessary statistical analysis.
- How to share data with outside groups, such as nonprofit organizations that provide after-school programs, is a challenge.
- University training programs need to prepare teachers to use this tool.
- Students should be included in the discussions so that they understand that PVAAS is being used to identify their strengths and weaknesses, not to do something to them.

USING PVAAS TO SUPPORT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

JUNE 13, 2008

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
SUSAN BROWNLEE, Executive Director, The Fine Foundation and Cochair, Education Policy Committee, Institute of Politics

WHAT PVAAS IS AND HOW TO EXPLAIN IT
JIM BOHAN, Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System Core Team

CONNECTING PVAAS DATA TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
CINDY H. GOLDSWORTHY, Assistant to the Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Derry Township School District, Hershey, Pa.

INVOLVING TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS
JOHN PIETRUSINSKI, Assistant Principal, Pine-Richland Middle School and **RICHARD PYSCH,** Principal, Hance Elementary School, Pine-Richland School District

REACTION PANEL
ALICIA GISMONDI HUTCHINGS, Data Research Analyst, Fox Chapel Area School District

MARY RAVITA, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, South Fayette School District

KRISTEN S. LEWALD, Statewide Project Director, Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System

OPEN DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY
Moderated by **JAMES W. TURNER,** Director, Partnership for School District Improvement, School of Education, University of Pittsburgh

USING PVAAS TO SUPPORT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

As a sequel to the April 25 forum, the Institute of Politics held a second PVAAS session on June 13 examining the impact of PVAAS at the school building, classroom, and individual student levels.

Cindy Goldsworthy: The Derry Township School District is high achieving, but we still need to focus on school improvement. Moving the proficient students to advanced levels, not just helping all students attain proficiency, has become a priority for us. Although we have students in our district who were born on third base, we can't take credit for hitting the triple.

PVAAS' emphasis on growth data has been very helpful in creating a sense of urgency in our district. It has challenged

James Turner from the Partnership for School District Improvement moderated open discussion at the June 13 PVAAS program.

administrators and teachers to move from good to great and has enabled us to align our resources where students need the most help. Teachers have a heightened awareness that their instruction can make a difference.

Derry Township became a PVAAS pilot district in 2005. We initiated data teams at each building and integrated PVAAS review with our other data analysis; these teams hold a summer retreat to establish annual goals for each building. We value transparency and have shared PVAAS results with our school board and the general public. [Goldsworthy provided copies of Derry Township's 36-page report on its 2007 PVAAS scores.]

We see key decision-making opportunities in planning at four levels: the district level, school level, grade level, and with individual students. At each level we ask who the stakeholders are, what they need to know, what data they should be using, what is needed to facilitate their use of data, and who should lead the process. Staff members receive valuable professional development as they learn to analyze data, set goals, and solve problems.

At the grade level, small groups of teachers hold weekly POD (poring over data) meetings. They have had to shift from talking about their next field trip to in-depth discussion of student results. They meet with no administrator present unless they need help from the principal to stay focused on interpreting the data.

Where individual students are not yet at proficiency, we schedule quarterly intervention planning meetings on each student. Use of a roving substitute enables us to get through all these meetings for one grade level in a day.

For successful application of PVAAS and other data, central office staff must be transparent and willing to communicate challenges and problems; principals must have a passion for data, reserve time in their schedules for data meetings, have strong instructional skills, and desire to build teacher leaders.

Richard Pysch and John Pietrusinski: PVAAS has helped us identify those cohorts of students who need greater attention. We have a districtwide data council that meets twice a year, plus data teams at each building. We ask teachers to look closely at their data; formulate questions, such as why their school should have a higher percentage of proficient students

Grable Foundation President Gregg Behr talks with Senior Policy Manager for Allegheny County Department of Human Services Bob Stumpp and interns Zach Morris and Ashley Young from Allegheny County's Department of Human Services (l to r) at the June 13 PVAAS program.

in math than in reading; and make judgments as to how to move forward. The most exciting change we are making is to increase the time available for principals and teachers to plan together. Having daily time after lunch for regular meetings on curriculum, assessment, and instruction should help us improve. Middle school teams are expected, at least once a week, to discuss student data and determine how their instruction will change as a result of the data.

PVAAS projections on students entering grade nine are a valuable tool. The high school level is a "data desert" due to the lack of annual testing, but we compare teacher-developed assessment results with the PVAAS projections. Math and science teachers have been more comfortable with data than language arts teachers, but having better data tools like PVAAS is raising all teachers' comfort levels.

Before PVAAS, we would have been satisfied with saying all our gifted students are doing great. Now PVAAS is helping us see places where the gifted students are not continuing to make a year's worth of growth each school year.

Alicia Hutchings: The Fox Chapel Area School District has 1 percent socioeconomically disadvantaged students at Fairview Elementary but 42 percent at Kerr Elementary. Kerr's test scores have never looked like those of our other schools, and historically people would look at the data and say the good teachers must be at Fairview. It was difficult for the Kerr teachers' morale. PVAAS changed all this. When Kerr scored in the green on PVAAS [meaning that its students had achieved at least a year of growth], it was something to celebrate.

PVAAS also showed us falling achievement trajectories where advanced students were tending to regress toward the middle. This result caused us to reconsider how we served those students who were capable of acceleration.

Mary Ravita: A "data day," on the second day of staff development before each school year, is part of our culture. We use a "huddle, pass, and receive" strategy. Teachers at a grade level huddle to make connections between the data and their students; they then determine the salient points that they wish to pass on to the next grade's teachers about these students, and they receive similar information from the previous grade's team.

Our teachers have a 30-minute common planning period and are to discuss student achievement issues once a week. Discussions are documented in the lead teacher's log. Nothing gets in the way of these discussions. We have put a structure in place to emphasize that the data are important. Sometimes you have to review basic statistics with teachers to help them understand the data.

The first sight of red bars [i.e., below one year of growth] on PVAAS results was shocking for our teachers. It forced them to find ways to stretch their students even when the overall achievement levels were strong.

Kristen Lewald: I heard six points in these presentations. First, these districts didn't know every answer before they started using PVAAS with their teachers. Some administrators seem reluctant to use PVAAS, perhaps because they didn't learn it in their superintendent training. But it's new to everybody. Supports are available—Cindy Goldsworthy has asked us to be available on call in case questions arise in a team meeting.

Second, we still hear a lot of schools saying they don't have time for data meetings. Sometimes you need to make schedule changes that aren't comfortable for the adults in the system but that will help students.

Third, I saw a willingness to be transparent—to face what the data are saying about the growth rates of both lower-achieving and higher-achieving students. Making the data available to those involved in decision making enables conversations about school improvement to happen.

Fourth is the importance of giving teachers access to information. I still hear many teachers asking, "Why hasn't anybody told us about these data?" Measuring students' yearly growth makes sense to teachers and validates the effort they put in every day.

Fifth, you need committed leadership to keep ringing the cowbell and maintaining everyone's focus. Putting systemic structures in place and making them work can be exhausting.

Finally, thanks to PVAAS, we now have clear evidence within Pennsylvania of schools that are making significant growth with their socioeconomically disadvantaged, special needs, or gifted students. We should learn from those schools.

INSTITUTE OF POLITICS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM:

A First-person Report

by Ian Russian

The Institute of Politics first made itself known to me by way of a bright yellow flyer in the Department of Political Science at the University of Pittsburgh. The flyer described an internship opportunity as follows:

> Selected students will be placed with an elected official in the Pittsburgh area at the local, state, or federal level. The student will earn two credits for working nine hours per week in the office and an additional two credits for attending a required weekly seminar.

As I have an abiding interest in the political world and a desire to learn about all forms of government, I applied for the internship and was accepted.

Interns in my class were assigned to various elected officials in city, county, state, and federal government. I was placed in State Representative Sean Ramaley's district office in Ambridge, Pa. I was excited to work there, as my mother's family is from that town and Ambridge was a longtime rival while I was attending and playing soccer for nearby Beaver Area High School.

Ambridge is a thoroughly working-class town, named for the American Bridge Co. but still is recovering from the economic shock of industrial decline. The many individuals facing economic hardship in Ambridge benefit from having a state representative's office on their main street to assist them. Filling out property tax rebates for senior citizens, many of whom relied on their J&L Steel pension and social security as their only sources of income, was one of my main duties in the office.

The interns had very different experiences due to the multitude of personalities and the varying responsibilities of the offices in which we served. For example, my tasks in a state legislator's office differed significantly from those of the classmates placed with U.S. Senators Arlen Specter and Bob Casey, who have much larger staffs. Our varied experiences made for excellent discussions at our weekly seminar session.

Each week, the class of 16 learned from instructors Denny McManus, education and advocacy coordinator at the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank and Nello Giorgetti, senior government affairs manager at GSP Consulting Corp. The instructors covered a range of political topics, with a primary focus on the city of Pittsburgh and the surrounding metropolitan region. The course format created an excellent learning environment and a welcome variation from the traditional

INSTITUTE LAYS FOUNDATION FOR INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY DIALOGUE

Infrastructure is not typically considered an exciting area of policy debate on the local, state, or national levels. However, the bridge collapse in Minneapolis, Minn., disastrous flooding in the Midwest, insufficient telecommunication networks, and increasingly deficient water and sewer systems have thrust infrastructure into the forefront of our national and local political discourse.

Many observers believe that infrastructure has become one of the most pressing U.S. domestic challenges. In 2007, the Pennsylvania Transportation Funding and Reform Commission reported that the state would need more than $1.7 billion a year in additional funding for highways, bridges, and transit to meet its needs. The American Society of Civil Engineers estimates that Pennsylvania's water infrastructure needs $8 billion of investment. These cases represent only a portion of the infrastructure problems we will face in the next 30 years. The price tags are staggering, and in many cases we do not know how to adequately approach the problem.

Recently, the Institute of Politics realized that its policy committee structure was not designed to consider the wide array of emerging infrastructure challenges holistically. Therefore, the Institute has recommissioned its former Transportation Policy Committee as the Infrastructure Policy Committee, under the leadership of State Representative Paul Costa and Armstrong County Commissioner Patty Kirkpatrick. The committee will meet for the first time at this year's annual Elected Officials Retreat, which will also focus on infrastructure as its primary topic, thereby providing the committee with a solid base of information to begin its work.

The Institute of Politics attempts to remain flexible so that structural alterations, such as this committee change, can be easily made in response to changing policy priorities.

class structure. We were required to write three papers, keep a journal, and participate in a mock legislative exercise for our final project.

We enjoyed two very politically astute guest speakers. Moe Coleman, director emeritus of the Institute of Politics, provided political commentary on past and present events and answered questions from every student in the class. Ron Brown, who runs a political consulting firm called RJB Productions, compared modern-day campaigning with more traditional methods and showed a series of campaign commercials he had helped to create. However, my favorite aspect of the program was our bus tour of the city of Pittsburgh, with McManus and Giorgetti as tour guides. Their great knowledge of and love for the Pittsburgh area was readily apparent.

The seminar and the internship aspects of the program complemented each other beautifully. Lessons learned in class were demonstrated within the elected official's office. The networking that occurred in both the internship and the seminar was invaluable. The combination of hands-on exposure to government and politics with instruction from two experienced political practitioners makes the program truly extraordinary.

I also owe a debt of thanks to Marie Hamblett of the Institute of Politics, who not only organizes the internship program but has been most helpful in assisting my next steps. When the program ended, I asked her about additional opportunities, and she helped me secure two more internships—one in U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire's office and one at the Institute itself, where I have enjoyed involvement in several research and policy projects.

The Institute of Politics internship program has been a great catalyst on my career path. I could not have asked for better firsthand experience, and I now have three professional internships on my résumé. I feel grateful that that bright yellow flyer from the Institute of Politics caught my eye.

BOARD OF FELLOWS MEETING AND UPDATE

The Institute of Politics held its annual Board of Fellows meeting on the afternoon of Thursday, April 17. Thirty-five board members attended, along with most of the Institute staff.

G. Reynolds Clark, chief of staff for University of Pittsburgh Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg and vice chancellor for community initiatives, provided introductory remarks. He noted that the Institute's work has been recognized statewide in such topical areas as water management, prisoner reentry, and pensions. Clark stated that the Institute remains trusted as a neutral convener and is widely valued for its role in helping regional leaders make good policy decisions.

Clark also honored five incoming members of the Board of Fellows:

- Paul Costa, member, Pennsylvania House of Representatives
- Ralph Kaiser, director of governmental relations, WQED Multimedia
- Patricia Kirkpatrick, commissioner, Armstrong County
- Fred Thieman, president, The Buhl Foundation
- Chelsa Wagner, member, Pennsylvania House of Representatives

Updates on the activities of all nine policy committees, student programming, special projects, and the Institute's finances were presented and discussed. Board members concluded the meeting with a dialogue about infrastructure funding challenges, including roads, bridges, transit, locks and dams, airports, and water and sewage facilities which will be the primary topic of the fall 2008 Elected Officials Retreat.

(Pictured left to right) State Representatives Dan Frankel and Paul Costa, Governor's Southwest Regional Director Allen Kukovich, and Pennsylvania Securities Commissioner Tom Michlovic participated in the April board meeting.

Pennsylvania Senator Jane Orie (l), Tom Stevenson, and Kathleen McKenzie of Allegheny County Executive Dan Onorato's office talk at the April Board of Fellows meeting.

REPORT

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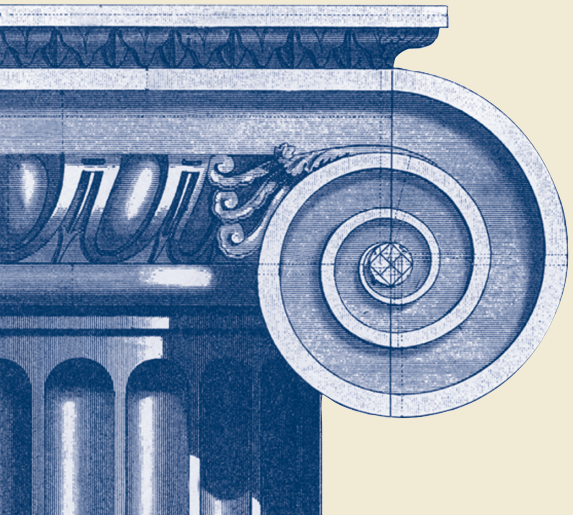

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