

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Yun Xiang is a research specialist at the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). Yun’s research interests include growth modeling, program evaluation, and the handling of large data sets. Her recent published works and presentations include an investigation of achievement gaps and summer learning loss, applications of growth modeling in evaluating schools and addressing student mobility, an analysis of school productivity by comparing different value-added models, and research involving the professional satisfaction of teachers. Yun holds a PhD in Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation from Boston College, an EdM in Curriculum and Instruction from Boston University, and a BA in English Education from Xiangtan Normal University, China.

Michael Dahlin is a research specialist with the Kingsbury Center at NWEA. He joined NWEA in 2007 as a research associate after working as a research analyst for the Oregon Department of Human Services. He has also worked as an adjunct and visiting psychology professor at Pacific University. Mike’s recent NWEA work includes extensive research and reporting to examine the effectiveness of the No Child Left Behind Act. His professional affiliations include the American Psychological Association, the American Psychological Society, the Society for Research in Child Development, the American Educational Research Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education. Mike holds a PhD in Developmental Psychology from Pennsylvania State University, an MS in Psychology from Western Washington University, and a BA in Biology from Pomona College.

John Cronin has served as director of the Kingsbury Center at NWEA since 2008. As the repository for the largest cross-state longitudinal database of student achievement in America, the Kingsbury Center engages in research and consulting partnerships with organizations such as Vanderbilt University, Notre Dame University, the Wisconsin Center for Educational Research, the Wisconsin Center for Value-Added Measurement, KIPP, Teach for America, and others to bring this resource to bear on important educational issues. John is the primary author of several important studies related to the rigor of educational standards, including two prior studies for Fordham, *The Proficiency Illusion* and *The Accountability Illusion*. John has served as an educator and consultant for thirty-three years and holds a PhD in Educational Studies from Emory University.

Robert Theaker joined the Kingsbury Center in 2011 as a senior research associate. He previously served as director of data analysis for Central Michigan University’s Center for Charter Schools, where he was in charge of establishing a data warehouse, school evaluation reporting, and analysis. Prior to joining Central Michigan University, he served as the senior manager of assessment and measurement for National Heritage Academies. In this role, he led one of the most innovative and sophisticated implementations of NWEA’s Measures of Academic Progress in the United States. In Bob’s thirty-seven years of experience, he has been a statistics professor, teacher, and school administrator, and has presented numerous seminars in data-driven decision making.

Sarah Durant is a senior research associate at the Kingsbury Center at NWEA, where she helps partners understand and use their performance data to make decisions about policy and practice. Prior to joining NWEA in 2009, Sarah worked as a principal performance analyst for Multnomah County and as a research analyst for the Oregon Department of Education. In addition to policy research and data analysis, her skills include performance measurement, program evaluation, project management, and organizational design. Sarah holds an MPP from the University of California at Berkeley and a BA in Linguistics from Boston University.