The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) was passed to increase academic rigor and to hold school officials and teachers accountable for the academic achievement of students. NCLB requires increased teacher and school effectiveness by requiring school organizations to meet growth targets each year. With the push towards greater accountability, teachers and administrators are more responsible than in previous years to increase academic achievement. Several states are employing teacher evaluations that include teacher performance based on student achievement in combination with classroom observations to assess teacher effectiveness.

In Louisiana, House Bill 1033 was passed in May 2010, which was the foundation for COMPASS, Louisiana’s teacher evaluation model. This model requires that teachers be evaluated annually based upon two equal measures: student growth and professional practice indices. This quantitative study investigated the nature of the relationships among the
COMPASS indices (VAM and SLTs), the professional practice index, and the overall ratings. The data were VAM, SLT, and professional practice scores, as well as overall effectiveness rates, for 30 teachers in a single school district in southeastern Louisiana. The findings were analyzed to determine if the scores fairly and accurately measured teacher effectiveness, as Louisiana law defines it, and if they are appropriate measures to be used by school district officials to make high stakes personnel decisions. The researcher was also interested in determining if COMPASS captures the behaviors, characteristics, and practices of effective teachers as indentified in the existing body of empirical literature on teacher effectiveness.