

Gwinnett County Public Schools Performance-Based Awards



In February of 2017, the Gwinnett County Board of Education approved a new teacher compensation system framework that focuses on rewarding employees for performance. (That framework, which was updated in February of 2018, is found on the back page of this document.) The framework is being phased in—first with the move to a Performance-Based Teacher Salary Schedule in August of 2017, and then with the development and roll-out of Performance-Based Awards this year. The 2018–19 school year is the “go live” year for the awards in that the data from this year will be used to determine award recipients. In this first year, there is one system, but two paths to the awards, a Four-Metric Path and a Three-Metric Path.

This FAQ provides answers to a few general questions about the Performance-Based Awards, updates on some of the work that has continued to take place, and specifically addresses questions Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) has received from teachers during the Phase 2 roll-out.

About the Awards:

I understand that there is one Performance-Based Compensation System, but why did GCPS create two paths to the Performance-Based Awards?

In this first year, GCPS is providing two paths to the awards to ensure more teachers have the opportunity to be eligible for the performance-based award. The Four-Metric Path is for eligible teachers who have scores on the four metrics (Professional Growth, TAPS Evaluation, Student Growth, and Weighted School Assessment). Eligible teachers with scores on all performance metrics except Student Growth will be included in the Three-Metric Path. The current Three-Metric Path is a temporary path for this year only.

What are the different categories of awards and how much can I earn?

Teachers on both the Three-Metric and Four-Metric paths are eligible for the district-level awards. However, separate calculations will be made by path to determine award recipients.

- Category 1— District-Level Awards
 - Among eligible teachers in both paths, the top 10% at each school level (elementary, middle, and high)— as determined by the total score on the metrics— will receive a district-level award. This award will equal 10% of the average GCPS teacher salary for the fiscal year in which the award is earned.
- Categories 2 and 3— School-Level Awards (Four-Metric Path) and District-Level Awards (Three-Metric Path)
 - Category 2 recognizes eligible teachers in the Four-Metric Path who score in the highest 10% at each school (excluding those in Category 1) and eligible teachers in the Three-Metric Path who score in the second highest 10% at each school level (excluding those in Category 1). Category 2 recipients will receive an award equal to 6% of the average GCPS teacher salary.
 - Category 3 recognizes eligible Four-Metric teachers who score in the second highest 10% at each school (excluding those in Category 1 or 2) and eligible Three-Metric teachers who score in the third highest 10% at each school level (excluding those in Category 1 or 2). Category 3 recipients will receive an award equal to 3% of the average GCPS teacher salary.

When will teachers receive the awards?

Awards will be distributed in December following the school year in which the awards are earned. For example, the first award recipients will be determined on the basis of performance in the 2018–19 school year. The awards earned by these teachers will be distributed in December of 2019.

About Teacher Eligibility:

Who is eligible for the Performance-Based Awards?

Eligible teachers are classroom teachers who provide direct instruction to students and who meet all six of the following criteria. Eligible teachers must:

1. Be paid on the GCPS teacher salary schedule;
2. Receive a TAPS evaluation score;
3. Have course sections in Synergy for 50% or more of the school day (excluding 00-dot courses like homeroom and lunch);
4. Administer all required designated student assessments. (This task may be performed by other designated staff members if the teacher is absent from school.);
5. Count as one full-time equivalent (FTE) employee;
6. Have been employed and in “non-leave” status for at least 120 of 190 contract days in the school year (with normal sick leave and personal days taken counting toward the 120-day minimum).
 - “Non-leave status” means that the teacher is not on an approved leave of absence as defined by Gwinnett County Board of Education policy GBRIC (Leave of Absence). According to the policy, leave of absence may be used for the following reasons— employee’s personal disability, adoption, guardianship, military leave, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), and/or Workers’ Compensation.
 - To determine whether a teacher is employed and in “non-leave status” for at least 120 of 190 contract days in the school year, subtract the number of days on an approved leave of absence from 190. The difference must be at least 120 for the teacher to meet the eligibility criterion.

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Is an elementary teacher eligible for a Performance- Based Award in the Four-Metric Path if the teacher has two ELA classes with 14 students in each and, in addition, teaches EIP, FOCUS, and EL pull-out groups?

Yes, if the eligible teacher has a total of 15 or more eligible student pre-test and post-test scores. At the elementary level, a teacher must be scheduled for three or more periods or three or more sections across all periods in one of these programs— the Early Intervention Program, Gifted, Special Education, and ESOL.

About the Metrics:

Professional Growth

Do teachers receive additional credit for professional development beyond 20 hours?

No. Teachers are required by GCPS Policy GAD (Professional Development) to complete 20 hours of professional development annually. Teachers meeting or exceeding this requirement receive the same maximum score for the Professional Growth metric.

What counts as professional development?

All professional development must be approved by the teacher's immediate supervisor or designee and must comply with GCPS Policy GAD (Staff Development) and accompanying Procedure GAD. The policy states "... all personnel shall participate annually in a minimum of 20 hours of approved staff development that aligns with the district's vision, mission, goals, and initiatives."

Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS)

How is the raw score for TAPS calculated and how is it converted to the scale score?

The evaluator assigns a numerical score of 0 to 3 for each of the 10 TAPS evaluation standards to produce a Summative Performance Score for the teacher, ranging from 0 to 30 as follows:

Level	Designation	Summative Performance Score Range
Level I	Ineffective	0–6
Level II	Needs Development	7–16
Level III	Proficient	17–26
Level IV	Exemplary	27–30

This Summative Performance Score is used as the raw score for calculating the TAPS metric score. The raw score is converted to a scale score by dividing the raw score by 30 and multiplying the quotient by 100. The raw score is carried out to six decimal points. Example: raw score of $26 \div 30 \times 100 =$ total TAPS metric score of 86.666667.

Student Growth

Which tests are being included in the Student Growth metric for the Performance-Based Awards?

All pre-test and post-test scores for eligible students from District Assessments (DAs) and Student Performance Goal (SPG) assessments are included.

How will the District Assessment (DA) scores be calculated for the Performance-Based Awards?

The number of items answered correctly will be divided by the number of items on the District Assessment to create a percentage. This percentage will be used.

What is meant by a minimum of 10 scores per quartile and a minimum of four teachers per assessment by course number?

For student scores to be considered in calculating a teacher's Student Growth score, there must be at least 10 student pre-test scores in each quartile districtwide for the course, and a minimum of four teachers districtwide must administer the same assessment for the same course number.

Is it a minimum of 15 students or 15 student scores that are used in determining a teacher's Student Growth score?

It is a minimum of 15 student scores. For example, a teacher teaches mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies and has 14 students who take the pre- and post-tests for all four subjects. This teacher would have 56 (14 x 4) student scores and thus receive a Student Growth score.

Why must there be 15 eligible student pre- and post-test scores for a teacher's Student Growth score to be calculated?

A minimum number of scores is required to increase the validity and reliability of the Student Growth score. It should be noted that a teacher who meets all eligibility requirements but who has fewer than 15 student scores (and, as a result, no Student Growth score) would be eligible for the Three-Metric Path awards for the 2018–19 school year.

Will scores of middle school teachers teaching high school courses be compared with scores of high school teachers?

Yes. All students taking the same course take the same assessment, regardless of grade level. Therefore, middle school teachers of a high school course will have their Student Growth metric calculated using the same assessment as high school teachers of that course.

Will middle and high school pre- and post-tests for both semesters be included in a teacher's Student Growth score?

Yes. All pre-test and post-test scores for eligible students on District Assessments (DAs) and Student Performance Goal (SPG) assessments are included. Pre- and post-test scores for both semesters will be used to calculate teachers' Student Growth scores.

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Teachers with additional questions may email questions via Lotus Notes to: Performance Based



Which student scores will be assigned to which teachers when there are multiple teachers? (e.g., co-teachers, collaborative teachers, or team teachers)?

All scores on designated student assessments taken by eligible students in courses taught or co-taught by co-teachers, collaborative teachers, and EL teachers will be included in the calculation of the Student Growth metric for those teachers. Special education co- and collaborative teachers will receive available student scores for all special education and regular education students in the classroom they support. EL teachers will receive credit for EL student scores and for regular education student scores.

How is the “student 65% course enrollment” requirement applied when a student moves between schools, teachers, and/or courses during the year?

Any student who has both a pre- and a post-test score and is enrolled in a course for 65% of the days for which the course is scheduled will be included in the Student Growth score calculation. If a student is enrolled for less than 65% of the days for which the course is scheduled, any assessments taken by the student are excluded from all calculations.

Test scores follow the student. Therefore, a student’s scores are included in the growth score of any teacher who, for a minimum of 65% of the days for which the course was scheduled: 1) was in non-leave status, 2) taught the course in which the student was enrolled, and 3) had that student assigned to him or her in Synergy. (Example: The student takes a pre-test at one school while in Teacher A’s class. The student moves in October to a new Gwinnett school and is in Teacher B’s class through the end of the school year. That student’s growth score would count toward Teacher B’s calculation.)

Weighted School Assessment (WSA)

What are poverty points and how are they calculated? Where are they reflected in the metrics, and how do they affect a teacher’s total score?

Poverty points are calculated as part of the total Weighted School Assessment (WSA) score, and are included in the WSA score teachers receive as part of the Performance-Based Awards. Schools may earn up to five additional points on the WSA if 50% or more of their students are eligible for the free or reduced-price meals program. One poverty point is allotted for each 10-point increment at or above 50% (i.e., one point beginning at 50%, two points beginning at 60%, etc.)

General Administration:

Will teachers be required to keep records associated with the calculation of their Performance-Based Award scores?

A district-level comprehensive data system will house all the data and perform all calculations related to the Performance-Based Awards.

What is the tax implication? Do these awards contribute to the Teacher Retirement System (TRS)/Gwinnett Retirement System (GRS)?

Performance-Based Awards are considered compensation and will be subject to state/federal income tax and federal Medicare tax (1.45%). Income taxes will be withheld using standard state and federal withholding tables based on a teacher’s federal W-4 and state G-4 forms on file. Performance-Based Awards will not be subject to Teachers Retirement System (TRS) deductions, nor count as compensation for TRS retirement purposes. However, Performance-Based Awards will be subject to Gwinnett Retirement System (GRS) deductions and will be included in GRS retirement benefit calculations.

If I retire or leave the district after qualifying for a Performance-Based Award, will I still receive the additional compensation?

Eligible teachers who earn Performance-Based Awards in the final year of employment in Gwinnett County Public Schools will receive payment of the awards in December of the next school year at the time that all other awards are made.

The image shows a screenshot of the Gwinnett County Public Schools website. At the top, there is a dark red header with the Gwinnett County Public Schools logo and navigation links for 'ABOUT', 'SCHOOLS', and 'NEWS & EV'. Below the header, there is a photograph of three women standing together, one holding a large award. To the right of the photo is the Gwinnett County Public Schools logo. Below the photo is a dark red box with the text 'I WANT TO...' and a list of options: 'Apply for...', 'Find...', 'Find...', 'Absence Management', 'Assessment and Accountability', 'Career Opportunities', 'Digital Learning Day', 'District Phone Numbers', 'eCLASS', 'GCPS Foundation', 'GCPS TV', 'The ISC', 'My Cluster', 'My School', 'Newcomer Information', 'Online Student Resources', 'Performance-Based Compensation', and 'Promotion/Graduation Requirements'. The 'Performance-Based Compensation' option is highlighted in blue. To the right of this menu is a white box with the text 'Looking for more information?' and instructions: 'On the district’s website: Go to the “I Want To...” menu . Select “Find.” Choose “Performance-Based Compensation.”'

Gwinnett County Public Schools

Performance-Based Teacher Compensation System

February 15, 2018

PHASE 1: SY2017-2018

Performance-Based Teacher Salary Schedule

Salary Schedule	Performance Steps	Degree Levels
Salary schedule that reflects base salary and step and level increases	Step increases that are based on Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) evaluation rating of Proficient or higher	Level 1 – Bachelor’s; Level 2 – Master’s; Level 3 – Specialist’s; Level 4 – Doctorate <i>NOTE: All levels require specific Georgia Professional Standards Commission certification.</i>

PHASE 2: SY2018-2019

Performance-Based Awards: Metrics, Scores, and Weights

Weighted scores of the four metrics or three metrics, as appropriate, will be combined each year to determine a total score for each eligible teacher.

Metric	Raw Score	Scale Score	Weight — Four Metrics	Weight — Three Metrics
Professional Growth	0 or 100	0 or 100	15%	23%
TAPS Evaluation	0 - 30	0 - 100	40%	62%
Student Growth	0 - 100	0 - 100	35%	N/A
Weighted School Assessment	0 - 100	0 - 100	10%	15%

Performance-Based Awards: Categories and Compensation (Based on Total Weighted Score)

Performance Category	Award Ranges — Four-Metric Path	Award Ranges — Three-Metric Path	Compensation Award	Payment Method
Category 1	Highest 10% of scores for eligible teachers by ES/MS/HS level	Highest 10% of scores for eligible teachers by ES/MS/HS level	10% of average GCPS Teacher salary <i>(FY18 - \$60,716)</i>	Lump sum payment based on prior school year’s performance
Category 2	Highest 10% of scores for eligible teachers at EACH SCHOOL	Second Highest 10% of scores for eligible teachers by ES/MS/HS level	6% of average GCPS Teacher salary	Lump sum payment based on prior school year’s performance
Category 3	Second highest 10% of scores for eligible teachers at EACH SCHOOL	Third Highest 10% of scores for eligible teachers by ES/MS/HS level	3% of average GCPS Teacher salary	Lump sum payment based on prior school year’s performance

Eligible teachers are classroom teachers who provide direct instruction to students and who were employed full-time for at least 120 days during the school year. Teachers are awarded in either the four-metric path or the three-metric path, as follows:

Four-Metric Path – Eligible teachers have scores on all four performance metrics.

Three-Metric Path – Eligible teachers have scores on all performance metrics except Student Growth, for which a score cannot be calculated because no District Assessment or Student Performance Goal assessment is available for courses taught by the teacher or fewer than 15 eligible student pre-and post-test scores* are available for the teacher.

* Eligible student pre- and post-test scores are those to which the growth calculation method can be applied.

Teachers may receive only one Performance-Based Award annually.