

# Performance-Based Awards 2020 Update



In December 2019, Gwinnett County Public Schools took an historic and long-overdue step in compensating high-performing teachers as it distributed the first Performance-Based Awards (PBA) as part of its Performance-Based Teacher Compensation System. Awards were calculated using four metrics: Professional Growth, TAPS Evaluation, Student Growth, and the Weighted School Assessment.

For eligible teachers, there were two paths to the awards in 2019— a Four-Metric Path for eligible teachers who had scores for all four metrics, and a Three-Metric Path for eligible teachers who had scores for all metrics except Student Growth. In all, 3,144 Gwinnett teachers (31% of those eligible) received an award.

Throughout the development of the Performance-Based Awards, district leaders have collected feedback from teachers, leaders, and community members. That feedback led to the approval of some minor changes that will apply to the next round of awards to be distributed in December 2020. (These awards will be based on data collected for the 2019–20 school year.) These changes were announced in September of 2019.

Year	School Year Data	Awards Distributed
Year 1	2018–19	December 2019
Year 2	2019–20	December 2020
Year 3	2020–21	December 2021

## What to expect in Year 2 of the Performance-Based Awards...

The school district is well into the data-collection period for the next administration of the Performance-Based Awards. For that reason, any new changes to the methodology will not be made until Year 3.

The **eligibility requirements and calculations will remain the same in Year 2** except for the following minor changes approved by CEO/Superintendent J. Alvin Wilbanks in September 2019.

- The district will **continue to offer two pathways— a Four-Metric Path** and a **revised Three-Metric Path**.
- In Year 2 of the Performance-Based Awards, **Category 2 and Category 3 awards in the Three-Metric Path will be distributed at each individual school**. (For Year 1, those awards were distributed only at the district level.)
- With this change, **a minimum of 20% of teachers on the Four-Metric Path at each school and a minimum of 20% of teachers on the Three-Metric Path at each school will receive awards**.

Feedback gathered this past year will assist in making any additional changes for Year 3 (awards to be distributed in December of 2021).

# About Year 2 Performance-Based Awards (PBA)

## Checks to be issued December 2020 based on 2019–20 Data

Performance-Based Award eligibility is limited to classroom teachers who provide direct instruction to students. These teachers:

- Are paid on the GCPS teacher salary schedule
- Received a TAPS evaluation score
- Had course sections in Synergy for 50 percent or more of the school day (excluding 00.xx courses)
- Counted as a 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) employee
- Were employed in a non-leave status for at least 120 of 190 contract days in the school year (Normal sick leave and personal days taken will count toward the 120-day minimum).
- Administered all required designated student assessments.

Awards are distributed in three categories, as shown in the graphic below.

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	<b>Highest</b> 10% of scores for eligible teachers by ES/MS/HS level	<b>Highest</b> 10% of scores for eligible teachers by ES/MS/HS level	10% of average GCPS Teacher salary-- \$6,508.80	Lump sum payment based on prior school year's performance
Category 2	<b>Highest</b> 10% of scores for eligible teachers* at EACH SCHOOL	<b>Highest</b> 10% of scores for eligible teachers* at EACH SCHOOL	6% of average GCPS Teacher salary-- \$3,905.28	Lump sum payment based on prior school year's performance
Category 3	<b>Second Highest</b> 10% of scores for eligible teachers* at EACH SCHOOL	<b>Second Highest</b> 10% of scores for eligible teachers* at EACH SCHOOL	3% of average GCPS Teacher salary-- \$1,952.64	Lump sum payment based on prior school year's performance

\*Eligible teachers who did not earn a district-level award

FY2020 Average GCPS Teacher Salary: \$65,088

### ■ District-Level Awards... rewarding top-performing teachers at each school level (ES, MS, and HS)

- The **top 10% of eligible teachers** (on both the Four-Metric and Three-Metric paths) **at each school level** (elementary, middle, and high)— as determined by the total score on the metrics— will receive a district-level award. We call these **Category 1** awards.
- This award will equal **10% of the average GCPS teacher salary** for the fiscal year in which it was earned. For FY2020, the average teacher salary is \$65,088 so the Year 2 award will be \$6,508.80.

### ■ School-Level Awards... celebrating and recognizing great teachers in every school in GCPS

- **Category 2** awards will go to teachers in **both the Four-Metric and Three-Metric paths** who score in the **highest 10% of scores at each school** (not including teachers who earned a district-level award). This award is **6% of the average teacher salary**. For Year 2 that amount will be \$3,905.28.
- **Category 3** awards recognize teachers in **both the Four-Metric and Three-Metric paths** with the **second highest 10% of scores at each school** (excluding those who received another award). This award is **3% of the average teacher salary** or \$1,952.64 for Year 2.

# About Student Growth

Student growth is determined by performance on District Assessments (DAs) and Student Performance Goal assessments (SPGs) only. After the Year 1 awards were announced, we received a number of questions about how the Student Growth Score is calculated. The five steps used to determine a teacher's Student Growth Score, and the pre-conditions that apply, are explained in detail on the following pages.

## Before a Student Growth Score can be calculated, the following pre-conditions must be met:

- The teacher must have a minimum of 15 pairs of pre-test and post-test scores across all courses taught (not 15 students, but 15 pairs of scores). A teacher who only has eight students in a class, but teaches them both reading and math, would end up with 16 pairs of scores if they all completed pre- and post-tests in both subjects.
- For student scores to be considered for a teacher, the following must be true:
  - Students must have both pre- and post-test scores and be enrolled in the course, with that teacher, for 65% of the days for which the course is scheduled;
  - The teacher must be assigned to the course number in Synergy for 65% of the days for which the course is scheduled;
  - The course must have at least 10 student pre-test scores in each quartile districtwide; and
  - A minimum of four teachers districtwide must administer the same assessment for the same course.

## The Five Steps for calculating a Teacher's Student Growth Score

To demonstrate each step, we will use one course— 5th Grade Mathematics— and its associated assessments. Note: Test scores used to calculate student growth are the percent correct scores on District Assessments (DAs) and Student Performance Goals (SPGs).

### Step 1: Pre-test scores from each assessment are organized, by course number, into quartiles ranked from lowest to highest.

A 5th grade Mathematics teacher gives the assessment for that course to all of her students. Their scores will be considered with all student scores on the same assessment throughout the district.

In this example, 10,000 GCPS students completed the pre-test and post-test districtwide. Among them, 6,000 are in regular education courses (.0 course); 3,000 are in gifted courses (.2 course); and 1,000 students are in special education courses (.8 or .9 courses).

The pre-test scores for all 10,000 students are sorted by the three course numbers, and then the pre-test scores are arranged from lowest to highest into quartiles within each course. Since there are 6,000 students in the .0 course, each quartile has 1,500 students. The cells with the vertical dots (:) simply indicate there is an entire list of students included in each quartile.

	Regular Ed .0 course	Gifted .2 course	Special Ed .8 & .9 courses			
	Student	Pre-test Score	Student	Pre-test Score	Student	Pre-test Score
Quartile 1	1	12	1	22	1	10
	2	13	2	23	2	12
	...	...	...	...	...	...
	1499	22	749	39	249	18
	1500	23	750	40	250	20
Quartile 2	1501	25	751	41	251	22
	1502	25	752	41	252	22
	...	...	...	...	...	...
	2999	31	1499	58	499	28
	3000	32	1500	58	500	28
Quartile 3	3001	33	1501	60	501	30
	3002	33	1502	60	502	32
	...	...	...	...	...	...
	4499	47	2249	66	749	38
	4500	47	2250	68	750	38
Quartile 4	4501	48	2251	70	751	40
	4502	51	2252	70	752	42
	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5999	72	2999	88	999	59
	6000	74	3000	90	1000	65

**Sorting student scores by assessment, course number, and quartile ensures that results for a teacher's students are compared to those of other students who took the same assessment, were in the same course, and had a similar pre-test score during a given year. Scores for regular education students are compared to regular education students, gifted to gifted, and special education to special education.**

**Step 2: The change in each individual student score from pre-test to post-test is calculated.**

**Regular Ed**

		.0 course			
		Student	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score	Change
Quartile 1	1	12	54	42	
	2	13	73	60	
	1499	22	50	28	
	1500	23	63	40	
Quartile 2	1501	25	54	29	
	1502	25	65	40	
	2999	31	54	23	
	3000	32	73	41	
Quartile 3	3001	33	46	13	
	3002	33	57	24	
	4499	47	44	-3	
	4500	47	78	31	
Quartile 4	4501	48	70	22	
	4502	51	62	11	
	5999	72	57	-15	
	6000	74	95	21	

In this example, the score change for Student 2 is simply the post-test score of 73 minus the pre-test score of 13, which gives us the change in student score of 60.

Changes for individual students can be quite different, and can be either positive or negative (see Student 4499).

73	Post-test
-13	Pre-test
60	Change

**Step 3: In each quartile, the district median change from pre-test to post-test is calculated.**

**Regular Ed**

		.0 course	
		Student	Change
Quartile 1	290	-15	
	1150	-13	
	56	-12	
	887	-10	
	1067	0	
	898	27	
	425	30	
	401	30	
	687	30	
	1256	31	
	30	55	
	567	56	
	725	71	
	1493	72	
	105	75	

**District Median Change** →

In order to find the district median change score, all the change scores within a quartile are put in order, and the change score in the middle (the median) is found.

Looking at Quartile 1 for the .0 course, you see the smallest change from pre-test to post-test was -15. The largest change was 75. The change score in the middle is 30. This is the district median change for this assessment, course number, and quartile.

In the next step, all eligible students who took this assessment, and are in this course number and quartile, will have their changes compared to the district median change.

**Step 4: The change in each individual student score is compared to the district median change calculated for that quartile.**

**Regular Ed**

.0 course			
Student	Change	District Median Change	Student Change $\geq$ District Median Change?
1	42	30	Yes
2	60	30	Yes
3	9	30	No
4	23	30	No
5	43	30	Yes
...	...	...	...
751	35	30	Yes
752	22	30	No
753	42	30	Yes
754	44	30	Yes
755	30	30	Yes
...	...	...	...
1496	45	30	Yes
1497	-12	30	No
1498	0	30	No
1499	28	30	No
1500	40	30	Yes

**Quartile 1**

**Is the score change equal to or greater than the district median change or did the student score 95 or greater on the post-test?**

**“Yes”** indicates that a student’s change was **equal to or greater than the district median change within the quartile.**

**“No”** indicates that a student’s change was **not equal to or greater than the district median change.**

NOTE: Some students will score so high on the pre-test, they will not be able to show enough growth on the post-test, compared to the district median change. Therefore, teachers also will receive a “Yes” if a student scores 95 or higher (no rounding) on the post-test.

Example: A student scores 78 on the pre-test. For his course and quartile, the district median change is 25 points. The highest possible post-test score is 100, so he could not earn a score change equal to or greater than the district median change ( $78+25=103$ ). If he scores a 95 on the post test, he counts as a “Yes” for his teacher.

To recap, if the student’s score change is equal to or greater than the district median change, OR the post-test score is equal to or greater than 95, that student counts as a “Yes” for the teacher.

Looking for more about the Performance-Based Awards? Go to the GCPS website. The district’s Performance-Based Teacher Compensation web page has additional information about the overall system, the metrics for determining awards, as well as FAQs and history.

Additionally, if a teacher has questions, they can send them by email to [Performance.Based.Awards@gcpsk12.org](mailto:Performance.Based.Awards@gcpsk12.org).



**Step 5: Putting it all together!** For each teacher, the percentage of student score changes that are equal to or greater than the district median change is calculated.

Student	Assessment	Course	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score	Student Change (Post-test Score minus Pre-test Score)	1		4		Student Change $\geq$ District Median Change OR Scored $\geq$ 95% on Post-test?
						Pre-test Quartile	District Median Change	Student Change $\geq$ District Median Change?	Student Scored $\geq$ 95% on Post-test?	
Clay	5th Gd Math	.0	12	59	47	1	30	Yes	No	Yes
Syd	5th Gd Math	.0	23	54	31	1	30	Yes	No	Yes
Dan	5th Gd Math	.0	30	81	51	2	27	Yes	No	Yes
Darla	5th Gd Math	.0	30	65	35	2	27	Yes	No	Yes
Eli	5th Gd Math	.0	35	33	-2	3	27	No	No	No
Nick	5th Gd Math	.0	35	97	62	3	27	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pete	5th Gd Math	.0	38	46	8	3	27	No	No	No
Lucy	5th Gd Math	.0	46	54	8	3	27	No	No	No
Kelly	5th Gd Math	.0	49	76	27	4	25	Yes	No	Yes
Erin	5th Gd Math	.0	51	78	27	4	25	Yes	No	Yes
Gavin	5th Gd Math	.0	76	95	19	4	25	No	Yes	Yes
Ty	5th Gd Math	.2	40	73	33	1	40	No	No	No
Ian	5th Gd Math	.2	40	82	42	1	40	Yes	No	Yes
Ebony	5th Gd Math	.2	60	68	8	3	27	No	No	No
Jose	5th Gd Math	.2	65	86	21	3	27	No	No	No
Sony	5th Gd Math	.2	80	98	18	4	19	No	Yes	Yes
Maria	5th Gd Math	.2	90	95	5	4	19	No	Yes	Yes
Al	5th Gd Math	.8 or .9	10	45	35	1	16	Yes	No	Yes
Juan	5th Gd Math	.8 or .9	23	37	14	2	11	Yes	No	Yes
Bob	5th Gd Math	.8 or .9	30	62	32	3	11	Yes	No	Yes
Sue	5th Gd Math	.8 or .9	32	57	25	3	11	Yes	No	Yes
Jane	5th Gd Math	.8 or .9	40	57	17	4	8	Yes	No	Yes
Joe	5th Gd Math	.8 or .9	42	59	17	4	8	Yes	No	Yes
Percent of student scores for which student change $\geq$ district median change OR post-test score $\geq$ 95%: 73.913043%										
Teacher's student growth score: 73.913043										

**1** In Step 1, pre-test scores for all students in the district who completed both the pre-test and post-test for this assessment are organized by course number, into quartiles ranked lowest to highest.

**2** In Step 2, the change in each individual student score from pre-test to post-test is calculated.

**3** In Step 3, the district median change from pre-test to post-test is calculated for each quartile.

**4** In Step 4, the change in each individual student score is compared to the district median change calculated for the quartile to which they belong. Is the score change equal to or greater than the district median change or did the student score 95 or higher on the post-test?

**5** In Step 5, the number of students who received a “Yes” in the final column is divided by the total number of “Yes” and “No” scores for the teacher. In this example, the teacher has 23 students. We divide the 17 “Yes” scores by the total of 23 and arrive at a percentage of 73.913043. That percentage is the teacher’s Student Growth score.

*Many teachers teach multiple courses and give multiple DAs or SPGs. For these teachers, the results from all of these assessments will be used to calculate the Student Growth score. The same five-step process is followed for each assessment, and all of a teacher’s students’ results across all assessments in courses taught by that teacher are included for the teacher. For example, if this same teacher also taught Science there would be Science scores included in the table as well. All the “Yes” scores for both Math and Science would be counted and divided by the sum of the “Yes” and “No” scores combined to arrive at the teacher’s Student Growth score.*

# FAQs:

**Throughout the development, implementation, and distribution of Year 1 Performance-Based Awards, GCPS communicated with teachers and staff. In Year 2 of the awards, GCPS leaders continue to listen to gain insight regarding things to consider in the future. As part of our ongoing communication, we are providing answers to some of the questions most frequently asked following the inaugural distribution of the Performance-Based Awards.**

**In some cases, teachers in the same grade level who gave the same assessments were on different paths, with some on the Four-Metric Path and others on the Three-Metric Path. Why would they not be on the same path if students took the same assessments?**

The Four-Metric Path requires that a teacher have a minimum of 15 pairs of eligible student pre- and post-test scores. Some teachers may not have met the 15-pair minimum if their classes included English Learner (EL) students in their first year in a U.S. school. The scores for these students are excluded for the Performance-Based Awards as they are with assessments including the Milestones.

**Are all special education teachers placed on the Three-Metric Path?**

No. Special Education teachers are eligible for the Three- or Four-Metric paths depending on the number of pairs of pre- and post-test scores for eligible students the teacher has.

**If a teacher has fewer than 15 students in a class (i.e., a self-contained classroom with six students) why would he be scored on the Four-Metric Path?**

Teachers on the Four-Metric Path have a minimum of 15 pairs of eligible student pre- and post-test scores. It is the count of test-score pairs, not students, that is used to determine the appropriate path. If six students took pre- and post-tests in four academic areas taught by the same teacher, there would be 24 pairs of scores associated with that teacher, which would place the teacher on the Four-Metric Path.

**Are there teachers of certain subjects who are at a significant disadvantage when it comes to student growth measurements?**

A review of the results does not indicate a pattern in which teachers of certain courses earned awards at significantly lower rates than other teachers. The student growth metric compares a teacher's students with only those students with similar content (same assessment), similar courses (same course type – e.g., special education), and similar starting points (pre-test scores).

**How is the point value for TAPS determined?**

During a teacher's evaluation, the evaluator assigns a numeric score of 0 to 3 for each of the 10 TAPS evaluation standards to produce a Summative Performance Score for the teacher. 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 (top of score range) and multiplying the quotient by 100. The scale score is carried out to six decimal points. Example: A raw score of 26 would yield a scale score of  $26 \div 30 \times 100 =$  total TAPS metric score of 86.666667.

**Can a teacher receive "Proficient" scores on TAPS and still earn a Performance-Based Award?**

Absolutely. In fact, some Category 1 Award winners earned Proficient scores (17-26) on their TAPS evaluation. Remember that it is the summative TAPS score (0-30 points), not the performance level, that is used in calculating a teacher's Total Weighted Score used in determining awards.

**What is GCPS doing to standardize TAPS evaluations?**

GCPS evaluators are required to be trained and credentialed in order to ensure high levels of interrater reliability. In addition to the initial Gwinnett Teacher Evaluation System (GTES) training, all evaluators are required to complete re-credentialing assessments each year. As part of the district's work to standardize evaluations, customized training is provided for schools that includes actual classroom observations culminating with a calibration activity. Other learning opportunities for evaluators include observation videos and strategies for providing effective feedback. GTES provides an Effectiveness Dashboard for leaders that is designed to improve interrater reliability and overall performance management. The dashboard promotes fidelity of practice in the supervision of employees who conduct evaluations.

## Could a teacher give all of the required assessments and still not be eligible to receive an award?

Yes. In addition to giving all required assessments, the teacher must also:

- Be paid on the GCPS teacher salary schedule
- Receive a TAPS evaluation score
- Have course sections in Synergy for 50 percent or more of the school day (excluding 00.xx courses)
- Count as a 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) employee; and
- Be employed in a “non-leave” status for at least 120 of 190 contract days in the school year.

All six criteria must be met for a teacher to be eligible for a Performance-Based Award.

## How are teachers' Student Growth scores determined for classes with co-teachers/multiple teachers?

Special education co- and collaborative teachers receive available student scores for all special education and regular education students in the classroom(s) they support. EL teachers who co-teach receive credit for EL student scores and for regular education student scores. (Keep in mind that the scores of EL students who are in their first-year in a U.S. school are excluded, just as is done for Milestones.)

## How are semester and year-long courses/assessments accounted for in the Student Growth calculation? Are pre- and post-test scores for fall semester, spring semester, or both used in calculating growth scores?

All pre-test and post-test scores for eligible students from District Assessments (DAs) and Student Performance Goal (SPGs) assessments are included. If the course is year-long, pre-test scores from the fall and post-test scores from the spring are used. If the course is divided into semesters, the pre- and post-test scores from the fall as well as the pre- and post-test scores from the spring are used.

## In looking at the number of awards, it looks like more awards went to teachers at non-Title I schools. What is the district doing to ensure teachers from Title I schools have a fair chance to earn a Performance-Based Award?

The district believes there are great teachers in every school, despite the different characteristics and clientele that make each school unique. As a result, the Performance-Based Awards were structured to recognize not only the district's top performers (Category 1 awards), but also the top performers in each school (Category 2 and Category 3 awards).

Category 1 provides district-level awards, while Categories 2 and 3 are specifically designed to provide awards at each school. Considering only Category 1 Awards disregards the school district's efforts to make the awards as inclusive as possible.

For those concerned that teachers in Title I schools are less likely to earn an award, here are some facts from Year 1.

- Category 1 awardees included teachers from schools with significantly different levels of poverty. Of the 66 Title I schools included in last year's calculations, 46 had teachers who earned a Category 1 award.
- 20% of Four-Metric Path teachers at every school—including Title I schools— received awards in Categories 2 and 3. (*In Year 2, changes will ensure that 20% of teachers at every school on both the Four-Metric Path and the Three-Metric Path receive awards in Categories 2 and 3.*)
- At some Title I schools, teachers earned a higher percentage of awards (Category 1, 2, or 3) than their peers at non-Title I schools.

## If a teacher leaves GCPS after this school year, would she still be eligible for the awards distributed in December of 2020? How would she find out about her award status?

Yes. Teachers who leave the district may be eligible if they meet all of the eligibility requirements, even if they no longer are employed by the district. In December of 2020, when the Teacher Statements for Year 2 are shared with teachers, those who left the district and received an award will receive information in the mail about their award status along with a check.

## When will other categories of staff be eligible to earn Performance-Based Awards?

That has not been determined. For now the focus is on continuing to improve the awards system for classroom teachers before initiating awards for other employees.

