Student Growth Frequently Asked Questions

What does a student growth score mean?

Student growth scores represent the teacher's contribution to student growth and performance, on average, to the students they taught while controlling for factors such as prior academic performance and demographics.

Why do we have student growth scores?

Section 1012.34, Florida statutes, requires that school districts implement personnel evaluations that are based on several criteria, one of which MUST BE the performance of each educator's assigned students. Student growth accounts for 33% (this is the minimum percentage allowed by FLDOE) of each teacher's final evaluation score. Instructional Practice (observations) accounts for 67%.

What does VAM stand for? How is the term VAM used in Collier County?

VAM stands for Value-Added Model, which is a type of statistical model that measures the value a teacher adds beyond a student's typical performance. In Collier County, however, VAM is often used casually to refer to the student growth portion of a teacher's evaluation, also sometimes called VAM points. In iObservation, they are called student growth points and this is preferred over VAM points.

Can my student growth score be changed?

Student growth scores cannot be changed; however, a teacher may request detailed information about the score, including courses, students, and assessments used in the

calculations.

I got a 79.9. Why am I not Highly Effective?

Final scores are rounded to the nearest tenth only. A score of 79.9 has already been rounded and is not sufficient to qualify as Highly Effective. This scale is negotiated as part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

My students all passed the state assessment, why didn't I get a Highly Effective rating?

Achievement and student growth are two different measures. The ratings are assigned based on multiple factors, including instructional practice, deliberate practice, and three years of student growth. A low instructional practice score can lead to a rating of Effective regardless of student growth or student achievement.

My co-teacher and I have the same students. Why did we receive different student growth scores?

Student growth scores are based on three years of data. Unless you and your co-teacher had the same exact students this past year, as well as throughout the prior two years, you are likely to have different final scores.

Why can't I know each student's expected score at the beginning of each year?

Unfortunately, this determination is not made until all students take the end-of-year assessments because the statistical model requires current end-of-year test performance.

Which students are included in my student growth score?

Any student who was on your roster for survey 2 OR survey 3 in courses with valid assessments will initially be included. Each student must have a valid pre-test score and a valid post-test score. Students without valid scores cannot be used because their predicted score cannot be calculated. Student data is weighted according to the time they were enrolled in a course with a teacher. Additionally, each course you teach must have at least six students. A teacher's course with fewer than six students will not be used in the calculations. Basing student growth scores on too few students can skew the scores in either direction if the students vary in their assessment performance; therefore, we require a minimum of six students per course (by teacher). This minimum may be adjusted as needed based on the data.

What are the ways CCPS gives deference to the teacher when calculating student growth scores?

Using statistical analysis for student growth rather than using simple gains or achievement gives all teachers the opportunity to succeed in helping students grow regardless of other factors. There are also many places in student growth score calculations where multiple calculations are made and the HIGHER of the calculations is used rather than using only one method OR using an average. For example:

- Schoolwide scores use the higher of two methods.
- Individual teacher scores by course are assigned using a minimum of two and up to five methods. The highest score is assigned.

- Resource teachers are assigned the higher of their individual one-year score or a schoolwide score.
- The three-year average is calculated using an average and also a weighted average giving 50% weight to the current year. The higher score is used.

Instructional Practice Scores also provide multiple scoring opportunities for teachers. Replacement scores used for instructional practice mean teachers can request another observation and be assigned their highest score. In addition, the deliberate practice point is a BONUS point added to the instructional practice score.

Why is my Schoolwide student growth score different from others at my school who also get a Schoolwide student growth score?

Student growth is based on three years of student data, so unless you and your co-workers were at the same school and in the same position for three years, you will likely have different scores. If one teacher has a Schoolwide score and has worked at the same school (School A) for three years, then their score would be based on the School A students over the most recent three years. If another teacher has a Schoolwide score and worked at School A in the current year but worked at School B for the two prior years, then their score would be based on the current students at School A, and the prior two years' students from School B. This would result in two different scores.

How is my score calculated if I have multiple roles or teach in multiple schools?

Scores are calculated by school and role/title. If a teacher serves in multiple schools and/or

roles, the one-year score is combined based on the contract hours/days for each role/school.

Why doesn't the District provide a pre-test for all of the courses that I teach that are not state-assessed?

By law, the district may not administer tests to students solely for the purpose of teacher evaluation (or student growth score) determinations. Therefore, if a test has no academic value at the student level, it must be removed.

My courses do not have pre-tests so how is student-growth measured?

For courses without existing pre-tests, there are many methods used to measure student growth. Some models use relevant assessments from previous years as pre-tests. Other models use teacher-submitted portfolios to determine growth. Other student data used to measure student growth alone or in combination with other methods may include concordant scores, student grades, pass rates, course completion, and other relevant student data. Any course without appropriate measures of growth may be excluded from calculations.

I teach Algebra 1 and received a VAM score from the State. Why is my CCPS student growth score different?

As directed by Florida statute 1012.341.341(3)(a)1, each teachers' evaluation must be based on at least three years of student data when available; however, when the state reports VAM scores for Algebra 1, it is based on only one year of student data. The district combines these VAM scores with other student growth scores as well as prior year data and Schoolwide scores to determine the student growth points.

I was rated Effective and would like to become Highly Effective. How do I accomplish this?

The best route to achieving a Highly Effective rating is by focusing on improving your instructional practice scores. Working with your school leaders to conduct additional observations can lead to an improved instructional practice score. Remember that the observation score is 67% of the final rating while a student growth score is only 33%. In addition, a student growth score is a three-year average which means that each of the three years only contributes a small number of points to your final score.

Can you show me the calculations used for student growth scores?

Student growth scores are calculated using statistical software. There are many steps and complex calculations required to produce a student growth score. If you would like a more detailed analysis of your score, you can request the data used in the calculation of your score including the courses, students, assessments, schoolwide scores, and previous year growth scores used to determine the student growth points.

Why does CCPS combine Schoolwide scores with an individual teacher's scores?

Including schoolwide scores encourages collective support of all students and their learning regardless of the subject. Schoolwide scores hold all individuals accountable for the success of every student and helps prevent the formation of "instructional silos" or the selective treatment of students. Schoolwide scores have been used as part of student growth calculations since the 2018-19 school year.

Why are student growth scores based on three years and instructional practice is based on one year?

The state mandates that student growth scores are based on three years of data. The state also mandates that the student growth portion of an evaluation must account for a minimum of one-third of the overall score and allows for using student growth for up to two-thirds of the overall score. Collier County chooses to keep the student growth portion of the evaluation at the minimum and allow the instructional practice portion of the evaluation to account for two-thirds of the overall score. The instructional practice score is based on a growth model which allows teachers to request additional observations. The highest score is the score used for instructional practice in the final evaluation, giving teachers more ownership of their performance.

Why are Summative Evaluation Ratings tied to pay?

Tying pay to Summative Evaluation Ratings is state-mandated.

How is Related Arts student growth calculated?

Student growth for **visual arts and music** teachers is calculated using optional portfolios or FAST ELA scores. Portfolios are student growth portfolios and are aligned to standards and benchmarks. They are evaluated by highly trained district staff.

Student growth for **secondary PE** teachers is calculated using fitness data and either an optional portfolio OR FAST ELA scores. Half of the score is based on fitness growth and the other half is based on EITHER a portfolio OR FAST ELA scores.

The portfolio score / PE score is used as the course score for any portfolio subject area

course. If no portfolio is submitted for visual arts and music teachers, course scores are calculated based on FAST ELA scores for the teacher's scheduled students.

The remainder of the calculation for visual arts, music, and PE is done the same way as for all other teachers, including combining the one-year teacher score with a schoolwide score and then calculating a three-year average.

Student growth for **instructional resource** teachers is calculated using FAST ELA scores for fifth grade students only.

Student growth for **elementary PE** teachers is calculated using fitness data for fourth and fifth grade students only.

How do ESE / ELL / gifted students impact student growth scores? Do high achieving students have a negative impact on student growth scores because they grow less?

Remember, student growth is not a simple gain. The reason we use the statistical models instead of gains is so that we can equalize groups such as ESE / ELL / gifted. This statistical analysis also accounts for differences in student populations; therefore, all students can be used in the analysis without unfairly impacting a teacher's growth score.

Why do you compare district assessments to state assessments when calculating student growth, for example in fifth grade science?

The purpose of a pre-test is to assess a student's prior academic performance, not calculate a raw gain. The FAST ELA score could be used as a valid pre-test for any academic subject or post-test because reading comprehension is relevant in every course. More subject specific

assessments are often used when available and this is why the prior year district assessment is sometimes used as a pre-test in place of a state assessment.

How is a resource teacher's growth score calculated?

Student growth scores for resource teachers are calculated using students and courses on their schedules, the same as all teachers; however, if the schoolwide score is higher than the teacher's individual score for a resource teacher, the schoolwide score is substituted to give the teacher the higher score.

What is the impact of students who are an in-county transfer or those who transfer from Charter schools in Naples? What about students who transfer from outside Collier County?

Any student who is on a teacher's schedule in either survey 2 OR survey 3 is used. The pre- and post-test scores for these students are compiled and any student with both a valid pre- and post-test score is used in the calculations. Any student with missing test scores will not be used in growth calculations.

Note that the state-calculated VAM score is one of the models used to assign student growth scores. The state-calculated VAM scores are calculated based on students who are in the same school for survey 2 AND survey 3. The state-calculated VAM score is assigned for a course when it is higher than the score from other models, which is another way to increase fairness.

Why was FAST PM1 removed from calculations?

FAST PM1 was used as a pre-test in student growth calculations when the FAST tests were

first introduced. Now that there are multiple years of data for FAST testing, the prior year PM3 can be used instead. This parallels the state method which also uses the prior year PM3 as a pre-test.

Why was the VPK calculation changed?

The state has introduced a new metric for assessing VPK programs. Collier County will utilize this data to calculate a student growth score for VPK teachers. For more information on VPK Accountability, visit https://www.fldoe.org/schools/early-learning/vpk-accountability .

What variables are included in the District's value-added model?

A pre-test score, ESE status, Gifted status, ELL status, home language, migrant status, number of absent days, and a retained indicator are variables included in the District model.

What variables are included in the FLDOE model?

Variables included in the FLDOE model include up to two prior years of FSA/FAST/EOC scores, ESE status indicators, ELL indicators, attendance, number of transitions between schools, difference from modal age in grade, number of relevant courses, homogeneity in achievement of students within relevant courses, and class size of relevant courses. More information regarding the State model can be found at: www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/3/urlt/value-added-model-white-paper.doc

What if I have more questions?

For additional information, please contact FTEM@collierschools.com .