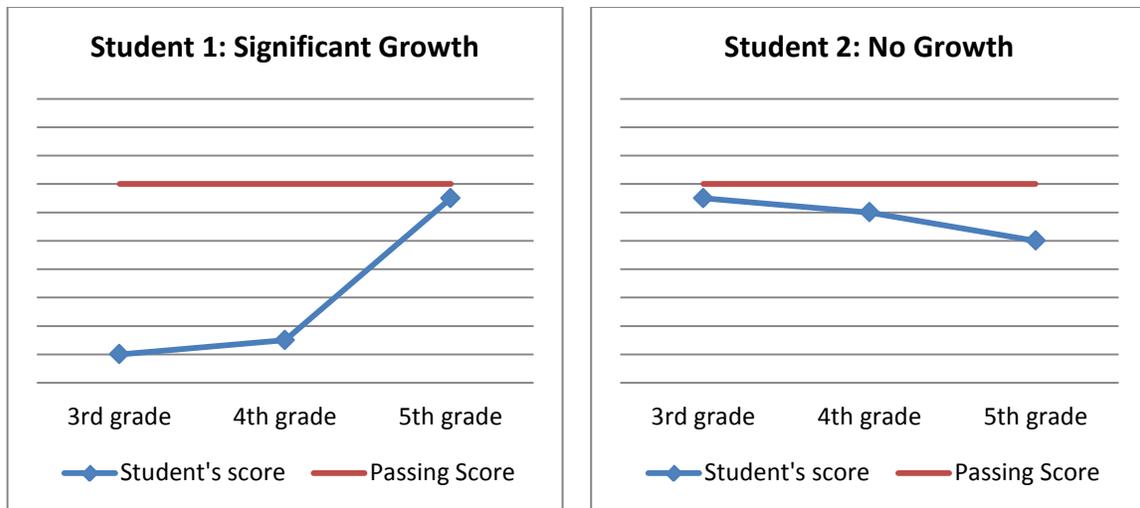


Understanding TVAAS: It's All About Growth

The Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) measures the impact schools and teachers have on their students' academic progress. TVAAS is a powerful tool because it measures how much students *grow* in a year, and shines more light on student progress than solely considering their score on an end of year test¹.

For example, a student who is behind academically may show significant academic growth but not pass the end of year test. Another student may also not pass the end of year test, but not show any growth. The school system added a lot of value to the first student's academic development, and little value to the second student's academic development. However, only looking at the end of year test scores would not tell this full story. TVAAS allows educators to consider their students' **achievement** (their score on the end of year assessment), as well as their **growth** (the progress students make year to year).



TVAAS levels the playing field for teacher performance

When a teacher greets her class on the first day of school, her students will arrive at different academic levels – one student may struggle to sound out words while another reads complex novels. A teacher's goal is to "add value" to her students' academic experience, meaning students in her class show growth. The expected progress for each student is unique and tailored to his or her own prior performance. Because every child has different needs, a teacher adds value by differentiating her instruction to meet the diverse needs of her students. A value-added measure is one tool to help an educator reflect on her teaching and identify the practices that met the needs of her students, as well as the practices that did not meet the needs of her students.

Ways schools can use TVAAS to improve

- Monitor the progress of all groups of students from low-achieving to high-achieving, ensuring growth opportunities for all students
- Measure student achievement as a result of the impact of educational practices, classroom curricula, instructional methods, and professional development
- Make informed, data-driven decisions about where to focus resources to help students make greater progress and perform at higher levels
- Align professional development efforts in the areas of greatest need
- Identify best practices and implement programs that best meet the needs of their students
- Celebrate growth with students and families
- Ensure that high-achieving students continue to be challenged

TVAAS only measures what a school can control

Educators are only held accountable for the things that they can control, such as their students' progress during the school year. Teachers are not held accountable for the things they cannot change, such as their students' previous achievement.

Teachers serving very high-achieving students can score highly effective on TVAAS. Student expectations are not built on a single score but on a progression of scores, so even the highest achievers are only expected to score in line with their own history of achievement. When teachers are effective, their students will not lose ground, even if their students are initially high achieving. For example, in 2013 Williamson County had the highest achieving students in the state based on the TCAP. Williamson County also had the highest TVAAS scores in the state.

Teachers serving low-achieving students can also score highly effective on TVAAS. TVAAS does not compare a student's performance to a set standard, but compares the student's performance to his or her own prior performance. For example, Lucie E. Campbell Elementary, Georgian Hills Elementary, and Treadwell Elementary in Memphis had low achievement scores based on the TCAP, but had very high TVAAS scores.

If you have not yet checked your 2013 TVAAS score, log-in [here](#) to do so. Reach out to your principal if you need your log-in information.

ⁱ End of year assessments most commonly include the K-2 assessment, formerly known as SAT-10, for grades K-2 and TCAP assessments including 3-8 and End of Course exams for high school.