

RT3 One-Time Merit Pay for Teachers and School Administrators

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Will Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) and Leader Effectiveness Measure (LEM) calculations for RT3 One-Time Merit Pay be based on 2012-2013 Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) data and 2013-2014 Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) scores?

For the RT3 One-Time Merit Pay, the TEM/LEM will be 2013-2014 SLO and SGP data (50%) and 2014-2015 TAPS Summative (50%).

1. How is the Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) and the Leader Effectiveness Measure (LEM) determined?

Click the following links to read the [TEM Scoring Guide and Methodology](#) and the [LEM Scoring Guide and Methodology](#) or visit the RT3 Merit Pay webpage at <http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/Page/42037>.

2. Is the one-time merit payment based upon our Value Added scores?

The RT3 one-time merit payment is not based upon value-added scores. Value-added measures will not be used in the calculation of student growth. The RT3 one-time merit payment is tied to teacher and school administrator performance, which is measured by the Teacher Keys and Leader Keys Effectiveness Systems' Teacher Effectiveness Measures and Leader Effectiveness Measures.

3. How will Student Learning Objectives (SLO) data be used for TEM and LEM calculations?

If a teacher teaches non-state assessed courses, the SLO data will be 50% of the teacher's final TEM rating. When a teacher has both SLO and SGP students, a weighted average of the teacher's SLO and SGP ratings will be calculated using the number of SLO and SGP student results in order to determine the teacher's overall Student Growth score. The combination will then be 50% of the teacher's final TEM rating. All Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) and SLO data in a school will be used in determining 50% of the LEM.

4. What year of SLO data will be used for TEM/LEM calculations for the RT3 One-Time Merit Pay?

The SLO data for the 2015 RT3 One-Time Merit Pay will be from the 2013-2014 school year.

5. What about new hires during the 2014-2015 school year—they will have TAPS, but no growth data? Are they automatically excluded?

Only teachers who have a full TEM, i.e. 2013-2014 Student Growth and 2014-2015 TAPS Summative, will be eligible for the required RT3 One-Time Merit Pay that will go to the Tier I top 10% of teachers. Since it is likely that money will be left over from the Tier I disbursement, Atlanta Public Schools (APS) decided to recognize aspects of the profession that are valued in our district. APS has included Tier II which will include teachers who do not have the adequate number of student measures to receive a TEM (ex: low-incidence special education), teachers who do not have 2013-2014 TKES Student Growth data but completed both Formative Assessment phases for the current school year (2014-2015), i.e. 4 Walkthroughs and 2 Formative Assessments.

RT3 One-Time Merit Pay for Teachers and School Administrators Frequently Asked Questions

6. Has there been any consideration to recognize those teachers who do not have the required number of students in order to receive a TEM? I have a small Special Ed population in Elementary School. I never have more than 13 students. Will I be able to get merit pay?

Yes, as mentioned in Questions 4, the APS RT3 One-Time Merit Pay Plan has made provision for teachers evaluated on Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) who will only have a TAPS Summative due to the number of student measures. Teachers must score a Level IV on their TAPS Summative to receive a one-time payment of \$2,500 (less applicable withholdings).

7. I am a non-core teacher who teaches courses that are not subject to state assessments, will I be eligible for Merit Pay?

Yes, a non-core teacher can receive the RT3 one-time merit pay stipend. Teachers who provide instruction in courses not subject to annual state assessments (CRCT or EOCT) will receive growth measures derived from Local Education Agency (LEA) developed and GaDOE approved Student Learning Objectives (SLO). The SLO is one of the measures of the Student Growth component of the Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM). In order for a teacher to receive the RT3 one-time merit stipend, the teacher must fall within one of the following Tiers:

- Tier I – Teachers earning a Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) in the top 10% of Teachers in the districts
- Tier II* – Teachers who do not have a TEM due to certain instances (see question 4), but earn a Level IV rating on the Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS)
- Tier III* – Teachers earned a TEM, but did not fall with in Tiers I & II, with a Level III TAPS and Level III Growth rating.

Please follow this link <http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/Page/42037> to the approved RT3 One-Time Merit Pay Plan for more detailed information. *The disbursement of Tiers II and Tier III is dependent upon the amount of remaining funds after disbursement.

8. Concerns have surfaced about RT3 One-Time Merit Pay teachers being made public through communication, PR, etc. by district or state—wouldn't this be a violation of evaluation information which is intended to be confidential?

The GADOE and APS will not make public a list of teachers who received one-time merit payment. The GADOE communication will continue to state that the top 10% of teachers based on their TEM score will receive \$2500.

9. Are districts required to issue RT3 One-Time Merit Pay to qualifying teachers and administrators who work at the charter schools?

Yes. Teachers and administrators in charter schools will qualify based on the top 10% and APS' local supplemental plan.

10. Are charter schools included for RT3 One-Time Merit Pay consideration?

Yes, Charter schools will be included for consideration for RT3 One-Time Merit Pay. The GADOE will calculate a TEM for the 26 RT3 Districts. Any teacher with a TEM in the top 10% must be provided the RT3 One-Time Merit Pay. It does not matter if the teacher works in a charter school.

RT3 One-Time Merit Pay for Teachers and School Administrators

Frequently Asked Questions

11. Who ranks the TEMs and LEMs?

The GADOE will provide TEM/LEM rankings from highest to lowest early June 2015.

12. Why is the student data from last year used to calculate the 2014-2015 TEM?

The student growth component will always be lagging data. Therefore, every year a TEM and LEM will be calculated using student growth data from the previous school year and TAPS and LAPS data from the current school year.

13. Who is monitoring whether or not the principals are rating teachers fairly for TAPS? Doesn't this affect merit pay as well?

All Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) evaluators (principals, assistant principals, and academy leaders) participate in the Georgia Department of Education's (GADOE) TKES Credentialed Training process, which is conducted by a GADOE Certified Trainer. Also, all TKES evaluators must take and pass a TKES Credentialing Examination and participate in inter-rater reliability sessions to ensure proper use of the system. In addition to training and credentialing from the GADOE, leadership from the Curriculum and Instruction and Human Resources Divisions provide oversight of the TKES process.

14. Will it be a separate check or included in our regular pay if we receive it?

For traditional Atlanta Public School educators, the RT3 One-Time Merit Pay stipend will be processed through payroll and will be included/reflected in your regular pay check.

15. How will a teacher know if he/she will be receiving the one time merit payment?

Educators awarded the one-time merit payment stipend will be informed via email and mail by late July, 2015. They will also be notified when the payments have been disbursed in late August, 2015.

16. Why are administrators included in merit pay?

As a RT3 district, APS aligned with the GADOE RT3 scope of work which requires that district pay both "teachers and principals based on performance tied to student achievement."

17. Are school support staff, such as secretaries, and counselors (instructional support staff), eligible for the one-time merit payment?

Only teachers and school administrators are eligible to receive the Merit Payment as specified in the Georgia Department of Education's RT3 grant, which outlines that the Merit Payment component of RT3 is meant to "pay individual bonuses to teachers and principals tied to student achievement." There was no allowance made for any other staff members,. While we as a district value the contributions of all of our employees, we are held to the parameters set forth in the RT3 grant.

RT3 One-Time Merit Pay for Teachers and School Administrators

Frequently Asked Questions

18. What about teachers who do not have a TEM or receive a low TEM due to SLO data issues?

The Georgia Department of Education worked with district leadership to correct SLO data issues. Teachers without a 2014-2015 TEM, but do have 2014-2015 TAPS Summative Rating of Level IV are eligible to receive Tier II one-time merit payments.

19. Will teachers in schools with higher test scores be better positioned than teachers in lower performing schools to receive merit pay?

No. The Student Growth component of a teacher's TEM is not dependent upon high test scores. Student Growth is a measurement of how much academic growth a student has over a set period of time, based upon a comparison of that student's academic peers. For more information about student growth, go to www.whatissgp.com.

20. What if I don't get merit pay and disagree with that? Who do I notify?

If you meet the eligibility requirements for APS' Race to the Top (RT3) Merit payment and you do not receive a merit payment, please send an email by August 3rd to RT3MeritPay@atlanta.k12.ga.us. A member from the Office of Performance Management will respond to questions within 48 hours.

21. What if I don't agree with my summative rating on my Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards, can I grieve my evaluation?

Performance ratings contained in personnel evaluations are not grievable. Please view the Board Policy Manual, section 4. *Personnel & Talent Management*, number GAE under *Exclusions*:
<http://www.boarddocs.com/ga/aps/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9CKMYG5857A2>