

# Guidance for Districts Using the Circle Assessments

## As the Student Growth Measure for Pre-Kindergarten Teachers in Their Teacher Incentive Allotment Local Designation System

The Circle Progress Monitoring system provides growth reports for each of the three waves in the Assessment cycle. For example, districts could use the growth reports from Wave 1 to set expected growth targets locally for where they expect students to be by the end of Wave 3 and then use the Wave 3 growth report to determine whether students met their expected growth or not. There are several subtests that comprise the Circle Assessment and it is up to districts to decide which subtests they want to include as part of their growth measure for pre-kindergarten teachers.

In addition, there are nationally normed cut points for each test that determine whether a student is a) on track, b) in need of support, or c) in need of monitoring with respect to their development of the skill being tested. These cut points could be used by districts to set growth targets for students. Read about the [Circle Progress Monitoring Benchmarks](#).

Districts will need to decide which subtests that make up Circle they want to use, if not all of them. While it is not required to use all the possible subtests, best practice is to use at least three or more subtests.

## SAMPLE METHODS DISTRICTS COULD USE TO SET EXPECTED GROWTH TARGETS LOCALLY\*

*\*These are possible methods a district could choose to use, not a list of pre-approved or required methods.*

### Method A: Overall point gain from Wave 1 to Wave 3

Districts could use the [Pre-K Circle Benchmarks](#) cut points to determine the overall point gain from Wave 1 to Wave 3 for an “on track” student, and then apply this point gain to a student’s Wave 1 score, regardless of whether the student began the year “on track” or “needs support”. For example, in the chart below regarding the Rapid Letter Naming Test for students who are 4 years old as of September 1<sup>st</sup>, you can see that from Wave 1 to Wave 3 there is a 7-point gain.

Wave	On Track Cut Point Score (for a 4 year old on the Rapid Letter Naming Skill)
1	7
2	11
3	14

Using this 7-point gain, districts could set expected growth targets for students using whatever score they happened to achieve on their Wave 1 test. See the table below for an example. This method is also known as the Flat Rate growth method.

Student	Actual Wave 1 Score	Expected Growth Target for Wave 3 (Wave 1 Score plus 7 points)	Actual Wave 3 Score	Student met expected growth target (Y/N)
Student A	7	14	14	Y
Student B	7	14	11	N
Student C	5	12*	12	Y
Student D	5	12*	10	N
Student E	9	16**	16	Y

\*Since the Benchmarks indicate a 7-point increase from Wave 1 to Wave 3, districts could apply that same 7-point increase to the score of a student whose Wave 1 Score was a 5, to end up with a growth target of 12.

\*\*Since the Benchmarks indicate a 7-point increase from Wave 1 to Wave 3, districts could apply that same 7-point increase to the score of a student whose Wave 1 Score was a 9, to end up with a growth target of 16.

Note: For some districts, deciding to use the nationally normed point gains from Wave 1 to Wave 3 on the Circle test may yield overall student growth that is much higher than other assessments the district may be using and that is not in alignment with the Teacher Incentive Allotment Statewide Performance Standards for student growth. In this case, districts might consider adjusting the required point gain needed within their local district context to yield student growth rates that are not inflated. This is a local decision.

## Method B: Remaining On Track for an age band

Districts could choose to define meeting expected growth targets as remaining on track for a student's respective age band, based on the age of the student as of September 1<sup>st</sup>. For example, a student who was 4 years old as of September 1<sup>st</sup> has an On Track Score of 7 for Wave 1 and an On Track score of 14 for Wave 3. The On Track scores are different for the variety of age bands depending on the age of the student as of September 1<sup>st</sup>. In this method, a student who started the year On Track and ended the year On Track could be considered to have met expected growth since the score that represents On Track at the end of Wave 3 represents growth compared to the On Track score at Wave 1. See the chart below.

Rapid Letter Naming On Track Benchmark for 4 year old student as of September 1	
Wave 1 On Track	7
Wave 3 On Track	14

In this method, students would be considered to have met expected growth if they remained on track for their respective age band. Circle provides four separate age bands, 3 years to 3.5 years, 3.5 years to 4 years, 4 years to 4.5 years and 4.5 years and above. Each age band has different scores for On Track at both Wave 1 and Wave 3.

## Method C: Setting average growth at the district level

Instead of using the national cut points, districts could choose to look at their own average district scores for Reading and for Math during Wave 1 then compare that to the district average score for both tests at the end of Wave 3 to calculate the average growth rate in the district. A student who showed average or above average growth for the district would be considered to have met expected growth and a student who demonstrated below average growth for the district would be considered not to have met expected growth. Please see the example below.

Wave 1 Rapid Letter Naming district average score for Flower ISD= 10

Wave 3 Rapid Letter Naming district average score for Flower ISD= 20

Flower ISD Average Growth on Rapid Letter Naming is 10 points

Student	Wave 1 Score	Flower ISD's local Growth Target (Wave 1 score plus 10 points)	Wave 3 Score	Student met growth target
Student F	7	17	17	Yes
Student G	8	18	20	Yes
Student H	10	20	18	No
Student I	3	13	13	Yes
Student J	5	15	13	No

Individual Student Level Summary Reports are available. They can be viewed by wave(s) to compare data and analyze challenges for proficiency and growth needs. More information can be located in the [Circle User Guide](#).

## Reports

Viewing reports can provide evidence of students' learning for teachers to adjust ongoing instruction. [CLI Engage data reporting](#) features provide snapshots of student skill levels at the individual, group, class, school, and district levels.

These reports use clear visual indicators to flag students who fall below established benchmarks.

- The **Completion Report** tracks completion of selected assessments.
- The **Growth Report** allows users to view their student's growth over time.
- The **Summary Reports** allows users to view student performance across all domains.
- The **Parent Report** informs families of assessment results and connects them to activities that enable them to support their children at home.
- The **Group Report** groups students with scores below age-related benchmarks and recommends interventions and provides lesson plans for further skill development.