

Insight

A Growth Model for Georgia

Used since 2005 by the following Georgia School Systems:

Banks County, Dawson County, Franklin County, Gainesville City, Habersham County, Hall County, Hart County, Lumpkin County, Rabun County, Stephens County, Towns County, Union County, and White County

Developed by

PIONEER RESA


History of *Insight*

- Developed in 2005 as a joint effort of RESA staff, superintendents, curriculum directors, principals, and teachers of 13 Georgia school systems.
- Development and implementation funded by local systems.
- Refinement and automated platform funded through public-private partnerships.
- Used by 13 Georgia systems in 84 elementary and middle schools for 6 years.
- Used by 4 Georgia Race to the Top school systems for 6 years.
- Used by 36 Georgia systems in 2009-10.
- Applied by hundreds of Georgia administrators as a teacher improvement and accountability tool.
- Utilized by Georgia teachers as a tool for improving instructional practices.
- Used by system administrators and local school boards to evaluate effectiveness of personnel and programs.
- Training and help desk support provided to users for six years.

Methodology: A Cohort Comparison Growth Model

Insight is a statistical cohort comparison model based on the percent correct scores of individual students on multiple administrations of Georgia's CRCT. *Insight* is a *growth model* because it measures actual growth over time as opposed to being a *value added model* which compares tested achievement to mathematically predicted achievement. Growth is determined by comparing the percent correct of a selected group (teacher's class) to the percent correct of the full cohort, using consecutive test administrations. Growth is expressed as a change in the comparison of the selected group to the full cohort at two points in time: at the end of the previous school year and again at the end of the current school year. Growth may be reported for any selected cohort of students including whole school populations, whole grade populations, students taught by an individual teacher, students served by a specific program, or students taught during a specific period of the day. Growth measures may also be reported for any identified subpopulation of students within these selected groups.

Insight utilizes a method of analyzing and presenting longitudinal growth that is easily understood and communicated among system administrators, principals, classroom teachers, and school boards. Using existing state test results, the reports indicate the instructional growth associated with teachers, programs, and various interventions over time. The methodology is free from complex analytics and predictions. Because the methodology uses percent correct and does not compare raw scores or percents of students meeting/exceeding standard, it minimizes the influence of factors such as non-vertically aligned tests, inconsistent levels of test difficulty, and

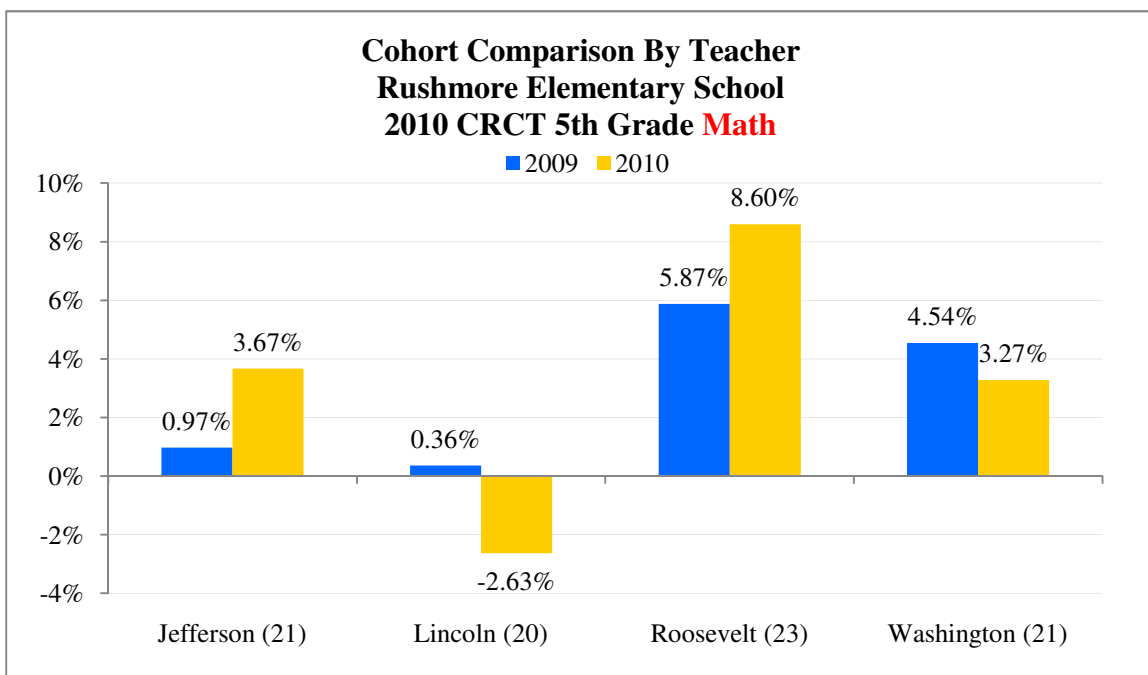
varying cut scores from grade to grade. It also minimizes the influence of factors such as varying ability levels of incoming students and of external variables such as student poverty, mobility, and language acquisition.

All students represented in *Insight* reports are tested for two consecutive years, creating a statistical cohort for growth comparisons. The cohort comparison includes only students with state test scores for consecutive years in consecutive grade levels. The growth or gain associated with a specific teacher for the selected cohort is compared to the growth of a selected larger population, such as all students in the region, similar systems, or the state. *Insight's* methodology and searchable automated platform allow it to report the growth attributed to an individual teacher in each subpopulation, class period, and for each domain within each subject.

The subject-level and whole-class information provided by *Insight* is a useful representation of teacher and administrator accountability for student growth. The more detailed information provided at the subpopulation, class period, and domain levels is not intended as an accountability measure for human capital decision making but is equally useful as a tool to inform teachers and administrators and to guide improvement of instructional practices.

Presentation of *Insight* Growth Reports

Insight reports provide a clear comparison of growth associated with individual teachers in specific subject areas from year to year.



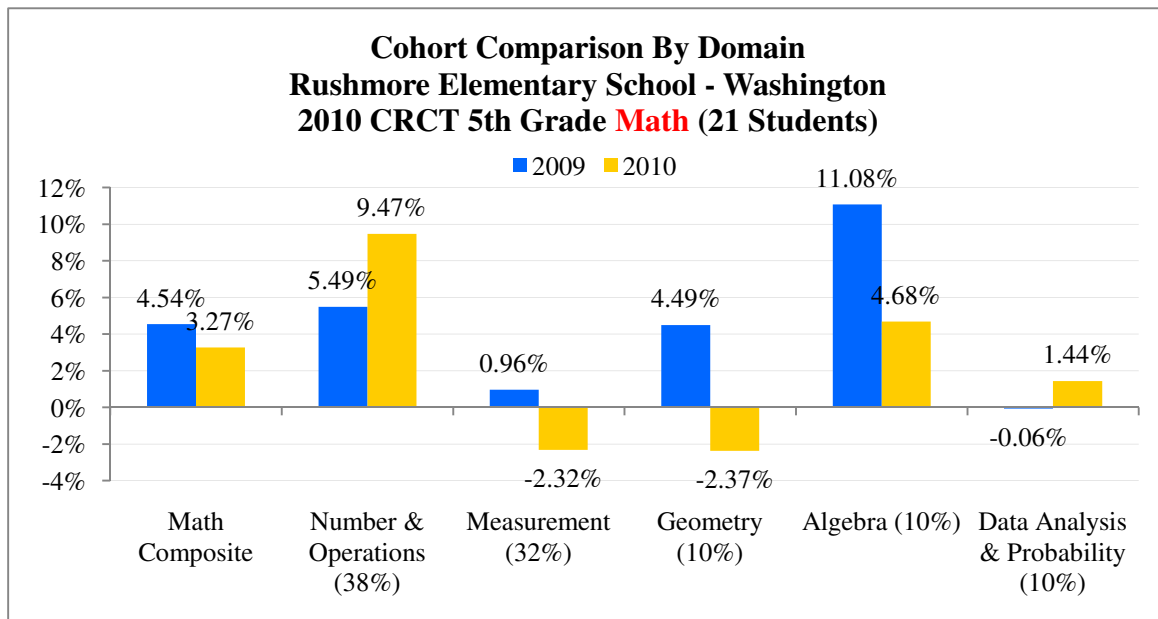
Jefferson’s 21 students began the school year 0.97 average percent correct *above* the baseline (2009 full cohort average percent correct) and finished the year 3.67 average percent correct *above* the baseline (2010 full cohort average percent correct), resulting in a net of **2.70** percentage points. Jefferson’s students continued to perform higher than the average while gaining ground from 2009 to 2010.

Lincoln’s 20 students began the school year 0.36 average percent correct *above* the baseline and finished the year 2.63 average percent correct *below* the baseline, resulting in a net of **-2.99** percentage points. Lincoln not only lost ground with his students, the students are now performing below the full cohort average percent correct.

Roosevelt’s 23 students began the school year 5.87 average percent correct *above* the baseline and finished the year 8.60 average percent correct *above* the baseline, resulting in a net of **2.73** percentage points. Roosevelt’s students continued to perform higher than the average and gained ground from 2009 to 2010.

Washington’s 21 students began the school year 4.54 average percent correct *above* the baseline and finished the year 3.27 average percent correct *above* the baseline, resulting in a net of **-1.27** percentage points. Although the students still perform higher than the average, Washington lost ground to the cohort of students.

Insight is uniquely valuable because it reports teacher-generated growth at greater depths than value added and other growth models. The chart below reports the growth of 21 students in the 5th grade Math class of Washington from 2009 to 2010, both for the subject as a whole (Math Composite) and in each of the five domains of 5th grade Math.



Washington showed a slight loss of growth in 5th grade Math Composite (from 4.54 percentage points above the region to 3.27 percentage points above the region). Such a minimal decline may not be cause for administrative intervention, and does not provide information that helps Washington improve by pinpointing areas of instructional effectiveness and ineffectiveness. The report, however, indicates that Washington is relatively effective in the instruction of Number & Operations while showing decline in the domains of Geometry and Algebra. While the Math Composite measure indicates Washington's class lost ground to the larger population, the domain measures provide valuable information that can increase the effectiveness of Washington by changes of instructional practice, targeted professional learning, or administrative assistance.

Acceptance by Teachers and Administrators

Insight reports have been used by hundreds of Georgia administrators to assess and improve the effectiveness of thousands of Georgia teachers. Teachers and administrators have readily understood these reports and accepted them as a meaningful measure of instructional growth. *Insight's* methodology as an accountability tool has been reviewed by the legal counsel of local school systems and found to be an appropriate instrument for human capital decision making. Local boards of education understand and accept *Insight* as a source of valuable information for system-level decision making.

Laura Hall
Third Grade Teacher, Mossy Creek Elementary School,
White County School System

"Being able to see the gains or losses broken into separate domains enables each teacher to become more aware of the areas in which he/she needs to provide more practice or additional instruction. I feel much more confident with the instruction given because I can concentrate and target the areas that prove to need the greatest attention."

Jim Willis
Superintendent (retired), Putnam County School System

"Insight eliminates the 'but' when discussing outcomes. It is a measure of a teacher's impact on student progress as well as a guide to their instructional planning. Insight would be an excellent statewide system. It is the best data system I have seen in my 38 years as an educator."

Matthew Cooper
Principal, Banks County Middle School
Georgia's 2010 GASSP "Breakthrough Middle School"

"The Insight reports give our teachers a true indicator of how much their students have grown each year. The Insight reports help administrators hold teachers accountable for improving the learning of their students."

Sherrie Whiten
Superintendent, Stephens County School System

“Insight helps teachers and administrators work together. Insight gives administrators the specific information they need to provide teachers with individualized support and professional learning.”

Will Schofield
Superintendent, Hall County School System

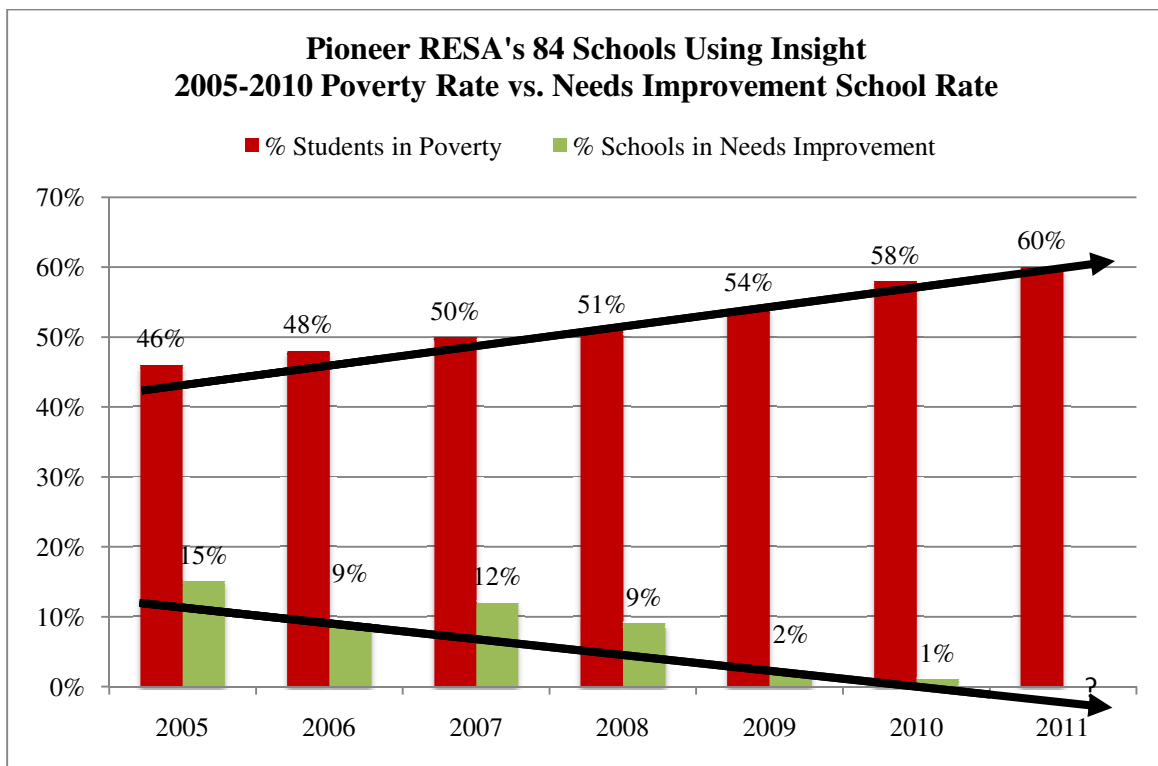
“Insight helps me determine what is working and what is not.”

Richard Behrens
Superintendent, Towns County School System

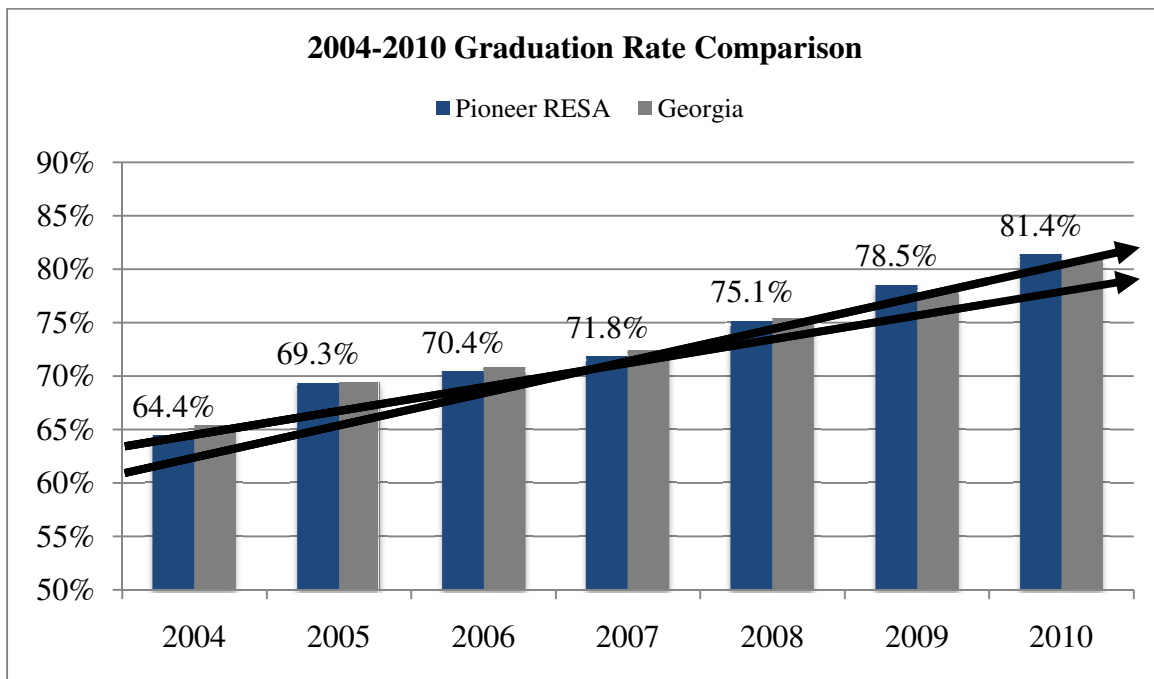
“This user friendly program allows us to analyze individual and group student achievement over time. Now we have a powerful combination that enables us to analyze our achievement results with greater insight and clarity.”

Regional Results

The use of *Insight* as an information and accountability tool is clearly related to decreased numbers of schools in Needs Improvement status and with improvement of regional graduation rates.



Schools in Needs Improvement were minimized as poverty population increased.



Insight introduced in 2005, creating first graduating class in 2009.

Features

- Delivers reports that are easily understood by administrators and teachers to maximize buy-in and utilization.
- Reports growth by subpopulation, class period and domain so that users can readily identify and address areas of need.
- Delivers searchable and customized growth reports to administrators and teachers on demand.
- Accepts data by manual loading or can automatically collect data from local school systems to produce growth reports.
- Easily integrated with existing longitudinal data systems.

Benefits for Georgia

- Developed specifically for Georgia, by Georgia educators, to use Georgia data.
- Used for six years by 13 Georgia systems, including four Race to the Top systems.
- Track record of being understood and accepted by administrators and teachers.
- Useful for both accountability and instructional improvement.
- Proven to strengthen performance of Georgia schools.
- Integration with existing longitudinal data systems will unify state initiatives.

- Training: Content and methods for training administrators and teachers are developed, tested, and easily adapted for on-line delivery statewide. Current users and developers are prepared to assist in rollout and delivery of training.
- Cost savings: Development and pilot work are already accomplished.
- Time savings: Growth reports can be quickly generated for additional Georgia elementary and middle schools with existing automated platform.

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