

# User Guide for the 2013-14 Teacher Median Student Growth Percentile Report

## Background

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On January 8, 2015, the New Jersey Department of Education (“the Department”) published a [broadcast memo](#) describing secure district access to 2013-14 median Student Growth Percentile (mSGP) data for all qualifying teachers. This data describes student growth from last school year, which comprised 30% of qualifying teachers’ 2013-14 evaluations (*note: the mSGP weight has been changed to 10% for 2014-15*). This guide describes how mSGP scores are calculated and used and includes an overview of the following components:

- [The Use of Growth Measures](#)
- [Qualifications for Receiving mSGP Data](#)
- [Calculation of mSGP Scores and Conversion to Evaluation Scores](#)
- [Understanding the Individual Teacher mSGP Report](#)
- [Suggestions for Sharing and Effectively Using mSGP Data](#)
- [Certifying mSGP Data and the Summative Rating](#)
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## The Use of Growth Measures

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A central tenet of AchieveNJ is that educators are never evaluated on a single factor or test score alone, but on multiple measures of both effective practice and student learning. While each district is responsible for developing the contours of their evaluation system, the state has committed to developing measures of student growth as required under the *TEACHNJ Act*. By using a growth methodology to calculate student outcomes, the Department recognizes that students enter each grade level at varying starting points and with unique challenges and that we should focus on student improvement, rather than simply how many students attain proficiency.

New Jersey measures growth for an *individual student* by comparing the change in his or her NJ ASK achievement from one year to the next to the student’s “academic peers” (all other students in the state who had similar historical test results). This change is reported as a Student Growth Percentile (SGP) and indicates on a scale from 1 to 99 how an individual student's growth compares to that of his/her academic peers. To determine the mSGP for an *individual teacher*, district course roster data is used to create an ascending list of SGPs of the qualifying students who were assigned to the teacher by the district. Since 2010, New Jersey has taken several steps to prepare and distribute SGP data to district-assigned NJ SMART users and will continue to offer resources and trainings in the future. Please see this [SGP Timeline](#) for more information.

## Qualifications for Receiving mSGP Data

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For mSGP to be part of a teacher's evaluation in 2013-14, the teacher must have been:

- Assigned to a 4<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts or Math course for 60% or more of the year prior to the date on which the NJ ASK was administered, and
- Assigned 20 unique students by the district through the Course Roster Submission.
  - These students must have been enrolled for 70% or more of the course duration prior to the administration of the test.

mSGP data are available only for teachers of 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts or Math because their students typically have prior year and current year NJ ASK scores. Given that third grade is the first testing year, there is no baseline data to create an SGP for that grade. 2013-14 was the first year when SGP data counted toward evaluation ratings. As more years of data become available, more 4<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts and Math teachers may become eligible to receive mSGPs and annual mSGP values may encompass multiple years of performance.

## Calculation of mSGP Scores and Conversion to Evaluation Scores

In order to determine the mSGP score for each qualifying teacher, the Department aligns NJ ASK results with course rosters provided by each district to the Department as follows:

1. Districts submit and certify Course Roster Submission Data through NJ SMART during the summer following each school year (since 2011-12). This submission lists the students assigned to each teacher for that school year.
2. SGP scores are calculated for each student following completion of the NJ ASK.
3. The Department links district Course Roster Submission data with relevant SGP scores for each qualifying teacher to determine his/her mSGP score. Districts are responsible for ensuring that their data is accurate when submitted to NJ SMART and teachers are encouraged to work with their supervisors to verify the accuracy of their rosters prior to submission.
4. The Department provides mSGP scores to districts to share confidentially with teachers.

To calculate a teacher’s final evaluation rating, 2013-14 mSGPs are converted to a 1.0 - 4.0 score, then weighted at 30% and tabulated with the teacher practice score (55%) and SGO score (15%). The Department used a careful process to create a scale that translates mSGP scores from a 1 - 99 scale to the 1.0 - 4.0 score:

**2013-14 mSGP Conversion Chart**

mSGP Score	Evaluation Rating						
1 - 20	1	35	2.5	50	3	65	3.5
21	1.1	36	2.5	51	3	66	3.5
22	1.2	37	2.6	52	3	67	3.5
23	1.3	38	2.6	53	3	68	3.6
24	1.4	39	2.7	54	3	69	3.6
25	1.5	40	2.7	55	3	70	3.6
26	1.6	41	2.8	56	3.1	71	3.7
27	1.7	42	2.8	57	3.1	72	3.7
28	1.8	43	2.9	58	3.2	73	3.7
29	1.9	44	2.9	59	3.2	74	3.8
30	2	45	3	60	3.3	75	3.8
31	2.1	46	3	61	3.3	76	3.8
32	2.2	47	3	62	3.4	77	3.9
33	2.3	48	3	63	3.4	78	3.9
34	2.4	49	3	64	3.4	79	3.9
						80 - 99	4

The [2013-14 Teacher Evaluation Scoring Guide](#) provides a detailed explanation of the conversion chart, information on scoring the other evaluation components, and the final summative rating scale.

## Understanding the Individual Teacher mSGP Report

District leaders have been provided secure access to a summary of all teacher mSGP scores, as well as individual reports for each teacher indicating his/her 2013-14 mSGP score. School principals and supervisors are asked to share these confidential reports with each teacher with the goal of finalizing the 2013-14 summative evaluation score as well as connecting the mSGP to elements of the teacher’s practice and professional learning.

The individual teacher mSGP report provides brief background information about the use of SGPs and mSGPs, lists the teacher’s score, and offers suggestions for use as well as additional resources. The chart depicting each teacher’s score appears as shown below:

**Ex. 1**

TEACHER	mSGP	# STUDENTS ASSIGNED	mSGP SCORE (1.0-4.0)
Language Arts Literacy	46	22	
Mathematics	68	22	
<b>Overall</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>3.0</b>

In Ex. 1, the teacher has 22 students, all of whom take both Language Arts and Math NJ ASK tests and receive corresponding SGPs. Student SGPs (not shown here) are arrayed in an ascending list for each subject, resulting in the teacher receiving a median SGP for Language Arts of 46 and a median SGP of 68 for Math. However, when all 44 student SGPs (22 for Language Arts and 22 for Math) are arrayed in an ascending list, the median value is 52, which converts to an mSGP score of 3.0 as shown in the last column. Note that the 52 is the median across all 44 student SGP scores, not the average of the teacher’s Language Arts and Math mSGPs.

A minimum of 20 unique student SGPs are required to calculate a valid mSGP appearing in any of the individual rows. In Ex. 1 above, the teacher had more than 20 students in both Language Arts and Math, so mSGPs for each subject and the overall total appear. In Ex. 2 below, the teacher had 20 mSGPs only by combining the 5 Language Arts and 15 Math students. Therefore, the individual subject mSGPs appear as “N/A” but the overall mSGP can be shown since the total was 20.

**Ex. 2**

TEACHER	mSGP	# STUDENTS ASSIGNED	mSGP SCORE (1.0-4.0)
Language Arts Literacy	N/A	5	
Mathematics	N/A	15	
<b>Overall</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3.0</b>

**Suggestions for Sharing and Effectively Using mSGP Data**

In consultation with principals, the chief school administrator (CSA) should review the district’s mSGP reports and determine a strategy to share this information consistently across district schools. While this may happen in a variety of ways, below are some optional suggestions based on approaches that districts have used when sharing mSGP data over the past several years.

**Alleviate Miscommunication Surrounding mSGPs**

Districts can share the [SGP video](#) and other resources found on the [AchieveNJ website](#) not just with educators receiving mSGPs, but with all district staff, the local school board, and the District Evaluation Advisory Committee (DEAC) to ensure all stakeholders hear the same information. Using such a proactive communications strategy will help dispel common myths about mSGPs and lower some of the anxiety associated with this measure. Some of these misconceptions and explanations can be found in the following table.

Misconception	Fact
SGPs are based on student scores on standardized tests.	SGPs measure how much a student <b>has grown from the previous year relative to students across the state</b> with similar NJ ASK performance histories.
mSGP scores will pit teachers in a school against each other.	Students are not compared with others in the class or in the school only but with <b>students around the state</b> , so an improvement by one teacher in a school would not necessitate a decrease for another.
A special education teacher's score will suffer if those students don't do as well on tests.	Evidence from the evaluation pilot showed that in the classroom of an effective teacher, <b>all students are capable of academic growth</b> . Further, SGPs are based on a student's growth in comparison to his/her <b>academic peers</b> , not test scores.
A few students who just don't try on standardized tests will hurt a teacher's score.	A teacher will only receive an mSGP score if 20 or more of his or her separate students take the NJ ASK. Also, the median – not the mean – SGP score is used. Both of these factors mean that <b>a few students who do very poorly are unlikely to significantly impact the mSGP score of a teacher</b> .
mSGP scores won't help teachers improve their teaching.	A thoughtful analysis of the mSGP in conjunction with teacher practice information and other student growth measures can provide <b>insight into areas where teachers can continue to grow</b> .
If the mSGP score differs greatly from the teacher practice and SGO scores, this proves the mSGP is not a valid measure of effectiveness.	AchieveNJ includes multiple measures of teacher practice and student learning because <b>no one factor alone can fully demonstrate teacher effectiveness</b> . While each component offers valuable information, the final summative rating is what counts for the evaluation. In cases where the mSGP score is very different from the other scores, the teacher and supervisor together should examine potential concerns with all components and how to address these concerns going forward.
Parents or reporters will be able to see a teacher's mSGP score.	Evaluation data of a particular employee is confidential in accordance with the <i>TEACHNJ Act</i> and <i>N.J.S.A. 18A:6-120</i> , is not subject to the Open Public Records Act, and <b>will not be released to the public</b> .
If a district made an error with a course roster, the mSGP score will be incorrect, which is unfair.	The Department has provided guidance to districts for correcting inaccurate mSGP scores based on district course roster errors. <b>Teachers can work with their supervisors to provide the proper documentation to correct the mSGP score</b> ; in cases where this is not possible, an incorrect mSGP score will be removed from the final summative rating. (see <a href="#">Certifying mSGP Data and the Summative Rating</a> )
The transition from the NJ ASK to the PARCC exam in 2014-15 will create a problem for mSGP scores next year.	Among measures of student growth, SGP is uniquely designed to handle a transition across different types of assessments. This is because it is a norm referenced methodology, creating a relative ranking of students within an academic performance peer group, not on absolute performance. Because of the careful work that the Department has undertaken over the last several years to align the NJ ASK to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), SGP in the 2014-15 school year will be comparable to SGP in 2013-14.

### Provide Specific Support for Teachers Receiving mSGPs

The Department recommends the following approach for sharing mSGP reports with teachers:

1. Principals watch the [SGP video](#) and review the [2013-14 Teacher Evaluation Scoring Guide](#) as well as this User Guide.
2. Principals email teachers links to key SGP materials listed above and any others deemed appropriate.
3. Principals answer any questions at a faculty or team/PLC meeting as best as possible and record any others that can be emailed to the Department's Office of Evaluation at [educatorevaluation@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:educatorevaluation@doe.state.nj.us).
4. Principals then meet with individual teachers to discuss mSGP scores either at an observation post-conference or at a separately scheduled time. If leaders decide to conduct individual meetings

with teachers, they should communicate expectations for the conference in advance. During the meeting, they might take the following steps:

- Address any of the teacher's outstanding questions about the SGP process.
- Share the teacher's mSGP score and the [mSGP Conversion Chart](#) showing how the mSGP rating converts to a 1.0 - 4.0 score.
- Share the calculated summative rating and show how the mSGP score fits with the other two components of teacher evaluation (teacher practice ratings and SGO scores) to generate an overall score. The [2013-14 summative rating calculator](#) may be used for this purpose, along with the [2013-14 AchieveNJ Optional mSGP Annual Summary Conference Form](#) (supervisors can update the form if partially completed in the personnel file, or can use a clean form to finalize the 2013-14 summative rating).
- Discuss the teacher's mSGP score in relation to evaluation information gathered so far for 2014-15.
- Discuss the teacher's current Professional Development Plan (PDP) and opportunities to address any relevant areas or standards indicated by the mSGP results and finalized 2013-14 summative evaluation rating. If the final rating is Partially Effective or Ineffective (2.64 or below), ensure the teacher is placed on a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) within 15 school days (see following section).

### CAP Procedures

If changes to the educator's summative rating result in a new rating of Partially Effective or Ineffective, then a CAP must be created to replace the PDP within 15 working days following the district's receipt of the summative rating. In order to ensure CAP educators receive all the necessary supports they are due, please consult this [Summary of Legal Requirements for Evaluation and Tenure Cases](#). Additional reminders for educators on a CAP include the following:

- If the CAP is developed after September 15, a mid-year evaluation must occur midway between the development of the CAP and the summary conference.
- Educators on a CAP must:
  - Remain on the CAP until they receive their next summative rating;
  - Be observed by multiple observers; and
  - Receive at least one observation in addition to the number typically required (i.e., most teachers will receive four, not three observations). Teachers should receive the additional observation every year they are on a CAP, even if the CAP only applies to part of the year.

Please see the [Office of Professional Development website](#) for more PDP and CAP resources.

### Handling and Storing mSGP Data

The Department strongly recommends that districts store mSGP data in each teacher's personnel file or in another secure manner that is easily accessible to the teacher (either electronically or on paper). The data should be handled in the secure manner you would treat, handle, and store any part of a confidential personnel record. Evaluation data of a particular employee shall be confidential in accordance with the *TEACHNJ Act* and *N.J.S.A. 18A:6-120*, is not subject to the Open Public Records Act, and shall not be accessible to the public.

### Certifying mSGP Data and the Summative Rating

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**The quality of the mSGP data that the Department produces depends entirely on the accuracy of Course Roster Submissions by districts.** If districts submitted inaccurate 2013-14 course roster data for teachers qualifying to receive mSGP, they may encounter errors with individual mSGP scores. This issue is addressed below, along with information on certifying the final summative evaluation rating for each teacher.

### **Accessing Full Course Roster Data**

The mSGP reports include the total number of qualifying students assigned to the educator in Language Arts and/or Math along with the mSGP score, based on data submitted by the district during the 2013-14 NJ SMART Course Roster Submission. Educators who wish to access their full historical student roster for 2013-14 should consult their supervisor to request the information from the individual(s) who manage your district's NJ SMART data submissions. Please note that such rosters may take some time for data managers to provide, and are based on district assignments and priorities. To help authorized NJ SMART users access the historical district submissions that result in the mSGP report, NJ SMART has posted this [Click-by-Click Guide](#).

### **Addressing Potential Corrections to the mSGP Score**

If teachers and supervisors review the full course roster data and identify an error with the 2013-14 mSGP score, the Department is offering options for addressing the error. Please refer to the [Procedures for Addressing 2013-14 mSGP Data Issues](#) for more information.

### **Certifying Final 2013-14 Evaluation Scores**

In the coming weeks, the Department will share information about a new electronic application for districts to use in certifying final 2013-14 evaluation scores for all educators. This interface will allow districts to review evaluation data, correct any errors that occurred in the original NJ SMART submission, and certify the accuracy of each staff member's final score. Districts will have approximately one month to complete this task after receiving instructions for accessing the tool. If educators encounter problems with the mSGP data released today, districts should consult the [Procedures for Addressing 2013-14 mSGP Data Issues](#) as soon as possible to ensure you can complete the upcoming certification process on time.

## **Additional Resources and Contact Information**

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The AchieveNJ website ([www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ](http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ)) includes several resources about teacher evaluation in general and SGPs specifically. Please visit the AchieveNJ Teacher SGP Page (<http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/teacher/percentile.shtml>) for additional information.

Please contact the Office of Evaluation directly at 609-777-3788 or [educatorevaluation@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:educatorevaluation@doe.state.nj.us) to share questions or feedback.