

User Guide for the Teacher Median Student Growth Percentile Report

Background

On February 4, 2014, the New Jersey Department of Education (“the Department”) published a [broadcast memo](#) describing secure district access to 2012-13 median Student Growth Percentile (mSGP) data for all qualifying teachers. This data does not have any consequences for this year’s evaluation as it describes student growth from last school year. Instead, the information is being shared primarily to help districts and the Department to examine the quality of district data submissions, consider related professional development opportunities, and prepare for the distribution of the first official mSGP scores (for 2013-14) next year when they will count for 30% of qualifying teachers’ evaluations. Districts should provide proper training to ensure educators understand how mSGP scores are calculated and used. This guide supports such training with an overview of the following components:

- [The Use of Growth Measures](#)
- [Qualifications for Receiving mSGP Data](#)
- [Calculation of mSPG Scores and Conversion to Evaluation Scores](#)
- [Understanding the Individual Teacher mSGP Report](#)
- [Suggestions for Using Preliminary mSGP Data](#)
- [Next Steps](#)
- [Additional Resources and Contact Information](#)

The Use of Growth Measures

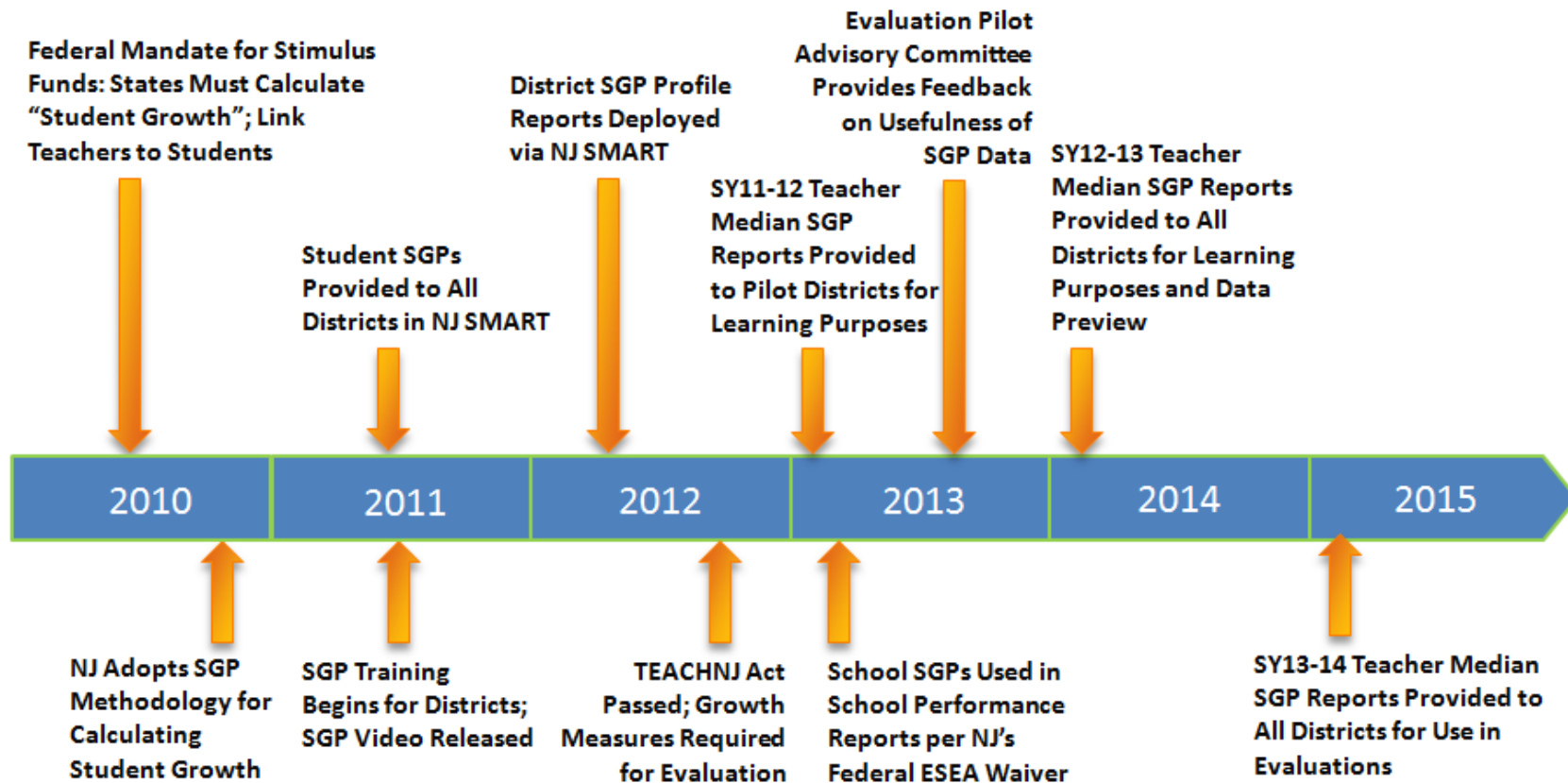
As a central tenet of AchieveNJ, educators are never evaluated on a single factor or test score alone, but on multiple measures of both effective practice and student learning. While each district is responsible for developing the contours of their evaluation system, the state has committed to developing measures of student growth as required under the TEACHNJ Act signed into law in August 2012. 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 in achievement 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. mSGPs are one of several measures used to examine the work of educators under AchieveNJ in 2013-14 and account for 30% of a teacher's overall rating. The rest is based on classroom observations and Student Growth Objectives (SGOs), which are goals set for a teacher’s students at the start of the year.

As depicted on the following timeline, 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.

Development of SGPs in New Jersey

- New Jersey has taken a **thoughtful, multi-year approach** to ensure SGP data is accurate and usable.
- SGP **resources and trainings** will continue to be provided for educators in 2014 and beyond.
- SGP data will continue to be available to **authorized NJ SMART users** in every district.



Qualifications for Receiving mSGP Data

For mSGP to be part of a teacher's evaluation, the teacher must be:

- Assigned to a 4th - 8th-grade Language Arts or Mathematics 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 be enrolled for 70% or more of the course duration prior to the administration of the NJ ASK.

mSGP data are available only for those who teach Language Arts or Mathematics in grades 4 - 8 because their students typically have baseline and end-of-year NJ ASK scores. Given that third grade is the first testing year of the NJ ASK, there is no baseline data to create an SGP for that grade.

2013-14 is the first year when SGP data will count toward evaluation ratings. As more years of data become available, more 4th - 8th grade Language Arts and Mathematics teachers may become eligible to receive mSGPs and annual mSGP values may encompass multiple years of performance.

- The qualification that a teacher must have at least 20 unique students with SGPs may be achieved over multiple years (i.e. a teacher may have 12 students for one school year and 14 students the following year, thereby allowing for an mSGP value in the second year when the total is at least 20).
- In the future, if two or three years of data are available, a teacher will be evaluated on the best available score for the teacher – either the teacher's median score from his or her current roster of students or the median of all student scores over the available years.
 - In 2014-15, a teacher's mSGP may represent the median score for 2014-15 alone, or the median of 2013-14 and 2014-15 combined – whichever is most advantageous to the teacher.
 - In 2015-16, the mSGP may represent the median score for 2015-16 alone, or the median score for 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 combined – whichever is most advantageous to the teacher.
 - Each subsequent year, the most recent of up to three years of data will be used to determine the highest mSGP for a given teacher.

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 according to the following steps.

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. The Department receives SGP scores 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 individual teacher to determine his/her mSGP score.

The quality of the mSGP data that the Department produces depends entirely on the accuracy of Course Roster Submissions by districts. If students are attributed to a

teacher incorrectly, that teacher’s mSGP score will be incorrect. 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 each year prior to submission.

4. The Department provides mSGP scores to districts to share confidentially with individual teachers.
 - 2012-13 mSGP data will be used primarily for informational and learning purposes.
 - 2013-14 mSGP data will be one of several evaluation measures under AchieveNJ and will account for 30% of qualifying teachers’ overall rating. Once available in early 2015, it will be used to finalize the 2013-14 summative evaluation score for those teachers.

To calculate a teacher’s final evaluation rating, 2013-14 mSGPs will be converted to a 1.0 - 4.0 score, then weighted at 30% and included along with the teacher practice score and SGO score. The Department undertook a careful process to create a scale that translates mSGP scores from a 1 - 99 scale to the 1.0 - 4.0 rating in a manner that is fair to teachers while maintaining high expectations for student learning. This process began with an examination of pilot data, extended to additional research and consultation with other states using similar measures, and concluded by conferring with the Department’s Technical Advisory Committee to build the scale (depicted below).

2013-14* mSGP Conversion Chart

mSGP Score	Evaluation Rating	mSGP Score	Evaluation Rating	mSGP Score	Evaluation Rating	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

**Please note that this mSGP Conversion Chart has been provided for 2013-14. The Department will continue to collaborate with educators and to study best practices and may adjust these numbers in future years.*

The [Teacher Evaluation Scoring Guide](#) and [Principal Evaluation Scoring Guide](#) provide a more detailed explanation of this chart, information about scoring the other evaluation components, and the final summative rating scale.

Understanding the Individual Teacher mSGP Report

To help districts and teachers prepare to receive and effectively use 2013-14 mSGP data, the Department has made 2012-13 mSGP scores available to districts for each qualifying teacher that they certified through the NJ SMART Course Roster Submission. District leaders were provided secure access to a summary of all teacher mSGP scores, as well as individual reports for each teacher indicating his/her 2012-13 mSGP. School principals and supervisors were asked to share these confidential reports with each teacher with the goal of connecting the mSGP to elements of the teacher’s practice and to professional learning opportunities.

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
Language Arts Literacy	58	21
Mathematics	47	27
Overall	51	48

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 Mathematics, 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 Mathematics 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
Language Arts Literacy	N/A	5
Mathematics	N/A	15
Overall	46	20

Teachers who wish to access their full student roster for 2012-13 should consult their principal/supervisor to request the information from the district data manager; please note such rosters may take several weeks for data managers to provide. Engaging in this exercise a year before the data will apply to evaluations will give districts the chance to practice and prepare. NJ SMART users should refer to the regularly updated training schedule for webinars on this specific report and should consider refresher webinars for appropriate staff members on the submissions that ensure the overall quality of this report.

Suggestions for Using Preliminary mSGP Data

2012-13 mSGP scores will not be used in 2013-14 evaluations. However, districts can use this data to help prepare for receiving 2013-14 mSGP scores.

Advice from Pilot Districts

Early in 2013, New Jersey’s teacher evaluation pilot districts received 2011-12 teacher mSGP data and were able to use it in a variety of ways, as documented in the [Final Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee \(EPAC\) Report](#) (p. 27-33). Suggestions from this report are summarized below, along with additional guidance for district and school leaders in using the data.

Provide Thorough Training in SGPs to Alleviate Miscommunication

Recognizing that there was much confusion surrounding SGPs, one pilot district trained all district educators on the growth measures – even teachers and schools that did not receive SGP scores. This district shared the SGP video and other resources found on the [AchieveNJ website](#) with principals, teachers, the local school board, and the District Evaluation Advisory Committee (DEAC) to ensure all stakeholders heard the same message and explanation. Such a proactive communications strategy can be used to dispel common myths about SGPs and lower some of the anxiety associated with the new evaluation system. Some of these misconceptions and explanations can be found in the table below.

Misconception	Reality
SGPs are based on how well my students score on standardized tests.	SGPs actually measure how much a student has grown from the previous year as compared to students across the state who have similar NJ ASK performance histories.
SGPs will pit teachers against each other.	Students are not compared with others in the class or in the school but with students around the state , so an improvement by one teacher in a school would not necessitate a decrease for another.
I teach special education students and my score will suffer if they don’t do as well on tests.	Evidence from the evaluation pilot showed that in the classroom of an effective teacher, all students are capable of academic growth . Further, SGPs are based on a student’s progress in comparison to his/her academic peers .
I have a few students who just don’t try on standardized tests and this will hurt my score.	A teacher will only receive an mSGP score if more than 20 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 a few students who do very poorly are unlikely to significantly impact the mSGP rating of a teacher .
Because my SGP scores don’t arrive until the following year, the results won’t help me improve my teaching.	Administrators can still have productive discussions with teachers about mSGP scores even if they arrive during the next school year (see suggestions on following page).

Conduct Reflective Conversations with Teachers

As part of a carefully structured professional conversation, SGP data can be a valuable learning tool. Some pilot districts shared SGP data to promote professional, reflective conversations with teachers. Principals can meet with individual teachers to discuss their scores. In conjunction with other elements of the evaluation rubric, SGP data can be used to prompt reflective dialogue to diagnose root problems and identify concrete strategies to improve practice.

Suggested Strategies for Sharing 2012-13 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 that district and school leaders might find useful.

Suggested Sequence of Events

- 1) Principals watch the [SGP video](#) and review the [Overview of Student Growth Percentile presentation](#) and the [Teacher Evaluation Scoring 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.
- 4) Principals then meet with individual teachers to discuss mSGP scores either at an observation post-conference or at a separately scheduled time.

Suggested Structure for Teacher-Principal SGP Conference

If leaders decide to conduct individual meetings with teachers, they should communicate expectations for the conference in advance. During the meeting, they might conduct the following steps:

- 1) Ask the teacher if he or she has any outstanding questions about the SGP process.
- 2) Share the teacher's mSGP score with the reminder that this is data from 2012-13 and will not count toward the current evaluation.
- 3) Use the [mSGP Conversion Chart](#) to show how the mSGP rating converts to a 1.0 - 4.0 score under AchieveNJ as a demonstration of how the process will work for 2013-14 data.
- 4) Show how this score fits with the other two components of teacher evaluation (teacher practice ratings and SGO scores) to generate an overall score. *Note: When considering prior year observation ratings, please consider that they may not be compatible with or representative of scores on the district's current practice instrument.*
- 5) Discuss the teacher's mSGP score in relation to his or her current observation ratings and current student performance on benchmark and other summative assessments.
- 6) Discuss the teacher's current Professional Development Plan and opportunities to address any relevant areas or standards indicated by the mSGP results.

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. and shall not be accessible to the public.

Next Steps

Districts are encouraged to identify ways in which 2012-13 mSGP data might inform individual teachers' professional growth and to share these ideas – along with any other suggestions, concerns, and feedback – with the Department. We will work with educators across the state to gather information about and examples of effective use of this data. This feedback will help to shape additional guidance to accompany the release of 2013-14 mSGPs next year. As part of this effort, the Department is examining quality control procedures and developing a process for addressing potential data inaccuracies to avoid any instance where an educator's final evaluation rating is impacted by misinformation. We will share guidance about this process with educators in the coming months.

As a reminder, districts are responsible for submitting evaluation data for all teaching staff members as part of the Staff Evaluation Data Submission in NJ SMART at the end of 2013-14. Detailed guidance on data submission procedures was provided in this [January 7 memo](#) and webinar trainings are available several times each month, as publicly posted in the NJ SMART Training Schedule and communicated through monthly email announcements to all NJ SMART users. In early 2015, the Department will enter 2013-14 mSGP scores as well as the final 2013-14 summative rating scores for each educator receiving an mSGP.

Additional Resources and Contact Information

The AchieveNJ website (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 to share questions or feedback.