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Explaining Student Growth Scores to Teachers and Principals: Key Discussion Points

In 2013-2014, approximately 38,000 teachers in ELA/math in grades 4-8 and 4,400 principals (with ELA and math educators in grades 4-8 as well as 9-12 principals) received a State-provided Growth Rating and Score.

The following questions were assembled based upon inquiries made directly by principals and superintendents across the state. For details about how State-provided Growth Scores are calculated see [APPR Guidance](#) Section D, specifically questions D1, D51-54, D71-D95, and D97.

Section A: Questions About This Year's Results and the Impact of the Roll-out of Common Core Regents Exams on Growth Scores

- 1. If a student takes both the Algebra I Common Core Regents Exam and the Integrated Algebra Regents Exam (or the ELA Common Core Regents Exam and the Comprehensive English Regents Exam) which score is included in the calculation of his/her school's and principal's State-provided growth score?**

In 2014, additional mean growth percentile (MGP) models were calculated in order to use the new Common Core-aligned versions of Algebra I and ELA Regents Exams in the calculation of grades 9-12 educator growth scores. For any students with scores from both versions of these assessments in the same subject area (e.g., Algebra I Common Core and Integrated Algebra or ELA Common Core and Comprehensive ELA), two student growth percentiles (SGPs) were computed for each student who took both versions and the higher of the SGPs was used in educator State-provided Growth Score calculations.

- 2. Even if a similar proportion of educators are effective or better this year compared to last year, how stable are an individual educator's results this year compared to last year?**

In 2013-14, almost 85% of individual teachers will earn the same or better HEDI rating than they did in 2012-13. This is a slightly higher percentage than those who earned the same or better HEDI rating between 2011-12 and 2012-13.

Our results are also somewhat more stable from year to year for individual educators than has been found by The Measures of Effective Teaching Study (<http://www.metproject.org/reports.php>).

Section B: Questions about Communications

- 3. What are the key points district and school leaders should use when talking about Growth Scores?**

The most important points to remember about educator Growth Scores used in evaluation are that:

- State-provided Growth Scores are just one of multiple measures in New York’s teacher and principal evaluation system. When talking about an educator’s Growth Score results, it is important to keep these results in context with the other evidence of educator effectiveness from your District’s evaluation system.
- State-provided Growth Scores measure change in learning between two points in time, not just a single-point level of achievement. While educators cannot control the characteristics of students who enter their schools and classrooms, they can, and they do, influence the learning that happens over the course of the year. This is what the New York State-provided Growth Scores measure.
- State-provided Growth Scores measure student performance in the current year compared to that of similar students statewide. By similar students, we mean students with similar prior academic history and student demographic characteristics. This ensures that all educators have a chance to do well regardless of the composition of their schools or classrooms.
- NYSED has developed an animated video and a professional development turnkey kit for administrators to use as they explain to educators in their community how New York State calculates student growth based on State tests for 2012-13 and 2013-14. These and other resources are available at: <http://www.engageny.org/resource/resources-about-state-growth-measures>.

Section C: Questions About Reports and Data

4. Why do some of my educators in grades 4-8 not have Growth Scores?

There are a number of possible reasons why an educator in grades 4-8 does not have a growth score including:

- Growth scores are only provided for those teachers and principals with students in grades 4-8 ELA and math. Educators must have the minimum number of student scores (16) attributed to them to receive a growth score.
- Students must meet the minimum enrollment duration required to be attributed to a teacher (60% of the course) or a principal (enrolled on BEDS day and the first day of the 4-8 subject assessment window or Regents assessment period).
- NYSED uses data for students, assessment scores, and enrollment and attendance duration submitted by districts and BOCES as of the deadlines set by NYSED for each data submission. Data submitted or changed after the deadline will not be included in the current-year growth scores.
- For additional information and detail about this topic, please see the APPR guidance document, available at <https://www.engageny.org/resource/guidance-on-new-york-s-annual-professional-performance-review-law-and-regulations/>.

NYSED recommends that **all** educators also set SLOs for comparable growth measures, particularly those who are close to the minimum n size, in case there are not enough students, not enough scores or are unforeseen issues with the data that might prevent the generation of a State-provided growth score.

5. Which students are included in the calculation of a grades 4-8 or high school principal’s MGP?

To be included in the calculation of a grade 4-8 principal’s State-provided growth score, a student must be attributed to the school using NYSED’s rule for inclusion in institutional accountability (please see NYSED Student Information Repository (SIRS) Manual for more details: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/sirs/home.html>) and have an SPG score calculated in either ELA or

math are included in this calculation. In 2013-14 and beyond, the principal must have a staff assignment record submitted for any of grades 4-8, and the appropriate grade-level students will be attributed to him or her. Each principal in these grades and subjects will receive an MGP for each grade and subject for which they are responsible. This is the simple average (or mean) of all the SGPs from students meeting the minimum enrollment rules for principals in each grade and subject. The SGPs are then combined and averaged to determine an overall MGP that includes all grades for which the principal has a staff assignment record. The principal must have a minimum of 16 SGPs to receive an MGP. See [APPR Guidance](#) questions D1, D54 and D75 for details.

To be included in the calculation of a high school principal's State-provided growth score, a student must have a grade 7 or 8 NYS ELA or math test score and be enrolled in a school with all of grades 9-12. Note that students who transfer into NYS schools in grade 9 from other states or countries will not be included if the baseline test scores from NYS assessments are not available. If a student is in his/her 5th through 8th year after entering high school the student will still be included in the principal's State-provided growth score calculation. A high school principal will only receive a State-provided growth score if the principal is responsible for all of grades 9-12, has a staff assignment record submitted for all of grades 9-12, and has a sufficient number of student scores attributed to him or her to calculate these measures. See [APPR Guidance](#) questions D78, D84, and D86 for details.

6. What if there are errors in the district data provided to the State for inclusion in Growth Scores? What if principals or teachers find errors in the data included in the report?

State-provided Growth Scores are calculated using student assessment, linkage, enrollment, and attendance data provided by Districts to NYSED as of the various deadlines established by NYSED (See Executive Director Kathleen Moorhead's February 2014 memorandum at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/memos/2014/2013-14-TSDL-2-20-14.pdf> and Assistant Commissioner Julia Rafal-Baer's June 10, 2014 memorandum at: <http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/teachers-leaders/docs/appr-deadline-cert-memo.pdf>). Districts, BOCES, and charter schools were required to certify the accuracy of the data submitted to NYSED to meet the June 14 deadline. Section 30-2.3 of the Rules of the Board of Regents requires teachers to be part of this data verification process. As with all other school data, if the information displayed in the reports is incomplete or inaccurate, the data should be corrected in the local source system (e.g., the student management system) and submitted again to NYSED, where possible and before the verification deadline. State-provided Growth Scores will not be re-calculated for 2013-14, but if errors in data are changed and verified by the district by the deadlines established by NYSED, these changes will be included in the data delivery to the growth model vendor for inclusion in the 2014-15 data analysis and calculation.

The failure to submit complete and accurate data on or before the June 6, 2014 verification deadline is **not** a valid basis for an appeal of the State-provided Growth Score to the State (see Question 14 of *Explaining Growth Scores* document here: https://www.engageny.org/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/explaining_growth_scores_faq_2012-13.pdf). Districts must consult with their local counsel on how to address the issue locally, consistent with Education Law §3012-c.

7. Where can I get help answering questions about these data?

NYSED has provided a variety of materials to help districts and educators understand and use the State-provided Growth Scores. The growth model vendor (American Institutes for Research—AIR) recorded a webinar that gives specifics about how Growth Scores and Ratings are determined. The slides and links for these webinars are available on the 'Resources about State

Growth' page on EngageNY: <http://engageny.org/resource/resources-about-state-growth-measures/>. Educator-specific brochures are also available on this site. Additional materials including a tutorial and a user guide for AIR's Growth Reporting System are available on this page. Section D of the "Guidance on New York State's Annual Professional Performance Review For Teachers and Principals to Implement Education Law §3012-c and the Commissioner's Regulations" (see: <https://www.engageny.org/resource/guidance-on-new-york-s-annual-professional-performance-review-law-and-regulations/>) contains additional information about these measures. If districts have questions about access to and navigation in AIR's Growth Reporting System please review the User Guide (<https://www.engageny.org/file/12711/download/grs-users-guide.pdf>) and the Tutorial (<http://usny.nysed.gov/AIRNY/>), and if further questions arise, send an email to educatoreval@mail.nysed.gov. Districts can send an email to dataquest@mail.nysed.gov with questions about data collection or educatoreval@mail.nysed.gov with questions about APPR. A technical report from AIR will be published later this fall and will document the statistical and technical details of NYSED's educator growth measures.

In addition, your network team members are a source of information and further training on State-provided Growth Scores. Note: For more detailed FAQs about teacher and principal Growth Scores for use in educator evaluation, please see Section D of the APPR Guidance Document, available at <https://www.engageny.org/resource/guidance-on-new-york-s-annual-professional-performance-review-law-and-regulations/>.

NOTE: If there are any discrepancies between language in these materials and Statute, Regulations, or APPR Guidance, the Statute, Regulations or APPR Guidance must prevail.