



Student Growth Plots:

A Guide for Parents and Teachers

We have two primary ways of understanding how your child is performing on state assessments; they are **Achievement/Proficiency** and **Growth**.

Looking at a student's score and achievement level represents a snapshot of how the student is doing at that one point in time. To look at how a student is growing in assessment subjects, we look at her **Student Growth Percentile** or **SGP**.

Achievement/Proficiency:

How high is my child's score? What achievement level did they reach? (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 and Level 4)

Growth:

How much progress did my child make in the past year? Is my child making enough progress towards reaching proficiency?

A student growth percentile describes a student's growth over the past year compared to other students with similar prior test scores.

We are used to understanding a child's growth in height or weight by comparing them to other children their age. If a student is taller than 45% of other children their age, we say that they are at the 45th percentile. With student growth percentiles, students are not only compared to other students in the same subject and grade, they are compared to other students who have a similar score history on their state assessments. We refer to these students with similar score history as their academic peers. Therefore, SGPs allow us to see how much students have grown over the course of a year, in comparison to their academic peers in Washington State.

An SGP is a number between 1 and 99. If your child has an SGP of 85, we can say that they showed more growth than 85 percent of their academic peers. Students with similar *current* test scores can have very different SGPs if they have different *prior* test scores. Students who have very low current test scores can have very high growth percentiles; conversely, students who have very high current test scores can have very low growth percentiles.

SGPs are meaningful because they tell a deeper story of a student's progress over time – not simply where they are now. This means that, despite scoring below standard, students can show progress and be recognized for their achievement.

SGPs can provide valuable evidence to help understand if students are making an adequate amount of academic growth from one year to the next. SGPs are an additional tool that can help parents engage with teachers and administrators in constructive conversations about their child's learning. Questions that a parent might want to ask are:

- What steps can we take since my child's growth in ELA was low and they need to catch up?
- Is my child on track to reach proficiency in math?
- Did my child make good progress last year, or are they losing ground?

As parents and teachers, we have a number of measures we rely on to understand our children's academic progress. SGPs should be viewed in conjunction with other information about how your child is progressing in school, such as their grades, completion of class assignments, and their collaborative and social skills. All of these indicators of student performance together form a more complete picture of a student's success in school. For additional information and resources, please visit OSPI's Student Growth Percentile website:

www.k12.wa.us/assessment/StudentGrowth.aspx



Guide to Understanding a Student Growth Plot

