



# Explaining Student Growth Scores for Accountability

## 2022–23 Frequently Asked Questions

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### Introduction

In 2022–23, a Growth Index and Level for districts containing grades 4–8 were provided in the Student Information and Repository System (SIRS) 112 verification report for informational purposes only. The New York State Education Department (NYSED or “the Department”) has provided a variety of materials to help districts and educators understand and use the Accountability growth measure. These materials can be found at the [NYSED Every Student Succeeds Act website](#).

The following document was developed based upon inquiries made directly by stakeholders across the State.

Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, the Department amended the accountability section of its Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan for the 2023–24 and 2024–25 school years based upon 2022–23 and 2023–24 school year results. More information can be found [here](#).

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON STATE-PROVIDED GROWTH SCORES

If further questions arise, reach out to the email addresses below:

- [datasupport@nysed.gov](mailto:datasupport@nysed.gov) for questions about data collection, or
- [accountinfo@nysed.gov](mailto:accountinfo@nysed.gov) for questions about Accountability growth results.



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## 1. How are student growth scores calculated for students in grades 4–8?

For each student in grades 4–8, a “student growth percentile” (SGP) is calculated based on their ELA and math State assessment results in the current year compared to similar students. The term “similar students” means students with the same academic history. Typically, up to three years of prior year assessment results are used, but in 2022–23 only a single prior year of assessment results was utilized.

SGPs range from 1 to 99, and they tell you where a student stands in a distribution of similar students (specifically, what share of students they performed the same as or better than). SGPs are calculated separately by subject and grade.<sup>1</sup> An SGP score of 44 for a grade 4 ELA student, for example, would mean that the student scored as high or better than 44 percent of similar students on the grade 4 ELA assessment that year.

For institutional accountability, typically three years of SGPs are used to generate a Mean Growth Percentile (MGP). For the 2022–23 school year, only a single year of SGPs was utilized, rather than the typical three-year average. The MGP, or Growth Index, is the aggregate measure of the growth of the institution’s students and is calculated for each accountability subgroup for which there are 30 or more SGPs. To be included in a Growth Index, students must have a valid SGP and be continuously enrolled in the institution for the year(s) in which the SGP was generated.

**TABLE 1. EXAMPLE OF STUDENTS WHO COUNT IN AN INSTITUTION’S SUBGROUP GROWTH INDEX**

Student	SGP	BEDS - Assessment Day Enrollment	Include Student in Index Calculation	Grade
Student A	-	Yes	No	4
Student B	40	Yes	Yes	5
Student C	70	No	Yes	6
Student D	60	No	No	7
Student E	41	Yes	Yes	8

*Step 1: Sum SGPs for all students to be included in the calculation.*

*Step 2: Divide Step 1 result by the total number of students and rounded to the nearest 0.1.*

1. Table 1 example:  $40 + 70 + 41 = 151$     2. Table 1 example:  $151 / 3 = 50.3$     Teacher MGP = 50.3

The subgroup described in **Table 1** has an MGP of **50.3**, meaning that, on average, students linked to this subgroup performed as well as or better than about 50 percent of similar students.

A Growth Index is calculated for each subgroup for which the count of SGPs is greater than or equal to 30 during the relevant period. A Growth Level is then assigned to the Growth Index based on the cut points described in **Table 2**.

**TABLE 2. GROWTH INDEX TO GROWTH LEVEL**

Growth Index	Growth Level
45 OR LESS	1
45.1 TO 50	2
50.1 TO 54	3
GREATER THAN 54	4

<sup>1</sup> This “comparison” is done through a regression modeling approach. For more details, please see the 2022–23 Accountability Technical Report, which will be available on the NYSED ESSA page (see here: <http://www.nysed.gov/essa/information-educators-and-schools>) in the fall of 2023.

For more information about how student growth scores are calculated in grades 4–8, please see the Growth Monograph on the [NYSED Every Student Succeeds website](https://www.nysed.gov/Every-Student-Succeeds).

## **2. How did the COVID-19 pandemic impact my accountability growth results?**

Due to the cancellation of the 2019–20 Grades 3–8 ELA and math assessments and the particularly low participation on the 2020–21 assessments, two modifications were made to the 2022–23 growth results:

1. SGPs were calculated using only one prior year test score. Test scores prior to the 2021–22 school year were not used.
2. Growth Indices were calculated using only one year of SGPs and are provided for informational purposes.

## **3. Are my grade 8 Algebra I students included in my accountability growth score?**

Yes. Beginning with the 2021–22 school year results, SGPs are generated for grade 8 students who take the June Algebra I Regents examination. These SGPs are generated using the same methodology already in place for other grades and subjects. As with the rest of the grades 4–8 growth model, SGPs are calculated for grade 8 students who take the June Algebra I Regents examination by comparing the current year Algebra I Regents scores to similar Grade 8 students who also take the Algebra I Regents examination with the same subject, prior-year test scores.

## **4. How did 2022–23 student participation compare to 2018–19?**

In 2022–23 there were slightly fewer students included in the growth results than there were in 2018–19. Overall, the number of students included in the analysis remains very large (about 240,000–288,000 student scores per grade in the grades 4–8 model). In addition, the model's technical characteristics—specifically, model fit and statistical reliability of MGPs—are nearly identical to 2018–19.

## **5. The students opting out in my school were my highest performing students. How can my growth score be considered accurate?**

New York State's growth model measures growth, not proficiency. That is, a student with a high prior test score will not necessarily receive a high SGP. New York's growth model has always assessed a student's progress relative to students with a similar academic history, meaning that if high performing students are included, they are compared to other high performing students and will earn a range of SGPs.

Historical data suggest that there is essentially no relationship between average student prior scores and MGPs. Previous years' growth model results show that schools with many high performing students and schools with few high performing students receive similar ranges of MGPs. Therefore, the fact that previously high performing students may not have participated in testing is not necessarily relevant to an institution's growth score.

## **6. Why did one of my grades 4–8 subgroups not receive a Growth Level?**

An index is created for each subgroup when the combined total of SGPs is equal to or greater than 30. Each subgroup, including the “all students” group for which a school or district is accountable for growth receives a rating of Level 1–4 based on the group's Growth Index for informational purposes. Districts and schools may use the SIRS 112 Growth Report to view which students were included in your Growth Index.

NYSED uses data for students, assessment scores, and enrollment and attendance duration submitted by districts and charters as of the deadlines set by NYSED for each data submission. For each reporting year, data submitted or changed after the deadline are included in the reporting-year growth scores.

## **7. What are the key points district and school leaders should use when talking about growth scores?**

The most important points to remember about growth indices used to make 2022–23 Accountability determinations include:

- The 2022–23 growth results are provided for information purposes only.
- The Growth Level is one of multiple measures in New York State's ESSA plan that is typically used to make Accountability determinations for elementary/middle schools. However, it is not used to make accountability determinations in 2022–23.

- SGPs measure change in learning between two points in time, not just a single-point level of achievement. While the characteristics of students who enter the schools and classrooms of educators are not subject to their control, educators can, and they do, influence the learning that happens over the course of the year.
- SGPs measure student performance in the current year compared to that of similar students statewide. By similar students, we mean students with similar prior academic achievement.

**8. When were testing administration dates, and which administrations were considered in State-provided growth results?**

Grades 3–8 ELA and math assessment administration dates are listed in **Table 3**.

**TABLE 3. ASSESSMENT ADMINISTRATION WINDOWS: 2022–23 SCHOOL YEAR**

Test	Administration Type	Administration Dates	Make-up Dates
Grades 3–8 English Language Arts	Paper-based	Wednesday, April 19–Friday, April 21*	Monday, April 24–Friday, April 28
Grades 3–8 English Language Arts	Computer-based	Wednesday, April 19–Wednesday, April 26	Monday, April 24–Friday, April 28
Grades 3–8 Mathematics	Paper-based	Tuesday, May 2–Thursday, May 4	Friday, May 5–Thursday, May 11
Grades 3–8 Mathematics	Computer-based	Tuesday, May 2–Tuesday, May 9	Friday, May 5–Thursday, May 11
Grade 8 Algebra I	Paper-based	Tuesday, June 15	-

*\*In Spring 2023, some schools were closed on Friday, April 21 in recognition of Eid al-Fitr. Schools that were closed on Friday, April 21 were permitted to use Monday, April 24 as an administration date for these exams.*

Only the Administration Dates and Make-up Dates are utilized as a basis for Accountability growth results. Any assessments taken on ‘straggler’ make-up dates after the listed windows were **not** included in Accountability growth results. Please see the 2022–23 [Elementary-and Intermediate-level Testing Schedule](#) for more details.

**9. What is the difference between growth for Institutional Accountability and State-provided growth results that formerly were used for educator evaluations?**

There are several differences between the growth measures used for Institutional Accountability and State-provided growth results.

- Accountability growth is generated for the accountability subgroups at the school and district levels. State-provided growth results are generated for schools, principals, and teachers of mathematics and English language arts (ELA) in Grades 4–8 as well as schools and principals of grades 9–12.
- For Accountability purposes, SGPs take into account students’ prior academic achievement, while State-provided growth results further adjust for peer effects (i.e., English-language proficiency, economic disadvantage, and disability status) at the student and classroom levels.
- Typically, the Accountability measure is based upon three years of SGPs for students in grades 4–8 English language arts and mathematics. However, the 2022–23 school year results are based upon only one year of SGPs. By contrast, State-provided growth typically uses one year of SGPs.
- 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 the [SIRS Reporting Timelines](#)). The Accountability growth measures attribute SGPs to school and district accountability subgroups using an end-of-year certified roster.
- State-provided growth results are generated for public schools, BOCES, and charters and are made available for download on the secure Information and Reporting Services Portal for districts and charter schools to download and are for informational purposes only. The Accountability growth results are generated for public schools, districts, and charter schools and are made available via the [SIRS 112 Report](#).

See the [State Growth Measures Toolkits](#) site for information about State-provided growth results and the [ESSA](#) site for more information about Accountability growth.

#### **10. 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 student growth scores for institutional accountability. A growth monograph and the 2021–22 technical report from Education Analytics (the current growth model vendor) that documents the statistical and technical details of the results are available on the [NYSED ESSA](#) webpage. The 2022–23 technical report will be published later this school year. If further questions arise, districts can send an email to:

- [datasupport@nysed.gov](mailto:datasupport@nysed.gov) for questions about data collection, or
- [accountinfo@nysed.gov](mailto:accountinfo@nysed.gov) for questions about accountability growth results.