

Understanding the GOALS District Student Growth Percentiles Report

Reading this Report

This report displays the performance of each group (school, grade, or subgroup) in this district. Each bubble on the graph represents a particular group and the size of the bubble is proportional to the number of students in that group. (At this time, calculations for high schools cannot be made, so only elementary and middle schools will be displayed with a bubble.) Group-level achievement, displayed on the vertical axis, is determined by the percentage of students who scored *Proficient* or *Advanced* on the WKCE. Growth, which is placed on the horizontal axis, is determined by finding the median student growth rate in each group. The horizontal gray line on the graph represents the Annual Measureable Objective and the vertical gray line is the median student growth percentile for the entire state.

The table that accompanies the graph displays the performance of each group in the district. The table provides the median student growth percentile for each group, the number of *Proficient* and *Advanced* students from this group, the number of students tested on the WKCE, and the percentage of those students who scored *Proficient* or *Advanced* on the WKCE.

In order to get the most information from this report, it is essential to look at achievement data in a multitude of ways. This includes looking at both the proficiency and growth displayed on this report, looking across years for achievement trends, and comparing performance by race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, grade level, English proficiency, and disability status.

Understanding Student Growth Percentiles

The *median student growth percentile* for a group is calculated by aggregating all of the individual student growth percentiles from the group and identifying the median (or middle) number. This measure is **not** the mean (or average) score. The median student growth percentile is a representation of “typical” growth for students in the group.

An *individual student growth percentile* measures the academic progress each student has made in a year. However, instead of showing how many points a student has gained or lost since the previous year, this measure shows how a student’s progress compares to other students with a similar WKCE score history. For example, a student in year one who obtains a score of 430 would have his year two score compared against the year two scores of students in the same grade across the state who also obtained scores near 430 in year one. The individual student growth percentiles would then be calculated for this group of similar students and for all other groupings of students. Individual student growth percentiles range from 1 (lowest growth) to 99 (highest growth).

When calculating individual student growth percentiles, results from two separate administrations of the WKCE are used. Since the WKCE is administered in the fall of each academic year it is important to attribute academic growth to the grade and school year in which it was obtained. Therefore, when calculating these scores, the lower of the two grades/years where scores were gathered is assigned the growth. For example, a student who completed the grade 3 WKCE in the fall of 2009 and the grade 4 WKCE in the fall of 2010 would have her growth identified as grade 3 growth for the 2009-10 school year.

Cautions and Limitations

The student growth percentile information presented here allows districts and schools to establish a starting point for data-based conversations, which should lead to questions about how to improve performance. Discussions about student performance should never rely on a single indicator, and student growth percentiles are no exception. Student growth percentiles should always be used in combination with other indicators of student achievement within a robust system of instruction and assessment. Further, thorough professional development must accompany the use of student growth percentiles to ensure data are properly interpreted. **GOALS Reports are confidential and should only be shared with appropriate staff and the student’s parent/guardian.**