

The College Ready Promise Growth Model

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)¹

General Questions

1. What is a growth model?
2. How will TCRP measure student growth?
3. For which grades and subjects will TCRP measure growth?
4. What do growth reports show that CA STAR and AYP reports don't?
5. Is growth a better measure of student performance than CST scores?
6. What questions can a growth model help answer?
7. Why did TCRP develop a growth model?
8. When will growth reports be available?
9. How will growth data be disseminated to Charter Management Organizations?
10. What additional information will TCRP provide to teachers and administrators on how growth data is calculated and used?

Specific Questions

11. What is a student growth percentile?
12. Against whom are students being compared to generate student growth percentiles?
13. What does the median student growth percentile at my school, grade level and classroom mean?
14. Can the student growth percentile be interpreted the same way regardless of grade level and the test's subject matter?
15. Do students who perform at the *Advanced* achievement level on their CSTs show growth?
16. Research shows that there are correlations between a student's economic status and achievement level on the CST. Is the same true with growth?
17. If my school made AYP, does that mean my students are growing faster than their academic peers?

General FAQ Answers

1. **What is a growth model?**

The term *growth model* describes a method of measuring students' learning progress on statewide assessments by tracking the test scores of the same students from one year to the next.

2. **How will TCRP measure student growth?**

TCRP will measure growth for *an individual student* by comparing the change in his/her CST performance to all other students in TCRP and LAUSD who had

¹ If you have a question that is not answered here, please email schacter@teachingdoctors.com, or visit the website <https://thevaanetwork.com>.

similar CST achievement results in previous years (the student's "academic peers"). This change will be reported as a Student Growth Percentile (SGP) from 1 to 99. Higher student growth percentiles indicate more growth.

3. For which grades and subjects will TCRP report growth?

TCRP will initially report growth for ELA and mathematics in grades 3 through 11. In future years, TCRP will report growth for other subjects such as science and social studies in the middle and high schools.

4. What do growth reports show that CA STAR and AYP reports don't?

Growth reports display information about how much academic progress students made in relation to their academic peers (students with a similar CST test results).

The CA STAR report presents information about the achievement level of students at the end of each school year, displaying the percent of students performing at: Far Below Basic, Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, or Advanced.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) provides information about how close a school is to helping all students reach or exceed proficiency. It focuses on comparisons of grade-level cohorts (e.g., this year's 4th graders compared to last year's 4th graders), not individual student's growth.

5. Is growth a better measure of student performance than CST scores?

If you want to know how well a student achieved on the standards for mathematics by the end of 6th grade, the CST score and performance level will answer that question. If you are trying to determine how much a student's performance changed from year to year relative to the student's academic peers, the growth model will answer that question.

6. What questions can a growth model help answer?

Growth models allow schools to identify promising and underperforming programs and practices. A growth model can help answer questions such as:

- a. *How much academic progress did an individual or group of students make in one or more years?*
- b. *How does an individual student's growth compare to that of students with similar prior CST test scores?*
- c. *Is a student, school or teacher's growth higher than, lower than, or similar to the growth of comparable students, schools or teachers?*
- d. *Which schools or teachers demonstrate better than (or less than) average growth?*

7. Why did TCRP develop a growth model?

TCRP developed a growth model to measure students' academic progress, in order to better meet each student's learning needs. In addition, TCRP aims to provide every student with a highly effective teacher. Research has

demonstrated that having access to an effective teacher is the single most important school related factor responsible for increasing student learning.

One way to determine an effective teacher is by measuring the student learning growth each teacher produces. TCRP teacher's growth percentiles will be used as one part of their rigorous and comprehensive teacher evaluation system.

8. When will growth reports be available?

TCRP educators can expect to receive their growth data by mid December.

9. How will growth data be disseminated to CMOs?

Growth data will be delivered to CMO leaders via a password protected secure Web site (<https://thevaanetwork.com>). CMO administrators can enroll principals and teachers providing them with access to their school's and students' growth and achievement results.

10. What additional information will TCRP provide to teachers, administrators, and other education stakeholders on how growth data is calculated and used? Where can I find this information?

TCRP leadership will be delivering face-to-face presentations to teachers and principals about their growth model. Recorded Webinars describing the TCRP growth model can be viewed at <https://thevaanetwork.com>, and finally, educators can read the *TCRP Quick Start Guide* to familiarize themselves with how student growth will be measured. Questions not answered by this FAQ should be emailed to schacter@teachingdoctors.com or jmarland@thecollegereadypromise.org.

Specific Questions

11. What is a student growth percentile?

Student Growth Percentiles, or SGP, measure how much a student has learned compared to his or her *academic peers*. *Academic peers* are students who have similar CST test scores. SGP allows educators to see whether a student has progressed similar to, greater than, or less than comparable students. Growth percentiles are reported on a normative scale from 1 to 99 with higher percentiles indicating greater growth. They can be interpreted as follows: if Maria Santos, currently a grade 5 student, has a student growth percentile of 65 in English language arts, that means that Maria improved more between grades 4 and 5 than 65 percent of students with a similar CST test score history. Similarly, if Maria had a student growth percentile of 44 in mathematics, it means that she improved more than 44 percent of students with a similar CST test score history in math.

12. Against whom are students being compared to generate SGPs?

Each student is compared to his or her academic peers (i.e., other students in TCRP and LAUSD with similar CST test score histories). This makes for a fair growth estimation because it allows us to describe the growth in student learning compared to other students that started at equivalent achievement levels.

13. What does the median student growth percentile at my school, grade level, and classroom represent?

The median student growth percentile is the midpoint of student growth percentiles in the school, grade level or classroom. Half of the students had student growth percentiles higher than the median; half had lower. This is a good way of describing the growth of students in the school, grade or class. It is not appropriate to use the average (“mean”) when reporting percentiles, because percentiles are not on an equal interval scale.

14. Can the student growth percentile be interpreted the same way regardless of the grade level or the test’s subject matter?

Yes. A student with a growth percentile of 70 improved more than 70 percent of his academic peers, whether that student is enrolled in grade 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, etc. Moreover, a student with a growth percentile of 70 in English language arts improved more than 70 percent of his academic peers in English language arts. And, a student with a student growth percentile of 70 in mathematics improved more than 70 percent of his academic peers in mathematics.

15. Can students who perform at the top range of the test, say the *Advanced level (550-600)* show growth?

Yes. One of the strengths of the Student Growth Percentile model is that it measures growth at the top and bottom of the CST performance scale equally well. All students no matter where they start have the opportunity to exhibit growth from the 1st to 99th percentile. SGP accounts for this by measuring each student’s growth relative to his or her academic peers.

16. Research shows that there are correlations between a student’s socio-economic status and their achievement on the CST. Is the same true with growth?

No. Numerous studies have established that there is a strong correlation between economically disadvantaged students and their achievement level. The correlation between growth and economically disadvantaged students is weak and statistically insignificant.

17. If my school made AYP, does that mean my students are growing faster than their academic peers?

No. AYP determinations are based on absolute performance, and do not compare the same students’ growth over time. It is, therefore, possible for schools to make AYP and have low growth, if most of the school’s students have performed at the *Proficient* level, and they grow more slowly than that of their academic peers. Likewise, it is possible for a school to have most of its students growing at high rates and still not make AYP.