

District Press Release

Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education Adopts New “Growth Model” to Measure Individual Student Progress

On October 27th the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education released its new “Growth Model” to measure student performance in conjunction with state MCAS achievement level results. Results show that the median or “typical” student district-wide for the Saugus Public Schools grew at a rate comparable to the state average.

School and district growth reports are developed by aggregating the student growth percentiles for all students in the school or district to determine the median student growth percentile. Results are calculated only for students in grades 4 – 8 who have two or more consecutive years of MCAS results and students in grade 10 with MCAS results from grade 8.

Student growth percentiles range from 1 to 99, where higher numbers represent higher growth and lower numbers represent lower growth. According to the growth model results, high growth is defined as growth in a subject or above the 60th percentile, typical growth is between the 40th and 60th percentile, and low growth is below the 40th percentile.

This year’s growth report includes results for students in grade 4 – 8 and grade 10 in English language arts and mathematics. The data is calculated using historical MCAS results going back at least two years.

This is the first time Massachusetts has used a growth model to evaluate student performance. The results measure individual student progress on the state’s assessment test by tracking the scores from one year to the next. Whereas basic test results reflect how a student performed on a particular assessment, growth reports detail how much the student’s performance has changed from year to year compared to students with similar test score histories.

Growth data alone does not create a full picture of school, district or student performance; the reports are meant to be used in conjunction with MCAS achievement level results.

Growth for individual students is measured by comparing the change in his or her MCAS performance from one year to the next to that of their “academic peers”, other students in the state with similar MCAS performance history. This “student growth percentile” (SGP) indicates how high or low a student’s growth was as compared to their academic peers.

School or district growth reports are developed by aggregating the SGP for all students in the school or district to determine the median student growth percentile. Results are calculated only for students in grades 4 – 8 who have two or more consecutive years of MCAS results, and students in grade 10 who have MCAS test results for grade 8.

Individual student growth percentiles for grades 6 – 12 are posted on X2 so parents will be able to access their child’s percentile and monitor demonstrated growth on next year’s MCAS test. Further information regarding the new growth model and student performance is available through the building principal.