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January 8, 2015

TO: Chief School Administrators
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School Leaders

ROUTE TO: All District Principals, Assistant/Vice Principals, Teaching Staff Members, and Web User Administrators

FROM: Peter Shulman, Assistant Commissioner/Chief Talent Officer *PS*
Division of Teacher and Leader Effectiveness

SUBJECT: Release of Median Student Growth Percentiles (mSGPs) and Score Verification Procedures for 2013-14

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Since 2010, the New Jersey Department of Education (“the Department”) has been developing Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs) to demonstrate the relative growth of students over the course of an academic year. After four years of preparation and piloting, **today we are sharing the median SGP (mSGP) scores for qualifying teachers, principals, and assistant/vice principals (APs/VPs) from 2013-14** to be used as one component of those educators’ performance

evaluations. **This information shall be maintained by the school district, shall be confidential, and shall not be accessible to the public in accordance with the *TEACHNJ Act* and *N.J.S.A. 18A:6-120.d* and *121.d*. Further, such individual data is exempt from the Open Public Records Act (OPRA).**

The mSGP data offers one important window into teaching and learning in New Jersey. When combined with the other multiple measures of educator practice and student learning, mSGP scores help provide a more comprehensive evaluation. **This memo includes detailed instructions and guidance to help district leaders access and share the mSGP scores, review and if necessary correct scores, and then finalize 2013-14 summative evaluation ratings.** Please read all sections carefully, visit the AchieveNJ website for more information, and send questions or comments to educatorevaluation@doe.state.nj.us. Please note that the Office of Evaluation is also sending emails directly to New Jersey teachers and principals to alert them to this important data release.

I. Background and Action Items

As you know, the *TEACHNJ Act* of 2012 requires the use of multiple measures of educator practice and student learning – including the state standardized assessment as appropriate. AchieveNJ includes two measures of student learning: the Student Growth Objective (SGO) score for all teachers and the mSGP score for qualifying teachers of 4th – 8th grade language arts and math. For the 2013-14 school year, mSGP scores count for 30 percent of qualifying teacher evaluations and 20 or 30 percent of qualifying principal/AP/VP evaluations. (*Note: the weight of the mSGP for the current 2014-15 school year has changed to 10 percent for all educators as the state transitions to the new PARCC exam.*)

The Department has been supporting districts in preparing for this release for several years, following these major steps:

1. Following a federal mandate for stimulus funds, in 2010 the Department began calculating SGPs based on NJ ASK results in 4th – 8th grade language arts and math; NJ SMART began providing districts with the student growth scores in 2011.
2. Starting in 2011-12, the Department began requiring districts to certify course rosters matching educators to their students – one critical element for the calculation of mSGP scores.
3. From 2011-13, the Department conducted an educator evaluation pilot program and worked with participating districts to share mSGP scores and hear feedback about their accuracy and usefulness.
4. With the passage of the *TEACHNJ Act* in 2012, state law required the use of student outcomes on the state assessment as one component of educator evaluation. The Department then worked with educators and analyzed results from the pilot program to inform regulations specifying evaluation measures. We shared detailed guidance with educators about the development of SGPs and mSGPs to help prepare them for the future use of this measure.
5. In January 2014, we provided districts with access to 2012-13 mSGP scores for all qualifying teachers as a “practice exercise” in preparation for today’s release. The practice exercise provided an opportunity for educators to learn more about this element of

evaluation, problem-solve for data quality errors, and share feedback to help improve the process for this year.

Please see this [New Jersey SGP Timeline](#) for more information about this multi-year process.

Confidentiality

2013-14 mSGP score reports are accessible only to those with proper data access permissions, and districts must ensure confidentiality of individual personnel data. The Department strongly recommends that districts store mSGP data in each teacher's personnel file or in another secure manner that is easily accessible to the educator (either electronically or on paper). As stated above, evaluation data of a particular employee shall be confidential in accordance with the *TEACHNJ Act* and *N.J.S.A. 18A:6-120.d* and *121.d*. Further, such individual data is exempt from the Open Public Records Act (OPRA). Educator mSGP data should be handled in the secure manner you would treat, handle, and store any part of a confidential personnel record and should not be released to the public.

A. Steps and Resources for Accessing and Sharing 2013-14 mSGP Scores

The chief school administrator (CSA) should review the district's teacher and principal/AP/VP mSGP reports and determine a strategy to share this information consistently across schools. Below is an outline of events that district and school leaders might find useful. Note that **although information about the Teacher mSGP Reports is listed first here, districts should determine the most fitting sequence of events locally**. Please also consult [Appendix A](#) for an annotated guide to several detailed resources to support this distribution.

1. Access Teacher mSGP Reports

The Teacher Median Student Growth Percentile District Summary Report is accessible only through the secure NJ SMART portal and only by those with account access and permissions that allow access to SMID Management. Account access and permissions are administered and managed by your district Web User Administrator. Authorized NJ SMART users with SMID Management account privileges can access the report by following these steps:

1. Log into the NJ SMART portal using your assigned credentials.
2. Click on "*State ID Management*" on the top of the NJ SMART Page (second option from left).
3. Click "*SMID Management*" (second option in drop-down menu).
4. Click "*Reports*" (on the left navigation bar).
5. Click "*Teacher Median SGP Summary*" (the only report option that will appear).
6. Make the desired selections from the resulting Report Parameters page to choose the specific school(s) and/or teacher(s) for whom the report shall be run, and click "*Run Report*."
7. Save the resultant report(s) in a manner that is consistent with your local policies and procedures, as you would secure any confidential document or part of a staff member's personnel file.

2. Share Teacher mSGP Reports

District leaders should work with principals to provide individual mSGP score reports to teachers along with the [2013-14 Teacher mSGP Report User Guide](#). The Department suggests the following approach:

1. Principals watch the [SGP video](#) and review the [2013-14 Teacher Evaluation Scoring Guide](#) as well as the [2013-14 Teacher mSGP Report User Guide](#).
2. Principals email teachers links to key SGP materials listed above and any others deemed appropriate.
3. Principals answer any questions at a faculty or team/PLC meeting as best as possible and record any others that can be emailed to the Department's Office of Evaluation at educatorevaluation@doe.state.nj.us.
4. Principals then meet with individual teachers to discuss mSGP scores either at an observation post-conference or at a separately scheduled time and communicate expectations for the conference in advance. During the meeting, they might take the following steps:
 - Address any of the teacher's outstanding questions about the SGP process.
 - Share the teacher's mSGP score and the [mSGP Conversion Chart](#) showing how the mSGP rating converts to a 1.0 - 4.0 score, using the [2013-14 Teacher mSGP Report User Guide](#) as a reference.
 - Share the calculated summative rating and show how the mSGP score fits with the other two components of teacher evaluation (teacher practice ratings and SGO scores) to generate an overall score. The [2013-14 Summative Rating Calculator](#) may be used for this purpose, along with the [2013-14 AchieveNJ Optional mSGP Annual Summary Conference Form](#) (supervisors can update the form if partially completed in the personnel file, or can use a clean form to finalize the 2013-14 summative rating).
 - Discuss the teacher's mSGP score in relation to evaluation information gathered so far for 2014-15.
 - Discuss the teacher's current Professional Development Plan (PDP) and opportunities to address any relevant areas or standards indicated by the mSGP results and finalized 2013-14 summative evaluation rating. If the final rating is Partially Effective or Ineffective (2.64 or below), ensure the teacher is placed on a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) within 15 school days. Please see [Section I.B.](#) for more information on CAP procedures.

3. Access Principal/AP/VP mSGP Reports

The 2013-14 Principal/AP/VP Median Student Growth Percentile District Summary Reports can be accessed at NJDOE Homeroom (<http://homeroom.state.nj.us>) under 2013-14 Principal mSGP Summary Report. If the CSA (or his/her designee) already has a district-level Homeroom account, then he/she will need to be authorized to view the grade reports. Additional user accounts can also be added to view the reports through Homeroom Administration. Authorized Homeroom users can access the report by following these steps:

1. Log into the Homeroom portal using your assigned credentials.
2. Click on and download each of the following three available reports:
 - Summary Report
 - Individual Principal/AP/VP Narrative Reports
 - Excel Document with all Principal/AP/VP Scores

4. Share Principal/AP/VP mSGP Reports

District leaders should provide individual mSGP score reports to principals/APs/VPs, along with the [2013-14 Principal mSGP Report User Guide](#). The Department suggests using an approach similar

to that for sharing teacher mSGPs. **When practical, districts might consider working through this process with principals first**, positioning these school leaders to effectively conduct a similar process with their teachers:

1. Principals and their supervisors review the material available for mSGPs, particularly the [SGP video](#), [2013-14 Principal Evaluation Scoring Guide](#), and the [2013-14 Principal mSGP Report User Guide](#).
2. During a leadership meeting, supervisors answer any questions that principals may have regarding the mSGP process.
3. Supervisors meet with school leaders receiving mSGP scores to discuss their specific results. During this meeting, supervisors might consider the following guidelines:
 - Address any of the principal's outstanding questions about the mSGP process.
 - Share the principal's individual mSGP profile, using the [2013-14 Principal mSGP Report User Guide](#) as a reference.
 - Show how the mSGP score fits with the other components of principal evaluation to generate a summative score. Discuss the relationship between the mSGP score and other components of the principal's evaluation, and to evaluation information gathered so far for 2014-15.
 - Discuss the principal's mSGP score in relation to the NJ ASK data from which it was derived and multi-year trends in standardized tests scores, data on the school performance report, and other markers of student success. Use these data to help inform the principal's future PDP, Administrator Goals, and school-wide priorities.
 - Discuss the principal's current PDP and opportunities to address any relevant areas or standards indicated by the mSGP results and finalized 2013-14 summative evaluation rating. If the final rating is Partially Effective or Ineffective (2.64 or below), ensure the principal is placed on a CAP within 15 school days. Please see [Section I.B.](#) for more information on CAP procedures.

Should you have any questions or concerns with any of the steps listed above please contact the Office of Evaluation at educatorevaluation@doe.state.nj.us or 609-777-3788.

B. Corrective Action Plan Procedures for Educators Rated Ineffective or Partially Effective

All teachers, principals, and APs/VPs are required to participate in the creation of an individual PDP each year based in part on information gathered through the evaluation process. Educators rated Partially Effective or Ineffective on a summative evaluation in a given year must be placed on a CAP to receive additional support.

For educators receiving mSGP scores and/or adjusting summative ratings based on issues addressed in [Section II](#), it is possible that the summative rating could result in the need to change the PDP.

If changes to the educator's summative rating result in a new rating of Partially Effective or Ineffective, then a CAP must be created to replace the PDP within 15 working days following the district's receipt of the summative rating. Districts will receive the summative rating when given access to the Evaluation Score Certification Tool, which will include each educator's component scores and summative rating (see [Section I.C.](#)).

In order to ensure educators with a CAP receive all the necessary supports, please consult this [Summary of Legal Requirements for Evaluation and Tenure Cases](#). Additional reminders include the following:

- If the CAP is developed after September 15, a mid-year evaluation must occur midway between the development of the CAP and the summary conference.
- Educators on a CAP must:
 - Remain on the CAP until they receive their next summative rating;
 - Be observed by multiple observers; and
 - Receive at least one observation in addition to the number typically required (i.e., most will receive four, not three observations). Educators should receive the additional observation for every year they are on a CAP, even if the CAP only applies to part of the year.

The Department has published several resources to help districts with PDP and CAP procedures:

- [Overview of PDP and CAP Requirements](#)
- Optional Teacher PDP Template and Sample ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))
- Optional Blank Teacher PDP Template ([Word](#))
- Optional Teacher CAP Template and Sample ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))
- Optional Blank Teacher CAP Template ([Word](#))

C. Upcoming Evaluation Score Certification Process

In the coming weeks, the Department will share information about a new electronic application for districts to use in certifying final 2013-14 evaluation scores for all educators. This interface will be similar to existing applications on NJDOE Homeroom through which districts can review, correct, and certify data, such as the Application for State School Aid (ASSA) application. The new Evaluation Score Certification Tool will allow districts to review evaluation data, correct any errors that occurred in the original NJ SMART submission, and certify the accuracy of each staff member's final score. Districts will have approximately one month to complete this task after receiving instructions for accessing the tool. If educators encounter issues with the mSGP data released today, districts should consult the guidance included in [Section II](#) of this memo as soon as possible to ensure they can complete the upcoming certification process on time.

II. Technical Details and Assistance

A. Qualifications for Receiving a 2013-14 mSGP Score

Median SGP scores are developed using course roster information submitted by districts. The accuracy of these scores relies on accurate district submissions within NJ SMART. The 2013-14 mSGP data available today is based on data submissions for the 2013-2014 school year. To calculate mSGPs, the Department matched student school and course assignments with corresponding SGP scores for those students assigned to each educator. The median score on an educator's roster is his or her 2013-14 mSGP score. For detailed information on SGPs and mSGPs, please visit the [AchieveNJ SGP web page](#).

Qualifications for Teachers

2013-14 mSGP data are available for those who taught language arts and/or math in grades 4–8. For the mSGP to be part of a teacher's evaluation, a teacher must:

- Have been the teacher of record for at least 60 percent of the course prior to the NJ ASK; and
- Have valid SGP scores for at least 20 separate students who were enrolled in the class for at least 70 percent of the school year before taking the NJ ASK.

Approximately 15 percent of all New Jersey teachers received mSGP scores for 2013-14.

Qualifications for Principals and APs/VPs

2013-14 mSGP data are available for those who led schools including one or more SGP grades. For the mSGP to be part of a principal/AP/VP's evaluation, that educator must have been:

- Assigned by October 15, 2013 to a school attended by more than 20 separate students who took the 4th- to 8th-grade language arts or math NJ ASK; and
- Assigned to qualifying students reported as having attended the school for one full year prior to the administration of the NJ ASK, according to the data submitted by the district in its State Submission.

Approximately 60 percent of all New Jersey principals and APs/VPs received mSGP scores for 2013-14.

Given these requirements, districts may find that they expected to receive mSGP scores for educators who ended up not qualifying and vice versa. These issues are addressed below.

B. Accessing Full Course Roster Data

The mSGP reports include the total number of qualifying students assigned to the educator in language arts and/or math along with the mSGP score, based on data submitted by your district during the 2013-14 NJ SMART Course Roster Submission. Educators who wish to access their full historical student roster for 2013-14 should consult their supervisor to request the information from the individual(s) who manage your district's NJ SMART data submissions. Please note that such rosters may take some time for data managers to provide, and are based on district assignments and priorities. To help authorized NJ SMART users access the historical district submissions that result in the mSGP report, NJ SMART has posted this [Click-by-Click Guide](#). For detailed steps on addressing issues with mSGP data quality, please see [Appendix B](#).

C. Guidance for Addressing mSGP Data Issues

If an educator receiving a 2013-14 mSGP score identifies a problem with the data, the Department is providing several options for districts to address the situation. We strongly encourage you to begin this process now, in advance of the evaluation score certification process, in order to gather any necessary documentation for modifying scores. Please see [Appendix B](#) for detailed guidance for the following scenarios:

- Educators expecting but not receiving an mSGP score
- Educators seeking to correct an mSGP score

This guidance has also been posted as a separate document: [Procedures for Addressing 2013-14 mSGP Data Issues](#).

D. Reminder About 2013-14 SGO and Administrator Goal Score Review Process

In addition to the mSGP score verification procedures outlined above, the Department is offering a review process for SGO and Administrator Goal scores for certain cases. **This process was announced last August and districts must complete the review by February 1, 2015 or within 15 school days of an educator receiving a summative rating.** Please see this [December 9, 2014 memo](#) for more information and please access the following forms for completing this review (note we have now released the form for educators receiving the mSGP score):

- [Non-SGP Teacher SGO Review Form](#)
- [SGP Teacher SGO Review Form](#)
- [Non-SGP Admin. Goal Review Form](#)
- [Multi-Grade SGP Admin. Goal Review Form](#)
- [Single Grade SGP Admin. Goal Review Form](#)

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Attachments

c: Members, State Board of Education
David Hespe, Commissioner
Senior Staff
Diane Shoener
Executive County Superintendents
Executive Directors of Regional Achievement Centers
Executive County Business Officials
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group

APPENDIX A: Annotated Resource Guide

mSGP and SGP Resources

The following resources are available to support district distribution of 2013-14 mSGP data:

- **2013-14 Teacher mSGP Report User Guide**
(<http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/teacher/percentile/mSGPuserguide.pdf>) and
2013-14 Principal mSGP Report User Guide
(<http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/teacher/percentile/principalmSGPuserguide.pdf>):
These detailed guides include background on the use of growth measures, a detailed explanation of the calculation of mSGP scores and how they convert to evaluation scores, and suggestions for confidentially sharing the data and using it to inform professional growth. We strongly encourage district and school leaders to closely review the User Guides and share them with your school communities as appropriate.
- **Procedures for Addressing 2013-14 mSGP Data Issues**
(<http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/resources/1314mSGPdataprocdures.pdf>): This document outlines the Department's guidance for handling issues with individual educator mSGP data and resolving final 2013-14 summative evaluation ratings.
- **mSGP Conversion Chart**
(<http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/resources/mSGPConversionChart.pdf>): This document shows the chart converting 1-99 mSGP scores to a 1.0-4.0 evaluation rating.
- **Evaluation Scoring Web Page**
(<http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/resources/scoring.shtml>): This page lists comprehensive information and resources for scoring educator evaluations.
- **NJ SMART Course Roster Access Click-by-Click Guide**
(<http://www.state.nj.us/education/njsmart/download/course/RosterVerificationClickByClick.pdf>): This guide shows screen shots and provides instructions for district Web User Administrators to access the full course rosters for each teacher as submitted to the Department during the Summer 2013 Course Roster Submission.
- **NJ SMART Course Roster Verification and Submission Guide**
(<http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/teacher/CourseRosterVerificationandSubmission.pdf>): This document explains the Department's guidance and procedures for district submissions of course rosters.
- **AchieveNJ SGP Web Page**
(<http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/teacher/percentile.shtml>): This page lists comprehensive information on the use of SGPs and mSGPs in New Jersey.
- **SGP Methodology Video** (<http://survey.pcgus.com/njgrowth/player.html>): This video explains how SGP scores are calculated.
- **SGP FAQ** (http://www.nj.gov/education/genfo/faq/faq_eval.shtml#sgp): These questions and answers address several common concerns related to SGP and mSGP.

APPENDIX B: Procedures for Addressing mSGP Data Issues

State law requires the use of multiple measures of student achievement in any educator's summative evaluation. Therefore, if district course roster or assignment errors result in the need to negate the mSGP score for a teacher – and that teacher did not set two SGOs last year – then the teacher cannot receive a final summative rating for 2013-14. This is why the Department guided districts to ensure all teachers set two SGOs if facing any uncertainty about whether or not they would receive an mSGP score. This scenario does not apply to principals, as their evaluations already include both Administrator Goals and the SGO Average in addition to potential mSGP scores. However, principals/APs/VPs might need to modify or remove an mSGP score if the district committed course roster or school assignment errors in NJ SMART or if the principal took an extended leave of absence after October 15, 2013. Please review the following procedures and contact the Office of Evaluation at educatorevaluation@doe.state.nj.us or 609-777-3788 if you need additional assistance.

1. Guidance for Educators Expecting but Not Receiving an mSGP Score

In certain circumstances, educators who were expecting to receive an mSGP score for 2013-14 will not. These circumstances include a teacher with a student roster of fewer than 20 qualifying students taking the NJ ASK, or an educator who had an extended absence (more than 40 percent of the school year). There are two options for educators in this situation.

Option A: For a teacher with two SGOs for 2013-14 OR for a principal/AP/VP, recalculate summative rating using other component scores.

- 1) If the teacher set two SGOs – or the educator is a principal/AP/VP – remove the mSGP score and recalculate the summative rating using the following weights:
 - a. Teachers: teacher practice score (85%) and SGO score (15%)
 - b. Principals/APs/VPs: principal practice score (30%), evaluation leadership score (20%), Administrator Goal score (40%), SGO average score (10%)
- 2) Make adjustments in the personnel file and individual Professional Development Plan (PDP) or Corrective Action Plan (CAP) as needed (see [Section I.B.](#) for more guidance about CAPs).
- 3) Prepare to make appropriate changes using the Evaluation Score Certification Tool to be released in the coming weeks.

Option B: For a teacher with one SGO for 2013-14, eliminate summative rating.

- 1) If the teacher set one SGO, the teacher cannot receive a summative rating for 2013-14.
- 2) Make adjustments in the personnel file and individual Professional Development or CAP as needed (see [Section I.B.](#) for more guidance about CAPs).
- 3) Prepare to make appropriate changes using the Evaluation Score Certification Tool to be released in the coming weeks.

2. Guidance For Educators Seeking to Correct an mSGP Score

When reviewing their mSGP data, educators may identify potential errors related to course roster accuracy or course assignment. In these cases, districts should validate and remediate any errors using the three following options.

If the district can provide documentation to verify and correct inaccurate rosters or course assignments, follow the steps in Option A:

Option A: Provide documentation of errors, correct mSGP score, recalculate summative rating.

- 1) Cross-check verifiable 2013-14 course roster information, such as that contained in the student information system or teacher grade book, with the NJ SMART course roster (see [Click-by-Click Guide](#) for accessing full course rosters).
- 2) If there are discrepancies, recalculate the mSGP of the educator using the correct roster information – as long as the educator still qualifies to receive the score based on the requirements explained in [Section II.A.](#). If the educator no longer qualifies to receive the mSGP score, see the following Options B & C.
- 3) Update personnel files and individual PDPs or CAPs as needed (see [Section I.B.](#)).
- 4) Prepare to make appropriate changes and provide documentation using the Evaluation Score Certification Tool to be released in the coming weeks.

If the district identifies a roster or course assignment error for an educator but cannot provide documentation to verify the error, the district should remove the mSGP score from the educator’s summative evaluation score by following Option B or C.

Option B: Remove mSGP score for a teacher with two SGOs for 2013-14 OR for a principal/AP/VP, recalculate summative rating.

- 1) If the teacher set two SGOs – or the educator is a principal/AP/VP – remove the mSGP score and recalculate the summative rating using the following weights:
 - a. Teachers: teacher practice score (85%) and SGO score (15%)
 - b. Principals/APs/VPs: principal practice score (30%), evaluation leadership score (20%), Administrator Goal score (40%), SGO average score (10%)
- 2) Make adjustments in the personnel file and individual PDP or CAP as needed (see [Section I.B.](#) for more guidance about CAPs).
- 3) Prepare to make appropriate changes using the Evaluation Score Certification Tool to be released in the coming weeks.

Option C: Remove mSGP score for a teacher with one SGO for 2013-14, eliminate summative rating.

- 1) If the teacher set one SGO, the teacher cannot receive a summative rating for 2013-14.
- 2) Make adjustments in the personnel file and individual PDP or CAP as needed (see [Section I.B.](#) for more guidance about CAPs).
- 3) Prepare to make appropriate changes using the Evaluation Score Certification Tool to be released in the coming weeks.