1. What are Student Growth Percentiles?

A Student Growth Percentile (SGP) describes a student’s growth compared to other students with similar prior test scores (their academic peers). Although the method for calculating Student Growth Percentiles is complex, percentiles are a method of measuring students’ growth in comparison to their peers.

Student Growth Percentiles do not measure student achievement on the state assessment, but rather how much growth they showed compared to students who performed similarly on the assessment in the previous year. For evaluation purposes, the assessment used for comparison is Smarter Balanced.

A Student Growth Percentile is a number between 1 and 99. If a student has an SGP of 85, we can say that she showed more growth than 85 out of 100 of her academic peers. A student with a low score on a state assessment can show high growth and a student with a high score can demonstrate low growth. Similarly, two students with very different scale scores can have the same SGP.

2. Who must use Student Growth Percentiles as part of their evaluation?

Teachers and principals in tested grades and subjects (English Language Arts/Math, grades 4-8). Educators who are responsible for both subjects are only required to use Median Student Growth Percentiles for one subject area.

The use of Student Growth Percentiles is only required when two consecutive years of statewide assessment results are available. Therefore, Student Growth Percentiles are only required for grades 4-8 and are not required for grades 3 and grade 11. Educators in grades 3 and 11 and educators in non-tested grades and subjects must use other valid and reliable measures that are comparable across the school or district. For additional information see this flowchart.

3. Are teachers whose students take the Extended Assessment in English language arts and math in grades 4-8 required to use Student Growth Percentiles as part of their evaluation?

In the 2015-16 school year Student Growth Percentiles will not be required for these teachers. It is projected that SGPs will be implemented for the Extended Assessment in the future.

However, teachers who are the primary provider of instruction in English language arts and math for students in grades 4-8 who take the Extended Assessment must use the Extended Assessment as the measure for one of their two goals. Goals will be scored using the statewide SLG Scoring Rubric.
4. What is a Median Student Growth Percentile?

The Median Student Growth Percentile summarizes student growth percentiles by district, school, grade level, class, or other group of interest. The median is calculated by ordering individual student growth percentiles from lowest to highest, and identifying the middle score.

For the purposes of growth, using the median rather than the average, is more appropriate because an average can be influenced greatly by a few very high or very low scores.

5. To whom are students compared when determining Student Growth Percentiles? What is an “Academic Peer”?

For Student Growth Percentiles, a student is compared to his/her academic peers. A student’s “academic peers” are all students in Oregon in the same grade and assessment subject who had similar scores in the previous year. This group is defined solely by their state assessment scores, not on any other characteristics. In other words, they are students who have followed a similar assessment score path. A Student Growth Percentile represents how much a student has grown in comparison to these academic peers.

6. How do districts determine which students’ Student Growth Percentiles are used in determining an educator’s Median Student Growth Percentile?

The district should have a process for defining which educators are responsible for content covered by Smarter Balanced assessments in grades 4-8 for English Language Arts and Math. For those educators, a class roster is created to determine the educator’s Median Student Growth Percentile.

7. How do districts determine which students should be included on an educator’s roster?

For teachers in grades 4 and 5, all students who take the Smarter Balanced assessment in either reading or math would be included in their roster.

For middle school teachers, all students within a particular course who take the Smarter Balanced assessment in either reading or math would be included on the roster. Course selection should be based on the largest possible group of students instructed by the teacher. This means that if a teacher has more than one section of the same course, students in all sections of that course would be pooled to create the roster.

For principals, all students in a particular grade who take the Smarter Balanced assessment in either reading or math would be used to create a roster.
8. What constitutes a class roster? How is a class roster developed?

Districts must create a class roster for each educator for whom median Student Growth Percentiles will be used, and have a clear procedure for educators to verify their rosters by May 1st. Roster verification ensures that the appropriate students are included in the median Student Growth Percentile rating.

Districts must use the state’s existing definition of “full academic year” that has been used in the state Report Card to determine which students data are included in the rating. Full academic year refers to a student with consecutive enrollment in a school or district for more than one-half of the instructional days prior to the first school day in May.

ODE will provide examples of class roster tools and verification processes for districts.

9. Does the “full academic year” requirement apply to goals that use Category 2 measures?

No, full academic year only applies to the use of statewide measures. Category 2 measures are school- and district-wide.

10. Are teachers and principals in tested grades and subjects required to set a goal using a Category 1 measure every year?

All educators, regardless of where they are in the evaluation cycle, are required to set two Student Learning and Growth goals each year.

Districts that utilize a two year evaluation cycle have discretion in determining whether teachers and principals in tested grades and subjects (grades 4- 8 in ELA and math) are required to set a goal using a Category 1 measure during their non-summative year, or whether both goals can be measured using a Category 2 assessment. However, as part of the summative evaluation for educators in tested grades and subjects, one of the two goals used in determining the X axis rating must use a Category 1 assessment as the measure.

11. Can teachers and principals in tested grades and subjects choose to set two goals using Category 1 measures and split the students on their roster(s) between the two goals rather than having all students in one goal?

No. In order to ensure consistency in the use of statewide assessments as a measure of student growth, teachers and principals in tested grades and subjects must include all students who took the statewide assessment in either reading or math in any goal that uses Smarter Balanced as the measure.

12. What are the responsibilities of districts in regard to Student Growth Percentiles?
Districts must:

- Select Option A or Option B to be used district-wide in fall 2015.
- Establish a process for determining the teacher of record in fall 2015.
- Create class rosters and establish a roster verification process. *It is recommended that implementation of this process begin after the October enrollment report.*
- Provide training in the district to educators and evaluators/supervisors and coordinating staff in winter/spring 2016.
- Determine the Median Student Growth Percentile ratings using the state criteria in fall 2016.
- Incorporate median Student Growth Percentile ratings into educator evaluations in fall 2016.

13. **How many students must be included on an educator’s roster in order for MSGPs to apply?**

Districts are required to use Median Student Growth Percentiles for each educators who have at least 20 students with individual Student Growth Percentile data. This means a teacher must have at least 20 students in order for MSGPs to apply. In the future, districts are encouraged to pool data across three years to strengthen the results and allow for the inclusion of more teachers who do not meet the minimum n size of 20 students in a single summative year.

14. **Does the minimum n size of 20 apply to Category 2 goals?**

No. All educators setting goals that use Category 2 measures must do so regardless of the size of their intact group. Because Category 2 measures are responsive to individual student need in ways that the statewide assessment cannot be, Category 2 measures can be considered reliable with a smaller minimum n.

15. **How is the Median Student Growth Percentile determined for a middle school teacher who has multiple sections of math or language arts?**

A teacher’s Median Student Growth Percentile should be determined using the Student Growth Percentiles from the courses with most sections a teacher instructs. For example, if Ms. Johnson teaches three sections of Algebra along with two sections of remedial math and there are more students enrolled in Algebra, her Median Student Growth Percentile should be based on the students in her Algebra classes.

Additionally, Median Student Growth Percentiles should only be used determined using Student Growth Percentiles from one grade level. If Ms. Johnson’s Algebra class includes both
7th and 8th grade students, only the grade level with the most students should be used to determine the Median Student Growth Percentile.

16. How do Student Growth Percentiles affect the goal setting process?

Districts will select one of two Student Growth Percentile options described below. The option selected must be applied district-wide.

- **Option A:** The Median Student Growth Percentile is used exclusively to determine the Category 1 SLG goal rating. This option does not require educators to set a Category 1 SLG goal, however, educators should discuss with their evaluator the strategies and supports needed to improve student performance on the statewide assessment.

- **Option B:** This option requires educators to set an SLG goal using Smarter Balanced and rate their goal using the state SLG scoring rubric. The educator’s SLG goal rating is then compared with the Median Student Growth Percentile rating to determine the final Category 1 SLG rating.

Regardless of the option selected by the district, educators set a second SLG goal to be measured using a Category 2 assessment. Additional guidance on both options can be found in the *Guidance for Using Student Growth Percentiles in Educator Evaluations*.

17. When must a district decide on Option A or B?

Before using Student Growth Percentiles, districts are advised to have a collaborative team of teachers, administrators, and association representatives collaborate to choose between Option A and B, then establish a process and procedures for implementing Student Growth Percentiles across the district. It is recommended that districts select Option A or B in fall 2015.

18. Can districts change options for the 2016-17 school year?

Yes. Districts are advised to reconvene the collaborative team that made the selection for the 2015-16 school year to consider changing options.

19. How are Median Student Growth Percentiles used in summative evaluations?

Median Student Growth Percentiles are used to meet the educator’s Category 1 SLG rating. The Median Student Growth Percentile rating is then combined with the educator’s Category 2 SLG goal rating to identify the educator’s X-axis performance level in the *Oregon Matrix*. 
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Student Growth Percentiles: Using State Assessments
in Educator Evaluation

20. What kind of data and supports can districts expect to receive from the Oregon Department of Education related to Student Growth Percentiles?

For the 2015-16 school year, each district will receive Smarter Balanced student performance data including Student Growth Percentiles. Consult with the individual in your school and/or district who serves as the assessment coordinator for more information.

In addition, ODE will:

• Provide districts the state criteria for determining Median Student Growth Percentiles.
• Provide districts with communications, guidance, resources, and technical support in fall 2015.
• Provide districts with professional development and technical support throughout the 2015-2016 school year.
• Calculate Student Growth Percentiles for all students in spring/summer 2016.
• Send districts Student Growth Percentiles and Smarter Balanced achievement data in August 2016.

21. When will districts receive data related to Student Learning and Growth Percentiles?

Each district will receive their Student Growth Percentiles data in August 2016.

22. How might the delivery timeframe of Student Growth Percentile data impact a district’s evaluation timeline?

Evaluations are typically finalized in the spring. However, since Smarter Balanced results and SGPs will not be available until the summer following that school year, districts may need to consider different approaches to address this timing issue. Districts are advised to work with their local association in reviewing their evaluation timelines. Examples of timelines are provided in the Guidance for Using Student Growth Percentiles in Educator Evaluations (pp.9-10).

23. How will the March 15th deadlines for probationary teacher decisions be accommodated; as state assessment results will not be available?

In making decisions about whether to renew a probationary teacher’s contract by the March 15th deadline, districts must consider multiple pieces of evidence. Evidence could include teacher performance on professional practice and responsibility standards as well as progress toward meeting SLG goals that are based on other assessments.

24. How does Oregon’s House Bill 2680 impact teacher and administrator evaluations?
The Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2680 during the 2015 legislative session which states that 2014-15 Smarter Balanced assessment results may not be used in educator evaluations. Because 2014-15 data are needed to calculate Median Student Growth Percentiles for 2015-16 evaluations, ODE has made a request to the U.S. Department of Education to delay in using SGPs this school year (pending approval). ODE has proposed the following amendments to the waiver:

- In place of using SGPs in 2015-16 evaluations, all teachers and principals in tested grades and subjects (4-8, ELA & math) must set two Student Learning and Growth (SLG) goals this year using other valid and reliable assessments that meet state criteria and are comparable across the school or district.

- With support of ODE staff, districts would be required to provide Student Growth Percentile training to staff and put into place their Student Growth Percentile procedures this school year. Districts will receive their Student Growth Percentile data in 2015-16 from ODE and calculate Median Student Growth Percentiles.

- Educators and evaluators would discuss their Student Growth Percentile results as part of the evaluation process but not include the results in the calculation of their summative evaluation. The summative evaluation for 2015-16 would be based on the two Student Learning and Growth goals with the understanding that in 2016-17 the Student Growth Percentile would be included in the summative evaluations.

- ODE will conduct a validation study of assessments used in evaluations as requested by USED in our 2015 ESEA waiver approval.