

## Understanding WIDA-ACCESS English Language Proficiency Growth

Communicating student academic growth is a new concept for WIDA-ACCESS English Language Proficiency. Borrowing concepts developed to show student academic growth on the ISTEP+, students taking WIDA-ACCESS to monitor English Language Proficiency across years now have their academic growth calculated to see whether they are on track to reach English Language Proficiency.

**What is a student growth percentile?** Indiana uses a measure of student growth referred to as “student growth percentiles.” A student growth percentile describes a student’s learning as compared to other students sharing the same assessment history as the student, or the student’s academic peers, within the State of Indiana. The growth calculation for English learners on the WIDA ACCESS assessment considers the student’s age/grade and initial English learner proficiency when determining the student’s academic peers.

**How does it work?** Two simple questions are answered with the WIDA-ACCESS growth calculations:

**How much did the student grow?** The first question answered by the WIDA ACCESS growth analyses is, “How much did the student grow?” At the heart of the student growth percentile is an integer from 1 to 99 indicating how much the student grew relative to his or her academic peers. For example, a student with a student growth percentile score of “65” grew more than 65% of his or her academic peers. Since a student is compared only to his or her academic peers, a student with a low scale score may demonstrate high growth, and a student with a high scale score may demonstrate low growth. Further, two students with different scale scores may have the same student growth percentile.

**Is it enough growth?** After describing how much a student grew, the next question to answer is whether the student’s growth is “enough”? The student growth percentile, on its own does not answer this question. Therefore, a growth target is set for each English learner to determine how much growth a student needs to be on a path to reach or maintain proficiency within a set timeframe. In Indiana, this timeframe is 6 years. The student’s actual growth (their SGP) is compared to their SGP Target that puts them on a trajectory to reach each language proficiency within 6 years. If a student meets or exceeds their target, it indicates that they “made enough growth” toward reaching English Language Proficiency. Given that the timeline to attain proficiency is 6 years, students will also need to achieve future targets in order to meet the ultimate goal. Future targets may adjust depending on whether or not enough growth was made. At present, student targets are recalculated each year as new data become available.

**Example:** Jesse is a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade English Learner who scored Level 1 in 2017 and Level 2 in 2018 on the WIDA ACCESS. His actual growth (SGP) from 2017 to 2018 is 65. This means Jesse grew

more than 65% of his academic peers. His SGP Target (the annual growth necessary for Jesse to reach English language proficiency) by 2023/Grade 8 is 62.

**How much did Jesse grow?** Jesse's actual growth of 65 is considered "high" as his growth exceeded that of 65 percent of his academic peers.

**Is it enough growth?** Jesse's SGP of 65 exceeded his target SGP of 62. This indicates that for this year, Jesse made "enough" growth toward reaching his ultimate goal of English Language Proficiency within 6 years.

In this example, Jesse's recalculated target for next school year will likely decrease from his current 62 since he did more than needed in the most recent school year.