Los Angeles Unified School District

Today's Learners, Tomorrow's Leaders

Making Meaning of Your School Academic Growth over Time (AGT) Report

This Making Meaning Guide will serve four purposes:

1. To be used in connection with face-to-face professional learning for district and school leaders
2. To serve as an ongoing reference toolkit
3. To provide support for school leaders to build their staff members' understanding of AGT reports
4. To guide school leaders in a line of inquiry and root cause analysis of their results to inform school-improvement efforts

Please consider the **LAUSD Strength-Leveraging and Problem-Solving Process** as you work through the Making Meaning Guide. References are made to this process throughout this guide.

1. **Problem/Strength Identification**
    - ***What is the problem or strength?***
2. **Problem/Strength Analysis:**
    - ***Why is it occurring?***
3. **Intervention Design:**
    - ***What are we going to do about it?***
4. **Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtI^2):**
    - ***Is it working?***

Interpreting AGT

We will begin by looking at the report key. This key is located on the first page of your school AGT report. It will be helpful to review as we begin making meaning of the reports.

LAUSD has chosen to use a five-color system. Based on statistics, these colors indicate whether or not student growth was significantly far above, above, not different than, below or far below the predicted AGT result. Keep in mind that the predicted AGT result and the district average for similar students are one and the same.

The results are color-coded based on the location of the confidence interval (CI) around the results.

The bubble is **blue** if the AGT result and confidence interval is entirely above 4.

The bubble is **green** if the AGT result and confidence interval is entirely above average growth.

The bubble is **gray** if the confidence interval crosses average growth.

The bubble is **yellow** if the AGT result and confidence interval is entirely below average growth.

The bubble is **red** if the AGT result and the confidence interval are entirely below 2.

Academic Growth over Time (AGT) school reports measure the impact of your school on the academic growth of your students at the school and grade levels for all of your statewide core tests. In some cases, end-of-course exams and other testing may be used. The AGT results in the various reports compare the actual growth of students in your school to the growth of similar students in the district.

You will find the tests and subjects are included in your AGT reports on the very first page under the title: *AGT School Report.*

More information about how to read your school AGT report can be found on the first page of your report titled: *AGT School Report.*

Throughout this guide, we will work through the anatomy of each portion of these reports.

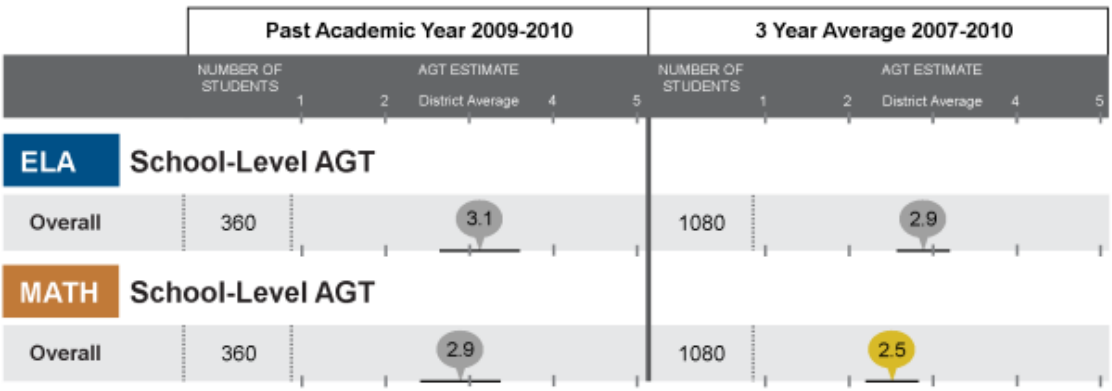
The AGT model uses statistical techniques to separate the impact of schooling from other factors that may influence academic growth. The factors or variables are chosen by the district and have statistical impact on the learning of students.

The following control variables or factors have been selected by LAUSD:

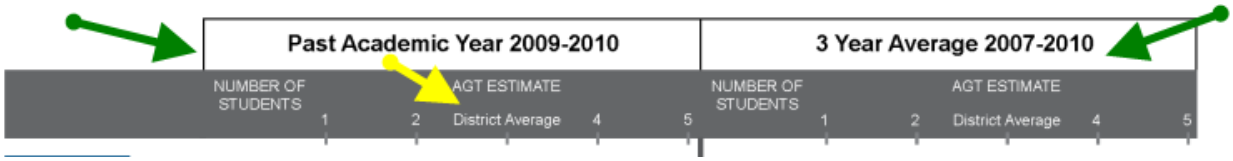
- Prior CST Scores
- Grade level
- Gender
- Race/Ethnicity
- Low income status
- ELL Status
- SPED status
- Continuous Enrollment
- Homelessness

It is important to note that controlling for demographic characteristics does not mean a lowering of expectations for any grouping of students addressed by a control variable. The "prediction" for each group of students is based on the actual performance of real students in your district. These predictions are based on the average performance of similar students in the same time period.

Take a few minutes to examine the table below. The results in this table provide overall AGT results for ELA and Math for a particular school. These results represent the academic growth of your students for the past academic year and for a three-year average compared to similar students across your district. In other words, it represents the effect of your school on the academic growth of these students.

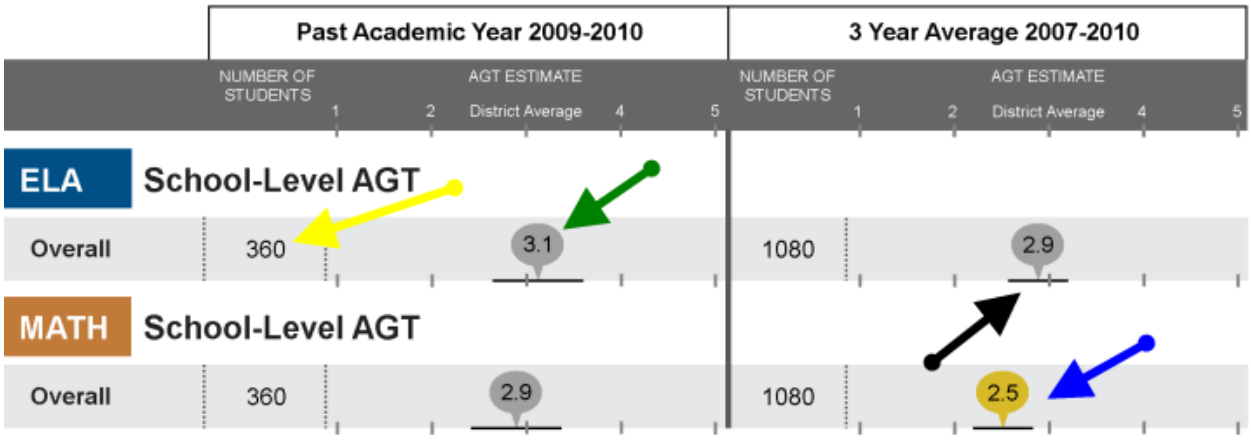


Now, let's explore the meaning of the information in this table in more detail.



AGT is reported on a 1–5 scale for the past academic year as well as the three-year average (**GREEN** arrows) with 3 as the district average growth for similar students as indicated by the **YELLOW** arrow. The AGT results range is unbounded, but almost all scores fall between 1 and 5. For visual purposes, the 1–5 range is shown. Results outside of this range are placed on the edge, with their current score. The 1–5 scale is used to facilitate comparisons of AGT across grades, subjects and years.

Now we will explore the meaning of the information in this School-Level AGT report.



The **YELLOW** arrow is pointing to the number of students included in this report. You will notice that logically, there are more students included for the three-year averages.

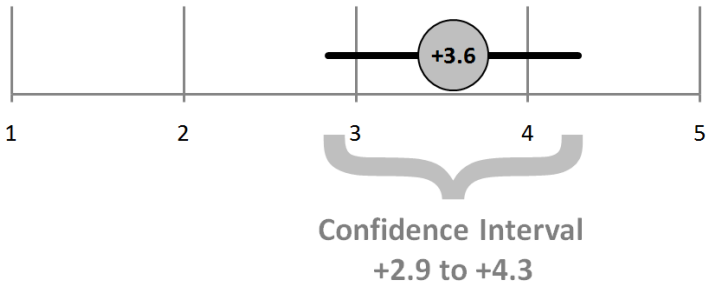
The **GREEN** arrow is pointing to an English Language Arts AGT estimate of 3.1 in the **GREY** bubble. In this example, 3.1 and the **GREY** color indicate that the growth of these students is within the district average. This means that when compared to other students in the district, these students are growing similar to what was predicted.

The **BLUE** arrow is pointing to a three-year average Math AGT estimate of 2.5. The bubble is **YELLOW** indicating that over the past three years in Math, students at this school grew below the district average. This does not mean that these students did not make progress; it simply means that their growth was below the district average for growth.

The **BLACK** arrow is pointing to the confidence interval. The confidence interval is a measurement of statistical reliability of the result. It takes into consideration several factors, such as consistency of student academic growth, the number of students and the inherent error in all tests. In this example, the AGT estimate is 2.9. The bubble is **GREY,** or within the range of the average predicted AGT. The confidence interval extends beyond the district average of "3." The most likely AGT estimate is 2.9, but it could be within a range of 2.6 to 3.2. (as indicated by the confidence interval).

Remember, the predicted AGT result and the district average growth for similar students are one and the same.

Let's take a closer look at another example of a confidence interval.



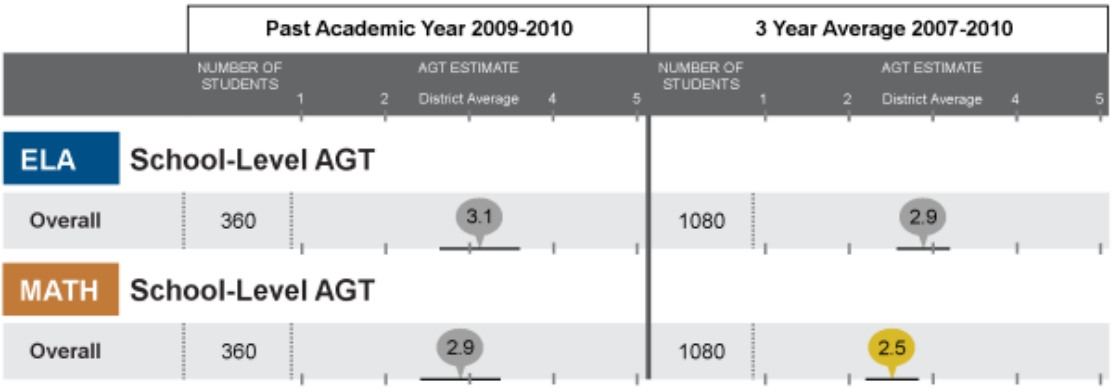
Let's take a closer look at another example of a confidence interval.

When considering confidence intervals, the most likely value is at the center. However, in this example, the true value could range anywhere from 2.9 to 4.3. It is less likely that the true value is at the extremes of the confidence interval.

It is important to keep confidence intervals in mind when using AGT data for decision making.

The real question is, "so what?" What does this mean in terms of helping students learn and continuously improving educator practice?

Now, let's go back to the original report and begin breaking down this information from interpretation to application.



Q: What problem or strength is identified by this overall ELA estimate? What does this report say about the impact of this school on academic growth with their ELA students?

A: *The **GREY** bubble and the 3.1 AGT result in this report indicate that for the 2009–2010 school year, students performed similarly to the predicted district average as compared to other ELA students in the district. The confidence interval crosses the district average. Because of this, the best we can say is that the academic growth of these students is not different than the average of the district for similar students. Average growth is still growth and means this school is meeting the district average in ELA. This is a strength in terms of district averages. However, in terms of RTI, it may be an area that requires further analysis.*

Q: What problem or strength is identified by this overall Math estimate? What does this report say about the impact of this school on academic growth with their Math students?

A: *The **GREY** bubble and the 2.9 AGT result in this report indicate that for the 2009–2010 school year, students performed similarly to the predicted district average as compared to other Math students in the district. The confidence interval crosses the district average. The academic growth of these students is not different than the average of the district for similar students. Average growth is still growth and means this school is meeting the district average in Math. This is a strength in terms of district averages. However, in terms of RTI, it may be an area that requires further analysis.*

*When looking at the three-year average for Math, the **YELLOW** bubble and the 2.5 AGT result indicate that students grew significantly below the average predicted range as compared to other ELA students in the district. The confidence interval falls clearly below the district average. This AGT result is an identified problem. It will be important to analyze further what might be occurring so that adjustments to instructional content, teaching practices and/or leadership can be made. Since this is an average of three years, including the 2009–2010 school year, it may indicate that AGT results may have been lower in 2007–2008 and 2008–2009 because the AGT result of the current year is higher than the three-year average. This result does not mean that students did not grow. The results indicate that they did not grow as much as other students in the district and on average did not meet the predicted range.*

Now You Try!

Examine your own school report. What information for ELA, Math and other subjects reported does the overall report tell you? What other information might you need from student experience surveys or achievement data?

Use the question stems and the sample interpretations to help you analyze the information for each subject.

School-Level Results

Indicate in the chart below your school-level results for Math, English Language Arts (ELA) and other reported subjects.

Far below	Below	District Average	Above	Far Above
Example: Math			*Example: ELA*	

✓ What is the identified strength?

✓ What is the identified problem?

✓ This does not mean…

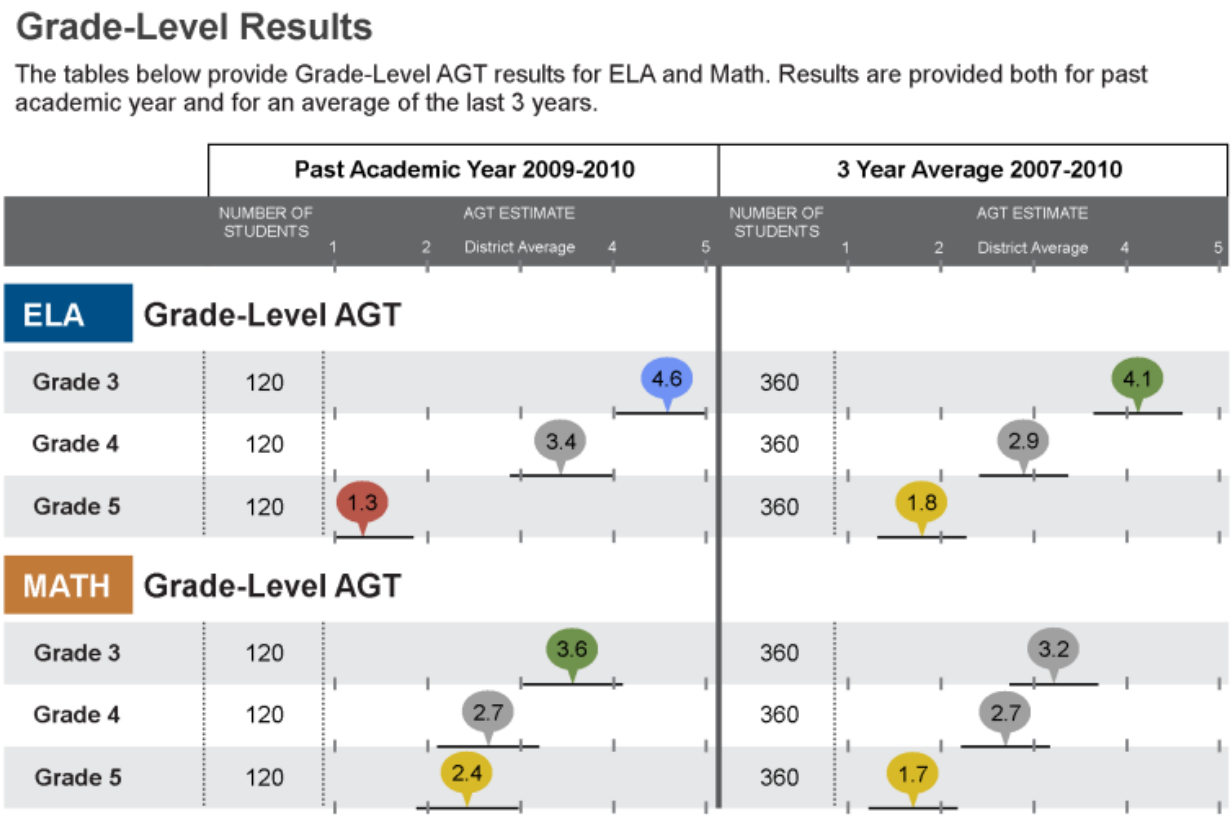
✓ I suspect that…

Now, take a look at an example of a grade-level break down for this school. This report provides a different level of analysis by grade level.

You will find grade-level results on your report on the page titled: *Grade-Level Results.*

The overall school report by subjects provides us with a summary of students' academic growth in each subject and the effect the school has on that growth. However, it does not provide the full picture. This sample school has reports for grades 3, 4 and 5. When you see the effect of schooling by the grade levels, it sheds more light on the consistency of grade-level team performance and offers more opportunities for continuous improvement.

For example, in the previous section, the overall ELA AGT result was 3.1 in the **GREY** bubble indicating that the overall growth was not different that the district average. However, when you examine the grade-level report below, you see that grade 3 significantly exceeded the district average growth, grade 4 was similar to the average growth of the district and grade 5 significantly fell below the district average growth. Although this example does not mean grade 3 students grew more scaled score points on the state test than grade 4 and 5 students, it does mean that the educators in this grade facilitated academic growth in students that was far above the district average for similar students in that grade. It is evident that the grade-level report indicates that there are pockets of success, challenge and opportunities within the same school in the same subject.



Q: We know the overall AGT estimate for 2009–2010 for this school in ELA falls within the district average (3.1 in the GRAY bubble). However, are ELA students in all grades displaying average district growth? Does this AGT result indentify a strength or problem?

A: *In this case, it is clear that the **3rd grade ELA teachers** are facilitating significant growth far above the district average (4.6 in the **BLUE** bubble) when compared to other grade three ELA students in the district. This indicates an identified strength. This is cause for celebration and all good news for grade 3l!*

Without examining the grade-level report, it may have not have been obvious that ELA students in grade 3 are growing far above the district average. This may call for further investigation so that the successes can be leveraged.

It may make sense to uncover what is contributing to this success. Are teachers using sound assessment practices? Is there more time spent on ELA in grade 3 than in other grades? Are the instructional practices differentiated and rigorous? What about alignment to the curriculum? Develop a hypothesis and vet it by asking questions of leadership and collaborate with subject or grade-level teams.

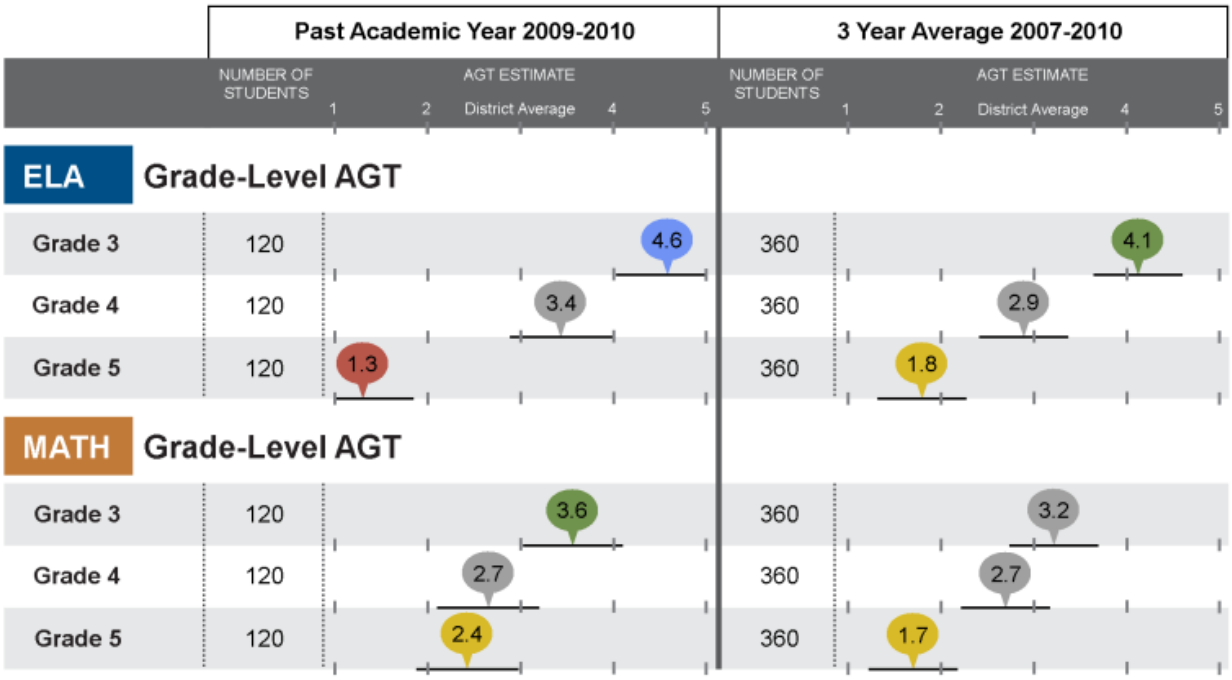
*In **grade 4**, students grew within the district average (2.7 in the GREY bubble) or met their predicted growth as compared to other grade 4 students in LAUSD. This may present an area of opportunity for this school. Growth is occurring, but perhaps students can be moved beyond the average.*

***Grade 5** students are growing far below (1.3 in the **RED** bubble) other fifth graders in the district. This certainly appears to be an identified problem or an area of challenge. These students are still growing, but just not as much as their peers. What might be occurring in grade 5? Why might be causing this identified problem?*

Now we will examine the grade-level or subject report for math.

Grade-Level Results

The tables below provide Grade-Level AGT results for ELA and Math. Results are provided both for past academic year and for an average of the last 3 years.



Q: We know that overall, this school falls within the district average for Math for 2009–2010. (2.9 in the GREY bubble) However, are all grades producing average growth in Math?

A: *Students in **grade 3** are growing more than other third grade math students in the district. Statistically, they are progressing above what was predicted. Again, this is good news for third grade educators and students. This appears to be an identified strength. What is this team of grade three educators doing to be producing this amount of progress? How might this success be leveraged?*

*In **grade 4**, students grew within the district average as compared to other grade 4 math students in LAUSD. This may present an area of opportunity for this school.*

*Students in **grade 5** are growing below what was predicted. This may indicate an identified problem. Teams may want to examine what may or may not be occurring in grade 5 Math.*

Remember that comparisons cannot be made between grades. Each AGT estimate is representative of only students in like subjects and like grades across the district.

Now You Try!

Grade-Level Results

Indicate in the chart below your identified strengths and problems by grade level/subject for AGT results in Math, ELA and other grades/subjects included in your report.

Far below	Below	District Average	Above	Far Above
Example: Grade 4 Math		*Example: Grade 6 Math*	*Example: Grade 5 ELA*	

- ✓ Are there discrepancies among grade-levels? How so?

- ✓ Are these discrepancies consistent across grades and subjects?
  Example: Is grade 4 above the district average in all subjects?

- ✓ What new evidence have you gathered from these reports?

- ✓ This does not mean…

- ✓ I suspect that…

We will now examine the school-level results with specific groups of students.

The grade-level reports provide more information than the overall school report. However, AGT reports offer more information that can help us look at student growth from a different perspective.

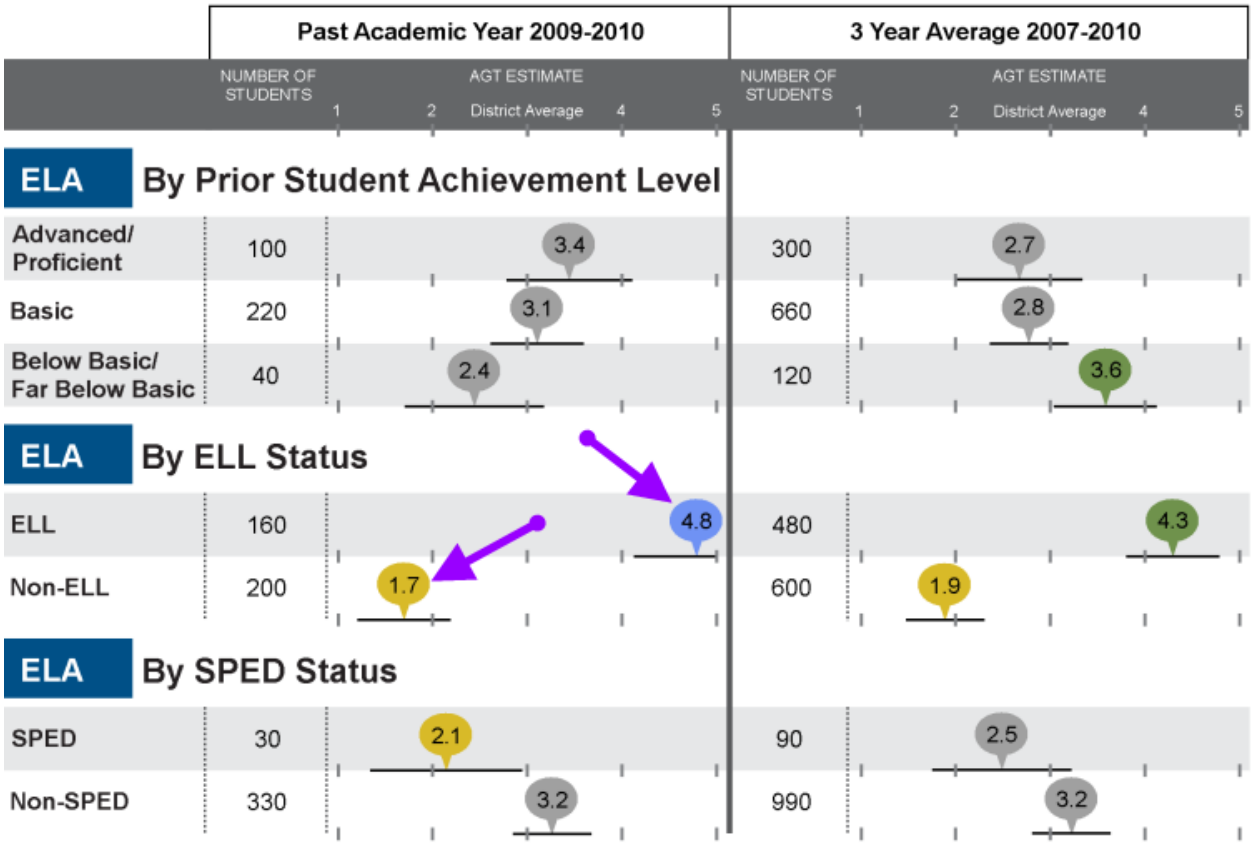
AGT results are provided for specific groups of students. These student groups demonstrate how consistently (or differently) we have performed with students in these groupings. These student groupings, or differential effects, are provided for most subjects included in your report. In LAUSD, differential effects are provided for Prior Student Achievement Level, English Language Learner Status, Special Education Status, Gender, Race and Free or Reduced Lunch Status. For each student group, the AGT result compares the actual academic growth of students in your school to the growth of other students in the district.

For this guide, we will focus on Prior Achievement Level, English Language Learner Status (ELL) and Special Education Status (SPED).

Let's begin with Prior Student Achievement Level.

You may recall that the overall AGT result for ELA was 3.1 (**GREY** bubble) indicating that the growth of students in this school was similar to the district average growth. But, does this result represent all peer levels of students in this school?

Note: The groupings by past academic year in this report are "Advanced/ Proficient", "Basic" and "Below Basic/Far Below Basic." These groups are based on the student's state test performance level from the previous year. The purpose of this calculation is to measure the impact of teachers on students from across the achievement spectrum.



The information in this table is about English Language Arts students in this school. You will have a similar report for other subjects.

Q: What is the impact of this school on the learning of students by prior achievement levels? What are the identified strengths? What are the identified problems?

A: *There are a few considerations that are important in understanding this report. In the ELA section by prior achievement level, students are placed in one of three performance categories based on their prior achievement level. The three classifications that are used in these reports have been collapsed from the five classifications of the CST achievement levels. In 2009–2010 these 360 students in all three achievement levels have shown average predicted growth relative to the district average. Notice that all confidence intervals intersect or cross the district average of "3."*

All Proficient and Advanced students in this school are being compared to similar Proficient and Advanced students in the district. Likewise, with students in the Basic category; these students are only being compared to similar students in the Basic category in the district. The same is true for those students in the Below Basic and Far Below Basic category.

When looking at these results, we can see that in general, this school is making growth that is similar to the district average for all achievement levels in this grade and subject.

Now, You Try!

Examine your own school's Academic Peer Level Reports.

Results Based on Prior Achievement Level

Indicate in the chart below your results for prior achievement level for ELA, Math and other subjects included in your report.

Far below	Below	District Average	Above	Far Above
Example: Proficient Math	*Example: Advanced/ Proficient Math*		*Example: Basic Math*	*Example: Below/ Far Below ELA*

- ✓ What new evidence have you gathered from these reports? What strengths have you identified? What problems have you identified?

- ✓ This does not mean…

- ✓ I suspect that…

The next report that we will examine is an English Language Learner (ELL) Status Report.

By now, you probably understand how these reports are interpreted. In this ELL report, we are looking at the same 360 students to determine the effect this school has on students by their ELL status.

In this school, we see that the ELL status students are making academic gains far above the district average when compared to other ELL students. We also see that the Non-ELL students are making gains that are below the district average when compared to other students in the district. The ELL programs in this district are clearly having a positive impact on learning for their ELL students. This is an area of strength and cause for celebration.

Q: What evidence does this information provide for making school improvement decisions? What is the identified strength? What is the identified problem?

A: *This means that something that this school is doing is working with their ELL students. These ELL students are growing far above the district average AGT. The three-year average for the impact this school has had on ELL students is also above the district average. This indicates a positive trend over time. This is certainly an identified strength. The educators in this school will want to look at what they are doing to contribute to this success!*

It would be equally as interesting to analyze why the Non-ELL students are progressing below the district average. Are these students overlooked? Are they involved in a rigorous curriculum? This type of rich discussions with teachers and principals who know their students can be very powerful in looking at ways to leverage strengths and address areas of challenge.

Now, You Try!

Examine your own school's reports for ELL.

Results Based on English Language Learner (ELL) Status

Indicate in the chart below your AGT results for ELL status and Non -ELL status for Math, ELA and other subjects included in your report.

Far below	Below	District Average	Above	Far Above
Example: Non-ELL Math		*Example: ELL ELA*		

- ✓ What new evidence have you gathered from these reports? What is the identified strength? What is the identified problem?

- ✓ This does not mean…..

- ✓ I suspect that….

The last report that we will examine is a Special Education (SPED) Status Report.

Q: What is the impact of this school on the learning of SPED Status students? What is the identified strength? What is the identified problem?

A: *When we examine these same 360 students by SPED status, we can see again that this school's effectiveness with students is not equal.*

Students with SPED status are growing at a rate below the district average for similar SPED students across the district. This is an identified problem for this school. Our performance with students identified as special education is below the district average performance when compared with other students identified as special education. This indicates that others across the district are more successful with special education students. Perhaps something can be learned from other schools in the district who are having better results with teaching their SPED students.Let's discover what might be causing this discrepancy.

On the other hand, Non-SPED students are growing at a rate that is average for Non-SPED students across this district.

Remember: In this case, it is not necessarily true that students in the "Non-SPED" grouping grew more than students in the SPED grouping. Instead, this report indicates that the "Non-SPED" students grew within the district average growth when compared to "Non-SPED" students across the district. The "SPED" students grew, on average, less than other "SPED" students across the district.

Now, You Try!

Examine your own school's reports for SPED Status students.

Results Based on Special Education (SPED) Status

Indicate in the chart below your AGT results for SPED status and Non–SPED status for ELA, Math and other subjects/grades included in your report.

Far below	Below	District Average	Above	Far Above
	Example: SPED Math		*Example: Non-SPED ELA*	

- ✓ What new evidence have you gathered from these reports? What is the identified strength? What is the identified problem?

- ✓ This does not mean…

- ✓ I suspect that…..

You will go through the same process for Gender and Race Results in your report.

Results Based on Gender

Indicate in the chart below your AGT results for Gender for ELA, Math and other subjects/grades in your report.

Far below	Below	District Average	Above	Far Above

- ✓ Are there discrepancies between genders? How so?

- ✓ Are these discrepancies consistent across grade and/or subjects?

- ✓ What new evidence have you gathered from these reports? What are the identified strengths? What are the identified problems?

- ✓ This does not mean…

- ✓ I suspect that…

Results Based on Race

Indicate in the chart below your AGT results for Race for ELA, Math and other subjects/grades in your report.

Far below	Below	District Average	Above	Far Above

- ✓ Are there discrepancies between the ethnicity groupings? Explain.
- ✓ Are these discrepancies consistent across grade and/or subjects?
- ✓ Does this indicate inequities in learning for specific ethnicity categories?
- ✓ This does not mean…
- ✓ I suspect that…

Now, let's take an overall reflective look at your report.

- As you look at your overall AGT report, what are your areas of strengths, opportunities and challenges in ELA, math and other subjects that may be included in your report?

- Do your grade-level results reveal consistencies or inconsistencies between subjects and grade levels that may explain the overall AGT result in ELA, math and other subjects that may be included with your report?

- What might explain the consistencies or inconsistencies between subjects and grade levels? Develop a hypothesis.

- Are there consistencies or inconsistencies in AGT results among prior achievement levels in ELA, math and other subjects that may be included in your report? If so, how will you use differentiated instruction and interventions that will close achievement gaps between all groups of students? (SL Standard II.b.3.)

- What evidence does the AGT report provide about teaching and learning in your school? What evidence does the report ***not*** tell you? What other types of quantitative and qualitative data would help you assess areas of strengths and challenges? (SL Standard II.b.4.)

- Looking at the Two-by-Two Matrix (http://matrix.escmatrix.com/lausd), how does your school compare to other schools in the district in ELA, math and other subjects?

- Principals: How might you use information provided in the AGT report to differentiate staff professional development, create teacher collaboration and leadership opportunities and/or strategically place teachers in grade levels and content areas? (SL Standard III.a.1. III.b.2. III.c.)

- Principals: What steps will you take to build the capacity of your staff to consistently use disaggregated student learning data and analysis to identify student learning gaps and areas for instructional improvement? (SL Standard II.b.1.)

- What surprised you and why? (Individual Growth Plan)

- In what ways do the data affirm what you already suspected? (Individual Growth Plan)

- How will you use this information to have conversations about your AGT results with your leadership team? Your teachers? Parents? Students?

Problem and Strength Analysis: Using AGT and Other Measures

Your AGT school report also includes achievement data. This information is being included on the Academic Growth over Time (AGT) report because in LAUSD, you will be considering the power of two: achievement and AGT. By examining these two measures, schools and educators will have a more complete picture of student learning. **Achievement levels provide a snapshot of how students performed relative to state goals.** AGT gives us information on the impact of schools and educators in moving toward these goals.

Below is an example of achievement information for the school that we have been examining. This information will provide another piece to the puzzle of student performance. Use this information along with the AGT information to work through the root cause analysis section that follows.

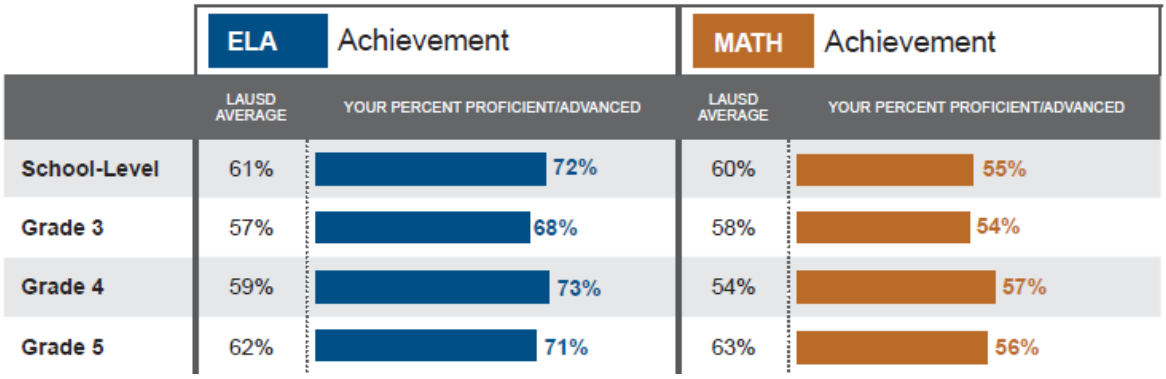
Academic Performance Index (API)

API is a score California gives each school based on student test scores. 800 is the target API score; 1000 is the maximum.

API SCORE	2009-2010	855	Change from 2008-2009	▲ +107

Percent Proficient and Advanced

Students in grade 2-11 are tested annually to assess their achievement of state content standards. CST scores fall into 1 of 5 performance levels. The state's goal is for all students to score proficient or advanced, the top 2 performance levels. The charts below show how your students compare to the LAUSD average both at school-level and for all grade levels for which AGT data available.



AGT and Achievement Grid

Multiple measures sharpen our understanding of strengths and challenges. Complete the following grid by plotting your school's AGT estimates and achievement data (provided by the district) for each grade and subject in your school.

Achievement						
	Advanced		*Example: Grade 5 Math*			
	Proficient					
	Basic					
	Below Basic					
	Far Below Basic					
		Far Below Average Growth	**Below** Average Growth	**Within range of** Average Growth	**Above** Average Growth	**Far Above** Average Growth
		AGT				

STRENGTHS

❖ **Success Analysis: *Why is it occurring?***

Begin with school strengths. Ask each team to assess the following factors. Highlight those factors that have a causal connection to the grade-level area of strength. Please add any other causal factors that attribute to success, but are not listed. First do this individually, then with a team.

Rigorous Content

Essential Question: How have we ensured that the curriculum is appropriately rigorous for all students at all levels?

The questions that follow will spark your thinking in analyzing why the strengths have occurred in relation to rigorous content.

- Is the curriculum relevant to students' lives?
- Is there strong vertical alignment across grade levels?
- Are there solid learning progressions within grade levels?
- Are learning targets written in student-friendly language?
- Do all students have access to rigorous curriculum?
- Does the curriculum have redundancies and/or gaps?
- Is there alignment across grade levels?
- Are lesson/unit structures logically designed to allow for different pathways according to diverse student needs? *(T&L Standard 1d)*

Other: (Please add any other root causes that may be appropriate)

Effective Teaching Practices

Essential Question: How have we ensured that educators have utilized effective practices?

The questions that follow will spark your thinking in analyzing why the strengths have occurred in relation to effective teaching.

- Are learning activities designed to engage students in cognitively challenging work that is aligned to the standards? *(T&L Standard 1d)*
- Do teachers consistently use formative and summative assessment data to determine next steps in instruction? *(T&L Standard 1e)*
- Do teachers have clear and high expectations for students? *(T&L Standard 2b)*
- Do teachers use techniques to ensure all students share their thinking around challenging questions? *(T&L Standard 3b)*
- Do teachers purposely organize instructional groups to support all students in achieving instructional outcomes? *(T&L Standard 3c)*
- Do teachers analyze practice and student work and use reflection to inform instruction? *(T&L Standard 5a)*

Other: (Please add any other root causes that may be appropriate)

Effective School Leadership

Essential Question: How does our leadership promote successes for all students?

The questions that follow will spark your thinking in analyzing why the strengths have occurred in relation to effective leadership.

- Do leaders use multiple sources of data (quantitative and qualitative) to assess the instructional learning plan, prioritize needs and drive continuous improvement? *(SL Standard II.b.4.)*
- Do leaders engage all instructional staff in the analysis of instructional objectives and constantly evaluate progress towards instructional objectives? *(SL Standard II.a.1.)*
- Do leaders regularly assess pedagogical practices of teachers? *(SL Standard II.a.3.)*
- Do leaders build teacher capacity to plan and practice a wide range of effective research-based pedagogical approaches? *(SL Standard II.a.3.)*
- Do leaders differentiate professional development opportunities to ensure growth for all staff? *(SL Standard III.a.)*
- Do leaders strategically place teachers in grade-level and content areas based primarily on their impact–uses skills, strengths, and qualification? *(SL Standard III.b.2.)*
- Is the building improvement agenda clear and focused?
- Do leaders initiate and support instructional improvement?
- Are all meetings structured to improve student results?
- Do leaders communicate effectively with all stakeholders and connect all conversations to school goals, the instructional program and values? *(SL Standard V.)*

Other: (Please add any other root causes that may be appropriate)

PROBLEMS

❖ **Problem Analysis: *Why is it occurring?***

Next, let's assess problems identified by the data. Ask each team to use the same set of questions related to Rigorous Content, Effective Teaching Practices, and Effective School Leadership to assess problems. In a different color, highlight those factors that have a causal connection to the grade-level area of challenge. Please add any other causal factors that attribute to problems, but are not listed. First do this individually, then with a team.

Setting Objectives and Planning Interventions

Strength-Based Objectives

It is always an important step to examine and celebrate strengths. We can learn from our strengths and even apply strategies to our areas of challenge. So let's look at an example based on the reports provided for our example school, ABC School. The example shows a focused objective for leveraging a strength and some supporting strategies.

Your objectives should evolve from your analysis and reflection on the evidence about your practice and your students' needs. It is suggested that three to four objectives be developed. While most objectives should focus on areas for improvement (problem-based objectives), it may be appropriate to identify one or two areas of strength where you would like to focus on building expertise to, for instance, be able support your colleagues (strength-based objectives). For each objective, we will use the SMART model:

- **S**PECIFIC (well-defined, clear to others)
- **M**EASURABLE (obtainable, know when it is achieved)
- **A**GREED upon (teacher and supervising administrator)
- **R**EALISTIC (within the availability of time and resources)
- **T**IME-BOUND (clear timeline to achieve)

What is a strength-based objective for this school?

Example Strength-Based Objective:
Organize vertical Professional Learning Teams (PLCs) of ELA teachers at this school to further study and leverage identified causes that led to the success of the school overall and specifically with the grade 4 ELA team.

Steps, Strategies and Activities				
In order to accomplish my objective(s), I will complete the following steps and/or strategies:				
Activity/Strategy	**Activity Type**	**Activity Description**	**Resources & Collaborative Partners**	**Target Completion Date**
1.) Schedule meetings times for embedded PLCs				
2.) Focus PLC by examining student work as it relates to the content standards for the grade level.				
3.) Examine the rigor of the curriculum in grade 4 as compared to grades 5, 6, 7 and 8.				

Now You Try!

Complete the table below for each objective

- Set a **S**PECIFIC, **M**EASURABLE, **R**EALISTIC and **T**IME-BOUND objective. Consider the following objective-setting template:
    - By [identify a specific point in **T**IME such as the end of the school year],
    - I will [identify how your practice will improve in this area, or how you will leverage your strength in this area—you may want to consider using language from the rubric.]
    - And in so doing, [identify the set of students who will benefit] will [identify (a) **M**EASURABLE way(s) in which students will benefit].
- Identify a set of activities that you will undertake to meet this objective.

Steps, Strategies and Activities				
In order to accomplish my objective(s), I will complete the following steps and/or strategies:				
Activity/Strategy	**Activity Type**	**Activity Description**	**Resources & Collaborative Partners**	**Target Completion Date**
1.)				
2.)				
3.)				

Response to intervention: How are you going to monitor progress against your objectives?

Problem-Based Objective

It is equally as important to examine and challenges and/or opportunities. In a culture of continuous improvement, they cannot be ignored. So let's look at an example based on the reports provided for ABC School. The example shows a focused goal for an area of challenge and some supporting strategies.

Your objectives should evolve from your analysis and reflection on the evidence about your practice and your students' needs. It is suggested that three to four objectives be developed. While most objectives should focus on areas for improvement (challenge-based objectives), it may be appropriate to identify one or two areas of strength where you would like to focus on building expertise to, for instance, be able support your colleagues (strength-based objectives). For each objective, we will use the SMART model:

- **S**PECIFIC (well-defined, clear to others)
- **M**EASURABLE (obtainable, know when it is achieved)
- **A**GREED upon (teacher and supervising administrator)
- **R**EALISTIC (within the availability of time and resources)
- **T**IME-BOUND (clear timeline to achieve)

What is a problem-based objective for this school?

- **Intervention Design: *What are we going to do about it?***
- **Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtI^2): *Is it working?***

Example Problem-Based Objective:
Critically examine the 6th grade math written curriculum, with teachers and administrators together, to what is actually taught and assessed.

Steps, Strategies and Activities				
In order to accomplish my objective(s), I will complete the following steps and/or strategies:				
Activity/Strategy	**Activity Type**	**Activity Description**	**Resources & Collaborative Partners**	**Target Completion Date**
1.) Employ the math coach to work with the 6th grade team to create short-cycle assessments at the content and rigor level of the 6th grade math standards.				
2.) Utilize pre-assessments to determine if and how much re-teaching and/or reviewing is needed.				
3.) Divide and conquer to develop scaffolded lessons for math content aligned to the standards.				

Now, You Try!

Complete a template for each objective

- Set a **S**PECIFIC, **M**EASURABLE, **R**EALISTIC and **T**IME-BOUND objective. Consider the following objective-setting template:
    - By [identify a specific point in **T**IME such as the end of the school year],
    - I will [identify how your practice will improve in this area, or how you will leverage your strength in this area – you may want to consider using language from the rubric]
    - And in so doing, [identify the set of students who will benefit] will [identify (a) **M**EASURABLE way(s) in which students will benefit].
- Identify a set of activities that you will undertake to meet this objective.

Steps, Strategies and Activities				
In order to accomplish my objective(s), I will complete the following steps and/or strategies:				
Activity/Strategy	**Activity Type**	**Activity Description**	**Resources & Collaborative Partners**	**Target Completion Date**
1.)				
2.)				
3.)				

Response to intervention: How are you going to monitor progress against your objectives?

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