Standardization of Value-Added Scores

Value-Added scores are reported in standardized units. This document gives a brief overview of what standardization means, why it is necessary, and how to read a standard score.

What is standardization?

Standardization is a common statistical process that allows us to compare numbers on different scales. In this case, it is used to convert ISAT scale score points and NWEA MAP RIT scores to a standard scale.

Why is standardization necessary?

Growth on the ISAT and NWEA tests is measured in scale score points. However, one scale score point of growth is more difficult to achieve at some grade levels than others.

- For example, 1 ISAT scale score point of growth between 3rd and 4th grade is approximately equal to 0.7 ISAT scale points of growth between 7th and 8th grade*.

Standardization allows us to more precisely compare growth across grade levels.

How do I read a standardized Value-Added score?

Standardized scales are measured in standard deviations. A standard deviation is a measure of distance from the mean.

- How much does School A’s score deviate from the mean?

Some features of the standardized Value-Added scale include:

- Zero is the District average.
  - Positive numbers mean above average growth.
  - Negative numbers mean below average growth.
- About 68% of scores fall within 1 standard deviation (between -1 and 1).
- About 95% of scores fall between -2 and 2.
- About 99% of scores fall between -3 and 3.
- Only about 1% of scores are less than -3 or more than 3.

*A percentile score represents the percent of scores in the District that are lower than a particular score. A Value-Added score of 1.0 would be at approximately the 84th percentile, because 84% of scores would be expected to be lower than this.

* Based on math between 2009 and 2010.