

Why Students (and Their Parents) Should Care About SAGE Tests...and Why They Shouldn't

I often have students ask, "Why should I care about my SAGE score, or even try? I'll just have my parents opt me out."

Here is what I want my students (and their parents) to know.

1. The main purpose for the SAGE is to help YOU know where you are on your path to college and career readiness. It aligns with the ACT and other college assessments and will help you know what you need to do to be ready.
2. SAGE helps me and my teaching teammates know if WE are on track: Are we teaching and assessing what matters? Do our assessment results accurately tell us which kids and standards need more attention?
3. Last, and perhaps most importantly, the SAGE gives us an opportunity to measure and celebrate your individual and collective growth. The Student Growth Percentile (SGP) tells us if you are headed in the right direction and, in many ways, is more meaningful than your proficiency score. As the old saying goes, "It's not where you are, it's what direction you are heading."

Now let me tell you three things you should NOT worry about with the SAGE:

1. I will not use it to grade you.
2. I will not use it to determine my worth as a teacher.
3. I will not use it to intimidate, motivate, or otherwise coerce you as a learner.

If you forget all of the above, just remember this: I am not preparing you for the SAGE; I am preparing you for college, careers, and citizenship. The SAGE is just one helpful feedback tool to tell us where we are on that journey.

-- Middle School Teacher, Washington County School District