

Student Learning Objectives Implementation Guide for Administrators



**STUDENT
LEARNING
OBJECTIVES**

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Using This SLO Handbook

The purpose of this Student Learning Objective Administrator Guide is to provide implementation guidance for campus administrators. This guidance is not designed as a stand-alone resource for SLO implementation but should accompany training on the SLO process and support throughout the year.

The design of this SLO model was driven by the Texas Student Learning Objective Advisory Committee, comprised of classroom teachers, principals, central office administrators, and Educational Service Center staff. The Texas Education Agency's goal is to assist districts in implementing a model that continually supports teacher development and is instructionally valuable for teachers and students.



TIA Tip

With the creation of the Teacher Incentive Allotment, the purpose of SLOs can be broadened in order to meet the requirements of a local teacher designation system.

Vision Statement

The Student Learning Objective (SLO) Model in Texas provides a framework for continual dialogue among students, teachers, and principals to support teacher development and student growth throughout the year.

Guiding Principles

- Support Growth and Development: Provide a meaningful framework to support student growth and teacher development.
- Support Local Autonomy: Provide flexibility for districts, campuses, and classrooms to adapt as needed.

Design Attributes

- Instructionally Valuable: Support educators to make responsive instructional decisions throughout the year.
- Standards-Aligned: Address academic standards that are critical to student learning.
- Equitable: Meet the unique needs of all students and teachers.
- Transparent: Be clear, concise, and easily understood.
- Manageable: Be easily incorporated into and enhance existing methods for measuring student learning.



TIA Tip

SLOs can be used as a valid and reliable student growth measure if specific procedures and protocols are followed. SLOs can be a viable option to measure student growth for teachers in tested and non-tested subjects, as well as in performance task based courses. The SLO chosen must align to a major standard or foundational skill of the course. Valid Measure of Student Growth: Tasks/assignments/projects/assessments to be included in the body of evidence for the SLO must align directly to the selected learning objective and accurately measure student progress toward mastery of the objective.

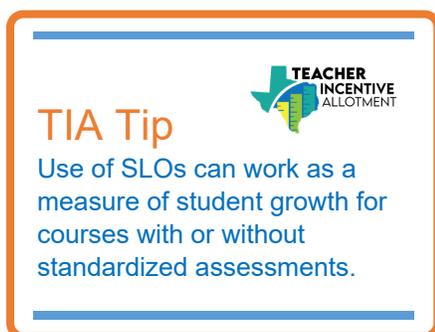
What are Student Learning Objectives?

Excellent teachers regularly set learning goals for their students and use a variety of data sources to monitor progress towards these goals throughout the year. The Student Learning Objectives process aims to capture this best practice as a means to allowing teachers and teacher appraisers to determine and reflect on a teacher's pedagogical strengths and areas for growth.

Student Learning Objectives are:

- Student growth goals.
- Set by teachers.
- Focused on a foundational student skill that is developed throughout the curriculum
- Tailored to the context of individual students.
- Designed to help teachers better understand the impact of their pedagogy
- For the purpose of refining instruction.

Why Use Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) as a Measure of Student Growth?



SLOs drive both teacher practice and student learning by strengthening instruction. The use of SLOs has been associated with improved student outcomes on standardized assessments. Teachers crafting SLOs report improved understanding of how to use data to determine student needs and to measure progress toward goals. SLOs encourage collaboration among teaching peers as well as between teachers and their appraisers. As well, SLOs encourage the adoption of a long-term vision for student learning and contribute to more meaningful discussions about vertical planning.

The SLO process represents a continuous cycle of improvement embodied in strong teaching practice. Teachers and their appraisers will use SLOs to design strategies to meet their goals for student success, beginning with planning and leading to thoughtful instructional design and delivery. Throughout the year, teachers will collect evidence of student learning and adjust instruction accordingly. At the end of the cycle, teachers will reflect on outcomes and plan to refine their practice for the following year.

Getting Started With Student Learning Objectives

Student Learning Objectives provide an effective process for improving instructional practices by encouraging thoughtful, deliberate, evidence-based decisions that should ultimately result in improved student learning. Like any research-based practice, however, the impact of the process is greatly influenced by the quality of the implementation.

For teachers, the process begins with determining the focus of the SLO and then mirrors what we know about effective teaching as it progresses. For administrators, however, the process begins with an informal assessment of current campus capacity in key aspects of the process to guide the development of systems of support to facilitate implementation. The purpose of this guide is to help administrators support teachers in this valuable work.

A Special Note About a District's First Year of SLO implementation...

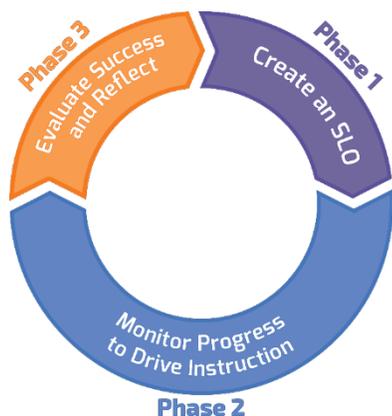
While SLOs result from a mostly intuitive process for teachers, achieving smooth and consistent implementation districtwide works best with a coordinated effort from multiple departments across the

organization. For the first year of implementation, districts are strongly encouraged to maintain focus on the core aspects of SLOs and to implement the process with quality, both of which lead to valuable teacher reflection and the resulting adjustment of instructional practice.

The Texas Student Learning Objective Process

Process Overview and Planning Considerations

The Student Learning Objective process should be used throughout the school year to help teachers plan backward from an end vision for student success. This process helps encourage regular conversations and collaboration among teachers, students, and appraisers in order to ensure that instruction facilitates students' progress toward growth goals.



The SLO process represents a continuous cycle of improvement embodied in strong teaching practice. Teachers and their appraisers will use SLOs to design strategies to meet their goals for student success, beginning with planning and leading to thoughtful instructional design and delivery. Throughout the year, teachers will collect evidence of student learning and adjust instruction accordingly. At the end of the cycle, teachers will reflect on outcomes and plan to refine their practice for the following year.

For ease of understanding, the SLO process has been grouped into three key phases to define the sequence of actions to be taken.

Phase 1: Creating a Student Learning Objective

The first phase focuses on purposeful planning of instruction. At the beginning of the course, teachers work with each other, their appraisers, and other support staff to identify the foundational skill they'll address in their SLO, identify student starting points on the foundational skill, and develop clear targets for student growth.

Phase 2: Monitoring Progress to Drive Instruction

After the SLO is completed and approved by the appraiser, teachers will work with each other and their appraiser, engaging in ongoing dialogue about progress toward goals. These discussions will also be opportunities for teachers to receive feedback and support, and to develop strategies to adjust instruction based on analysis of student learning. To improve efficiency in implementation, SLO processes should be integrated into existing support frameworks at each school.

Phase 3: Evaluating Success and Reflection

This last phase occurs at the end of the course and includes a conversation between the teacher and his or her appraiser regarding the effectiveness of the teacher's engagement in the SLO process. This conversation results in an overall rating for the SLO process that is based on both teacher and student outcomes. The final conversation is designed to help teachers and appraisers plan for the refinement of instruction for the following year.



TIA Tip

Using multiple sources of data, teachers will determine the beginning of the year preparedness level of each student covered in the SLO.



TIA Tip

The end of year discussion centers around evaluating the progress students made toward their targeted growth, based on the body of evidence of student work.

Designing and Establishing a System of Supports for SLO Implementation

Implementation Pre-work

Prior to teachers beginning their work on Phase 1 of the SLO process, campus administrators, working in conjunction with district administration, lay the groundwork for successful implementation of the SLO process through their work on the District- and Campus-Level Decisions worksheets (see Appendices A and B). Although district and campus understanding of the SLO process will continue to develop as the process unfolds, these decisions serve as the foundation that can enhance alignment of the implementation decisions made throughout the year and keep the district on course to reach the desired outcomes.

District and campus leaders should finalize the district approach to the key aspects of the SLO process outlined on the District Planning Worksheet following the initial SLO orientation. Then, campus leaders can begin to plan for the specific supports necessary for successful campus implementation. Throughout the planning process, it may be helpful for administrators to think of these implementation tasks as organized into one of five key elements: Campus Culture and Capacity; Expectations & Procedures; Staff Training; Access to Resources and Data; and Communication, Timeline, and Technology.

The campus administrator’s role is pivotal, both for establishing expectations and developing structures to support the work of this process. To ensure a successful launch to the process, allow ample time to introduce the process, building understanding and momentum for doing the work. This will help teachers get started on the right track and reduce any anxiety and ambiguity they may feel associated with a new process.

Throughout the implementation process, it is important for the administrator to establish and to maintain the connection between appraisal and the SLO process. Many of the SLO activities and conferences can and should occur in conjunction with other campus initiatives and components of the appraisal process. More information about these connections is included in each step of this guide. After reviewing this guide, appraisers may wish to create a prioritized Appraisal / SLO Calendar to help ensure that the timing and sequencing of each step reflects the anticipated campus needs for successful implementation.

Key Elements for Campus Leaders

These five key elements are threaded throughout this guide to assist administrators in organizing and prioritizing the planning process for campus implementation:



Unpacking the Key Elements

Campus Culture and Capacity

It is essential that campus leaders consider how the SLO process aligns with existing campus culture and capacity prior to creating an implementation plan. If the SLO process represents a significant change or will require substantial support, campus and district leaders are strongly encouraged to design the rollout process to reflect that reality. Even districts already involved with work similar to SLOs will likely experience some implementation challenges that come from any new process. Administrators should reflect on the following as they consider how the current campus capacity aligns with the SLO process:

- To what extent does the current appraisal process emphasize educator growth and development through reflection and evidence-based feedback?
- To what extent does the campus already engage in similar or related processes such as PLCs, portfolios, or other collaborative processes focused on teacher and student growth?
- What is the current campus capacity and comfort with collaborative planning and constructive, collegial feedback?

By carefully considering current campus capacity, administrators can design a more effective implementation strategy that proactively addresses possible obstacles. The SLO process itself involves growth, and educators will refine and improve implementation as they become more familiar with the process.

Expectations and Procedures

To implement an SLO process that centers on teacher development and student learning, ensure that teachers clearly understand the expectations of the process as well as your own commitment to supporting them throughout. Perhaps the most important expectation to convey is that the philosophy of the SLO approach drives the process, not adherence to mechanical procedures. And that key philosophy is this: **An increased focus on and awareness of the impact of instructional choices creates opportunities for effective adjustments to and improvements on practice, which in turn lead to improved student outcomes.** As administrators plan for implementation, they should set clear expectations that the process is about increasing reflection on teaching to become a more thoughtful, deliberate, and evidence-based practitioner.

SLOs are most valuable when implemented with fidelity to the philosophy of the process, not by focusing on perfecting the paperwork. The full SLO cycle takes time, but crafting SLOs still brings benefits even in the early stages. The goal of the first year is to develop a deeper understanding of the thinking behind the SLO process and to embed that approach into the core culture of the school. Strive to create expectations and structures that allow educators the time necessary to engage in evidence-



TIA Tip

To what extent does the campus already use data sources to determine student's expected growth in a particular content area?



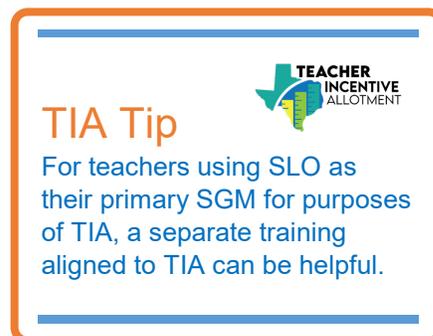
TIA Tip

In addition, when SLO processes are crafted as valid and reliable measures of student growth, they can be used for purposes of the student growth measure required by TIA.

based reflection on the impact of instructional choices and to apply that insight to future work. Keep in mind that implementation is a cyclical process, with deeper understanding gained as one progresses through it. As with most new things, staff will become more proficient and more comfortable with the process over time as they learn from experience and receive additional training to develop their skills and understanding.

Staff Training

It should be clear that SLO training is ongoing, especially throughout the first year. At the beginning of the year, the training should focus on ensuring educators have a clear understanding of the process and are able to begin crafting their SLOs. The initial training can occur in one session or in a series of trainings; however, it is important to be mindful of the recommended timeline when scheduling a series. As designed, a separate orientation can be followed by self-study modules that could be reviewed during team, PLC, or planning meetings. During Phase 2, as teachers engage in the core aspects of the SLO process – planning, teaching, collecting, and analyzing evidence, and then planning again based on that evidence – SLO training may shift to a coaching model to better align with the needs of adult learners. It is also recommended that SLO training and coaching be incorporated into existing frameworks, such as PLCs, to the extent possible. A self-study module reviewing actions teachers should take in Phase 2 is available as well.



Use clarity gained from the pre-assessment of campus capacity, described above, to help prioritize available time and resources as a plan for on-going training and collaborative meetings for participating teachers is mapped into the existing schedule. SLOs are designed to encourage staff to learn from each other. One recommended strategy is to broaden staff understanding by creating opportunities for staff, such as a grade level or subject team, to share insights they have gained throughout the process with the larger school community.

Access to Data and Resources

During the initial steps of the SLO process, teachers may need to access data to help them work through their SLOs. These data may include recent historical grade-level or course data to determine an SLO focus, as well as recent academic and other student-specific data to better understand each student's learning tendencies and other factors that may impact the student's learning in the focus area. Administrators should facilitate teachers' use of multiple sources of data and encourage an expanded view of data beyond state-and district-level assessments.

As teachers progress through the SLO process of selecting a focus, determining student targets, and designing a progress monitoring plan to ensure all students reach the desired goal, one of the primary resources teachers could use is the expertise found within their district, often on their own team. The SLO process encourages teachers to become more thoughtful, deliberate, and evidence-based. By establishing a structured reflection process and expectations for high-level pedagogical discussions, SLOs may assist teachers in becoming more nuanced in their use of resources to support learning.

Please consider the following guiding questions as you determine your campus needs related to data and resources:

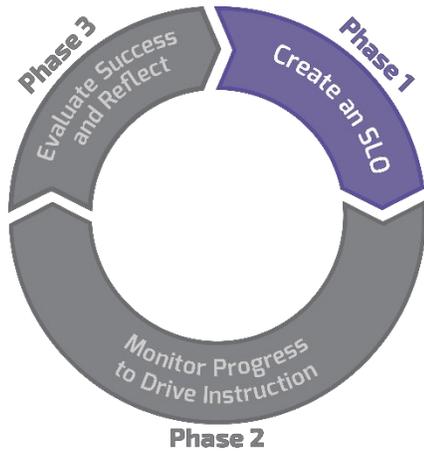
- How easily can teachers access the data necessary to inform decisions about an SLO focus and student growth targets?
- What is the current staff capacity for data analysis and application?
- What is the availability of instructional resources and expertise to support teachers in monitoring progress and adjusting instruction throughout the process?
- In what areas is additional training needed to support teachers in data analysis and interpretation?

Communication, Timeline, and Technology

As you create your campus SLO implementation plan, be aware that the process will almost always take longer during the first year. To allow time for staff to reach an initial level of understanding of the process, plans should be flexible. Taking advantage of the prework guidelines will allow administrators to better anticipate challenges for their campuses and provide opportunities to gather resources, minimizing delays. As with all new processes, effective communication is important. Campus technology can assist with communication as well as with the mechanics of the process, such as submitting materials and sharing resources.

Limited technology should not be a barrier to implementation. At the heart of SLOs is a teacher designing and adjusting instruction based on ongoing reflection and an ever-increasing understanding of student needs and student response to instructional strategies. The appraiser serves as a collaborator and at times as a guide. Technology merely serves to facilitate the process as teachers and appraisers work together to deepen their knowledge of the craft of teaching and improve outcomes for students.

Phase 1: Create a Student Learning Objective



Phase 1 will occur over the first 1-2 months of school for yearlong courses, or in the first 3-4 weeks for semester courses. During Phase 1, teachers will work with other teachers and with their appraiser to develop Student Learning Objective(s) for a selected course.

Although teachers will use the [Student Learning Objective form](#) (Appendix A) to craft the SLO, the form simply captures the thinking prompted by the first four questions:

1. **What is the focus and Skill Statement for my SLO?**
2. **What do I think my students will be able to do?**
3. **What are my expectations for these students?**
4. **How will I guide these students toward growth? (for use in discussion)**

Following the guidance below, teachers will spend time gathering resources and information to complete Steps 1 through 5. To improve the quality of the SLO, teachers may wish to refer to the [SLO Success Criteria](#) (Appendix D).

Phase 1: Creating a Student Learning Objective	
Step 1: What is the focus of the teacher’s SLO?	
Teacher	Complete before the first day of class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select the content/subject area and then the foundational skill on which the SLO will focus. Determine connection(s) between selected skill focus and TEKS. 	
Administrator	
<p>Staff Capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New teachers or new-to-content teachers will need additional support for this step. The SLO approach to determining the key skill focus may challenge some veteran teachers to reflect on course content from a different perspective. <i>The skill focus represents a balance between value and importance, a skill the teacher may feel less confident teaching and that students often struggle to learn.</i> 	

<p>Communication & Timelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convey the key message: This step begins with the content, not the TEKS. <i>The skill focus represents a foundation skill that persists throughout the course and will impact teacher practice.</i> • Clarify that teams may share a common skill focus, however, a single school-wide focus is not appropriate for SLOs. • Dedicate time for teachers, preferably working with peers prior to the first day of school, to collaborate on selecting the skill focus. 	
Phase 1: Creating a Student Learning Objective	
Step 1: What is the focus of the teacher’s SLO?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce that teachers should not become mired in the data review process if consulting historical data is necessary. <i>The selected focus should represent a balance between being important for students to know & do and being a valid measure of student growth.</i> <p>On-going Training and Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As you gain additional insight into staff content knowledge, consider what additional training may be needed to build staff capacity. <p>Protocol / Procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the campus expectation for teachers to work with teams/peers during this step? • How will progress be monitored? Consider involving teacher leaders and C&I specialists to provide support and assist with monitoring. <p>Technology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How easy is it for teachers to access data to assist in narrowing or selecting the focus area? • Do you have the technology necessary to support this process? If not, what steps or “workarounds” are needed to address the situation? 	

Recommendations for Selecting an Area of Focus

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
Elementary	Common Focus	Teacher and appraiser decide area of challenge
Secondary	Common Focus or area of preference	

Curriculum and Instruction personnel may be engaged to provide general guidance regarding an appropriate focus for SLOs, especially for new or new-to-subject teachers. *The process for selecting an area of focus is slightly different for the first year of SLO implementation than for the following years.*

For the first year, teachers should select a subject or content area (math, science, reading, etc.) that will allow them to focus primarily on learning the SLO process rather than selecting an area that will be more challenging. Teachers should be encouraged to work in teams in a common subject or content area or to work in an area where they already have some proficiency.

After the first year of implementation, teachers should be encouraged to focus on a subject or content area that provides the greatest opportunity for growth. During subsequent years, the decision about where to focus should be included as part of a goal-setting and professional development planning conversation during the end-of-year conference. Consider referring to information from the teacher's appraisal regarding areas of strength and refinement to enhance alignment between all aspects of T-TESS to reinforce the idea that SLOs are part of the appraisal system.

Coaching Connection:

Teacher's Guide, pgs. 4-8

Phase 1: Creating a Student Learning Objective

Step 2: Who are the teacher's students?

Teacher

- Describe the range of skill levels your students *typically* possess when entering the course that are related to the selected skill focus. *The (Initial Skill profile, or ISP) descriptors often include foundational “building block” skills that are prerequisites to the more advanced skills that are the focus of the SLO.*
- Select the class that will be the primary focus for the SLO, usually your most representative class.
- Collect data from current students to determine which ISP level most accurately describes their skills at the beginning of the course.
- Record on Student Growth Tracker (SGT).

Administrator

Staff Capacity:

- Plan for additional support that may be needed for new and new-to-content teachers.
- Identify current or potential teacher leaders and specialists who can assist other teachers to develop their SLOs.
- Look for sufficient differentiation of levels to allow accurate mapping of students.

Communication & Timelines:

- Convey this key message: This step is about describing the range of skills in the selected area of focus that students typically possess on the first day of school. ISPs are based on each teacher's experience, so even if a team is working on the same focus area, the ISP descriptors may not all be the same. First-year teachers will need to work with an experienced teacher for this step.
- Remind teachers that this work could be completed prior to receiving their class list(s) for the year to help ensure the ISP is created based on “typical” or expected students.
- Dedicate time for teachers, preferably working with peers, to work on this prior to the first day of school.

On-going Training and Support:

- Continue ongoing support and development for teacher leaders and/or specialists assisting with SLO development.
- Consider what additional training may be useful to build staff capacity as you gain additional insight about staff content knowledge.

Protocol / Procedures:

Begin prior to first day of class – complete by week 3.

Phase 1: Creating a Student Learning Objective

Step 2: Who are the teacher’s students?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the campus expectation for teachers to work with team/peers during this step? How will progress be monitored? Consider involving teacher leaders and C&I specialists to provide support and assist with monitoring. <p>Technology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have the technology necessary to support this process? If not, what steps or “workarounds” are needed to address the situation? 	
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Guidelines for Selecting the Target Class

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
Elementary Generalist	Whole class	Whole class
Elementary Departmentalized	Most representative class	Most challenging class for teacher
Secondary		



TIA Tip

This should be most representative class every year if used for TIA.

For the first year, encourage departmentalized teachers to select a representative class, but not the most challenging class, so teachers can focus on learning the SLO process.

Gathering Information about Students’ Current Level of Mastery on Selected Area of Focus

The SLO process is intended to build on the measures and activities teachers typically use at the beginning of the year to help them develop an academic portrait of each student. The BOY data can come from both formal and informal sources, including written assignments or performance tasks, pretests/diagnostic tests (where readily available), district formative assessments, exit tickets or surveys, and observational data. Another key aspect of this process is to carefully consider the alignment between the measures used for assessment and the focus area. The question teachers should be asking is whether the measures used to determine initial skill level are in fact measuring the skills described in the ISP.

Prior to each school year, administrators are encouraged to anticipate the type and degree of support current staff may need for this step. Campus teacher leaders and other district/ESC curriculum specialists can help provide additional support. Review the campus SLO calendar to ensure teachers have adequate opportunities to gather multiple data points to determine students’ initial skill level within the first few weeks of school. The amount of time may vary slightly from year to year; however, after the first year, this process can usually be completed within the first 3–4 weeks of school.

As teachers begin to determine the ISP level for each student, they may realize revisions are needed to the ISP. For example, the mapping process may reveal that the descriptors need greater clarity to distinguish one level from the next or that the range of levels doesn’t adequately cover the current

students. Teachers may revise the ISP descriptors, but this process should also be captured as part of the teacher’s reflection. Revisions to the ISP should not be viewed as evidence of an error but as an indication of the teacher gaining insight. The ISP may help the teacher better understand and articulate the initial skills demonstrated at the different levels, or it may provide a clear picture that the current class is significantly higher or lower than previous classes and therefore may need different instruction. This is one example of how the SLO process reveals the teacher’s thinking.

Coaching Connection:

Teacher’s Guide, pgs. 10-14

Phase 1: Creating a Student Learning Objective

Step 3: What are the teacher's expectations for these students?

Teacher

- Develop the Targeted Skill Profile (TSP) to describe growth expectations that reflect challenging yet reasonable goals for current students based on present skill level.
- Review supplemental data to establish a growth goal for each student covered in the SLO.
- Record goals on the Student Growth Tracker (SGT).
- Identify performance measures that will be used to determine end-of-year student skill level for SLO skill focus.



TIA Tip

For purposes of TIA, setting expected growth goals is critical. A detailed TSP that specifies end of year student behaviors and proficiencies across a variety of skill levels is a helpful tool to use when determining expected growth. The TSP, when used in conjunction with carefully considered beginning of year preparedness levels, can yield accurate expected growth goals for each student.

Administrator

Staff Capacity:

- Plan for additional support that may be needed for new and new-to-content teachers.
- Consider teachers' current skill levels for data analysis.
- Plan for support that may be needed to ensure alignment between evidence sources and skill targets.

Communication & Timelines:

- Key Message: Reinforce that the TSP is tailored to the selected students and should reflect an enhanced proficiency in the skill selected, not just an increased score on the same measure.
- Communicate clearly regarding acceptable performance measures, which could include traditional assessments, projects, essays, lab reports, presentations, or other similar assessments.



TIA Tip

A student who demonstrates a “typical” preparedness level at the beginning of the year can show growth if their end of year skill proficiency is also “typical” as long as the TSP describes in detail what the **end of year** skill progression rubric looks like across multiple skill levels.

In order for student work to qualify as a valid part of the Body of Evidence, the content of the assignment must align directly to the learning objective and the assignment itself must directly measure student progress toward increased proficiency.

Weeks 3 - 6 (YR1) / Weeks 1 - 3 (YR2)

On-going Training and Support:

- Teachers may need additional support to establish appropriate growth goals for students who are significantly below or above grade-level.

Protocol / Procedures:

- What is the campus expectation for teachers to work with teams/peers during this step?
- How will progress be monitored? Consider involving teacher leaders and C&I specialists to provide support and assist with monitoring.

Technology:

- Do you have the technology necessary to support this process? If not, what steps or “workarounds” are needed to address the situation?

Supplemental Data Sources

Supplemental data sources that teachers can review for determining a challenging yet reasonable targeted skill goal for each student could include the following:

- Previous academic performance from prior years in vertically aligned courses and in courses that correlate with the skill focus for the course in question, for example, performance in math courses may correlate with the logical thinking necessary for an ELA argumentation skill focus.
- Related student-specific data, such as attendance, participation in extra-curricular activities, and any other factors that have impacted student learning in the past.

Data Sources for End-of-Year Skill Level – Key Considerations

- Check for alignment between the summative task(s) and/or assessment(s) and the skill focus of the SLO. To accomplish this goal, it may be necessary to ask teachers to submit the proposed measures along with the SLO.
- Check for a sufficient number of items or tasks related to the SLO skill focus to adequately capture student skill level.
- Consider having staff create an item analysis that provides a blueprint of the task or assessment for teacher- and locally-developed measures that demonstrates alignment with identified standards and the cognitive complexity (Bloom’s taxonomy, etc.) required for each component.

Regarding Growth Goals

- When establishing growth goals, encourage teachers to consider the student’s previous performance tendencies but to not be bound by them. In particular, ask teachers to reflect on the extent that the previous growth trajectories may reflect isolated factors impacting student performance, both positively and negatively. Although educators should never completely ignore reliable previous data, they should also never dismiss opportunities to discover new and more effective approaches for maximizing student growth.



TIA Tip

It is critical that SLOs used for purposes of TIA determine end of year student progress on an entire body of evidence of student work not just one BOY and one EOY assessment.

In order to increase the accuracy of the body of evidence, it is recommended that it include multiple pieces of student work (best practice is at least 5) that represent the student's mastery throughout the year.

- Since the TSP is based on the skill level of current students, it may not align with the TEKS grade-level expectations for that skill. For example, if the ISP reveals students are already at a high level of proficiency with the identified skill, the TSP should reflect appropriate levels of growth, some of which may exceed the TEKS grade-level expectation. Conversely, if the ISP reveals students are well below proficiency on the identified skill, the TSP should still reflect appropriate levels of growth, some of which may fall below the TEKS grade-level expectation. Administrators may wish to consider asking teachers to indicate where the TEKS grade level expectations aligns with the TSP to assist in monitoring the overall status of student mastery with regard to grade-level expectations. Awareness of the grade level expectation, however, does not change the expectation that the TSP should always be determined by setting a challenging yet reasonable growth goal for each student based on his or her current skill level and previous growth trajectory.



TIA Tip

In measuring student growth for TIA using SLOs, it is important to underscore that depending on the student's initial preparedness, a student can show growth at the end of the year even if the student skill level at the end of the year does not match "proficiency" as defined by the TEKSs for that grade level/content area. For example, a student who began the year as "well below typical" for the grade level, and ended the year at "below typical" on the end of year TSP rubric would have shown growth. On the other hand, a student who began the year as "typical" for the grade level and ended the year at "below typical" on the TSP, would not have shown growth.

Coaching Connection:

Teacher's Guide, pgs. 15-20

Phase 1: Creating a Student Learning Objective

Step 4: How will the teacher guide these students toward growth?

Teacher	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan for differentiation. • Identify strategies to monitor progress • Create a schedule for regular, structured opportunities to conference and collaborate with colleagues. • Review the SLO plan with appraiser for approval. 	Weeks 6 - 9 (YR1) / Weeks 3 - 6 (YR2)

Phase 1: Creating a Student Learning Objective

Step 4: How will the teacher guide these students toward growth?

Administrator

Staff Capacity:

- Consider which teachers may need additional support to plan scaffolded instruction, to select instructional strategies aligned with student learning needs and preferences, and to select appropriate methods/materials to monitor student progress.
- Identify current or potential teacher leaders and specialists who can assist other teachers with refining their SLOs prior to the approval conference.
- Consider your capacity and comfort level with all content areas and what additional resources you may desire to support you in this work.

Communication & Timelines:

- Incorporate the SLO approval conference into regularly occurring meetings when possible.
- Ensure this pivotal step in the SLO process is completed in a timely manner by making it a priority in the schedule.
- Use data gathered from SLO approval conferences to ensure teachers have access to necessary resources, including expertise available through campus, district, and ESC staff.

On-going Training and Support:

- Provide opportunities for teachers to receive feedback from colleagues on their SLO prior to the SLO approval conference with their appraiser.
- Ensure that the campus calendar and daily schedule support regular opportunities for collaboration. Shelter designated SLO collaboration time from other meeting requests such as ARDs, Rtl, etc.
- Consider the current capacity and comfort level of the campus for instructionally focused collaboration.

Protocol / Procedures:

- What is the campus expectation for teachers to work with teams/peers during this step?
- How will completion and submission of the SLO be monitored? Consider involving teacher leaders and C&I specialists to provide support and assist with monitoring.

Technology:

- Do you have the technology necessary to support this process? If not, what steps or “workarounds” are needed to address the situation?

SLO Approval Process

The SLO approval process should be viewed as the beginning of a year-long dialogue between the appraiser and the teacher. As such, SLOs should be approved by the teacher's primary appraiser. Once the SLO has been approved, changes to the expectations for student growth should occur only due to extreme and extenuating circumstances, and then only with the explicit and documented approval of the appraiser. Any changes relative to instructional strategies resulting from monitoring progress and adjusting instruction, should be captured in teachers' notes on progress as part of the reflection process. This will be a key element to demonstrate how a teacher's thinking about his or her practice and students has evolved throughout the SLO process.

During the first year of SLO implementation, developing and approving SLOs will likely take longer than in subsequent years. While SLO quality should not be sacrificed for the sake of a deadline, it is important for administrators to ensure the overall process doesn't stall during this step. Once SLOs have been thoughtfully crafted and are at an acceptable level of quality, teachers should move to Phase 2, where they will use the cycle of assessment, analysis, and adjustment to improve student learning. This cycle may yield some of the most critical insights into the interaction between teacher practice and student learning that can result in long-term improvements in pedagogy.

The SLO approval process should include a review of each teacher's SLO Form, Student Growth Tracker (SGT), and other documentation the appraiser may want to see, such as samples of end-of-year performance measures selected by the teacher. The SLO Success Criteria provide guiding statements to assist the teacher and appraiser in reviewing the SLO for approval.

The SLO approval process should also include a discussion of the SLO rating rubric that will be used to evaluate the teacher's work at the end of the SLO interval. It is important to remind teachers that ratings are based on a combination of factors that include both teacher practice and student growth, with the greatest emphasis placed on teacher practice.

During the approval process and throughout the year, remind teachers that an integral part of the process involves teacher reflection and adjustment in response to evidence of student progress collected throughout the year. The SLO process captures a teacher's ability to develop and adjust instruction to evolving student needs.

Suggestions for the SLO approval process:

- Design a planning structure that will encourage teachers to seek feedback on their SLO from peers, coaches, or team leaders prior to submission. This will ensure that SLOs will be more refined when they are submitted to the appraiser for approval.
- The SLO approval conference may be held in conjunction with other regularly scheduled meetings and may involve a group of teachers who share a common SLO focus rather than meeting with each individually. As a reminder, although teachers can share a common SLO focus, each teacher's students are different, so their SLOs should ultimately be different, too, particularly in relation to student expectations on the Targeted Skill Profile.
- When feasible, ensure the necessary technology is available to allow teachers to make modifications to the SLO during the approval conference.



TIA Tip

Appraisers and teachers should discuss what kind of student work (performance tasks, projects, assessments, etc.) will be included in the body of evidence for each student at the end of the year. Appraisers also should provide guidance as to the depth and breadth of the planned body of evidence and ensure that at minimum, there will be five examples of student work, aligned to the skill rubric of the SLO, in the BOE for each student.

If the SLO is the primary student growth measure for teachers in the district's TIA local teacher designation system, greater emphasis will be placed on the student growth element of the SLO rating rubric.

SLO Approval Process – Other Key Considerations

Area of Focus

Appraisers should encourage teachers to select a skill focus with sufficient depth and complexity to sustain the process through the course. The skill focus should involve skills that are essential to not only the current course, but also that will be applicable to other current courses and possibly more advanced coursework. *In addition to being a skill that is important for students to know, the area of focus should represent an area that will be valuable for the teacher's development.*

Differentiation

Appraisers should discuss how teachers plan to ensure that the needs of all learners, including the most- and least-advanced students, are addressed in the teacher's instructional planning and design.

Monitoring Progress

Appraisers should look for how teachers plan to:

- Monitor student progress regularly, using both formal and informal measures.
- Use the information gained through progress monitoring to tailor instruction to meet evolving student needs.
- Reflect on the data gained through progress monitoring to gain insight into their professional practice.
- (Added bullet)

Teacher Collaboration

- Coordinate SLO collaboration meetings with existing processes such as PLCs or team meetings to the extent applicable.
- Ensure the campus calendar and daily schedule support opportunities for collaboration.
- Shelter designated SLO meetings to ensure that other meetings do not encroach on critical collaboration time.
- Consider options for teachers to capture key reflections on data review and instructional planning to assist in their MOY and EOY SLO review. The idea is to provide a manageable vehicle that will assist teachers as they reflect on their instruction without adding more paperwork.
- Consider options to provide collaboration opportunities for teachers in unique positions who may not have a peer group available on campus.*

**Note: While it is preferable for all teachers to have regular opportunities to collaborate with content peers, occasional opportunities to collaborate across subjects and/or grade levels can provide additional valuable perspectives on teaching strategies and connections between content areas.*

TIA Tip



The skill focus should be aligned to the content standards of the course and represent a foundational skill or concept within the standards. For example, an SLO for a STAAR tested subject should align to what will be thoroughly tested on the STAAR.

Coaching Connection:

Teacher's Guide, pgs. 21 - 23

Guidance for Beginning-of-the-Year Conferences

Before the Conference

1. Before scheduling a conference, ask teachers to submit the completed SLO form and Student Growth Tracker, as well as any documentation that would support the SLO. This could include examples of evidence or measures they will use at the end of the SLO interval to determine growth.
2. Review the documentation and consider the following factors in your review:
 - Appropriateness of content selection: Is it a foundational skill? Will it be addressed throughout the year? *Is it valuable for teacher development?*
 - Clarity in the profiles: Can one level be easily distinguished from the others?
 - Evidence: Are the measures appropriate for the content?
 - Expectations: Are teachers' expectations for growth rigorous but attainable?
3. *Consider reviewing the SLO using the SLO Success Criteria. This tool will provide you with guidance for expectations about SLO development.*

During the Conference

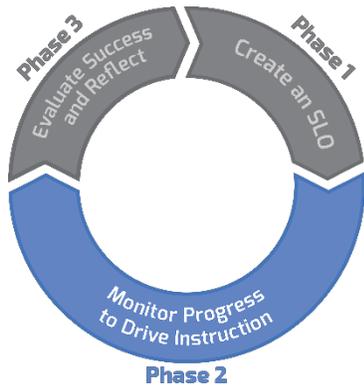
1. When possible, combine the SLO conference with existing goal-setting and professional development planning conferences or fall semester observation pre-conferences, if applicable. If that is not possible due to timing, consider reviewing common SLOs together. This could include grade-level teams or content-area teams. Even if they do not share a common SLO, their SLOs are likely to be similar in focus, and working together as a team will help refine the SLOs.
2. Always start and end on a positive note. Encourage teachers by focusing on the strengths of the SLO as it currently stands.
3. The prompts below highlight the kinds of questions you might want to ask teachers during the beginning-of-the-year conference:
 - How were decisions made about the focus? What personal knowledge or experience led to the selection?
 - Was data reviewed to make the selection for a focus? If so, what data was used and how did it guide the focus?
 - How did you approach developing the Initial Skill Profile created? How did you assign students to descriptors? Were there any challenges in that process?
 - Select one or two students and ask about the targets set for them. Focus on targets that may not be consistent (higher or lower than others). What factors went into that differentiation?
 - What is the plan for instruction to address all students?
4. If you feel the SLO is not sufficient, return the SLO requesting revisions. It may be best to meet with the teacher to discuss your requests. In fact, changes may be made during that conference to eliminate the need for another meeting.
5. Consider reviewing the SLO Rating Rubric to be used by the district with teachers.
6. This will help them understand that when SLOs become part of the appraisal system, teachers' work with SLOs will be evaluated based upon the thoughtfulness of the SLO design, willingness to adapt instruction throughout the interval, student growth, and reflection on outcomes. This will help reinforce that SLOs are a process focused on teacher reflection, adjustment, and growth.



TIA Tip

If using the SLO as the primary student growth measure for a teacher with respect to the TIA, emphasize that student growth, as measured by the SLO will be a significant factor in determining whether teachers are eligible to earn designations under TIA.

Phase 2: Monitor Progress to Drive Instruction



During Phase 2 of the SLO process, teachers will be answering this question: are my students progressing toward their targets? This phase is designed to last throughout the majority of a course and aligns with best practices in teaching as captured throughout the T-TESS observation rubric, principally within the three dimensions “Standards and Alignment (1.1),” “Data and Assessment (1.2),” and “Monitor and Adjust (2.5).” Teachers continuously engage in a continuous

cycle that includes planning, instruction, evidence collection, analysis, reflection, and then back to planning in order to further student learning.



TIA Tip

If using SLO as the TIA student growth measure for the teacher this phase aligns to the district’s local teacher designation plan.

Phase 2: Monitoring Progress to Drive Instruction

Are the teacher’s students progressing toward their targets?

Teacher

- Plan and provide differentiated instruction to further student learning (on-going).
- Monitor student progress toward goals (on-going, record on the Student Growth Tracker).
- (Added bullet)
- Review student progress with colleagues to engage peer knowledge and experience as a resource while planning for instruction (on-going).
- Adjust instructional plans to meet evolving student needs (on-going).
- Conference with appraiser “mid-year” to review progress of SLO process.

Administrator

Staff Capacity:

- Consider teachers’ ability to evaluate alignment between skill focus, classroom instruction and practice, and the assessments or measures used to monitor growth.
- Consider teachers’ ability to adjust instructional scaffolding based on progress monitoring data.
- Consider how SLO work may complement other processes such as Rtl, portfolios, etc.
- (Added bullet)

Communication & Timelines:

From Week 9 (YR1) or Week 6 (YR2) to near “end of course”

Phase 2: Monitoring Progress to Drive Instruction

Are the teacher's students progressing toward their targets?

- Key Message: This step is where the SLO process can increase an educator's skill in monitoring and adjusting instruction to ensure it meets student needs.
- Look for and establish structure for ongoing dialogue with and among teachers.
- The MOY conference may be held in conjunction with other scheduled meetings or pre- and post-conferences occurring from about Week 12 (mid-November) through Week 22 (mid-February) of the school year.

On-going Training and Support:

- Ensure staff collaboration meetings occur regularly and are valuable for teachers.
- Look for ongoing formative progress checks and instructional adjustments.
- Look for development of a robust body of evidence, aligned to the SLO for each student.
- Provide opportunities to calibrate grading practices across the team if teachers are using common assessments aligned with a shared SLO focus.
- Begin training for EOY processes about 12 weeks prior to the end of the school year.

Protocol / Procedures:

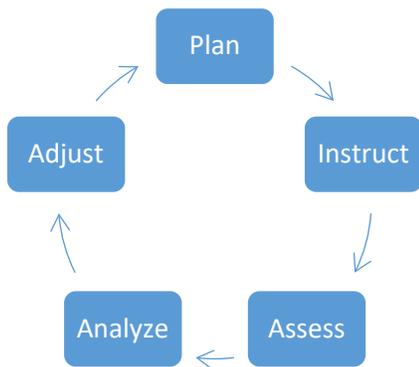
- Consider involving teacher leaders and C&I specialists to provide support and assist with monitoring.

Technology:

- Do you have the technology necessary to support this process?
- What technology may be needed to facilitate collaboration between teachers?
- If technology is an issue, what steps or "workarounds" are needed to address the situation?

Phase 2: A Continuous Cycle

Question 5 marks the beginning of Phase 2 of the SLO process, which lasts for the majority of the school year and involves a continuous cycle of professional practices that comprise the core of the SLO process.



At the core of the SLO process is the continuous cycle of planning, instructing, assessing, analyzing, and adjusting. This cycle reflects one of the hallmarks of effective instruction and should occur continuously during Phase 2 of the SLO process.

MOY Conference

It is recommended that the SLO MOY review be conducted in conjunction with another regularly occurring conference, such as a pre- or post-observation conference. The design of the SLO process allows an appraiser to gain greater understanding of a teacher’s proficiency with the instructional planning process. The MOY review can occur any time from mid-November through mid-February, although this can be adjusted to fit specific contexts.

The MOY review is also an ideal time to review the alignment between end-of-year performance measures and the skill focus for the SLO. As teachers collect progress measures during Phase 2, any lack of alignment between the SLO and end-of-year measures may become more apparent. Encourage teachers to review the selected measures and make adjustments as needed to increase alignment.

A note about discussing student growth goals during the MOY conference

– As teachers monitor student progress throughout the year, some may ask to make changes to the student growth targets set at the beginning of the year. This practice is strongly discouraged. If this situation occurs, please remind teachers that:

- Although teachers are encouraged to set growth goals that reflect high yet attainable expectations for all students, appraisers understand that this will be an even more inexact science in the first year of SLO implementation as teachers are getting comfortable with the process of determining growth expectations.
- The primary reason for reviewing student growth data is to help teachers better understand the factors contributing to student outcomes for the purpose of strengthening teacher practice. This will become apparent by reflecting on reasons why students meet, exceed or fall below the growth goals set by the teacher.
- SLO ratings are based on indicators related to effective teacher practice as well as students’ goal attainment. Appraisers will balance these factors when ultimately determining SLO ratings.
- However, if there should be extreme extenuating circumstances that render a student’s goals unrealistic, the appraiser may take these factors under advisement and determine if a change in goals is warranted. Any such changes should be clearly documented.



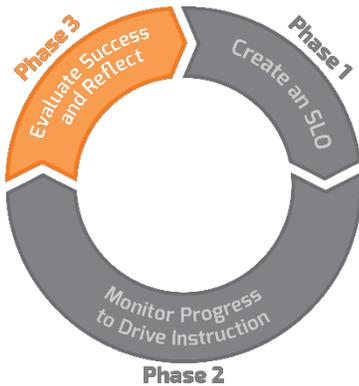
TIA Tip

The MOY is an ideal time to review the BOE to date for a sampling of a teacher’s students so that the administrator can help ensure that the BOE is on track to be as accurate and robust as possible in order to be able to measure student growth accurately at the end of the year for purposes of TIA.

Coaching Connection:

Teacher’s Guide, pgs. 24-26

Phase 3: Evaluate Success and Reflect



In Phase 3 (near the end of the course), the appraiser and teacher will meet to discuss progress throughout the year, the quality of the SLO, expectations for student growth, monitoring and adjustments, and overall student growth, using the Targeted Skill Profile, [Student Growth Tracker](#), and the [SLO Rating Rubric](#). It is recommended that this discussion be integrated with the appraisal end-of-year conference, but it can also be scheduled separately.

Phase 3: Evaluating Success and Reflection	
Did these students grow, and what did the teacher learn from the process about his/her practice?	
Teacher	Near the "end of course"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect evidence to determine levels of student growth. Record on the Student Growth Tracker. Reflect on student growth in response to instructional choices. Consider possible areas of refinement to strengthen future practice. Meet with appraiser to discuss outcomes and insights. 	
Administrator	
<p>Staff Capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider staff capacity for using SLO outcomes in longitudinal reflection on teaching practice. Consider your capacity and comfort with conducting EOY SLO reviews. What additional resources could you access to support you in this step? <p>Communication & Timelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convey the key message(s): The end-of-year reflection is the critical step to ensure that teachers gain a greater understanding of their practice and apply that insight to future work. 	
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="flex: 1;"> <p style="margin: 0;">TIA Tip</p> <p style="margin: 0; color: #0070c0;">The percent of a teacher's students who met or exceeded their expected growth goal using the SLO process is the key factor in aligning a teacher's student growth rating to the statewide performance standards for TIA.</p> </div> <div style="flex: 0.2; text-align: center;">  </div> </div>	

Phase 3: Evaluating Success and Reflection

Did these students grow, and what did the teacher learn from the process about his/her practice?

- Consider the campus calendar (testing and other school events) to identify window for data collection, which could include multiple measures.
- Consider the appraisal calendar when planning for SLO EOY meetings including identifying and communicating the window for teacher submission of SLO materials prior to EOY meetings.
- Coordinate SLO EOY meetings with other EOY meetings to the extent possible.

On-going Training and Support:

- Plan for any training and support teachers may need to submit materials prior to the EOY conference.

Protocol / Procedures:

- What is campus expectation for teachers to work with teams/peers during this step?
- What is the campus expectation for calibrating teacher scoring on common assessments?

Technology:

- What methods has the district selected to maintain SLO files for documentation and future reference?
- What support or additional resources may be needed for campus implementation?

Collect Evidence

Appraisers:

- Look for the use of multiple measures to determine student mastery on the SLO focus skill.
- Request an explanation for how the data gathered was synthesized to determine students' summative skill levels.
- Utilize campus, district, and ESC staff to promote grading calibration for common assessments.

Teacher Reflection

Encourage teachers to reflect on notes and data collected throughout the year to prepare for the EOY conference. Key questions centered on teacher growth and development include the following:

- How did you adjust instruction during the year? Did the changes you made help improve student learning?
- What did you learn about your own pedagogy (assumptions, sequencing, grouping, etc.)?
- Were all students engaged in the learning?



TIA Tip

Encourage teachers to reflect on key questions centered on student growth, including:
Based on the BOE for each student, what is the end of year proficiency level on the TSP for each student?
Which students met their expected growth goals?
How many students exceeded their expected growth goals?
Why?
Did any students not meet their expected growth goals?
Why?

- Were the assignments, class work, and measures appropriate for this course?
- What would you do differently the next time? Would you change the focus, the instructional strategies, or the goals set for students? Why or why not?

EOY Conference

The EOY SLO conference should occur during the appraisal EOY conference, reinforcing that SLOs are a part of the appraisal process. Create a schedule for teacher submission of the completed Student Growth Tracker and a copy of summative assessments used to determine student skill levels prior to the EOY conference to allow appraisers time to review the materials. In addition, select a few students (2-4) for more in-depth review during the conference. The appraiser should inform the teacher which students will be discussed in depth so the teacher may bring examples of student work to the conference.

Reviewing student samples allows the appraiser to gain a deeper understanding of the teacher’s approach to assessing and determining the students’ skill levels. The purpose isn’t to check the teacher’s math but to better understand his or her thinking and the reasonableness of that approach. If the appraiser has any lingering questions about the teacher’s thinking, he or she may ask either for additional student samples or for the teacher to revisit the summative skill level determination and resubmit the Growth Tracker. Not until the conference concludes and the appraiser has had time to consider all the information submitted and gained during the conference should he or she attempt to complete the SLO rating rubric for the teacher.

Appraisers should view the EOY conference as an opportunity for the teacher to walk the administrator through his or her SLO process, including his or her overall SLO experience, a detailed discussion of work and related data about the selected students, reflection on insight gained through the SLO process, and the anticipated application of that insight on future work. Appraisers should refer to the EOY Conference Protocol for a list of potential conference questions. The EOY conference is an opportunity for the teacher and appraiser to dialogue about the SLO process, providing additional insight to both the teacher and the appraiser. This additional information is a key piece for the appraiser to understand the teacher’s work throughout the SLO process and therefore must occur before the appraiser can determine a final rating for the teacher’s SLO.

The insight gained into the teacher’s instructional practice through the SLO process should funnel into the teacher’s goal-setting and professional development plan for the following school year.



TIA Tip

If using SLOs as the SGM for eligible teachers, reinforce that in addition to being a part of the appraisal system, SLOs are also a part of the local teacher designation system.



TIA Tip

A key part of the EOY conference is the determination, based on the body of evidence, of how many students demonstrated targeted skill growth over the course of the year by comparing their preparedness levels from the beginning of the year to their skill level at the end of the year. The accuracy of this process is critical in order to align with the statewide performance standards for TIA.

Coaching Connection:

Teacher’s Guide, pgs. 27 - 30

Guidance for End-of-Year Conferences

Before the Conference:

1. In advance of the meeting, ask teachers to submit the Student Growth Tracker and measures used as evidence at the end of the SLO interval, including any assessments, essay prompts, lab instructions, and performance task directions.
2. Upon reviewing the tracker and assessments, ask the teacher to bring in results on those measures for a few students. The intention is not for the appraiser to verify all outcomes or check the math of mapping students to the targeted profile. Rather, the goal is to review a few samples to discover how the teacher determined end-of-year skill levels.
3. Consider whether you want teachers to review the reflection questions in their implementation guide. This may assist the teacher in preparing for the meeting.

During the Conference:

1. As before, begin with a positive statement about the SLO (e.g., “I was really impressed with how you and your team worked on this SLO. I think you showed strong leadership in this process, guiding the team through the development of the SLO as well as monitoring progress”).
2. Then, work through the following protocol and questions, adjusting to your context as appropriate:
 - a. Overall – how did the SLO process go for you this year? What did you learn?
 - b. Let’s talk about the three students whose work you brought in. Walk me through how this assessment/these assessments captured the skill(s) in question. How did you determine where these three landed on the Targeted Skill Profile?
 - c. Tell me about your students’ growth. Who did better than you expected? What do you think about that? Why did they do so well? Are there any insights from these students that you might be able to transfer to other students in the future?
 - d. Let’s talk about the reverse. Were there some who did not progress as you expected? Why do you think that happened? What could you do differently with this type of student in the future?
 - e. Overall, what do you think you would do differently the next year in your SLO process?
 - f. Did you notice any place this year where there were gaps in support – is there anything else that I can do or any PD we can offer that might help you in the future?
 - g. Combining your experience with the SLO this year and what we’ve discussed through the appraisal process in general, what should we focus on moving forward as your practice goals for next year?
3. After the conference concludes, the appraiser should have enough information about the teacher’s SLO work to rate him or her on the SLO Rating Rubric. The appraiser will share the rating with the teacher after the conference concludes and with the rest of the teacher’s appraisal ratings.
4. The SLO closeout should be combined with an end-of-year evaluation conference.



TIA Tip

Ask teachers to submit the body of evidence for all of the students covered in their SLO.



TIA Tip

Ask teachers to bring in the body of evidence for students at each level of initial preparedness, and at each level of end of year targeted skill growth.

District Decision Worksheet

Key Decisions – Policies and Procedures

Student Learning Objectives

This document contains a series of questions to assist districts in preparing for initial implementation of SLOs.

District _____ Date _____

Key Policy Decisions - Districts	
Policy Question	Decision/Notes
<p>1. Who will be the central point person(s) to guide the initiative and ensure success? <i>The SLO process involves interaction among different departments (Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, campus leadership, HR, etc.). Consider who is in the best position to lead the initiative as well as key personnel to be included as part of the leadership team to coordinate across the district.</i></p>	
<p>2. Determine the process and timeline for completing a preliminary assessment of district capacity in key SLO components to identify resources needs and priorities for each the following areas:</p>	<p>Data access:</p> <p>Data review and application:</p> <p>C & I coaching and collaboration:</p> <p>Technology support:</p>

Key Policy Decisions - Districts

Policy Question	Decision/Notes
<p>3. What is the district timeline for key SLO components?</p> <p>a. Teacher Orientation and Training: <i>Since the initial SLO steps can occur prior to the school year, it is recommended to schedule orientation as early as possible during the pre-year in-service training window.</i></p>	<p>Training dates:</p>
<p>b. Submission/Approval of SLO timeline: <i>Refer to information below for additional consideration about how the process will be structured</i></p>	<p>Draft due date (if applicable): _____</p> <p>Final Approval completed by: _____</p>
<p>c. Mid-point SLO review: <i>Will the district require formal documentation of progress notes from the mid-point review? If so, how will this information be captured and if needed, shared?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consider availability of supporting data</i> 	<p>___ Not Required</p> <p>___ Required (if so, indicate how this information will be made available)</p>
<p>d. EOY SLO review: <i>Will the district require formal documentation of progress notes from the end-of-year review? If so, how will this information be captured and if needed, shared?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consider availability of supporting data</i> 	<p>___ Not Required</p> <p>___ Required (If so, indicate how this information will be made available)</p> <p>What is an appropriate timeline for when EOY conferences should be completed?</p>

Policy Decisions – Districts or Campus-based			
District Decision	Site-Based Decision	Policy Question	Decision/Notes
4. Determine whether the following decisions will be made at the district or campus level and what additional guidance and support, if any, are necessary. Check alignment with district timeline.			
		a. How will the SLO approval process be structured? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the process consist of a single approval by an administrator or a group approval by an SLO team (campus administrator, C&I specialist, etc.)? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Single administrator <input type="checkbox"/> Campus team (If selected, list roles of eligible team members below)
<div style="border: 2px solid orange; padding: 5px;"> <p>TIA Tip</p>  <p>Determine how many examples of student work will be required for the body of evidence, communicate to teachers. Also specify the manner in which the required number of student work samples will be shared, e.g. electronically, shared files, paper versions, etc. Best practice is to include at least five examples of student work.</p> </div>		b. How will the SLO workflow be managed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic platform <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic documents via email <input type="checkbox"/> Hard copies <input type="checkbox"/> Other
		c. Will teachers be encouraged/expected/required to work collaboratively with peers while developing initial skill profiles? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If so, what will be the recommendations for those in unique teaching positions such as elementary music teachers or high school Latin teachers? 	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Additional recommendations:
		d. Will teachers be required to meet periodically with colleagues to review/discuss teacher monitoring and instructional adjustment throughout the SLO process? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If so, what is the expectation for how often this would occur? Is any additional support necessary for these meetings to occur? 	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Additional support:

Policy Decisions – Districts or Campus-based			
District Decision	Site-Based Decision	Policy Question	Decision/Notes
		e. How will teachers track student progress toward growth targets in an explicit way? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How often?</i> • <i>Will this be accomplished by adding more columns to the Student Growth Tracker or another way?</i> 	Monitor via: <input type="checkbox"/> Student Growth Tracker <input type="checkbox"/> Another method
		f. Will teachers/teacher teams be allowed to create measures or assessments, if desired, for demonstrating student progress toward Targeted Skill Profile? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If so, will these measures be reviewed/approved?</i> • <i>If so, when/how will the review/approval occur?</i> 	Teacher team assessments: <input type="checkbox"/> Allowed <input type="checkbox"/> Not allowed If allowed, will they require approval? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If approval is required, how and when will that occur?
		g. Check alignment with district timeline to see if any adjustments need to be made.	
		5. Districts and schools: Determine a process for periodic review of implementation progress and impact to strategically capture and apply “lessons learned” in all areas (C & I, administration, etc.) to future work.	

TIA Tip



Require teachers to compile a body of evidence of student work for each student that documents students' progress toward growth targets so that the percent of a teacher's students who met or exceeded expected growth goals can be determined accurately at the end of the year.

Planning Worksheet for School-Based Leaders

SECTION I: PREPARATION

A. Setting the Stage:

Which teachers in your school will complete SLOs?

B. Orientation and Training Plan

Will orientation occur in a single session or are multiple sessions preferred?

Single Multiple

When will orientation occur? _____

Who will lead the training? _____

Will pre-work be required for orientation? Yes No

If so, what will that pre-work be?

What should teachers bring with them to orientation?

What will be the follow-up plan to orientation? Will teachers/administrators be expected to view content on the website? Yes No

If yes, what specific content should be reviewed?

Teacher Implementation Guide Appraiser Implementation Guide

District Implementation Guide Sample SLOs

Orientation video

Will there be a schedule for potential review dates of material on the website?

Yes No

If so, specify the timeline:

SECTION II: SLO DEVELOPMENT

A. SLO Development Plan

Will there be time set aside specifically for teachers to craft SLOs?

Yes, regular planning time.

Yes, will create special time frame which will be: _____.

No, teachers will create SLOs on their schedule.

Will SLOs be developed in teams? Yes No

If so, are there any teachers who do not have a natural partner for a PLC?

Yes No

If yes, is there someone with a similar background with whom they could be matched (e.g., Music teachers with Art teachers) Yes No

If not, who will contact the district to arrange for a virtual PLC across schools?

Are there teacher leaders, instructional coaches, or others in leadership positions who will provide assistance to teachers as they craft their SLOs? If so, who are they?

What other strategies will you put into place to improve efficiency?

B. SLO Approval Process

Who will approve SLOs? _____

If there are multiple approvers, how will teachers' SLOs be divided among them?

Who will set deadlines for submissions and approvals? _____

What will be the deadline for submission? _____

How will SLOs be transmitted, stored, and reviewed by approvers?

Will SLOs be reviewed by grade- or content-level teams? Yes No

What materials do you want teachers to submit for the approval conference?

SLO form

Student Growth Tracker

Evidence of students' current level of learning

Complete measures to be used at the end of the SLO

Blueprint or descriptions of measures to be used at the end of the SLO

How will appraisers track progress toward completion of SLOs they will supervise?

Excel spreadsheet developed by _____

Each appraiser will use his or her own strategy



TIA Tip

Require that teachers use and document multiple sources of evidence in order for teachers to set initial skill profile (preparedness levels) for each student so that the expected growth goal for each student can be as accurate and evidence based as possible.

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTATION

Will there be regular meetings of PLCs or other settings for discussions of SLOs?

Part of PLC planning

Will organize separate meetings

How often do you expect peer groups to meet about progress on SLOs?

Biweekly Monthly As needed

How will you organize mid-point conferences?

With pre- or post-observation conferences

Separate meeting scheduled

What documentation do you want teachers to submit for these conferences?

Reflection document

Student Growth Tracker

Sample student work



TIA Tip

For the mid-year conference, require teachers to bring at least two examples of student work from the first part of the school year to demonstrate student progress toward expected growth goals. (By the end of the year best practice is to have at least 5 examples of student work.)

___ Sample formative measures

SECTION IV: REFLECTION AND CLOSEOUT

Will you set aside a specific timeframe for teachers to administer the measures used as evidence at the end of the SLO interval?

___ Yes ___ No If yes, what is that timeframe? Between _____ and _____.

What documentation do you want teachers to submit in advance of the closeout conference?

- ___ Reflection on SLO
- ___ Sample student work
- √ Student Growth Tracker
- √ Performance measures used (copies of tests, essay prompts, etc. given to students)

What will be the time frame for completing the appraisal EOY conferences where SLOs will also be discussed? Between _____ and _____.



TIA Tip

Require that teachers bring a body of evidence of student work that demonstrates student progress toward expected growth goals throughout the year, including both formative and summative student work. A robust body of evidence of student work, including a best practice of at least five pieces of student work, will increase accuracy in determining which students met or exceeded expected growth goals for the purposes of TIA.

SECTION V: HOMEWORK

Explore the availability of data for evaluating trend data, determining initial level of student learning, and collecting evidence at the end of the interval. *Note that trend data may be useful if there are multiple foundational skills that could be the focus of the SLO. Data for determining an initial level of student learning will include data gathered in the current year and could include informal measures as well as local measures such as common formatives. Evidence at the end of the interval would include assessments that either exist or will need to be created to directly assess the skills central to the SLO.*

Data source	Which grades or content areas could use this source?	Is it currently available to teachers?	If not available, how could it be made accessible?	Who could accomplish making it accessible?	When can this be accomplished?

Student Learning Objectives Form

Teacher Name	<input type="text"/>	Date	<input type="text"/>
School	<input type="text"/>	Appraiser Name	<input type="text"/>
Grade	<input type="text"/>	Subject Area	<input type="text"/>

Step 1: What is the focus for my SLO?

a. Identify the focus area of the SLO.

b. What is the SLO skill focus statement for this content area or subject?

c. What led to the decision to focus on this content area and the SLO skill focus?

d. What TEKS for the content area or subject correspond to these most important skills? You may provide an enumerated list of TEKS, but be prepared to share the verbiage of the TEKS with your appraiser.

Step 2: What do I think my students will be able to do?

Use your knowledge of prior students' performance and end-of-year expectations for students in previous, vertically aligned courses to describe typical students in the class. A best practice is to start by describing a typical entering skill level, then, the highest entering skill level ("well above typical skill"), and the lowest entering skill level ("well below typical skill") and finally, complete the in-between levels ("above typical skill" and "below typical skill").

Initial Student Skill Profile		
SLO Skill Focus		
Level	Descriptors	Number of Students in this level
Well above typical skill		
Above typical skill		
Typical skill		
Below typical skill		
Well below typical skill		

a. Who will be included in your SLO?

When choosing your class or classes, gather informal data about your students to determine which class or classes is/are most representative of the cross-section of students that you teach.

- Elementary classroom teachers: select your entire class.
- Elementary departmentalized teachers or secondary teachers: identify the targeted class or classes (class, grade and subject).

b. What multiple sources of evidence/student work (both current and historical) did you use to map students to the Initial Student Skill Profile?

c. Match your current students to the descriptions in the Initial Student Skill profile.

- List the total number of students at each level in the right hand column above, and
- Record the level for each individual student on the Student Growth Tracker.
- Check here when both tasks are complete:

Step 3: What are my expectations for these students?

- a. Use information about how students mapped to the Initial Student Skill Profile to describe the expected skill sets across all five levels, that student will be expected to demonstrate at the end of the year. In other words, what are the specific skills that will describe what high, average, and low performers will be able to do at the end of the course? Complete the Targeted Student Skill Profile below

The profile should describe your expectations for what this particular group of students' performance will look like at the end of the interval. For example, the description at the middle level describes what you expect to be a typical skill level at the end of the interval.

Targeted Student Skill Profile	
SLO Skill Focus	
Level	Expectations
Well above typical skill	
Above typical skill	
Typical skill	
Below typical skill	
Well below typical skill	

- b. Use available data on your current students (e.g., attendance, grades in relevant courses, current student work, prior testing data, etc.) along with each student's description on the Initial Student Skill Profile to establish a target for each individual student covered in the SLO. Record these targets on the Student Growth Tracker.
- c. What evidence did you use to establish a targeted skill level for each student? Include multiple data sources.

- d. What will you include in the body of evidence (BOE) that will establish students' skill levels at the end of the interval? Describe the measures to be used and how they are aligned with the skills identified in the SLO.

Step 4: How will I guide these students toward growth? (for use in discussion)

Be prepared to discuss answers to the following questions with your appraiser.

- a. How will you differentiate instruction for those students who are in the highest performing group as well as those who are in the lowest performing group? How will you guide all students toward reaching their targeted growth goals?
- b. What strategies will you use to monitor progress? How will you document your body of evidence for each student.
- c. Describe your plan for conferencing with your colleagues about student progress. Who will be members of your team and how often will you meet? Who will be members of your team and how often will you meet? How will you share notes, best practices, feedback, etc.?

Optional Notes

Student Learning Objectives Review & Approval

By signing below you acknowledge that you have discussed and agreed upon the Student Learning Objectives Plan, above.

Comments	Decision
	Approved Revise and Resubmit
Teacher Signature	Date
Appraiser Signature	Date

Revision Comments (if required)	Decision
	<input type="checkbox"/> Final Approval
Teacher Signature	Date
Appraiser Signature	Date

Student Growth Tracker

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	Student ID <input type="text"/>	Student Name <input type="text"/>	Teacher Name <input type="text"/>	Course <input type="text"/>	Initial Skill Profile Level (Select from Drop Down) <input type="text"/>	Targeted Skill Profile Growth Goal (Select from Drop Down) <input type="text"/>	Evidence of Student Progress # 1 <input type="text"/>
1							
2							
3							
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SLO Teacher Rating Rubric

(For rating of the student growth component of T-TESS, either as a 5th domain or a 17th dimension)

The list below provides guidance for locating evidence to support evaluation of teachers' effectiveness on the criteria included in the rubric.

Rubric Criteria	Supporting evidence location
Quality of the Skill Statement	Skill Statement Success Criteria
Expectations for students	Targeted Skill Profile Success Criteria, and steps 3 and 4 on the SLO Form
Students meeting targeted growth	Completed Student Growth Tracker at the end of the SLO interval

Student Growth Rating	Descriptors	*Required
Distinguished	<p>The following have been accomplished:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher has crafted a high-quality Skill Statement Teacher has set beginning of year skill profiles using multiple sources of data Teacher has set student growth goals that reflect high expectations for students Teacher has consistently monitored student progress, collected data, and used evidence of student work to make successful adjustments to instructional strategies, as needed Teacher has compiled a valid and reliable body of evidence that accurately documents students' end of year growth All students met targeted growth goals and most students exceeded targeted growth goal* 	
Accomplished	<p>The following have been accomplished:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher has crafted a quality Skill Statement Teacher has set beginning of year skill profiles using multiple sources of data Teacher has set student growth goals that reflect high expectations for students Teacher has consistently monitored student progress, collected data, and used evidence of student work to make adjustments to instructional strategies, as needed Teacher has compiled a valid and reliable body of evidence that accurately documents students' end of year growth All students met targeted growth goals and some students exceeded targeted growth goals* 	
Proficient	<p>The following have been accomplished:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher has crafted a quality Skill Statement Teacher has set beginning of year skill profiles using multiple sources of data Teacher has set student growth goals that reflect high expectations for students Teacher has consistently monitored student progress, collected data, and used evidence of student work to make some adjustments to instructional strategies, as needed Teacher has compiled a valid and reliable body of evidence that accurately documents students' end of year growth Most students met targeted growth goals and some students exceeded targeted growth goals* 	
Developing	<p>The following have been accomplished:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher has crafted an adequate Skill Statement Teacher has set beginning of year skill profiles using minimal sources of data Teacher has set student growth goals that reflect adequate expectations for students Teacher has attempted to monitor student progress, collect data, and make some adjustments to strategies, although with limited success Teacher has compiled a limited body of evidence or a body of evidence that unreliably documents students' end of year growth Some students met targeted growth goal 	
Improvement Needed	<p>The following have been accomplished:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher has crafted an adequate Skill Statement Teacher has set beginning of year preparedness levels using minimal sources of data Teacher has set student growth goals that reflect adequate expectations for some students Teacher has attempted to monitor student progress, collect data, reflect on his or her pedagogy, and make some adjustments to strategies, although with limited success Teacher has compiled a limited body of evidence that unreliably documents students' end of year growth Few students met targeted growth goal 	

Appraiser Comments:

TIA Tip



For districts using SLOs as their student growth measure for TIA, consider using the chart below to align your SLO ratings to the [TIA Statewide Performance Standards for Student Growth](#).

% of Students who exceeded targeted growth (From SLO Growth Tracker)	% of students who met targeted growth (From SLO Growth Tracker)	SLO Teacher Rating Rubric Level	Alignment to TIA Statewide Performance Standards for Student Growth

Appraiser Signature: _____

Date: _____

Teacher Signature: _____

Date: _____

Student Learning Objectives Success Criteria

This tool is designed to be used by appraisers as they review SLOs for approval. Ideally, SLOs will demonstrate effectiveness with each of the success criteria. Appraisers can use this tool to coach teachers for improvement of the SLO. In addition, teachers are encouraged to use this tool as a guide to improve the quality of their SLOs as they are crafting them.

SLO Skill Statement	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Represents a foundational skill that is specific to the content area 2) Persists throughout the course 3) Measurable through a demonstration of student skill 4) Focus on it will improve the teacher's practice (teacher dependent) 5) The skills captured are clearly defined and appropriately focused (teacher dependent) 	
Initial Skill Profile	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Articulates skills for the beginning of the year 2) Differentiates between levels 3) Descriptors align to skill statement (potentially through subskills) 4) Can be assessed in multiple ways 5) Specific to the teacher's experience and expectations (teacher dependent) 	
Targeted Skill Profile	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Articulates skills for the end of the year 2) Differentiates between levels 3) Descriptors align to skill statement 4) Can be assessed in multiple ways 5) Targets are specific to the students in the teacher's class (teacher dependent) 6) Reflects high, yet reasonable, expectations for student growth (teacher dependent) 	
Plan, Monitor, Collaborate	
<p>Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Considers highest and lowest performing students in planning 2) Challenges all students regularly <p>Monitor</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Assesses student progress on SLO at least twice per semester 2) Assessments are aligned to SLO in content and rigor 3) Adjusts pedagogy and lesson plans based on assessment results <p>Collaborate</p> <p>In alignment with district and campus expectations for collaboration</p>	

Progress Discussion Notes (Optional)

Meeting Name	Discussion #	Date
Colleagues/Team Members		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Who is on my support team?</i> 		
Reflection Notes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What instructional strategies have been particularly successful in helping students progress on this skill?</i> • <i>Which particular students (or groups of students) have made the most progress? Which have made the least? Why might this be the case?</i> • <i>Where could I use additional support or ideas from my colleagues?</i> 		
Discussion Notes		
Focus Area		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What additional strategies or adjustments do you think you will use to drive student growth?</i> • <i>How will you know if these new strategies are working?</i> 		

End-of-Year Reflection

Teacher Name	Date
School	
Appraiser Name	

Self-Reflection Notes on Student Progress

- *Who grew the most? Why do you think they were so successful?*
- *Who grew the least? Can you identify where their problems in learning occurred?*
- *Were there any common characteristics among those who did not achieve the expected growth?*

Self-Reflection Notes on Instruction

- *How did you adjust instruction during the year? Did the changes you made help improve student learning?*
- *What did you learn about your own pedagogy (assumptions, sequencing, grouping, etc.)?*
- *Were students engaged in the learning?*
- *Were the assignments, class work, and measures appropriate for this course?*
- *What would you do differently next time? Would you change the focus, the instructional strategies or the goals set for students? Why or why not?*

Definitions for the SLO Process

Appraiser

“Appraiser” refers to the principal or designated individuals certified to appraise teachers using the T-TESS evaluation system.

Colleagues or Teams

To maximize the effectiveness of this handbook, it is recommended that teachers meet with their colleagues throughout the year to share their learning and experiences. Throughout this handbook, we refer to “colleagues” and “teams.” These are general terms to signify any and all individuals or groups who can collaborate throughout a semester or year to support each other with instruction. These teams should collaborate through channels and networks that likely already exist within schools. In some schools, teams will be grade-level or content-area groups. In other cases, the team may be the whole school working together on SLOs.

Course

Throughout the handbook, a “course” refers to a specific grade/subject combination. For example, 4th grade Science, 8th grade Math or High School Physics.

Initial Student Skill Profile

Teachers develop the Initial Student Skill Profile to describe student performance levels on the first day of a course. The Initial Student Skill Profile is based on typical student performance as seen in the past. The goal of this profile is to learn the distribution of student skill levels present early in a course. This will provide the baseline from which the Targeted Student Skill Profile and student growth targets will be set.

SLO Scoring Rubric (developed by TEA to describe teacher performance)

Appraisers will meet with teachers at the end of the year to discuss how they monitored student progress, adjustments made during instruction, SLO quality, and student growth, reflecting on the overall SLO process. Based on the conversation, review of evidence, and his or her professional judgment, the appraiser determines a rubric score based on all of these factors, using the SLO Scoring Rubric selected by the district.

Success Criteria

This tool is designed to be used by both appraisers and teachers. Appraisers can use the tool as they review SLOs for approval and to coach teachers in improvement. Teachers are encouraged to use this tool as a guide to improve the quality of their SLOs as they are crafting them. Ideally, SLOs will demonstrate effectiveness with each of the success criteria.

Targeted Student Skill Profiles (developed by teachers to describe student performance)

Teachers will develop the Targeted Student Skill Profile to answer the question of what students should be able to do at various levels leading up to and exceeding mastery of the particular skill(s). The teacher describes the skills that would be exhibited by students who meet each level of performance from “no familiarity” to “exceeds expectations”. Where possible, it is recommended that these profiles be developed by teacher teams. They will be based on the initial levels of student learning and TEKS or other curriculum expectations.

Student Growth Tracker

The Student Growth Tracker is an Excel format spreadsheet that teachers will use to document students starting and end-of-year levels on the SLO Skill Profile. In addition, any progress check-in scores can be entered into the form to help monitor progress trajectory.

Teacher

Teacher roles may look different across districts. For the purposes of T-TESS, “teacher” means anyone who is appraised on the T-TESS evaluation system.