



Student Learning Objectives Handbook

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND
SECONDARY EDUCATION

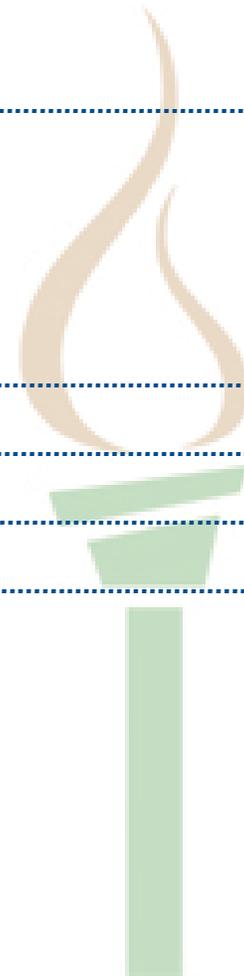


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OVERVIEW



What is a Student Learning Objective?

A Student Learning Objective (SLO) is a measurable, long-term goal of academic growth that represents a portion of a teacher’s impact on student learning. While the term “SLO” may seem new, the concept is actually a very familiar one in Missouri. Essentially, SLOs represent the process of gathering and analyzing student data, using that data to set student growth goals, and then assessing whether students have met those goals at the end of instruction. What is new about SLOs is that they offer a formalized, collaborative process for using student growth data in evaluations, especially for non-tested grades and subjects.

Why are SLOs Important?

Teaching Practice

The heart of SLOs—setting goals for students and measuring progress towards those goals—is all about good teaching practice. Moreover, using SLOs gives administrators an opportunity to let evaluation results drive professional learning opportunities for teachers.

Faculty Collaboration

Just as importantly, SLOs promote collaboration between teacher and administrator, which brings a sense of ownership to teachers in the overall evaluation process. Moreover, SLOs are non-competitive, which enables greater collaboration among teachers within and across grades and subjects.

Educator Evaluation

Missouri’s Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation require that all districts use student growth data as a significant contributing factor in educator evaluations. SLOs provide an opportunity to examine student growth data by gathering baseline scores, setting measurable goals for improvement, and ultimately assessing growth with a summative test.

What are the Challenges?

Administrators should be prepared to answer questions about the fairness of evaluations using SLOs and consider the following points when developing their responses:

- It is less important for student growth to be measured in exactly the same way for all teachers than it is to apply consistent rules about how growth measures should factor into evaluations.
- Rigorous goals for student growth should be a feature of SLOs, but it may take more than one cycle to ensure parity with teachers of subjects and grades covered by state assessments.
- Research suggests that teachers who meet their SLOs often have higher growth on state assessments, supporting the idea that SLOs can be used to identify effective teachers.

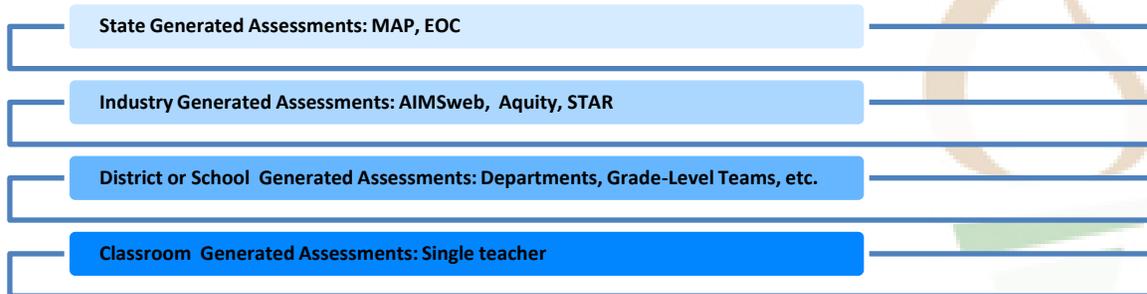
SLO PROCESS FOR TEACHERS

*note: the following steps need not necessarily occur in the order listed below

1. Choose the Assessment and Identify the Learning Content

The SLO Process begins with reflection: how will the teacher measure the effectiveness of instructional strategies and student growth at the end of instruction? An SLO should measure only the most important learning content or skills in the course, and as such, the teacher or team must decide at the outset what specific content and skills the SLO will target. Then, the teacher should use those content standards to select an aligned, appropriate assessment with which to measure growth. This requires careful selection by both the teacher and the administrator to ensure that the assessment is high quality. The **SLO Assessment Checklist** is a great tool for quality control. For a list of recommended vendor assessments, see the **List of Recommended Assessments**.

Generally, the rank of confidence in the rigor and alignment of assessments is as follows:



2. Determine the Interval of Instruction

The teacher must then decide how much time students need to demonstrate the desired growth. Typically, the interval of instruction will cover the full length of the course. Ultimately, an SLO must offer enough time for the expected growth to occur from the beginning of instruction to the end.

3. Gather Baseline Data

Before deciding how to get students to reach their growth targets, teachers need to know how well prepared their students are for the course content. Pre-assessments can help teachers identify any learning gaps among the most important content standards. By analyzing baseline data, teachers can ensure the selection of appropriate targets and instructional strategies. The **SLO Template** presents a great framework for recording baseline data and ensuring a high quality SLO that includes all of the necessary elements.

4. Identify Student Populations

Teachers must next identify the student population to which each SLO will apply. Although each SLO should serve as many students as possible, teachers should consider developing tiered targets if the baseline data shows a significant gap in skills and knowledge among students.





5. Set Growth Targets

A growth target is the amount of improvement the teacher expects to see from the intended student population. Typically, a growth target will be set in terms of the percentage of growth expected from a diagnostic assessment at the beginning of instruction to the end.

When setting a growth target, teachers should consider the baseline data of the student population and set ambitious but achievable goals. Then, the teacher should develop a rationale for why the targets are important and appropriate.

6. Submit SLOs for Approval

Once the SLO is complete, the teacher should submit the SLO to the designated approval person or committee. The district should provide guidelines on how such approval authorities should be established. That approval authority should use an **SLO Approval Checklist** to ensure that all the elements of a high quality SLO are present.

7. Regularly Track Progress

To ensure that students are on track to reach their SLO goal, the teacher must monitor progress by recording formative data along the way. Accurate formative data allows the teacher to adjust instruction as necessary and continuously inform students of their progress. The **SLO Progress Tracker** is an excellent tool for monitoring progress towards those goals.

8. Administer the Post-Test and Complete the Scoring Guide

Of course, success on SLOs is determined by performance on the designated post-assessment. Summative results should be recorded in the **Summative Scoring Guide** to document overall performance. If the district or building uses the **SLO Progress Tracker**, results can simply be copied directly from the Tracker to the Scoring Guide.

9. Review Performance

Finally, the teacher should meet with the administrator to discuss performance on the SLO using the **Scoring Guide** and student work samples.

I need more help. Where can I find some samples of SLOs?

Additional SLO samples can be found in the **Educator Growth Toolbox**. The Department has samples from multiple content areas and grade levels. However, teachers should be careful not to simply download the samples and use them without careful consideration. SLOs should be targeted for specific classrooms and contexts.



SLO PROCESS FOR DISTRICTS/LEAs

Policies

1. Determine Policies

Districts should determine their policies around SLOs based on their unique needs and priorities. Such policies may include what the deadlines will be, what forms will be used for documentation, or what personnel will have authority to approve SLOs. Regardless of which topics are addressed, establishing policies is a crucial step towards giving teachers and administrators clear guidelines around SLOs.

Timeline

2. Set the Timeline

Again, the timeline for SLOs should reflect districts' unique needs and priorities. The key concept to understand here is that establishing at least a recommended timeline provides adequate time for each step along the way.

Approval Authority

3. Establish Approval Authorities

The district should provide clear guidelines on which individuals or groups of individuals should be in charge of approving SLOs on the front end. Approval authorities might include administrators, peers, or even coaches. Whether this authority is a single administrator or a committee, districts will need to give clear directions on how such decisions will be made.

Progress & Feedback

4. Monitor Progress and Provide Feedback

At the building-level, the proper administrators or evaluators must be sure to follow up with teachers throughout the SLO process and offer feedback where appropriate. Such feedback is critical to improving teacher practice and driving students towards their goals.

Review & Plan

5. Review Performance and Plan Ahead

At either the district-level or the building-level, plans to review performance at the end of the interval of instruction must be in place, as teachers need to know how performance will be reviewed. Of course, the results should then be used to plan ahead for the next SLO cycle.

I teach multiple courses. Should I create an SLO for each subject?

We recommend a maximum of two SLOs. So, for someone who teaches English I, Creative Writing, and English III, he or she would write two SLOs. The teacher should select the courses for which to write SLOs depending on the importance of the content, and the number of students in the class.

SLO approval authorities or teacher teams should help teachers in the selection of courses for which to write an SLO.



USING SLOs IN THE OVERALL EVALUATION

In the Missouri Model. . .

Step 1: Score the SLO

John Smith teaches an Agricultural Science course for high school students. At the end of the course, he receives a score based on the percentage of his students that meet their SLO growth targets. Here is a summary of his results using the Model Educator Evaluation System’s scoring guide:

Baseline	Target	# Students Meeting Target	# Students	% Meeting Target	Overall Results	
0 to 40	60	13	out of 14	92.9%	# Students Meeting Target	% Students Meeting Target
41 to 50	70	2	out of 2	100.0%		
51 to 70	80	1	out of 1	100.0%		
71 to 85	90	4	out of 5	80.0%		
86 to 100	95	2	out of 4	50.0%		
Scoring					22	84.6%
Insufficient Attainment	Less than 65% of students meet or exceed differentiated growth target				Score Attained	
Partial Attainment	65 - 79% of students meet or exceed differentiated growth target					
Acceptable Attainment	80 - 93% of students meet or exceed differentiated growth target					
Exceptional Attainment	At least 94% of students meet or exceed differentiated growth target					
					Acceptable Attainment	

*Baseline ranges are presented for illustrative purposes and may not be appropriate for your SLO

Mr. Smith finds that 84.6% of his students met their growth target. He has an “Acceptable Attainment” rating for the SLO.

Step 2: Complete the Summative Evaluation

Principal Jane Doe is responsible for Mr. Smith’s evaluation. She knows that student growth needs to be a significant factor. Since her school district has adopted the state’s Model Educator Evaluation System, she can be assured that her evaluations will meet this requirement.

Principal Doe follows Missouri’s **teacher evaluation protocol** to complete Mr. Smith’s summative evaluation form. This protocol uses three components to determine a teacher’s overall rating:

- (1) General performance on the nine teacher standards;
- (2) Specific performance on selected quality indicators; and
- (3) Student growth.

Data from each of these three components is compared to the following rubric:

Overall Teacher Rating

Years in Position	Ineffective	Minimally Effective	Effective	Highly Effective
0-2	Multiple Areas of Concern Or Indicator Rating 0 Or Student Growth Measure Insufficient Attainment	1 Area of Concern Or Indicator Rating 1-2 Or Student Growth Measure Partial Attainment	No Areas of Concern And Indicator Ratings 2-4 And Student Growth Measure Acceptable Attainment	No Areas of Concern And Indicator Ratings 5-7 And Student Growth Measure Acceptable Attainment
3-5	Multiple Areas of Concern Or Indicator Ratings 0-2 Or Student Growth Measure Insufficient Attainment	1 Area of Concern Or Indicator Rating 3-4 Or Student Growth Measure Partial Attainment	No Areas of Concern And Indicator Ratings 4-5 And Student Growth Measure Acceptable Attainment	No Areas of Concern And Indicator Ratings 6-7 And Student Growth Measure Acceptable Attainment
6-10	Multiple Areas of Concern Or Indicator Ratings 0-3 Or Student Growth Measure Insufficient Attainment	1 Area of Concern Or Indicator Rating 4-5 Or Student Growth Measure Partial Attainment	No Areas of Concern And Indicator Ratings 5-6 And Student Growth Measure Acceptable Attainment	No Areas of Concern And Indicator Rating 6-7 And Student Growth Measure Exceptional Attainment
Over 10	Multiple Areas of Concern Or Indicator Ratings 0-3 Or Student Growth Measure Insufficient Attainment	1 Area of Concern Or Indicator Rating 4-5 Or Student Growth Measure Partial Attainment	No Areas of Concern And Indicator Rating 5-6 And Student Growth Measure Acceptable Attainment	No Areas of Concern And Indicator Rating 7 And Student Growth Measure Exceptional Attainment

Observe that in the “Ineffective” and “Minimally Effective” columns, if even one of the three components is rated “Ineffective” or “Minimally Effective,” the word “Or” prohibits the teacher from moving to the next performance level.

In this case, Mr. Smith meets expectations for each of the nine teacher standards with no areas of concern. Additionally, on the three specific quality indicators on which Mr. Smith was focusing his efforts this year, an average rating of “3” has been calculated. Finally, as already noted, Mr. Smith has “Acceptable Attainment” of his SLO, which counts as his growth measure.

Mr. Smith is in his second year of teaching, so Principal Doe locates the cell in the first row of the summative evaluation rubric where the three scoring components are aligned. Accordingly, Principal Doe rates Mr. Smith “Effective.”

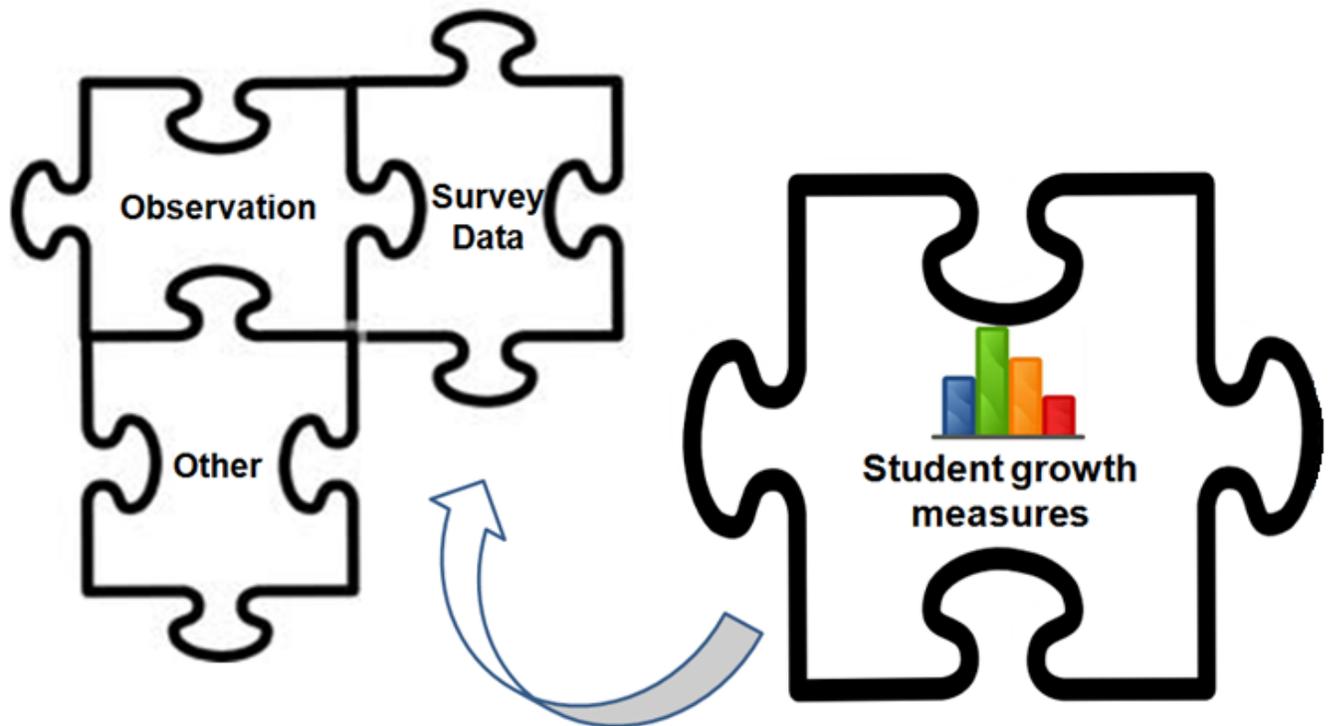
More information on the **teacher evaluation protocol** can be found in the **Model Evaluation System**.

How do I include growth data from more than one SLO in a teacher’s overall evaluation?

One way is to apply a formula to the attainment scores based on the amount of time spent with each course. For example, a teacher who spends 75 percent of the time teaching World History and 25 percent of the time teaching Psychology would have an “Acceptable Attainment” rating if he had 78 percent attainment of his World History SLO and 95 percent attainment of his Psychology SLO $((.75 \times .78) + (.25 \times .95) = .823 = 82.3\% = \text{“Acceptable Attainment”})$.

Other Options

For those school systems that opt to use another model, student growth will still need to be included as a significant factor in teacher evaluations. Administrators should use multiple measures to develop a balanced overall performance rating that includes evidence of student growth. Data collected as part of the SLO process can provide this evidence of student growth, which reflects the teacher’s impact on student academic outcomes. Administrators are encouraged to adapt the resources included in this handbook as needed to better support alternative evaluation systems.



A Piece of the “Educator Effectiveness” Puzzle

Teacher effectiveness ratings should also consider evidence that either confirms or refutes the student growth evidence, since no single measure is entirely foolproof or comprehensive. Observations, surveys, and professional artifacts should also be considered.

APPENDIX

- A. SLO Template**
- B. SLO Assessment Checklist**
- C. SLO Approval Checklist**
- D. SLO Progress Tracker**
- E. SLO Summative Scoring Guide**
- F. District Readiness Rubric**

Educator Name: _____

Grade/Subject: _____

Assessment Used: _____

Common Assessment? Yes No

Learning Content

(Identify the essential content area and state the academic concepts or skills to be taught. Include the state or district curriculum standards this SLO addresses)

Interval of Instruction

(How much time will students have to reach their goals? A unit? A semester? The full year? Be as specific as possible)

Student Population(s)

(Describe the student population(s) included in this SLO. Include IEP, ELL, and Free and Reduced Price Lunch (F/RL) data)

#IEP	#ELL	#F/RL

Targets

Baseline Data	Expected Growth	Instructional Strategies

Rationale

(State how the growth targets are appropriate and rigorous. Explain how the identified instructional strategies are appropriate to reach those growth targets)

Scoring

Insufficient Attainment	Partial Attainment	Acceptable Attainment	Exceptional Attainment
Less than 65% of students meet or exceed differentiated growth target	65 – 79% of students meet or exceed differentiated growth target	80 – 93% of students meet or exceed differentiated growth target	At least 94% of students meet or exceed differentiated growth target

This checklist provides a set of criteria with which to select appropriate assessments for Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). This checklist should be completed prior to SLO approval to ensure that the assessment chosen meets the basic requirements. All boxes should be checked “yes” before an assessment is approved.

Educator Name: _____

Assessment Name: _____

ALIGNMENT TO STANDARDS				
Yes	Somewhat	No	N/A	
				All items in the assessment align to the standard(s) addressed in the SLO
				The assessment measure addresses the full range of topics and skills included in the SLO
				The focus of the assessment mirrors the focus of the curriculum and standards
				The assessment requires students to engage in higher order thinking where appropriate
STRETCH				
Yes	Somewhat	No	N/A	
				The assessment includes items that cover prerequisite knowledge and skills from prior years where possible, and includes content-relevant items for appropriate student populations
				The assessment items cover knowledge and skills that will be of value beyond the school year
VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY				
Yes	Somewhat	No	N/A	
				The assessment includes only grade-level appropriate language or vocabulary
				Items or tasks are written clearly and concisely
				Clear scoring rubrics exist for open-ended questions or performance-based assessments
				A plan for administering baseline, formative, and summative assessments has been developed

Approved by: _____

Approval Authority Signature

Date: _____

This checklist provides a set of criteria with which to assess the quality of a proposed Student Learning Objective, or SLO. If the SLO adequately addresses all of the listed criteria, it is likely to be a useful form of evidence in the educator's evaluation and a tool for professional growth. It is recommended that all areas in need of revision be addressed prior to approving the SLO.

Educator Name: _____

Approval Authority: _____

Component	Criterion	Approved	Needs Revision
Assessment	Measures growth, gain, or change expected	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provides the data needed to decide whether the objective is met	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is reliable, valid, rigorous, and credible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is a common assessment if possible (approve if not possible)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning Content	Identifies the essential content area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	States the academic concept or skill to be taught	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aligns with curriculum standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interval of Instruction	Clearly states the time students have to reach the goal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is appropriate to content complexity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is realistic and attainable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Represents a long enough period to demonstrate desired growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Population	Identifies the specific population(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Includes a majority of the students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Conveys an understanding of the population	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Specifies any agreed-upon exceptions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Growth Target	Draws upon baseline data, where available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Predicts expectation or gain anticipated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Allows all students to demonstrate growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is rigorous yet realistic for all students in the identified population	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Instructional Strategies	Identifies method of instruction or key strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Includes specific interventions where needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are observable or documentable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rationale	Includes how the objective is connected to student needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	States how and why the instructional strategies and growth targets are appropriate and rigorous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SLO Approved By: _____

Approval Authority Signature

Date: _____

Missouri DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

Sort Data by Name

Student Learning Objective Progress Tracker

Anticipated # Formative Assessments 4

Student Name	Status	Pre-test	Growth Target	Formative 1	Formative 2	Formative 3	Formative 4	Formative 5	Formative 6	Formative 7	Formative 8	Formative 9	Formative 10	Post-Test
Amanda Roemmer	Exceeds Expected Progress	0	60	15										
Billy Greene	On Course	10	60	19										
Finneus Clark	On Course	90	95	91										
Hallie Baron	Exceeds Expected Progress	21	60	63										
Hilde Geisel	Exceeds Expected Progress	5	60	22										
Iko Takahashi	Exceeds Expected Progress	23	60	80										
Jillian Mitchell	Exceeds Expected Progress	22	60	70										
Jorge Bustamante	Exceeds Expected Progress	15	60	55										
Karter Fleischmann	On Course	73	90	84										
Kim Cardstock	Exceeds Expected Progress	33	60	51										
Leslie Poulitice	On Course	81	90	82										
Liz Brockschmidt	On Course	90	95	100										
Lonnie Fitch	On Course	88	95	95										
Markus Samuelson	Off Course	44	70	29										
Mason Millsworth	Exceeds Expected Progress	13	60	41										
Michael Maddox	On Course	99	95	88										
Nolan Parks	On Course	63	80	60										
Norte Delgado	On Course	40	60	45										
Rajesh Singh	On Course	31	60	37										
Sandy McMillian	Off Course	18	60	12										
Scott Flanders	Off Course	43	70	40										
Sommer Westerfield	On Course	20	60	28										
Tabitha Jones	On Course	78	90	78										
Tricia Stevens	On Course	75	90	78										
Tristan Smith	On Course	82	90	90										

This scoring guide is designed for use with the Student Learning Objective (SLO) Data Tracking Tool, also available through the Evaluation Toolbox. Data from the tracking tool can be inputted into the scoring guide to record overall measures of student performance relative to the targets included in the SLO. The completed form may serve as supporting documentation of student impact in an educator's evaluation.

Educator Name _____
Evaluator Name _____
SLO Title _____

Detailed Results					Overall Results
<i>(Provide the baseline score ranges used to set differentiated growth targets. Enter the number of students in each range, as well as the number and percentage meeting the growth target)</i>					
Baseline	Target	# Meeting Target	# Students	% Meeting Target	
		_____ Out of _____			# Students Meeting Target
		_____ Out of _____			
		_____ Out of _____			
		_____ Out of _____			% Students Meeting Target
		_____ Out of _____			
		_____ Out of _____			
Scoring					Score Attained
Insufficient Attainment	Partial Attainment	Acceptable Attainment	Exceptional Attainment		
Less than 65% of students meet or exceed differentiated growth target	65 – 79% of students meet or exceed differentiated growth target	80 – 93% of students meet or exceed differentiated growth target	At least 94% of students meet or exceed differentiated growth target		

The SLO Readiness Rubric helps districts/LEAs determine whether any additional preparations must be made before implementing SLOs on a district-wide or building-wide scale. Where any boxes are checked “Not Ready” or “Almost Ready,” districts and LEAs should develop strategies to address those deficiencies and ensure effective implementation.

	Not Ready	Almost Ready	Ready
Shared Vision	<input type="checkbox"/> The district articulates broad goals for improving effectiveness and student achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> Key stakeholders are aware of goals for improving educator effectiveness and student achievement, but district initiatives are not aligned to the goals	<input type="checkbox"/> All stakeholders exhibit a shared commitment to increasing educator effectiveness and student achievement as well as developing district initiatives aligned to the goals
	<input type="checkbox"/> A limited number of district staff understand the benefits and challenges of implementing SLOs	<input type="checkbox"/> District staff make limited efforts to communicate the benefits and challenges of implementing SLOs to the community	<input type="checkbox"/> All district educators share a common understanding of what implementing SLOs will entail and demonstrate a shared commitment to implementing the SLO process with fidelity
Infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/> Schools lack the organizational structure to facilitate development and review of SLOs, and to provide feedback and support	<input type="checkbox"/> Schools have building-level teams responsible for overseeing the SLO process, but team members lack training, time, or commitment to provide feedback and support	<input type="checkbox"/> All schools have building-level teams that have sufficient training, time, and commitment to approve SLOs and provide valuable feedback and support to teachers
	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers and administrators have limited access to student data	<input type="checkbox"/> The district is working to develop systems to provide teachers and administrators with greater access to data	<input type="checkbox"/> The district has fully developed systems that provide teachers and administrators opportunities to analyze current data and data trends for the development of growth targets
	<input type="checkbox"/> The district has a limited number of high-quality assessments available	<input type="checkbox"/> The district is working to develop more high-quality methods to gather baseline data, post-assessments, and formative assessments	<input type="checkbox"/> The district has a variety of methods to gather baseline data, post-assessments, and formative assessments available for all grades and subjects where possible
	<input type="checkbox"/> The district lacks sufficient resources to	<input type="checkbox"/> The district offers some opportunities through PD	<input type="checkbox"/> Job-embedded PD opportunities exist at all

	support the development of educators' use of assessments and data to inform instruction	to further educators' use of assessments and data	schools to help teachers augment their assessment and data literacy skills
	<input type="checkbox"/> The district has limited feedback mechanisms and procedures for overseeing the SLO process at the district level	<input type="checkbox"/> The district has systems to monitor the SLO process via occasional audits and feedback	<input type="checkbox"/> The district has systems to monitor and revise the SLO process on an ongoing basis through regular communication channels, in which schools provide feedback for revisions
	<input type="checkbox"/> The district does not have the capacity to improve implementation over time	<input type="checkbox"/> The district has limited capacity to improve implementation over time	<input type="checkbox"/> The district has the capacity to evaluate implementation on a yearly basis and adjust the process as necessary
Teacher Readiness	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers generally do not use student data to inform instruction	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers analyze student data with support and use data to inform long-term planning but not in everyday instruction	<input type="checkbox"/> Using student data to inform instruction is common practice; teachers consistently use student data to adjust planning, improve practice, and seek PD
	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers implement mandatory district and state assessments, but rarely use other forms of assessments	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessments of varying quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers apply assessment literacy skills to select or collectively develop high-quality assessments that align with standards and provide useful information about student growth
	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers rely on student files and prior-year report cards as sources of information about their students	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers rely on student files and prior-year report cards as sources of information about their students and attempt to seek out additional information, but do not always know where to look	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers gather and use a variety of information about the needs and strengths of their students from student files, prior-year teachers, report cards, surveys, assessments, and discussions with family members



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