STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE (SLO) GUIDANCE

TO IMPLEMENT EDUCATION LAW §3012-D AS AMENDED BY THE LAWS OF 2019 AND THE COMMISSIONER'S REGULATIONS

****NOTE****

This document provides SLO guidance for Educator Evaluation Plans approved *after* January 1, 2020 under Education law §3012d as Amended in April 2019.

For SLO guidance on plans approved *before* January 1, 2020, please contact the Office of Educator Quality and Professional Development (OEQPD) at 518-486-2753 or educatoreval@nysed.gov.

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PURPOSE OF THE GUIDANCE

The mission of the New York State Education Department is to raise the knowledge, skill, and opportunity of all the people in New York. Our vision is to provide leadership for a system that yields the best educated people in the world.

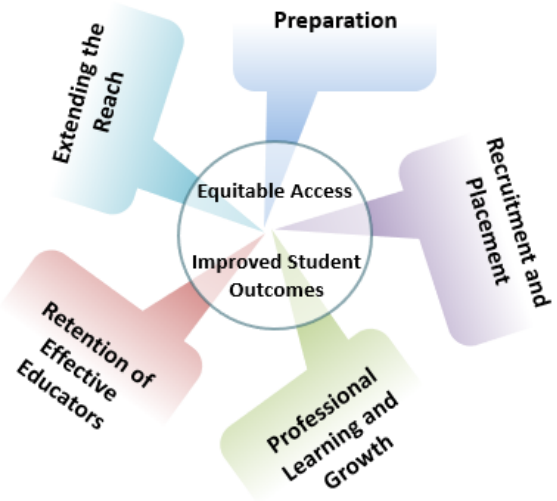
Central to the Department's mission and vision is the belief that we must increase student achievement for all students in the State while closing gaps in student achievement between our lowest and highest performing students. Taken together, these initiatives are intended to create a comprehensive, systemic approach to advance excellence in teaching and learning and to promote equity in educational opportunity throughout the state system in New York. This system consists of:

- well-designed learning standards and aligned curricula that are measured by authentic and meaningful assessments;
- core instruction (standards, curricula and assessments) delivered by well-prepared, highly effective, diverse teachers, and school leaders who have access to high quality, differentiated professional learning informed by evidence of educator practice and data on the longitudinal academic growth of students; and
- the analysis and use of these data to inform instructional practice to support the success of all students.

Research consistently confirms that instructional practices and leadership strategies are among the most significant school-based factors impacting student outcomes. Although research suggests that out-of-school factors also have a significant influence on student outcomes, effective teaching, and school leadership are essential elements in ensuring that all students graduate ready for college, careers, and citizenship.

The Department believes the overall quality of teaching and learning can be raised through alignment to the Educator Effectiveness Framework:

Educator Effectiveness Framework



To ensure equitable access to effective educators, local educational agencies (LEAs) should create coherent systems of development and support that place instructional practices tied to student learning at their center. These systems can then be used to: improve the preparation of new educators; identify effective educators as models and peer mentors; develop differentiated supports for all educators; create opportunities for self-reflection and collaboration; inform high-quality professional learning opportunities; and make strategic staffing decisions.

The Department believes that a well-designed evaluation system should support:

- a shared vision for high-quality instruction/leadership that supports student learning;
- a school culture that values continuous improvement and the success of every student;
- opportunities for feedback and coaching;
- self-reflection;

- collaboration; and
- high quality, differentiated professional learning opportunities.

The purpose of this guidance is to answer questions that educators, administrators, and community stakeholders may have about the use of Student Learning Objectives as a part of the Student Performance category in our evaluation system - Education Law §3012-d as amended by Chapter 59 of the Laws of 2019 and Subpart 30-3 of the Commissioner's regulations.

REVISED TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION LAW

On April 13, 2015, a revised annual professional performance review (APPR) system for teachers and principals was signed into law as Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2015, which added Education Law §3012-d. Education Law §3012-d was amended by the Legislature in Chapter 59 of the Laws of 2019 and signed by the Governor on April 12, 2019.

As a result, at its October meeting, the Board of Regents adopted emergency regulations to implement the changes to the evaluation system. A copy of the Board of Regents Item and regulations are available on the Board of Regents website.

In response to public comment received during the 60-day public comment period following the adoption of the emergency regulations, the Board of Regents adopted revised amendments to the regulations at its February 2020 meeting. The Board of Regents item and the revised regulations can be found here.

Section 3012-d of the Education Law can be found by visiting the New York State Legislature website, selecting "Laws" then "Laws of New York" from the top menu bar, entering "3012-d" in the search box, and clicking on the second link, "Education Law §3012-d."

The regulations that implement Education Law §3012-d as amended by the laws of 2019, as well as additional information, tools, and resources related to APPR and Student Learning Objectives can be found on the Office of Educator Quality and Professional Development's page on the NYSED website.

Note: This Student Learning Objectives ("SLO") guidance document applies to all LEAs (districts and BOCES). This document provides LEAs with guidance as they implement SLOs as the required measure of student growth for educators' APPRs. *Nothing herein is meant to abrogate any collective bargaining rights provided under an applicable law, existing collective bargaining agreement, or judicial ruling.*

SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND

On April 12, 2019, the Governor signed Chapter 59 of the Laws of 2019 to amend Education Law §3012-d. The amended law retains the requirement from the original §3012-d that teachers and principals are to be evaluated based on two categories: the Student Performance category and the Observation/School Visit category, each of which are explained in further detail throughout this document. Under the amended law, New York State continues to differentiate teacher and principal effectiveness using four rating categories – Highly Effective, Effective, Developing, and Ineffective (HEDI). Education Law §3012-d requires APPRs to result in a single overall teacher or principal effectiveness rating that incorporates multiple measures of effectiveness. As in the past, the results of the evaluations shall be a significant factor in employment decisions, including but not limited to promotion, retention, tenure determination, termination, and supplemental compensation, as well as teacher and principal professional development (including coaching, induction support, and differentiated professional development).

At the May 2020 meeting of the Board of Regents, proposed amendments were permanently adopted to amend Subparts 30-2 and 30-3 of the Rules of the Board of Regents Relating to Annual Professional Performance Reviews (APPR) of Classroom Teachers and Building Principals to Implement Chapter 59 of the Laws of 2019.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

The Student Performance category under the amended law has two subcomponents: one required and one optional.

For the first required subcomponent, all teachers are required to have an SLO consistent with a goal setting process determined or developed by the Commissioner that results in a student growth score based on a State-created or administered assessment or other State-approved student assessment. Principals will have either an SLO or an input model for the required Student Performance category.

The second subcomponent is optional and based on one or more locally-determined measures of student growth or achievement based on a State-created or administered assessment or a State-designed supplemental assessment.

The selection and use of an assessment(s) in the required or optional subcomponents of the Student Performance category of a teacher or principal's evaluation shall be subject to collective bargaining pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law.

The weights assigned to each of the subcomponents of the Student Performance category are as follows:

- If an LEA does not locally select to use the optional second Student Performance subcomponent, the required subcomponent shall be weighted at 100%.
- If the optional subcomponent is selected, the weight of each subcomponent shall be established locally, subject to approval by the Commissioner in the submitted evaluation plan.

Each measure used in the Student Performance category must result in a score between 0 and 20. LEAs shall calculate scores for SLOs in accordance with the table provided in the APPR regulations; provided, however, that for teachers with courses with small "n" sizes, LEAs shall calculate scores for SLOs using a methodology described in this guidance document. For all other student performance measures, scores of 0-20 shall be computed using the methodology described in the approved evaluation plan.

OVERVIEW OF THE SLO GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

SLOs have played an integral part in the educator evaluation system since 2011-12. Each year, educators and LEA leaders should reflect upon the design and implementation of SLOs, continuously refining their systems to ensure alignment not only to the requirements, but also to the LEA's vision and goals for student performance.

This document is meant to provide support and guidance to those involved in such work under Education Law §3012-d as amended by the Laws of 2019. Users will find the same type of foundational information around required elements and scoring parameters that was included in previous guidance documents, alongside new tips and considerations stemming from field input. In addition, users will gain insight into SLO calibration sessions and audits that can be used to increase the

quality and fidelity of implementation in the 2019-20 school year and beyond. For further resources on SLOs please visit the Office of Educator Quality and Professional Development's website.

SECTION TWO: SLO BACKGROUND AND BASICS

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF SLOS?

The required subcomponent of the Student Performance category for all teachers is an SLO. For principals, the required subcomponent of the Student Performance category is either an SLO or the input model. SLOs are developed locally, consistent with the Commissioner's goal-setting process. As required by Education Law §3012-d, the selection and use of the assessment(s) as the underlying evidence for the SLO is subject to collective bargaining and must be based on the following options:

- State-created or -administered assessments,
- State-approved locally-developed assessments (district-, BOCES-, or regionally-developed); or
- State-approved third-party assessments.

The Department believes the development of SLOs should encourage educators to focus and align instruction with LEA and school priorities, goals, and academic improvement plans. Setting long-term goals allows educators to plan backwards from a vision of student success, and research indicates that setting rigorous and ambitious learning goals, combined with the purposeful use of data through both formal and informal assessments, leads to improved academic performance by students.

The SLO process developed by the Department is aligned with best practices in instructional goal setting and is intended to have significant instructional benefit by encouraging educators to be systematic and strategic in their instructional decisions. Done thoughtfully, the SLO process will lead to an increase in the quality of discussions taking place in LEAs, schools, and classrooms that focus on student growth and learning, clearer indications of when and how to adjust instruction to meet students' needs, and more targeted professional development efforts.

WHAT ARE SLOS?

An SLO is an instructional planning tool developed at the start of an educator's course or building principal's school year that includes expectations for student growth. It should represent the most important learning aligned to national or state standards, as well as any other school and LEA priorities. The goals included in the SLO must be specific and measurable, based on available prior student learning data. Before setting targets for expected growth, educators will determine students' levels of preparedness at the start of the course by reviewing relevant baseline data. This baseline data may come from a variety of sources which include, but are not limited to, a student's prior academic history, pre-tests, or end of course assessments from the prior year.

Educators' student performance scores are based upon the degree to which the goals included in the SLO were attained, as evidenced by student academic performance at the end of the course. All assessments used with SLOs must be State-developed or approved by the Department pursuant to the *Assessment RFQ.* The selection and use of these assessments for purposes of evaluation are subject to collective bargaining.

SLOs are developed and approved through locally-determined processes consistent with the Commissioner's goal-setting process. SLOs should be based on the best available student data and should be ambitious and rigorous for all students. Superintendents must certify that all individual growth targets used for SLOs represent, at a minimum, one year of expected growth.

ARE THERE REQUIRED ELEMENTS OF AN SLO?

New York State SLOs must include the following elements:

- **Student Population:** Which students are being addressed?
- **Learning Content:** What is being taught? National/State standards? Will specific standards be focused on or all standards applicable to the course?
- **Interval of Instructional Time:** What is the instructional period covered?
- **Evidence:** Which State-administered, -developed, or -approved assessment(s) will be used to measure student growth?

- **Baseline:** What is the starting level of learning for students in the class?
- **Target:** What is the expected outcome (target) by the end of the instructional period? (All targets must include a minimum of one year of expected academic growth.)
- **State-Determined HEDI Criteria:** LEAs must use the State-determined scoring ranges to determine final scores and HEDI ratings
- **Rationale:** Why choose the specific learning content, evidence and target?

The New York State Student Learning Objective templates aligned with Education Law §3012-d as amended by the Laws of 2019 can be found here.

There are templates available for various types of SLOs (teacher- or course-specific; collectively attributed through school-, program-, district-, or BOCES-wide measures; small "n"; principal) on the NYSED website. Please note that an LEA is not required to use these templates when developing SLOs and may create local systems for planning and collecting the required elements of an SLO.

FREQUENT MISPERCEPTIONS AND "FOUR FAST FACTS"

Through conversations with stakeholders, the Department has identified frequent misperceptions related to the development and implementation of SLOs. The following information is meant to dispel some of the most prevalent misperceptions and provide a few "fast facts" about SLOs.

MISPERCEPTION 1: SLOS ARE JUST A PART OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Truth: Well-crafted SLOs can lead to more purposeful instruction, closer monitoring of student progress, and greater student growth.

This is most often reflected in the portions of the SLO dedicated to the learning content and rationale. Strategic identification and clear description of learning content can allow an instructor to use what they know about their students' performance to tailor learning to best meet their needs.

In addition, rationales that indicate progress monitoring efforts used to determine students' growth towards academic goals set within the SLO can strengthen the connection to instructional practice.

MISPERCEPTION 2: PRINCIPALS NO LONGER NEED TO USE STUDENT GROWTH FOR THE REQUIRED STUDENT PERFORMANCE CATEGORY

Truth: Principals now have two options for the Required Student Performance Category: SLOs and an input model. Both are linked to student growth.

SLOs for principals tie principal evaluation results directly to student growth outcomes on assessments. In an input model, effectiveness is measured by the actions educators take to improve student performance and to achieve set goals. In the case of the principal input model for the Required Student Performance category, principals are evaluated based on evidence of principal practice related to the Leadership Standards that impacts student growth.

Four Fast Facts About SLOs

1. All teachers will have an SLO for the Required Student Performance subcomponent of their evaluation, whether the evidence of student growth is individually attributed or collectively attributed through a school-, program-, district- or BOCES-wide measure. SLOs are an option for principals in the Required Student Performance subcomponent.
2. There is no minimum 'n' size for SLOs.
3. SLOs must include a minimum growth target of one year of expected growth for all students. These targets must be determined locally consistent with the Commissioner's goal-setting process.
4. All assessments used as evidence of student growth with SLOs must be a State-created or administered assessment or be approved by the Department through the Assessment RFQ.

MISPERCEPTION 3: TARGETS SHOULD BE SET LOWER FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE STRUGGLING ACADEMICALLY

Truth: All individual growth targets used for SLOs represent, at a minimum, one year of expected growth consistent with Commissioner's goal-setting process.

Targets are meant to be ambitious and rigorous, nurturing the academic growth of all students. In order to close achievement gaps for our most high-need students, targets may need to reflect more than one year's worth of growth. In setting rigorous yet attainable growth targets for students who are entering a course/grade level less well-prepared, targets should be set to consider both the expectation for the student's growth in the current year as well as the student's longer term trajectory toward proficiency. The quality, consistency, and rigor of SLOs can be enhanced through a clearly articulated approval process that is aligned with the LEA's vision for the academic success of all students.

MISPERCEPTION 4: TEACHERS MUST NOW WRITE SLOS FOR ALL OF THEIR COURSES UNDER THE AMENDED LAW

Truth: Under Education Law §3012-d as amended by the Laws of 2019, all teachers will have and principals may have one or more SLO(s) and the 50% rule for teachers and 30% rule for principals no longer apply when determining which courses/subjects need SLOs.

LEAs may now locally determine processes for the selection of courses/subjects for educators' SLOs so long as each teacher has at least one SLO.

MISPERCEPTION 5: PRE-ASSESSMENTS MUST BE USED IN SLOS

Truth: Although the use of pre-assessments is allowable, it is not required. It is important to note that multiple sources of evidence should be used to establish the most informative baseline.

Baseline data should be derived from the most informative sources educators have about a student's level of preparedness at the start of a course to help inform accurate target setting. Often, this information will be a student's past performance in similar courses/subject areas and/or information collected during the first marking period of the course. LEAs using a State-approved assessment should consult with the assessment provider for information regarding the use of baseline data in setting growth targets for SLOs based on a specific assessment.

MISPERCEPTION 6: IF AN EDUCATOR IS INCLUDED IN A SCHOOL-, PROGRAM-, DISTRICT-, OR BOCES-WIDE MEASURE, THEY DO NOT NEED TO HAVE AN SLO

Truth: All teachers will have an SLO as the measure of student growth for the required Student Performance subcomponent of their APPR. This means every teacher will have their own SLO, whether the evidence of student growth is individually attributed or collectively attributed through a school-, program-, district- or BOCES-wide measure.

The Department agrees that school-, program, district-, or BOCES-wide measures may provide opportunities for collaboration among teachers, which can result in higher quality assessments, consistent expectations for student growth across classrooms and grade levels, and shared discussion related to instructional practice. An SLO that utilizes a collectively-attributed measure for evidence of student growth may in fact look very similar from teacher to teacher. The Department encourages educators who are included in a collectively-attributed measure to think about how their instruction and work in the classroom is related to the growth targets included in the SLO and to include this information in the rationale section of their own SLO.

MISPERCEPTION 7: IF I MEET A GOAL THAT WAS SET AS PART OF MY SLO, THEN I HAVE EARNED 100% AND MY CORRESPONDING HEDI SCORE/RATING IS 20/HIGHLY EFFECTIVE

Truth: SLO scores and ratings are based on the percentage of students who meet or exceed their growth target; they are not dependent upon whether a class-wide goal was met.

Please consider the following examples to illustrate:

SLO TARGET: **85% OF STUDENTS WILL MEET A MINIMUM RIGOR EXPECTATION FOR GROWTH OF PROFICIENCY**		
CORRECT	***Assessing the results to calculate a HEDI score and rating:***	**INCORRECT**
	85% of students met their proficiency targets. Using the State-determined table to calculate scores and ratings for SLOs, 85% corresponds to a HEDI score of 17 and a HEDI rating of Effective.	85% of students met their proficiency target. Because the target was met in its entirety (85%/85% or 100%), using the State-determined table to calculate scores and ratings for SLOs, 100% corresponds to a HEDI score of 20 and a HEDI rating of Highly Effective.
	The goal of the SLO was for 85% of students to meet a proficiency target. 70% of students met their proficiency targets. Using the State-determined table to calculate scores and ratings for SLOs, 70% corresponds to a HEDI score of 14 and a HEDI rating of Developing.	The goal of the SLO was for 85% of students to meet a proficiency target. 70% of students met their target. 70%/85% = 82%. Using the State-determined table to calculate scores and ratings for SLOs, 82% corresponds to a HEDI score of 16 and a HEDI rating of Effective.

SECTION THREE: REQUIREMENTS

WHO IS REQUIRED TO HAVE STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES (SLOS)?

The required subcomponent of the Student Performance category for all teachers is an SLO. For principals, the required subcomponent of the Student Performance category is either an SLO or an input model.

WHAT TYPES OF EVIDENCE OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE MUST BE USED WITH SLOS?

The underlying evidence for an educator's SLO must be based on:

- State-developed or -administered assessments;
- State-approved[1] third-party assessments; or
- State-approved[1] locally-developed assessments (district, BOCES-, or regionally-developed) assessments.

All third-party and locally-developed assessments used for APPR purposes must be submitted and approved for use under Education Law §3012-d as amended by the Laws of 2019 and Subpart 30-3 of the Rules of the Board of Regents pursuant to the *Assessment RFQ*. As part of their submission, applicants must provide a description of how the student-level scores produced by the assessment are used in conjunction with New York State's SLO framework. This must include an explanation of the baseline data that will be used as the starting point for measuring one year's expected growth at the student level.

In determining how student results on the selected assessment(s) will be combined for purposes of determining a score and rating on the SLO, SLO measures may be either individually attributed or collectively attributed. The following options exist:

- **Individually attributed measures**: An individually attributed SLO is based on the student population of a course for which the educator directly contributes to student learning outcomes.
    - ***Teacher- or principal-specific:*** This measure relies only on the growth of students enrolled in the teacher's course or the principal's building/program covered by the SLO.
- **Collectively attributed measures**: A collectively attributed SLO is based on the student population across multiple sections of the same course or across multiple courses where more than one educator either directly or indirectly contributes to student learning outcomes.
    - ***School- or program-wide results:*** This measure relies on the growth of all students enrolled in a school or program who take the applicable assessments in the current school year.
    - ***School- or program-wide group or team results:*** This measure relies on the growth of students in a group/team of teachers' courses in the current school year.
    - ***School- or program-wide linked results:*** This measure relies on the growth of students enrolled in the teacher's course in the current school year taking assessments in other grades/subjects.
    - ***District-or BOCES-wide results:*** This measure relies on the growth of all students across buildings/programs in an LEA who take the applicable assessments in the current school year.
    - ***District- or BOCES-wide group or team results***: This measure relies on the growth of students in a group or team of teachers' courses across buildings/programs in an LEA who take the applicable assessments in the current school year.

When determining whether to use a **collectively attributed SLO**, the LEA should consider:

- identifying which measures and assessments could be used to encourage partnerships or teams where teachers have an opportunity to collectively impact student learning;
- identifying which assessments could be used to help foster and support an LEA's focus on a specific priority area(s);
- the impact on the LEA's ability to make strong and equitable inferences regarding an individual educator's effectiveness; and
- when using multiple measures, the appropriate weight of each measure that reflects individually and collectively attributed results.

[1] Effective March 2, 2014, no APPR plan shall be approved by the Commissioner for use in the 2014-15 school year or thereafter that provides for the administration of traditional standardized assessments to students in kindergarten through grade two that are not being used for diagnostic purposes or are required to be administered by federal law.

SECTION FOUR: TARGET SETTING REQUIREMENTS WITH SLOS

WHAT IS THE "MINIMUM EXPECTED GROWTH" IN SLOS?

SLO targets must reflect a minimum growth target of one year's expected growth for every student. As appropriate, this target should vary based upon a student's academic preparedness and learning needs. Student-level characteristics such as prior academic history, disability status, poverty status, and ELL status may be useful in determining whether targets should be differentiated to promote the success of all students. Educators should look to standards and course curricula to determine the knowledge and skills students are expected to gain over the interval of instruction.

Figure 4 illustrates questions educators should ask themselves as they work to set targets that will ensure all students are growing academically each year.

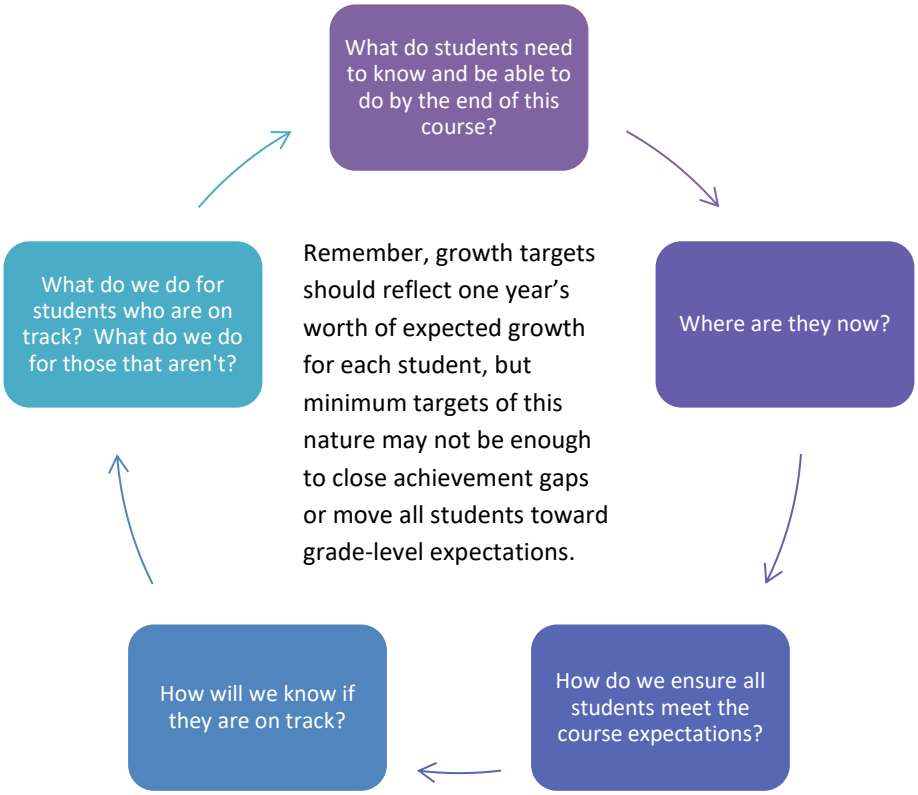


Figure 4. Reflective Questions for Use in the Target Setting Process

HOW MIGHT AN LEA DIFFERENTIATE TARGETS WHILE MAINTAINING THE RIGOR OF A YEAR'S WORTH OF EXPECTED GROWTH FOR STUDENTS WHO ENTER SIGNIFICANTLY BELOW OR SIGNIFICANTLY ABOVE GRADE-LEVEL EXPECTATIONS?

Students begin a course with varying levels of preparedness and educators must determine what a year's worth of growth will look like for all students, even those who enter significantly below or significantly above grade-level expectations.

The flow chart in Figure 5 provides educators with a series of actions that will ensure targets:

- Accelerate student gains and close achievement gaps;
- Focus on mastery of relevant course content that prepares students for the next level of instruction; and
- Continuously challenge students to grow and deepen their understanding.

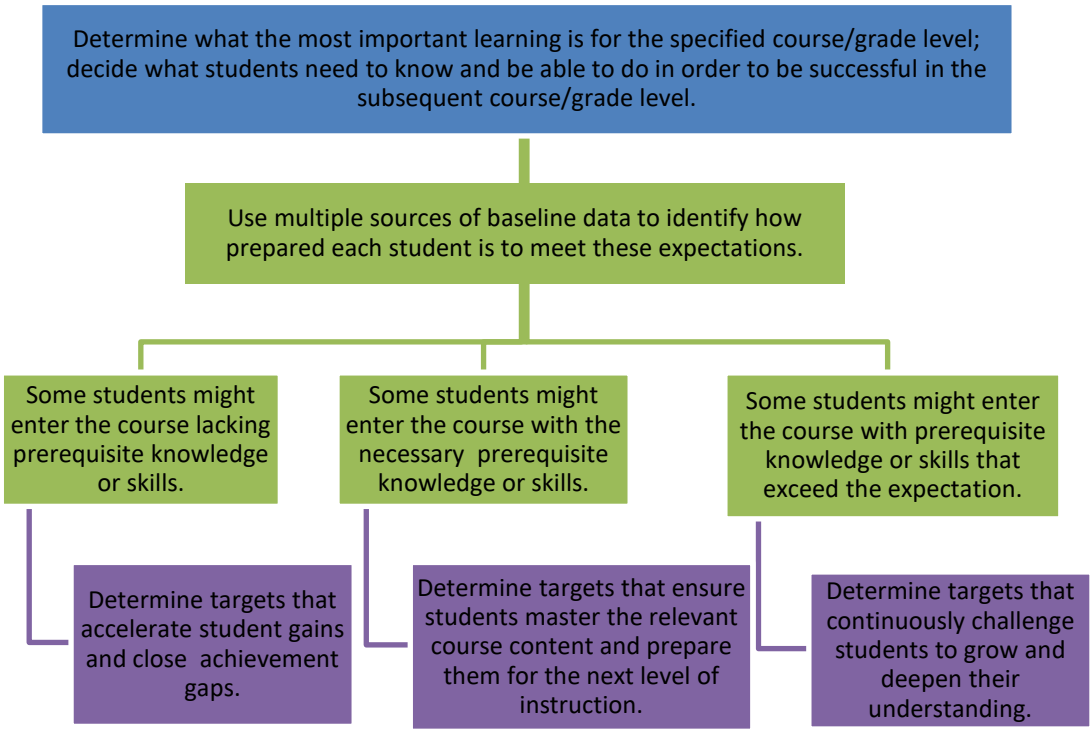


Figure 5. Setting Differentiated Targets While Maintaining Rigor

Rigorous but achievable growth targets accompanied by appropriate supports and intensity of instruction can help to ensure all students are successful.

HOW CAN AN LEA REVIEW GOALS OR SPOT CHECK TARGETS TO ENSURE RIGOR AND COMPARABILITY?

The SLO includes information regarding the level of knowledge and skills students have at the beginning of a course and defines the level of student performance that is expected at the end of a course. Educators should tailor the SLO to the specific needs of their students and nature of the course.

The following questions may be helpful to educators and administrators in determining if targets meet locally-determined minimum expectations and are rigorous and comparable across classrooms/subject areas:

Questions to Reflect Upon Rigor of SLO Targets

- What are the defined levels of proficiency and mastery for student performance in this course?
  - Do these levels align with the expectations of the applicable grade level/course standards?
- What sources of baseline data were used to identify current levels of student performance?
  - Do these sources provide information relative to the knowledge and skills students will need in order to be successful in the current course?
  - Does the analysis of baseline data provide insight into the type of instructional strategies and areas of support needed to ensure the success of each student?
- Based on previous student performance in the course, and familiarity with the assessment(s), are appropriate targets set for students starting below, at, and above grade level?
  - Do the targets set for all students require a minimum of a year's worth of expected growth?
  - Do the targets set for students entering below grade-level expectations ensure enough progress will be made to narrow or close achievement gaps?
  - Do the targets set for students entering at grade-level expectations ensure enough progress will be made to prepare students for the next level of instruction?
  - Do the targets set for students entering above grade-level expectations maintain a sense of rigor and challenge so that students continue to grow academically?

Please note that pursuant to Education Law §3012-d(4)(a), the Department must affirmatively approve and shall have the authority to reject or require modifications of LEA's APPR plans that do not set appropriate growth targets, including after initial approval.

WHAT ELSE WILL AN LEA NEED TO DETERMINE IN ORDER TO SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENT SLOS?

LEAs will need to **locally determine the processes for setting, reviewing, and assessing SLOs. Questions for consideration include**:

- Are there grades or subjects where an LEA can identify priority learning standards or other LEA-wide guidance for schools and teachers?
- How will training be provided on the selected assessments and target setting process?
- What tools/information will be used to assess the rigor of SLO targets?
- How will the LEA calibrate those who have the locally-determined responsibility for approving SLOs?
- How will the LEA train those involved in the development and scoring of SLOs?
- How will the LEA audit the quality of approved SLOs on a regular basis?
- What guidelines will be used to communicate who will receive school-, program-, district-, or BOCES-wide, group, team, or linked measures and how will the LEA ensure data are attributed accurately?
- How will procedures to monitor progress of students toward SLO targets and the review of final results be handled?
- Will the LEA use observation/school visit conferences as well as processes for evidence-based inquiry meetings to ensure sufficient time and coordination are provided?
- How will data be analyzed regularly to determine alignment between measures?

LEAs will need to **determine where data gets stored**.

- LEAs may wish to create a database or dashboard for SLOs to allow baseline data, SLOs, monitoring reports, summative evidence, etc. to be uploaded for review at a variety of levels.

LEAs will need to **determine how to address assessment security issues**.

- LEAs will need to create structures that will ensure assessments are secure. Such processes shall ensure that any assessments and/or measures used to evaluate teachers and principals are not disseminated to students before administration.

SECTION FIVE: SCORING, WEIGHTING, AND FINAL RATINGS

HOW ARE SLO SCORES/RATINGS GENERATED?

Each measure in the Student Performance category (SLOs, optional student performance measures) must result in a score between 0 and 20.

LEAs must calculate the percent of students meeting their target within each SLO and then determine the SLO score in accordance with the table on the following page[2].

Percent of Students Meeting SLO Target	Scoring Range	HEDI Rating
0-4%	0	Ineffective
5-8%	1	
9-12%	2	
13-16%	3	
17-20%	4	
21-24%	5	
25-28%	6	
29-33%	7	
34-38%	8	
39-43%	9	
44-48%	10	
49-54%	11	
55-59%	12	
60-66%	13	Developing
67-74%	14	
75-79%	15	Effective
80-84%	16	
85-89%	17	
90-92%	18	Highly Effective
93-96%	19	
97-100%	20	

Please remember that under Education Law §3012-d as amended by the Laws of 2019, no adjustments or additional points may be used or added to an educator's score in the Student Performance category.

The SLO process includes a minimum growth target of one year of expected growth, as determined locally consistent with the Commissioner's goal setting process. Where appropriate, targets should vary based upon a student's academic preparedness (i.e., prior achievement) and learning needs.

It is important for LEA leaders to ensure that targets are ambitious and rigorous to ensure that **all** students are on a trajectory for success.

Please note that LEAs will need to locally determine if they will calculate scores for teachers of certain courses with small "n" sizes using this table or the methodology described below.

HOW CAN AN LEA CALCULATE THE SCORE FOR AN SLO IN A COURSE WITH A SMALL "N" SIZE?

For those specific courses with small "n" sizes, the Department continues to recommend that LEAs use an alternative target setting model. Please keep in mind that when using this approach with State-approved assessments, LEAs will need to consult with the provider to ensure targets are set appropriately and as described in the assessment materials approved by the Department.

[2] Please note that these scoring ranges are applicable to all LEAs except for the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE).

STEP 1: Points from 0-4 are assigned based on each student's movement from baseline performance level from 1-4 to a summative performance level from 1-4 aligned with the qualitative descriptors in the box.

STEP 1

Level 1 = performance is well-below average/expectations

Level 2 = performance is below average/ approaching expectations

Level 3 = performance is average/meets expectations (also aligned with concept of proficiency)

Level 4 = performance is well-above average/ exceeds expectations (also aligned with concept of mastery)

STEP 2: Once student performance has been classified into varying levels, the LEA must locally determine what levels of end performance reflect the expectations they have for students of varying starting levels. The matrix below is one way to communicate the goals and priorities of the LEA.

STEP 2[3]	End Level 1	End Level 2	End Level 3	End Level 4
Start Level 1	.5	3	3.75	4
Start Level 2	0	2.5	3.5	4
Start Level 3	0	1	3.25	4
Start Level 4	0	0	3	3.5

STEP 3: A sum of the points earned on each student's performance is calculated and then averaged for all students on a teacher's course roster. The ranges seen in the box to the right indicate how an LEA shall determine the final points earned for the SLO.

HIGHLY EFFECTIVE			**EFFECTIVE**			**DEVELOPING**		**INEFFECTIVE**											
20	**19**	**18**	**17**	**16**	**15**	**14**	**13**	**12**	**11**	**10**	**9**	**8**	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
3.85 - 4.00	3.68 - 3.84	3.51 - 3.67	3.34 - 3.50	3.17 - 3.33	3.00 - 3.16	2.51 - 2.99	2.00 - 2.50	1.68 - 1.99	1.54 - 1.67	1.40 - 1.53	1.26 - 1.39	1.12 - 1.25	0.98 - 1.11	0.84 - 0.97	0.70 - 0.83	0.56 - 0.69	0.42 - 0.55	0.28 - 0.41	0.14 - 0.27	0.00 - 0.13

EXAMPLE: Teacher A is employed in a small district with 6 students in his grade 6 science course. In reviewing the best available baseline data, students have been classified into the four levels (Step 1). Based on the scores resulting from the collectively bargained summative assessment, each of these 6 students receive a summative level. The points earned reflect the movement of students from baseline to summative level using the locally-determined matrix (Step 2).

Student	**Baseline Level**	**Summative Score**	**Summative Level**	**Points Earned**
A	2	81	4	4
B	3	68	3	3.25
C	4	94	4	3.5
D	2	77	3	3.5
E	3	80	3	3.25
F	1	62	2	3

In order to determine the score and HEDI rating for the SLO, the points earned are totaled and averaged to the nearest hundredth:

20.5 (sum) / **6** (number of students) = **3.417** (rounded to 3.42)

Using the required table in Step 3, 3.42 is equal to 17 points, a rating of Effective.

[3] The scores assigned within this table are provided as an example. The actual scores employed by an LEA are to be locally determined.

HOW WILL RESULTS OF MULTIPLE SLOS TRANSLATE INTO ONE OVERALL SCORE/HEDI RATING FOR AN EDUCATOR?

1. The LEA will assess the results of each SLO separately, arriving at a HEDI rating and point value between 0-20 points.
2. Each SLO will then be weighted based on a locally-determined process to arrive at the required Student Performance subcomponent score between 0-20 points.
3. Using this score, an overall required student performance subcomponent rating shall be derived from the table below[4]:

	Overall Required Student Performance Subcomponent Score and Rating	
	Minimum	*Maximum*
H	18	20
E	15	17
D	13	14
I	0	12

Example of an educator with multiple SLOs to demonstrate proportionate weighting:

	SLO 1 (30 students)	**SLO 2 (25 students)**	**SLO 3 (20 students)**
STEP 1: (assess results of each SLO separately)	• 17/20 points • Effective	• 15/20 points • Effective	• 19/20 points • Highly Effective
STEP 2: (the LEA has determined that they will weight each SLO proportionately)	30 students/75 TOTAL students = 40% of overall student load	25 students/75 TOTAL students = 33% of overall student load	20 students/75 TOTAL students = 27% of overall student load
STEP 3: (calculate proportional points for each SLO)	17 points x 40% = 6.8 points	15 points x 33% = 5 points	19 points x 27% = 5.06 points
Final Required Student Performance Subcomponent Score/Rating: 16.86 points, rounded to 17 points; Effective			

[4] Please note that these scoring bands are applicable to all LEAs except for the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE).

SECTION SIX: EXAMPLE SLOS

This section includes several examples of different types of SLOs that can be created. Please note that these are not full SLOs, as they do not have all the *required elements*. There are many possible approaches to developing SLOs other than those included in the below samples that LEAs may wish to consider.

EXAMPLE 1: AN INDIVIDUALLY ATTRIBUTED SLO WITH MINIMUM RIGOR TARGETS

Scenario:

- Math teacher with 110 total students across 5 sections of courses:
  - 4 Algebra (Regents) sections with 20 students each where the LEA has collectively bargained to use the Algebra Regents exam;
  - 1 economics elective with 20 students where the LEA has collectively bargained to use a locally-developed summative assessment.
- The LEA locally determined that the SLO used for the required student performance subcomponent for each educator will be based on their largest course.

Individual Scoring/Rating of SLOs:

- The SLO will be scored based upon the percent of students meeting their individual target in accordance with the State-provided scoring ranges as seen in this chart:

HIGHLY EFFECTIVE			EFFECTIVE			DEVELOPING		INEFFECTIVE											
20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
97-100%	93-96%	90-92%	85-89%	80-84%	75-79%	67-74%	60-66%	55-59%	49-54%	44-48%	39-43%	34-38%	29-33%	25-28%	21-24%	17-20%	13-16%	9-12%	5-8%	1-4%

SLO SUBJECT	BASELINE	TARGET[5]	ACTUAL RESULT	SLO SCORE/ RATING
4 sections of Regents Algebra with 20 students in each	Historically in this district, 88% of students pass the Algebra Regents exam. 43% of students across both sections scored proficient or better on the 8th grade State math test. 90% of students mastered standards covered in first class assessment in September.	All students will meet the minimum rigor expectation of a year's worth of growth on the Algebra Regents exam. Typically, proficiency on a Regents exam signifies that an individual has accumulated enough knowledge to progress to a subsequent course. Because the baseline data suggests that there is variation in students' preparedness for the Algebra content, the LEA is using differentiated growth targets to capture a year's worth of expected growth.	80% of students met the minimum rigor target of a year's worth of expected growth.	16/ Effective
REQUIRED STUDENT PERFORMANCE SCORE AND RATING: 16 POINTS / EFFECTIVE				

EXAMPLE 2: AN SLO THAT USES LINKED RESULTS BASED ON LOCALLY-DEVELOPED ASSESSMENTS WITH MINIMUM RIGOR TARGETS

Scenario:

- Elementary physical education teacher with 130 total students:
  - 2 sections of 3rd grade physical education (70 students total); and
  - 2 sections of 4th grade physical education (60 students total).
- The LEA has a locally-determined process that SLOs with linked results will include all students across all sections an educator teaches.

[5] As approved through locally-determined processes consistent with the Commissioner's goal-setting process.

- The LEA has collectively bargained to use a district-developed summative assessment for ELA for 3rd and 4th grade students for APPR purposes.

Applying rules about which SLOs must be created for this teacher:

- This teacher will have SLOs using linked-results and minimum rigor targets for the district-developed ELA assessments students on his/her roster take, as this aligns with the district's emphasis on literacy across content areas. This approach also allows the district to minimize the amount of testing taking place.

Individual Scoring/Rating of SLOs:

- The SLOs will be scored individually based upon the percent of students meeting targets in accordance with the State-provided scoring ranges as seen in this chart:

HIGHLY EFFECTIVE			EFFECTIVE			DEVELOPING		INEFFECTIVE											
20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
97-100%	93-96%	90-92%	85-89%	80-84%	75-79%	67-74%	60-66%	55-59%	49-54%	44-48%	39-43%	34-38%	29-33%	25-28%	21-24%	17-20%	13-16%	9-12%	5-8%	1-4%

SLO SUBJECT	BASELINE	TARGET[6]	ACTUAL RESULT	SLO SCORE/ RATING
Two 3rd grade physical education sections with 70 students	25% of these 3rd grade students scored at the proficiency level on the district-developed 2nd grade exit assessment in the previous year.	All 3rd grade students on this physical education teacher's roster will meet the minimum rigor expectation of a year's worth of growth on the 3rd grade district-developed ELA assessment. The district has determined that "a year's worth of expected growth" means that all students who received a Level 1 on the 2nd grade end of course assessment will perform at a Level 2 on the 3rd grade district-developed ELA assessment. All students who received a Level 2 or higher on the 2nd grade end of course assessment will either maintain or exceed their performance on the 3rd grade district-developed ELA assessment.	85% of students met the minimum rigor target of a year's worth of expected growth	17/ Effective
Two 4th grade physical education sections with 60 students	32% of these 4th grade students scored a Level 3 or 4 on the district-developed 3rd grade exit assessment in the previous year.	All 4th grade students on this physical education teacher's roster will meet the minimum rigor expectation of a year's worth of growth on the 4th grade district-developed ELA assessment. The district has determined that "a year's worth of expected growth" means that all students who received a Level 1 on the 3rd grade end of course assessment will perform at a Level 2 on the 4th grade district-developed ELA assessment. All students who received a Level 2 or higher on the 3rd grade end of course assessment will either maintain or exceed their performance on the 4th grade district-developed ELA assessment.	93% of students met the minimum rigor target of a year's worth of expected growth	19/ Highly Effective

As per locally-determined processes, educators with multiple SLOs are combined and averaged. This will provide for one overall growth component score between 0-20 points.

	SLO 1	SLO 2
Step 1: (assess results of each SLO separately)	17/20 points Effective	19/20 points Highly Effective
Step 2: (weight each SLO evenly, as per locally-determined processes)	50%	50%
Step 3: (calculate points for each SLO)	17 points x 50% = 8.5 points	19 points x 50% = 9.5 points

REQUIRED STUDENT PERFORMANCE SCORE AND RATING: 18 POINTS / HIGHLY EFFECTIVE

[6] As approved through locally-determined processes consistent with the Commissioner's goal-setting process.

EXAMPLE 3: AN SLO THAT USES A DISTRICT-WIDE MEASURE FOR HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL EDUCATORS THAT USES REGENTS EXAMS WITH MINIMUM RIGOR TARGETS

Scenario:

- An LEA has collectively bargained to use a district-wide measure for the evidence of student growth based on five Regents Assessments (ELA, Algebra 1, Global 1, US History and Government, Living Environment) for all high school and middle school teachers.
    - There are 70 high school and middle school teachers across three buildings in the LEA that will utilize a district-wide measure as the evidence of student growth in their SLO.

Applying rules about which SLOs must be created for these teachers:

- All 70 teachers will each have an SLO that uses a minimum rigor target of one year of expected growth for all students in the district that take the five Regents assessments, as this aligns with the district's emphasis on collaboration and vertical alignment across content areas. This also allows the district to minimize the amount of testing taking place, especially for educators of non-tested grades and subjects.

Individual Scoring/Rating of SLOs:

- While each educator will have their own SLO that utilizes the district-wide measure as the evidence of student growth, their scores will be calculated in the same way based upon the percent of students meeting targets in accordance with the State-provided scoring ranges as seen in this chart, resulting in the same score for all 70 high school and middle school educators:

HIGHLY EFFECTIVE			EFFECTIVE			DEVELOPING		INEFFECTIVE											
20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
97-100%	93-96%	90-92%	85-89%	80-84%	75-79%	67-74%	60-66%	55-59%	49-54%	44-48%	39-43%	34-38%	29-33%	25-28%	21-24%	17-20%	13-16%	9-12%	5-8%	1-4%

SLO SUBJECT	BASELINE	TARGET[7]	ACTUAL RESULT	SLO SCORE/ RATING
MS/HS teachers using a District-wide measure based on 5 Regents Exams (ELA, Algebra 1, Living Environment, Global 1, US History)	Historically in this district, 75% of students have scored proficient (65) or better on each of the 5 Regents Assessments; 20% of students have scored at mastery level (85) or better on each of the 5 Regents Assessments. 50% of students currently enrolled in the courses mastered standards covered in the early class assessments for each of five courses, across all sections.	All students will meet the minimum rigor expectation of a year's worth of growth on each of the 5 Regents Assessments. The district has determined that "a year's worth of expected growth" means that **all** students are expected to reach at least proficient (65) on the 5 Regents Assessments. This target was selected after a careful review of baseline data where no students were determined to be too far behind or too advanced in the coursework making proficiency an appropriate target for all.	80% of students met the minimum rigor target of a proficiency (65)	16/ Effective
REQUIRED STUDENT PERFORMANCE SCORE AND RATING: 16 POINTS / EFFECTIVE				

EXAMPLE 4: A PRINCIPAL SLO FOR A K-5 BUILDING WITH TIERED TARGETS

Scenario:

- An LEA has three K-5 buildings in their district, each with their own principal. The LEA has decided to use the collectively bargained assessments chosen for the Student Performance category for teachers as the evidence of student growth:
    - K-5: the results of a 3rd party assessment for grades 3-5 in ELA and Math

[7] As approved through locally-determined processes consistent with the Commissioner's goal-setting process.

- Building 1: covers 270 students
- Building 2: covers 285 students
- Building 3: covers 240 students

- It has been locally determined that principals will use the same tiered targets that are being used for their teacher's SLOs to promote administrative collaboration with teaching staff.

Individual Scoring/Rating of SLOs:

- Each principal's SLO will be calculated in the same way based upon the percent of students meeting targets in accordance with the State-provided scoring ranges as seen in this chart:

HIGHLY EFFECTIVE			EFFECTIVE			DEVELOPING		INEFFECTIVE											
20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
97-100%	93-96%	90-92%	85-89%	80-84%	75-79%	67-74%	60-66%	55-59%	49-54%	44-48%	39-43%	34-38%	29-33%	25-28%	21-24%	17-20%	13-16%	9-12%	5-8%	1-4%

SLO SUBJECT	BASELINE	TARGET[8]	ACTUAL RESULT	SLO SCORE/ RATING
Principal 1: 3rd Party Assessments in ELA and Math, grades 3-5	In consultation with the educators responsible for the applicable course(s)/ grade(s) included in this SLO, historical 3rd party assessment data and early course formative assessment data in ELA and math was reviewed to establish tiered targets that reflect one year's worth of expected growth.	Students with baseline data indicating that they were performing significantly below grade level are expected to score a 2 or better; students with baseline data indicating that they were performing at a level approaching grade level or at grade level are expected to score a 3 or better; students with baseline data indicating that they were performing significantly above grade are expected to score a 4.	Of the 540 targets (ELA and math target for each of the 270 students), 511 targets were met. (95%)	19/ Highly Effective
Principal 2: 3rd Party Assessments in ELA and Math, grades 3-5			Of the 570 targets (ELA and math target for each of the 285 students), 485 targets were met. (85%)	17/ Effective
Principal 3: 3rd Party Assessments in ELA and Math, grades 3-5			Of the 480 targets (ELA and math target for each of the 240 students), 355 targets were met. (74%)	14/ Developing
REQUIRED STUDENT PERFORMANCE SCORES AND RATINGS: **PRINCIPAL 1: HIGHLY EFFECTIVE / 19 POINTS** **PRINCIPAL 2: EFFECTIVE / 17 POINTS** **PRINCIPAL 3: DEVELOPING / 14 POINTS**				

EXAMPLE 5: AN SLO THAT USES GROUP RESULTS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHERS

Scenario:

- An LEA has collectively bargained to use a group result for the evidence of student growth based on the Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Test for all middle school science teachers.
  - There are 12 middle school science teachers across two buildings in the LEA that will utilize group results as the evidence of student growth in their SLO.
  - There are 480 students who will take the Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests.

Applying rules about which SLOs must be created for these teachers:

- All 12 teachers will each have an SLO that uses a minimum rigor target of one year of expected growth for all students in the district that take the Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Test, as this aligns with the district's emphasis on collaboration and vertical alignment across content areas.

Individual Scoring/Rating of SLOs:

- While each educator will have their own SLO that utilizes the group results as the evidence of student growth, their scores will be calculated in the same way based upon the percent of students meeting targets in accordance with the State-provided scoring ranges as seen in this chart, resulting in the same score for all 12 middle school science teachers:

[8] As approved through locally-determined processes consistent with the Commissioner's goal-setting process.

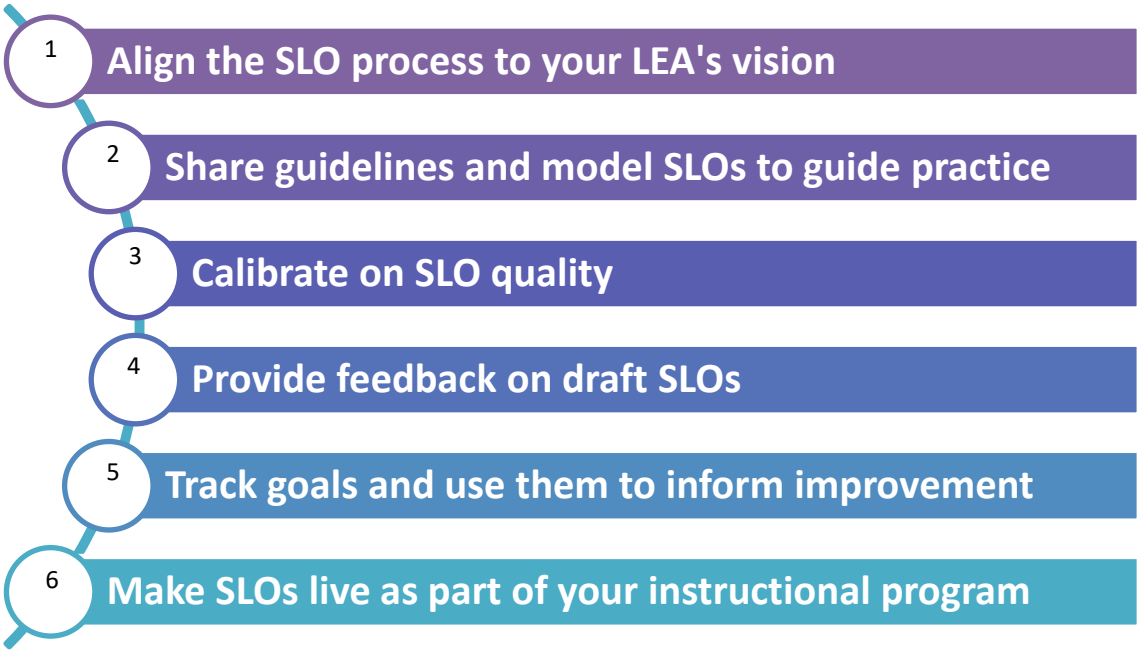
HIGHLY EFFECTIVE			EFFECTIVE			DEVELOPING		INEFFECTIVE											
20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
97-100%	93-96%	90-92%	85-89%	80-84%	75-79%	67-74%	60-66%	55-59%	49-54%	44-48%	39-43%	34-38%	29-33%	25-28%	21-24%	17-20%	13-16%	9-12%	5-8%	1-4%

SLO SUBJECT	BASELINE	TARGET[9]	ACTUAL RESULT	SLO SCORE/ RATING
Middle School Science Teachers based on the group results of the Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Test.	Historically in this district, 65% of students have scored proficient (3) or better on the Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Test. 77% of students passed their 7th grade summative assessment in science in the previous year. 87% of students passed their 6th grade summative assessment in science in the previous year.	The LEA has set a goal of improving the percentage of students scoring proficient on the grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science test of at least 75%. After considering the LEA goal and reviewing the baseline data for students in the current year, the LEA's grade 8 science educators have decided that all students (100%) will meet the minimum rigor expectation of a year's worth of growth on each of the Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests.	81% of students met the minimum rigor target of a proficiency (3).	16/ Effective
REQUIRED STUDENT PERFORMANCE SCORE AND RATING: 16 POINTS / EFFECTIVE				

[9] As approved through locally-determined processes consistent with the Commissioner's goal-setting process.

SECTION SEVEN: ENSURING HIGH QUALITY SLOS

This section will walk you through six steps that can be taken to support high quality SLO processes:



Each step will be accompanied by examples of the work in action, strategic actions that can be taken to increase the quality and fidelity of SLO implementation, and tools and resources that can be used and shared immediately.

STEP 1: ALIGN THE SLO PROCESS TO YOUR LEA'S VISION.

Common Challenge: Improving collective investment in the SLO development and implementation process

Potential Solutions

Involve stakeholders in the:

- analysis of student performance;
- establishment of expectations for the SLO process that align to the LEA's vision and strategy for closing identified achievement gaps; and
- clear communication with administrators, teachers, parents, and students.

A collective investment in the SLO development and implementation process stems from an understanding of the purpose of SLOs. By engaging stakeholders in all phases of SLO development LEAs can communicate the ways in which SLOs can be used to inform instructional practice and help close achievement gaps, while also likely increasing their investment in high-quality implementation.

An analysis of student performance should be conducted first. Which of the LEA's students are struggling to meet grade level and/or course expectations? Is there a subject area, grade level, or subgroup of students that stand out as struggling the most and/or where students are on track or exceeding the LEA's expectations?

Remember, every student must have a target set within an SLO that reflects a year's worth of expected growth. There should not be targets set for students that allow for lower performance at the end of a course than what was demonstrated at the start.

Example of Applying Step 1

Many LEAs have worked hard to clearly communicate their expectations for student learning to all stakeholders. One LEA has done this through the strategic use of their website. The main page of the site has a spotlight section that draws attention to the importance of the evaluation system within the LEA. By accessing materials found on the LEA's APPR subpage, parents and the community can learn about all aspects of teacher and principal evaluation, including the target setting process found within the LEA's SLOs. The LEA's strategic plan is posted in conjunction with the Board of Education goals and clearly defines the expectations for K-12 student academic growth and relevant tools and resources are easily accessible. This information provides all stakeholders with a clear vision for how this LEA defines student success.

This knowledge, used in conjunction with your LEA's vision and strategy for closing identified achievement gaps, helps you to establish your expectations for SLOs and can also help you clearly communicate these expectations to administrators, teachers, parents, and students.

Potential Next Step: A next step for LEAs may be to post the actual SLO targets established for each grade level and/or subject area and to share with family members the targets that are set for their child. This can help show how the SLO targets have been purposefully designed to help achieve the academic goals and aspirations set forth in the LEA's strategic plan.

Publicly posting SLO targets can also build stronger home-school partnerships and help to invest families in the SLO goals for their children. This may also help you and others communicate the instructional program and use of resources throughout the LEA. By linking SLO goals to instructional tips, tools, and videos, LEAs can help all community members align around an action plan for ensuring each student's success.

STEP 2: SHARE GUIDELINES AND MODEL SLOS TO GUIDE PRACTICE.

Common Challenges: Target setting processes, review of baseline data sources, and availability of quality, aligned assessments for all courses.

Potential Solutions

- Communicate expectations and guidelines regularly
- Provide concrete models and examples of high-quality products
- Provide training and support on the SLO process

The Department regularly reviews SLOs as part of the APPR quality review process. There have been notable levels of variation in the SLO samples reviewed, even within a single LEA submission. The best way to calibrate on SLO quality is to provide training and support to those involved. Superintendents or other trained administrators serving as their designees, teachers, and principals, should have a clear understanding of what the LEA's expectations and guidelines are for the locally-determined development and approval of SLOs. Training should include the use of concrete models and examples that illustrate high-quality products.

Example of Applying Step 2

Many LEAs are looking for ways to eliminate unnecessary testing while using multiple sources of baseline data to set more accurate and rigorous targets. In one LEA, Teacher Leaders are learning how to analyze past performance trends and use historical data to increase the rigor of SLOs developed for high school Regents courses. These Teacher Leaders are putting action plans in place to support this work across the LEA. By using protocols and rubrics, student work product is examined to inform decisions around the integration of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Potential Next Steps: Once a common understanding of guidelines and expectations is in place, a next step for LEAs may be to ensure continued calibration for those in charge of the approval process.

STEPS 3 AND 4: CALIBRATE ON SLO QUALITY AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON DRAFT SLOS.

Common Challenges: The SLO approval process; consistent LEA expectations in target setting; and time to review goals and provide feedback.

Potential Solutions

- Establish clear SLO approval processes
- Host calibration session for those responsible for approving SLOs
- Conduct regular SLO audits

Although the responsibility of SLO development is often shared by many, the quality of SLOs ultimately rests in the hands of those approving the final product. Locally-determined processes will establish who has the responsibility to ensure SLO targets are ambitious and rigorous and meet the minimum expectation of a year's worth of growth, and that the SLOs are accurately and meaningfully completed. SLOs that do not meet these criteria should not be approved.

Potential Next Steps: LEAs can help address the quality of SLOs by locally establishing a clear approval process, hosting calibration sessions for those responsible for approving SLOs, and conducting regular audits of SLOs that have been approved.

Calibration Sessions: The purpose of an SLO calibration session is to assess and improve consistency of SLO approval. Calibration sessions are a useful exercise for LEA leaders, building administrators, and department chairs to establish a shared understanding of what constitutes a high-quality SLO.

Applying Steps 3 and 4: SLO Calibration Sessions

Purpose: to assess and improve consistency of SLO approval

Participants: LEA leaders, building administrators, department chairs, teachers, etc.

Benefits: better support for the SLO writing process, decrease in amount of revisions needed, and will contribute to high levels of consistency across the LEA

SLO Audits: The SLO audit is meant to provide helpful information to LEA leaders about the implementation of SLOs once they have been set and approved. Since the results of the audit will drive future decisions about SLOs and the approval process, it is important that auditors have a strong and shared sense of the SLO process so that reliable and accurate data is produced for the LEA to act upon. An audit can be conducted at multiple levels, for instance, at the district-level, school-level, or within a grade-span or content-area.

Applying Steps 3 and 4: SLO Audits

Purpose: provide information to LEA leaders about the state of SLOs

Participants: LEA or school level teams, grade-span or content area teams, etc.

Benefits: information gained can drive future decisions about SLO development and the approval process

Audits, like calibration sessions, should be grounded in clear expectations and scoring criteria. LEAs may also tailor the "look fors" to address common issues.

Common Areas in Need of Improvement

Learning Content: Learning content may be vague and/or non-specific.

Improvement Sought: Educators should recognize the full body of standards required for the course, but also take one step further in describing the learning content that will be prioritized over the interval of instruction based on what is known about other students' performance in the particular course in the past, as well as based upon what students who are currently taking the course know and are able to do.

Targets: Targets may lack rigor and/or do not require academic growth of all students in the course.

Improvement Sought: The Department's expectation is that all students demonstrate at least one year's worth of expected growth. Targets may take into account characteristics such as poverty, SWD, ELL status, and prior academic history so that all students receive the support necessary and to ensure targets are set in a way that can help close achievement gaps.

Rationales: Rationale statements may lack the connection to instructional practice and planning.

Improvement Sought: Helping educators to make connections among curriculum, instruction, and assessment is the key to unlocking the power of SLOs in helping you close achievement gaps. There should be clear indication of how progress will be measured over the course of instruction and the type of support and intervention that will be available when students are not on track to meet expectations.

STEP 5 AND 6: MAKE SLOS LIVE AS PART OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM. TRACK GOALS AND USE THEM TO INFORM IMPROVEMENT.

Common Challenges: Systemic methods for collecting and tracking of SLOs; connecting SLOs to instructional planning or practice; and how to move SLOs beyond paperwork.

Potential Solutions

- Develop a systemic method that allows for the analysis of submitted SLOs at the building- and LEA-level
- Require SLOs to include connections to instructional practice and methods of monitoring student progress
- Discuss progress towards SLOs at pre- and post-observation conferences
- Incorporate close-out procedures that inform the next phase of SLO preparation and development

High-quality SLOs can play an important part in teaching and learning. When teachers start from what they want their students to know and be able to do, they can more effectively design instruction that is aligned with those goals. Strong SLOs also enable students to have a better understanding of is the skills and content they are expected to learn, allowing them to assess their own progress towards those goals.

Potential Next Steps: LEAs must develop systemic methods for collecting and tracking SLOs and help teachers incorporate connections to instructional practice. SLOs should describe how student academic growth will be monitored and evaluators should discuss this progress at pre- and post-observation conferences. Finally, it is the LEA's responsibility to communicate expectations for SLO close-out procedures that will help inform the next phase of SLO preparation and development.

Data can inform improvements in both teacher practice and LEA decision making.

Using SLO Data to Improve Instruction: Analyzing SLOs by content area or grade level can indicate the types of curriculum provisions that may best support instructional practice. For example, if many teachers have identified the close-reading of informational text as a skill students must acquire, then training and/or materials could be properly aligned to that need. This may include sample lesson plans, videos of aligned practice, webinars on the infusion of literacy across content areas, or the purchase of aligned student materials, etc.

Related to this, analyzing SLOs by grade-level or content area may help the LEA, school leaders, department and/or grade-level teams align professional development. For example, evaluators could discuss the progress being made toward the established learning targets within the SLO with teachers at the pre- and post- observation conferences. This is an opportune time to connect observed teacher and student behavior with established learning targets. Content coaches

could be assigned to a related set of teachers to provide support through co-planning, co-teaching, or modeling of instructional practice.

If teachers share a common curriculum or assessment, the LEA or school leader might consider how they can best support data analysis and collection through approaches such as data tracking templates, collaborative planning time to analyze data, and/or support of the development of higher quality assessments, particularly performance-based assessments.

Using SLO Data to Inform LEA Level Improvements: SLO information can also yield vital evidence for continuous LEA-level improvements. For example, end-of-year SLO data, and its correlation with other measures of performance, may indicate whether the skills and content students are supposed to be learning are properly aligned with the way learning is measured and how content is being taught. Analysis of SLOs may also indicate areas where students are falling behind due to lack of rigor in expectations.

Example of Applying Steps 5 and 6

Many LEAs have incorporated ways to document the progression of an individual SLO, as well as collect feedback and reflection on the SLO process. One LEA includes a section of the SLO template dedicated to describing when an SLO was first developed, the feedback and comments provided during the revision process, the date at which the SLO received final approval, and a specified place for teacher and administrator reflection upon completion of the SLO. This type of documentation can help inform future SLO decisions and processes.

A second LEA has used the following questions to reflect upon SLO data:

Questions for Teacher Reflection:

- What additional student data might help explain why certain students did, or did not, meet their growth targets?
- What instructional strategies might increase the likelihood for success?
- Are there any biases evident in student outcomes based on student demographics?

Questions for Administrator Reflection:

- What steps have we taken to ensure that SLOs are sufficiently rigorous and consistent?
- What tools were used to document, report, and/or provide feedback for analyzing student achievement (answer keys, machine scoring template, rubric-generalized or task specific, checklists/lists of criteria, etc.)?
- Have student outcomes proved to be consistent across a grade level/content area?
- How closely do student scores reflect the school's/LEA's goals?
- Do student outcomes on the assessment correlate to other measures of student performance?
- How do student outcomes on the assessment correlate to other measures of educator performance?

SECTION EIGHT: KEY TERMS

Approved student assessment: A student assessment approved by the Commissioner for inclusion in the State Education Department's lists of approved student assessments to measure student growth for use in the required subcomponent and/or for use in the optional subcomponent of the Student Performance category. The selection and use of these approved assessments as the basis of SLOs are subject to collective bargaining.

Baseline: A measure of the level of knowledge that a student possesses at the start of a course, used when setting a growth goal. For each source of evidence, the numerical quantity that represents student learning prior to instruction is the baseline; it is the starting point used in the SLO. Growth is determined by student learning as the student progresses over a period of time from baseline performance.

Evidence: The assessment of student learning or other form of student work product that is used to determine how much an educator's students have learned. It is not necessary to use an identical assessment for determining progress from baseline to target; it is possible to use a collection of evidence from different assessment(s)/measure(s).

Goal: A specific and measurable learning outcome that can be measured over the course of a year (or other interval of instruction, where applicable, e.g., for a teacher with semester-long courses).

Minimum growth target: The SLO process shall include a minimum growth target of one year of expected growth, as determined locally consistent with the Commissioner's goal-setting process. Such targets may take the following characteristics into account, as applicable: poverty, students with disabilities, English language learner status, and prior academic history.

New York State Student Learning Objective template: The statewide form for use in writing SLO(s). Please note that templates can be found on the Student Learning Objective landing page of the Office of Educator Quality and Professional Development's page on NYSED.gov.

Progress: A measure of the change in the level of learning for a student over a particular interval of instruction.

Target: The quantitative outcome expected at the end of the instructional period for student learning**.**