

South Dakota Student Learning Objectives Guidebook

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Introduction to the SLO Guidebook

The Student Learning Objectives Guidebook represents South Dakota's initial effort to provide additional support and guidance to schools and school districts working to incorporate quantitative measures of student growth into local **Educator Effectiveness Systems**. This document clarifies and expands upon key concepts, provides additional resources, and answers common questions raised since the release of South Dakota's recommended **Educator Effectiveness Models**.

ASPIRATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

South Dakota's work to develop meaningful educator effectiveness systems is united by a common aspiration: *To improve instruction and student learning*. A multi-year, collaborative effort to identify and promote best practices has been aided by a diverse group of educators, professional organizations, state entities and other stakeholders, including:

- The 2010 Teacher Standards Workgroup
- The 2011-12 Teacher Standards Pilot Districts
- The 2012 Teacher Evaluation Workgroup
- The 2012 Principal Evaluation Workgroup
- The South Dakota Commission on Teaching and Learning (Appendix D)
- The 2013-14 Teacher Effectiveness Pilot participants
- The 2013-14 Principal Effectiveness Pilot participants
- The University of South Dakota

South Dakota is one of several states working to develop a state-specific approach to evaluating educator impact on student growth. This guidebook references the work of other states, organizations and researchers working to identify and promote best practices. In particular, this reference leans on strategies being implemented in Kentucky and on research and resources provided by American Institutes for Research (AIR).

EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS HANDBOOKS

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Where do I find resources that explain the Teacher Effectiveness Model?

This guidebook focuses on the implementation of student learning objectives as a measure of educator impact on student growth, which is just one concept embedded into South Dakota's comprehensive educator effectiveness models. The purpose and structure of the state's recommended educator effectiveness models are detailed in the state's educator effectiveness handbooks. To fully understand the role student learning objectives have in determining and differentiating educator effectiveness, refer the state's educator effectiveness handbooks.

- ✓ Teacher Effectiveness Handbook: <http://1.usa.gov/15xtMQz>
- ✓ Principal Effectiveness Handbook: <http://1.usa.gov/14P9bTP>

2013-14 EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS PILOTS

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Where can I find the slides used during the July/August pilot training event?

During the 2013-14 school year, schools and districts from across South Dakota are participating in a pilot of South Dakota's recommended educator effectiveness models. Pilot participants are tasked with field-testing recommendations of the South Dakota Commission on Teaching and Learning. A research effort,

led by the University of South Dakota, is intended to gather formal pilot feedback that will inform best practices and revisions to the model.

- ✓ Teacher Effectiveness Pilot Overview: <http://1.usa.gov/18b9sBw>
- ✓ Principal Effectiveness Pilot Overview: <http://1.usa.gov/1dd6ZO8>

PILOT TRAINING: EVALUATING EDUCATOR IMPACT ON STUDENT GROWTH

During the summer of 2013, the South Dakota Department of Education invited pilot participants to attend a two-day training titled “Evaluating Educator Impact on Student Growth.” During the work-session, a team of teachers from Kentucky shared a process-approach developing long-term student growth goals using the SMART goal format.

- ✓ Pilot Training Presentation: <http://1.usa.gov/17b7DaN>

A CHANGE IN TERMS: FROM SLTs to SLOs

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. We currently use the term Student Learning Targets to describe short-term learning goals – is it possible to change term used in the educator effectiveness model?

The South Dakota Commission on Teaching and Learning originally chose the term “Student Learning Targets” to describe the recommended measure to evaluate teacher and principal impact on student growth. Based on the feedback from the 2013-14 pilot schools and districts, this guidebook uses the term “Student Learning Objectives.” The term Student Learning Objectives is widely associated with state efforts to incorporate measures of student growth, and several public policy organizations and researchers have adopted the term. In addition, resources that used the term student learning objectives informed recommendations of the South Dakota Commission on Teaching and Learning.

Though the term has changed, the definition and intent remains consistent with the recommendations of the South Dakota Commission on Teaching and Learning. For the purposes of our state’s educator effectiveness systems, a **Student Learning Objective** is a teacher-driven goal or set of goals that establish expectations for student academic growth during a specified period of time.

Minimum Requirements: Evaluating Student Growth

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. When will we be required to include student growth in our local effectiveness system?

South Dakota’s ESEA Flexibility Waiver requires the South Dakota Department of Education to develop a statewide approach to incorporating **Student Growth** as one measure of educator effectiveness. Beginning in the 2014-15 school year, all South Dakota school districts are required to adopt procedures for evaluating student growth that conform to the following minimum requirements:

- ✓ **STUDENT GROWTH AS A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR**
Student growth must be a “significant factor” in determining educator effectiveness. The U.S. Department of Education has not established a definition of “significant factor” and states have the option to define a state-specific approach.
- ✓ **USE OF STATE ASSESSMENTS AND STATE ACCOUNTABILITY DATA**
In grades and subjects in which it is available, data from state-mandated assessments must be used as one measure to assess a teacher’s impact on student growth. For principals, statewide accountability results must be one measure used to evaluate a principal’s impact on student growth.

Note: Due to a transition to the Smarter Balanced Assessment, schools and districts participating in the 2013-14 educator effectiveness pilots will not be required to use state assessment or state accountability data during the 2013-14 pilot year.

✓ USE OF ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS

For grades and subjects in which state assessments are not available, alternate assessments must be used to evaluate a teacher's impact on student growth.

FEDERAL GUIDANCE: STUDENT GROWTH AS ONE MEASURE OF EFFECTIVENESS

As a reference, federal guidance addressing the requirement to include student growth as a measure of educator effectiveness is provided below.

C-53 (U.S. Department of Education, 2012): *What are an SEA's (State Education Agency, or state department of education) responsibilities with regard to ensuring that an LEA's (Local Education Agency, or local school district) evaluation and support systems consider student growth?*

"An SEA is responsible for ensuring that an LEA develops and implements evaluation and support systems consistent with the guidelines the SEA has developed under principle 3 (as described in the document titled ESEA Flexibility). This includes ensuring that LEA evaluation and support systems take into account data on student growth in significant part in determining teacher and principal performance levels.

"To ensure that an LEA's evaluation and support systems take into account student growth, several approaches are appropriate. For grades and subjects in which assessments are required under ESEA section 1111(b)(3), an SEA must define a statewide approach for measuring student growth based on such assessments. For grades and subjects in which assessments are not required under ESEA section 1111(b)(3), an SEA may take one of two approaches, or a combination of both: (1) specify measures of student growth that LEAs must use or select from, or (2) provide guidance to LEAs as to what measures of student growth are appropriate, and establish a system to ensure that LEAs will use valid measures of student growth, meaning that the measures are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance, and are implemented in a consistent and high-quality manner across schools within an LEA. In designing its evaluation and support systems, an LEA should avoid policies that result in the dismissal of a teacher or principal solely on the basis of a single test score."

Summary: SLOs as a Recommended Measure of Effectiveness

The South Dakota Commission on Teaching and Learning has developed a series of recommendations that conform to student growth requirements outlined in the state's ESEA flexibility waiver. A brief summary of important recommendations, as they apply to the development of student learning objectives, is provided below.

A COMMON EFFECTIVENESS SYSTEM DESIGN

The recommended educator effectiveness models share similar philosophy, structure and process. Both models emphasize professional best practices while allowing student growth serve as a "significant factor" in determining educator effectiveness. Both systems also rely on separately determining for each educator a **Professional Practice Rating** and a **Student Growth Rating**, which are combined form a **Summative Educator Effectiveness Rating**.

- ✓ For more information about South Dakota's comprehensive recommended educator effectiveness systems, refer the Teacher Effectiveness Handbook (<http://1.usa.gov/15xtMQz>) and Principal Effectiveness Handbook (<http://1.usa.gov/14P9bTP>).

SLOs: A COMMON MEASURE AND PROCESS TO EVALUATE STUDENT GROWTH

The state's two effectiveness models share a common measure – SLOs – to evaluate educator impact on student growth. Implementing SLOs asks teachers and principals to assume shared responsibility and accountability for student learning. The recommended SLO process encourages and reinforces best

practice, while remaining flexible enough to allow educators to take ownership in setting rigorous, yet realistic expectations for student growth goals.

- ✓ A significant portion of the Student Learning Objectives Guidebook is devoted to providing a thorough introduction to SLOs (Pages 8-12), the SLO Process (Pages 13-17), and Developing High Quality SLOs (Pages 18-23).

STUDENT GROWTH PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES AND SLO SCORING

Both effectiveness models are designed to quantify an educator’s impact on student growth into one of three student growth performance categories: Low Growth, Expected Growth or High Growth. The two models are united by SLOs, which serve as the foundation for determining an educator’s student growth rating. The South Dakota Commission on Teaching and Learning has developed recommended procedures to score SLOs, which are summarized in the following sections.

- ✓ For more information on how evaluations of student growth are combined with other measures to determine summative educator effectiveness ratings, refer the Teacher Effectiveness Handbook (<http://1.usa.gov/15xtMQz>) and Principal Effectiveness Handbook (<http://1.usa.gov/14P9bTP>).

DETERMINING A TEACHER’S STUDENT GROWTH RATING

A teacher’s student growth rating is based on a percentage of SLO goal attainment. Figure 1 outlines the three possible teacher student growth ratings. Additional references to scoring SLOs and determining student growth ratings are presented throughout this guidebook.

Figure 1: Teacher Effectiveness - Student Growth Performance Categories

PERFORMANCE CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Low Growth	The teacher’s SLO(s) were less than 65 percent attained.
Expected Growth	The teacher’s SLO(s) were 65 to 85 percent attained.
High Growth	The teacher’s SLO(s) were 86 to 100 percent attained.

Using goal attainment to determine student growth performance empowers teachers with the flexibility to establish rigorous, realistic expectations for student learning. For example, an elementary teacher that has 20 students in his or her class may develop a goal that sets an expectation that 90 percent of the students in the class, or 18 students, will master the identified learning content. In that example, expected growth is attained if 12 to 15 students (65 to 85 percent of 18 students) achieve the established goal.

DETERMINING A PRINCIPAL’S STUDENT GROWTH RATING

The Commission on Teaching and Learning Principal Effectiveness Workgroup recommends two measures – one primary measure and one secondary measure - to evaluate a principal’s impact on student growth. In the 2013-14 pilot year, a principal’s student growth rating will be determined using only the primary measure. Beginning in 2014-15 school year, both measures will be used.

1. PRIMARY MEASURE: STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The primary measure of a principal’s impact on student growth quantifies the principal’s efforts to lead teachers through the development and attainment of ambitious, achievable SLOs. This measure accounts for 75 percent of a principal’s final student growth rating.

2. SECONDARY MEASURE: STATE ACCOUNTABILITY DATA

The secondary measure of principal’s impact on student growth requires the principal, in cooperation with district superintendents, to set school-level growth goals based on available state accountability data (SPI or AMOs). This measure accounts for 25 percent of a principal’s final student growth rating.

Note: Due to a transition to the Smarter Balanced Assessment, schools and districts participating in the 2013-14 Principal Effectiveness Pilot will not be required to use state accountability data as a measure of a principal’s impact on student growth.

For the 2013-14 pilot year, a principal’s student growth rating is determined by the percentage of teachers under his or her supervision that earn a student growth rating of Expected. Figure 2 identifies the three possible student growth ratings in the context of the principal effectiveness model.

Figure 2: Principal Effectiveness - SLO Measure – Student Growth Performance Categories

PERFORMANCE CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Low Growth	Less than 80% of teachers attain Expected Growth
Expected Growth	80% to 90% of teachers attain Expected Growth
High Growth	91% to 100% of teachers attain Expected Growth

Introduction to Student Learning Objectives

The South Dakota Commission on Teaching and Learning created a set of core principles to guide development of South Dakota's recommended effectiveness models. The recommendation to use SLOs to evaluate educator impact on student growth is influenced by a desire to shape educator effectiveness models that:

- ✓ Encourage professional teacher-administrator relationships as a basis for structuring meaningful, in-depth dialogue focused on student learning.
- ✓ Use multiple measures of teaching practice and student growth to meaningfully differentiate teacher performance.
- ✓ Communicate clearly defined expectations and provide regular, timely and useful feedback that guides professional growth.
- ✓ Provide a fair, flexible, and research-based mechanism to create a culture in which data drives instructional decisions.

What is a Student Learning Objective?

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the definition of Student Learning Objective?
2. How do we manage the implementation of SLOs?

A **Student Learning Objective** is a teacher-driven goal or set of goals that establish expectations for student academic growth during a specified period of time. The specific, measurable student learning goals are based on student learning needs and aligned to applicable Common Core State Standards, state or national standards. At the end of the instructional period, the teacher's student growth rating is determined by the progress toward documented goals.

Though many South Dakota educators are familiar with the process of setting academic growth goals for students, managing the implementation of SLOs as a measure of educator effectiveness requires integrating the **SLO Process** (pages 13-17) into the district's broader evaluation and professional growth process. In addition, teachers or teams of teachers will need the time and support necessary to engage in the important work of developing high-quality SLOs (pages 18-23).

Benefits of Implementing Student Learning Objectives

When considering whether to implement any new initiative or strategy, it is important for educators to have information to guide district discussions and decision-making. This section briefly overviews benefits associated with implementing SLOs. Information presented in the following sections is supported by early feedback from educators participating in the 2013-14 Teacher Effectiveness Pilot and the 2013-14 Principal Effectiveness Pilot. In addition, this section leans on SLO research and guidance provided by the American Institutes for Research.

REINFORCING BEST PRACTICES

Setting goals for students, assessing student progress, and incorporating data to make adjustments to instructional strategy demonstrate good teaching practices (What Works Clearing House, 2009). Many South Dakota teachers regularly use assessment data to drive instructional decisions, and implementing the SLO process formalizes those teaching best practices while working to focus conversations around student results, which ultimately benefits teaching and student learning (Lachlan-Hache, Cushing, & Biovana, 2012).

PILOTS: EARLY FEEDBACK

During a summer training associated with the educator effectiveness pilots, participants were asked to share a benefit associated with SLOs. Educators described SLOs as a “coaching model” that supports increased skill and knowledge for both teachers and administrators. In addition, pilot educators felt SLOs allowed “student learning to become the focus.”

USING THE S.M.A.R.T. GOAL SETTING PROCESS TO DEVELOP SLOs

SLO implementation encourages teachers to make direct connections between planning and instruction by asking educators to use the S.M.A.R.T. goal-setting framework to structure classroom-level goal setting. Using the S.M.A.R.T. goal-setting framework, educators are guided toward establishing SLOs that are (S)pecific, (M)easurable, (A)ppropriate, (R)igorous and realistic, and (T)ime-bound. Many South Dakota educators are already familiar with using the S.M.A.R.T. goal-setting framework to guide classroom instruction. In addition several schools and districts use the same goal-setting framework to structure building or district-level school improvement goals. Though SLOs are classroom level-goals, the same best-practice approach to writing quality goals can be applied to developing SLOs.

CONNECTION THE SOUTH DAKOTA FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How do SLOs relate to the South Dakota Framework for Teaching (Danielson Model)?2. How do we use SLOs with educators with varying levels of expertise and experience?

When integrated with evaluations of professional practice relative to the South Dakota Framework for Teaching, SLOs provide yet another way to reinforce effective teaching practices. School districts in the early stages of SLO implementation may consider focusing evaluations of professional practice on the components that are most connected to the knowledge and skills necessary to establish and attain SLOs (Figure 3). In addition, SLO documentation can serve as an artifact to demonstrate performance relative to non-observable components of the framework. When scheduling informal and formal observations, evaluators may opt to observe lessons related to the established SLO.

Figure 3: South Dakota Framework for Teaching Components Used Linked to SLOs

<p style="text-align: center;">Domain 1 PLANNING AND PREPARATION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogyb. Demonstrating Knowledge of Studentsc. Setting Instructional Outcomesd. Demonstrating Knowledge of Resourcese. Designing Coherent Instructionf. Designing Student Assessments	<p style="text-align: center;">Domain 2 THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapportb. Establishing a Culture for Learningc. Managing Classroom Proceduresd. Managing Student Behaviore. Organizing Physical Space
<p style="text-align: center;">Domain 4 PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Reflecting on Teachingb. Maintaining Accurate Recordsc. Communicating with Familiesd. Participating in a Professional Communitye. Growing and Developing Professionallyf. Showing Professionalism	<p style="text-align: center;">Domain 3 INSTRUCTION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Communicating with Studentsb. Using Questioning & Discussion Techniquesc. Engaging Students in Learningd. Using Assessment in Instructione. Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do we use SLOs with educators with varying levels of expertise and experience?

Implementing SLOs promotes shared accountability for student learning by asking principals to lead teachers through the establishment and attainment of realistic, rigorous SLOs. The South Dakota Framework for Effective Principals connects to SLOs through the Instructional Leadership domain, including the components highlighted in Figure 4. To reinforce concepts related to SLO implementation, superintendents may consider asking principals to provide data and evidence that demonstrates the principal's efforts to lead teachers through the SLO process.

Figure 4: South Dakota Framework for Effective Principals - Domain 2 - Instructional Leadership

Domain 2 – Instructional Leadership
To promote student success, principals engage with teachers, research and data to promote a school culture and instructional program that fosters student learning and staff professional growth.

An effective principal:

- 2.1 Promotes, facilitates and utilizes the effective use of data from multiple measures to inform instruction and evaluate student performance to support effective instruction.
- 2.2 Leads and supports staff in acquiring, planning and implementing research-based instructional strategies and technologies that advance the school's vision and goals and meet the diverse needs of all students.
- 2.3 Distributes leadership and creates communities of practice within the school to improve teaching and learning.
- 2.4 Ensures that the instructional content/curriculum is aligned with state/district content standards and curriculum priorities of the school and district.
- 2.5 Develops a professional growth plan for the purpose of continuous improvement.

A TEACHER-LED, COLLABORATIVE GOAL-SETTING PROCESS

Districts that have implemented SLOs found that the process, when done well, provides teachers with the opportunity to take ownership in establishing student growths goals that are authentic and relevant to daily classroom instruction, an outcome that can work to build confidence in the broader effectiveness system. Implementing SLOs has also been shown to build a culture of collaboration (Lachlan-Hache, Cushing, & Biovana, 2012).

PILOTS: EARLY FEEDBACK

During a summer training associated with the educator effectiveness pilots, participants were asked to share a benefit associated with SLOs. Educators described SLOs as “empowering” and “authentic,” adding that the process would help “establish consistent expectations for students, teachers and administrators.”

A FLEXIBLE FRAMEWORK TO INCORPORATE STUDENT GROWTH EVALUATION

Implementing SLOs allows districts create a uniform goal-setting process that provides educators with flexibility to match the assessment and student growth goal to course content and the unique student population. SLOs are not entirely dependent upon the availability of statewide assessments; an important benefit considering nearly 70 percent of educators teach in grades and subjects in which state assessments are not available (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). The SLO process is also flexible enough to accommodate changes in curriculum and assessment (Lachlan-Hache, Cushing, & Biovana, 2012), a critical consideration as South Dakota works to implement Common Core State Standards and the Smarter Balanced Assessments.

PILOTS: EARLY FEEDBACK

During a summer training associated with the educator effectiveness pilots, participants were asked to share a benefit associated with SLOs. Educators described SLOs as having “relevance” because SLOs take into account learning that occurs outside of math and English language-arts.

FOCUSED ON THE MOST IMPORTANT LEARNING THAT NEEDS TO OCCUR

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Do I write SLOs for each unit taught in my classes?

SLOs promote educator expertise by emphasizing teacher knowledge of curriculum, assessment, learning context and student data. Through SLO development, educators are asked to assess student needs and align instruction accordingly. While many educators rely on similar goal-setting strategies to guide instruction for all content taught during the year, educators are only asked to formalize the process, through SLO development, for the most important concept or learning standards. Involving teachers in the process of structuring evaluations of student growth is a key benefit of implementing SLOs. In studies of evaluation systems that use SLOs, teachers cite the SLO process as empowering, giving them more authorship over the performance appraisal process (Lachlan-Hache, Cushing, & Biovana, 2012).

Elementary teachers, for example, are not expected to establish SLOs for every subject or learning concept related to his or her teaching assignment. Teachers charged with multiple classes or preps are encouraged to work with evaluators to determine which classes and learning content will be documented using the SLO process.

PILOTS: EARLY FEEDBACK

During a summer training associated with the educator effectiveness pilots, participants were asked to share a benefit associated with SLOs. Educators described SLOs as having the benefits of encouraging “curriculum alignment.”

- ✓ For initial guidance related to identifying learning standards or determining the appropriate number of SLOs to be developed, refer to section four, Developing High-quality SLOs, of this guidebook (pages 18-23).

Challenges of Implementing SLOs

To successfully plan for long-term success, educators must have an understanding and awareness of challenges that may be encountered during SLO implementation. Information presented in this section is supported by early feedback from educators participating in the 2013-14 Teacher Effectiveness Pilot and the 2013-14 Principal Effectiveness Pilot. In addition, this section leans on SLO research and guidance provided by the American Institutes for Research.

CULTURE CHANGE AND TIME CONSTRAINTS

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do you support the professional development needs that arise from SLO development?

Some school districts may have SLO-related processes already in place, but other school districts will require additional support to aid implementation. For districts in which the SLO process is unfamiliar, it may be necessary to address the “culture change” that results from SLO implementation (Luchlan-Hache, Cushing, & Bivona, 2012). In early stages of implementation, it is important to provide initial training and adequate time for educators to fully engage in the process. A recent review of SLO implementation in Indiana reported teachers needed between 4 to 6.5 hours to work on SLOs (TNTP, 2012).

PILOTS: EARLY FEEDBACK

During a summer training associated with the educator effectiveness pilots, participants were asked to share a challenge associated with implementing SLOs. Having the time to manage SLOs was a frequent

concern. While many educators felt SLOs could be implemented into existing processes, some educators expressed concern that SLOs represented a change in existing practice and stressed that additional training would be important, including professional development to help teachers utilize student data.

- ✓ For initial guidance related to integrating SLOs into the recommended evaluation and professional growth process, refer to section three, The SLO Process, of this guidebook (pages 13-17)
- ✓ For initial guidance related to practices that promote SLO development, refer to section four, Developing High Quality SLOs, of this guidebook (pages 18-23)

IDENTIFYING OR DEVELOPING HIGH QUALITY ASSESSMENTS

Selecting or developing assessments to measure SLO goal attainment, a critical step in the SLO process, is often identified as a challenge to SLO implementation. Successful SLO implementation requires educators to understand what makes an assessment valid, reliable, rigorous, and aligned to standards. Educators will need guidance that outlines how to locate available assessments, and, when an assessment is not available, educators must have confidence in their understanding and abilities to create quality assessments (Luchlan-Hache, Cushing, & Bivona, 2012).

PILOTS: EARLY FEEDBACK

During a summer training associated with the educator effectiveness pilots, participants were asked to share a challenge associated with implementing SLOs. Several educators expressed concerns about having access to content-area specific assessments that are valid and reliable. Some participants also felt SLO implementation will be challenging as South Dakota implements Common Core State Standards and the related Smarter Balanced Assessment.

- ✓ For initial guidance related to assessment selection and assessment sources, refer to section four, Developing High Quality SLOs, of this guidebook (pages 18-23), and specifically page 20.

DEFINING AND DEVELOPING HIGH-QUALITY SLOS

As a measure of student growth, SLOs must be “rigorous and comparable” across school districts. Ensuring rigor will be a persistent challenge, and consistency will regularly compete with the need to be flexible to unique classroom contexts, assessment availability and staff capacity (Lachlan-Hache, Cushing, & Biovana, 2012).

- ✓ For initial guidance and resources related to SLO development, refer to section four, Developing High Quality SLOs, of this guidebook (pages 18-23).

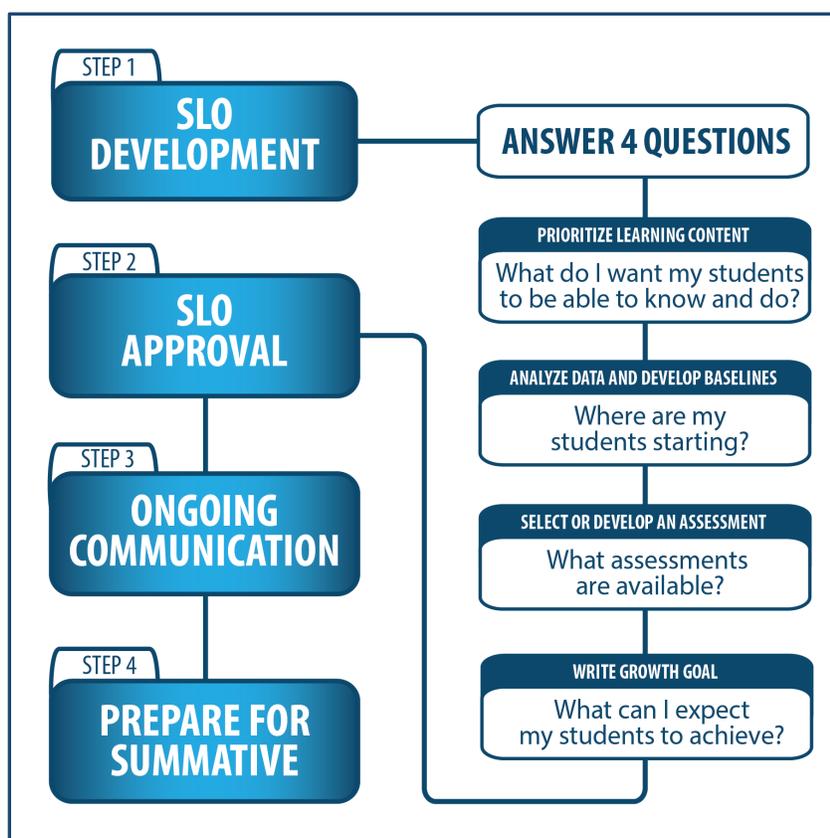
PILOTS: EARLY FEEDBACK

During a summer training associated with the educator effectiveness pilots, participants were asked to share a challenge associated with implementing SLOs. Educators highlighted “controlling variables” and “consistency” as challenges inherent in SLOs. Some educators identified that educators will need “practice writing goals and using data appropriately” and indicated that the process needs to be supported with “curriculum and lessons” necessary to meet established goals.

The SLO Process

The South Dakota Commission on Teaching and Learning recommends a **SLO Process** that embeds best practices into a transparent and collaborative process. The four steps of the recommended SLO Process include: **SLO Development**, **SLO Approval**, **Ongoing Communication**, and **Preparing for the Summative Conference**. Through the SLO Process (Figure 5), teachers or teams of teachers identify core standards and content, determine student starting points, and write goals to set expectations for student growth. The SLO process encourages teachers to monitor student learning and make data-driven adjustments to instructional strategies. Principals and evaluators support the SLO process by guiding and approving SLOs, providing structured and ongoing feedback, and scoring the final results.

Figure 5: The 4-Step SLO Process



Guidance: SLO Process Resources

PILOT FEEBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do we structure SLO conversations?
2. Are there forms that guide the SLO process?

School districts working to implement SLOs can refer to two key resources available in the appendix of this guidebook. An SLO Process Guide (Appendix A) provides structure to each step of the SLO Process and can be used both as a mechanism to document SLO work and guide SLO discussions. During SLO Development and SLO Approval, educators can consult the SLO Goal Quality Checklist (Appendix C) to apply the S.M.A.R.T. goal setting process to ensure high-quality SLOs.

When reviewing the SLO process resources, keep the following points in mind:

- ✓ A MS Word version of the SLO Process Guide is available at: <http://bit.ly/16711G2>
- ✓ A MS Word version of the SLO Quality Checklist is available at: <http://bit.ly/19zJxp4>
- ✓ The first three pages SLO Process Guide address SLO development and can serve as a SLO document template. Teachers may complete these pages prior to SLO approval.
- ✓ The SLO Quality Checklist can be used to check the overall quality of the SLO and ensure that the SLO meets the S.M.A.R.T. criteria.
- ✓ The remaining pages of the SLO Process Guide can be used to facilitate approvals or discussions related to the final three steps of the SLO Process.

Step 1: SLO Development

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do we manage goal setting with a large staff?
2. Do we set goals individually, or in teams?

The SLO process begins with the important task of attaching structure to student learning expectations. Through **SLO Development**, teachers are asked to answer four key questions:

1. What do I most want my students to know and be able to do?
Answering this question helps the teacher identify the core concepts and standards that will be addressed by the SLO.
2. Where are my students starting?
Answering this question involves gathering and analyzing data to understand how well prepared students are to learn core concepts and standards.
3. What assessments are available?
Answering this question leads to the selection or development of an appropriate assessment to measure student growth and goal attainment.
4. What can I expect my student to achieve?
Answering this question leads to the development of growth goal(s) and a strong rationale statement supporting why the goal is appropriate for the instructional period.

Teachers, either individually or in teams, are encouraged to assume much of the responsibility for developing rigorous, achievable SLOs. A principal's support and guidance will be important, particularly as teachers become familiar with any new expectations or processes. As the instructional leader, the principal holds the ultimate responsibility for leading teachers through the establishment of high-quality SLOs. The time and support necessary to implement SLOs will vary widely based on a school district's unique circumstances. To address time and capacity issues, schools are encouraged to consider:

- ✓ Integrating SLO development into existing professional support systems, including mentoring and induction programs, common planning time and professional learning communities.
- ✓ Encouraging teachers working in similar grades and subjects to work collaboratively through SLO Development.
- ✓ Allocate available in-service time to reinforcing key SLO concepts and building skills necessary to complete SLO development.

For additional considerations and guidance on SLO development, refer to section four, Developing High Quality SLOs, of this guidebook (pages 18-23).

Step 2: SLO Approval

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. At what point in the year should SLOs be approved?

Once developed, the SLO must be approved as the official measure of student growth for the evaluation period. **SLO Approval** is supported by at least one **SLO Conference** between the teacher and evaluator. To ease time pressures, the SLO conference may be scheduled in conjunction with other face-to-face meetings that occur during the evaluation and professional growth process, such as goal-setting or post-observation conferences. SLO approval can take place either during or following an SLO conference.

Teachers prepare for SLO approval by submitting the preliminary SLO document and providing evaluators with the necessary information to make informed judgments about goal quality and rigor. Principals may require teachers to identify the specific standard being addressed, detail the assessment used to measure goal attainment, provide data supporting the need for the goal, and describe how the goal will benefit student learning.

- ✓ Consider creating an **SLO Review Team** to provide SLO feedback prior to the SLO approval.

If the SLO is not approved, teachers should receive documented feedback that explains how the SLO can be improved. Teachers should be given a window to make appropriate changes before resubmitting the SLO for approval.

TIMELINES FOR SLO APPROVAL

School districts have the responsibility to adopt procedures that establish clear deadlines by which all SLOs must be approved. In establishing deadlines, important considerations include:

- ✓ Educators will need sufficient time at the beginning of the year to develop SLOs;
- ✓ Educators will need sufficient time work toward attaining the growth goal; and
- ✓ Some educators will write SLOs for courses that last a semester, trimester or quarter.

EXAMPLE: AISD REACH, AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Austin Independent School District implemented SLOs in 2007 as one component of a comprehensive strategy to recruit and retain quality teachers. To promote clarity and establish expectations, the district developed a SLO timeline that includes, among other milestones, an SLO Approval deadline of late October (Austin Independent School District, 2012).

Step 3: Ongoing Communication

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do SLOs relate to in-class observations of professional practice?
2. What do we do if we have a transient student population?

Ongoing Communication provides opportunities for principals and teachers to regularly correspond regarding progress toward goal attainment. The SLO process encourages, but does not require, teachers to monitor student progress through ongoing formative assessment. By using formative assessment, teachers have access to data that may either validate instructional strategies or determine whether mid-course modifications need to be made. Ongoing Communication, which may be conducted electronically, will be particularly important during the early stages of SLO implementation.

OBSERVATIONS AND SLOs

The recommended educator effectiveness models rely on evidence from multiple measures to assess educator performance. In addition to evidence provided through the SLO process, principals will gather evidence of performance through classroom observation. Districts working to implement SLOs are

encouraged to find ways to align all forms of evidence collection to promote efficient and in-depth discussions focused on improving teaching and learning.

As a measure of efficiency, educators may decide that pre- or post-observation conferences are a convenient time to discuss progress toward goal-attainment. Educators may also consider the advantages and disadvantages of conducting either formal or informal observations in conjunction with lessons related to the established SLO.

MID-COURSE MODIFICATIONS

Educators are encouraged to make modifications to instructional strategy before considering making mid-course modifications to the SLO or the student growth goal. Strategy modifications serve as evidence of teaching best practices, and can be discussed and documented during step 3 of the SLO Process.

Educators have the authority to exercise professional judgment to determine whether circumstances beyond the teacher's control will impact goal attainment. In such cases, the teacher and principal can mutually agree to revise the SLO. For example, student migration may significantly change the context of the class. If characteristics of the class change enough to make goal-attainment unrealistic, the teacher and principal may agree to adjust the student growth goal.

Step 4: Preparing for the Summative Conference

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How frequently do you formally determine that students are making progress?

A discussion of the teacher's student growth rating and summative teacher effectiveness rating will take place during a **Summative Conference** that occurs as part of the broader teacher evaluation and professional growth process. The final step of the SLO process prepares for that discussion to take place.

In the **Preparing for the Summative Conference** step of the SLO process, teachers assemble, organize and deliver to the evaluator evidence of SLO goal attainment, including any assessment data required by the administrator. While teachers may use formative assessment to guide changes to instructional strategy, each teacher formally determines student progress one time at the end of the instructional period. Preparing for the summative conference may include self-scoring the SLO, determining a preliminary student growth rating and self-reflection.

In preparation for the summative conference, principals review teacher-submitted SLO evidence to establish a preliminary student growth rating. To provide sufficient time to prepare the summative evaluation, principals may establish timelines for evidence submission. The preliminary rating should be provided to the teacher in advance of the summative conference, and teachers should receive feedback with sufficient time to review the principal's comments and gather any additional data or evidence that either educator believes will be necessary to reference during the summative conference.

Integrating SLO Processes

The recommended SLO process occurs during the Plan and Prepare phases of South Dakota's recommended **Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Process** (Figure 6).

South Dakota's recommended teacher evaluation and professional growth process is an over-arching process that outlines various steps needed to assess educator effectiveness based on multiple measures of performance. The Commission on Teaching and Learning has developed a teacher evaluation and professional growth process that includes four phases - Prepare, Plan, Perform and Progress – and eight individual steps.

Figure 6: Integrating the SLO Process



During SLO implementation, districts will determine how best to incorporate the SLO process into the district's broader teacher evaluation and professional growth processes.

The recommended teacher evaluation and professional growth process, as outlined in the Teacher Effectiveness Handbook, recommends that SLOs are approved in the Plan phase during an initial goal-setting conference. That recommendation that may be attainable for districts that have SLO-related concepts and processes already in place. Districts are encouraged to establish evaluation procedures that meet the unique needs and circumstances of the district, which could include allowing SLO approval to occur later in the year and using the recommended goal-setting conference to discuss progress toward SLO Development.

Though the work performed during the SLO process starts in the Plan phase and concludes with the

Perform phase, SLOs are also represented in the Prepare and Progress phases. The Prepare phase, for example, recommends training staff on SLO processes and evaluation procedures prior to SLO implementation. During the Progress phase, the teacher's summative effectiveness rating is assigned, which is informed by the teacher's student growth rating.

- ✓ For more information about the recommended Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Process, refer to Teacher Effectiveness Handbook (<http://1.usa.gov/15xtMQz>)

Developing High-Quality SLOs

To comply with the requirements of the state’s flexibility waiver, the South Dakota Department of Education must establish “a system to use valid measures of student growth, meaning that the measures are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance, and are implemented in a consistent and high-quality manner across schools.” This chapter is devoted to responding to early feedback from educator effectiveness pilots and addressing questions related specifically to developing high-quality student learning objectives.

Guidance: Prioritize Learning Content

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This section of the SLO Guidebook addresses the following concepts and questions raised by educators participating in the 2013-14 Teacher Effectiveness Pilot and the 2013-14 Principal Effectiveness Pilot.

1. How do I narrow down to only one SLO?
2. Do we address all standards through an SLO?
3. Is it appropriate to measure student growth using IEP goals?
4. How will SLOs work in an alternative school setting?

WHAT DO I MOST WANT MY STUDENTS TO KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO?

While all learning standards are important, the recommended SLO process only requires educators to develop SLOs based on the unique and critical learning needs of students in a particular class or course.

- ✓ The content addressed by the SLO should be broad enough to represent important learning for the entire course, but narrow enough to be measured through one or more summative assessments.
- ✓ Whenever possible, encourage teachers in the same content area or the same grade span to collaboratively identify learning content.
- ✓ When appropriate, SLOs should be aligned to school and district priorities.
- ✓ Educators may choose to identify core content through a data-driven needs analysis, by demonstrating expert knowledge of standards, or a combination of both.

IDENTIFYING CONTENT: DATA-DRIVEN NEEDS ANALYSIS

Whenever possible, teachers should use available data to determine which learning content will be the focus of an SLO. School districts that encourage teachers to review and analyze student data should work to integrate SLO development into existing process, such as data retreats. Through data analysis, educators or teams of educators discover trends or specific student needs that inform the selection of priority content.

To illustrate how SLOs align through data analysis, consider the following example. A K-5 elementary school determines through trend analysis that students regularly struggle with literacy in early grades. Instructional leaders ask all K-2 educators to focus SLO development on increasing the number of students reading at grade level. With that guidance, K-2 teachers work collaboratively to identify the specific concepts or standards that would make the most impact on the literacy goal. Finally, individual K-2 teachers gather and analyze data to determine which of the identified concepts or standards are most aligned to the needs of students in his or her particular class.

IDENTIFYING CONTENT: DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF STANDARDS

When data is not available to help educators prioritize learning, relying on educators’ expert understanding of standards can inform the identification of priority content. Educators regularly work to examine curriculum to determine over-arching concepts or skills that students must gain during a course, and that knowledge of learning standards can guide and focus SLO development. To ensure consistency

and rigor, educators are encouraged to collaborate with peers and curriculum leaders to identify the most important learning standards and content.

SLOs AND THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

No matter the subject or grade-level, developing SLOs asks educators to think critically and deeply about learning standards that define what students should be able to know and do. While educators may be concerned about implementing SLOs while transitioning to Common Core State Standards, the SLO process, over time, promotes a deeper working knowledge of the new standards.

STUDENTS WITH IEPs OR SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS

All educators will establish SLOs using content standards, data and academic information about the students they teach. By definition, IEP goals are individualized and highly personalized for individual students, whereas SLOs ask teachers to establish growth goals for groups of students. However, teachers may examine broad trends across several IEPs to help identify the focus of SLOs. When appropriate, the SLO content may be matched to social, emotional or behavioral learning standards when teaching such skills is an explicit and central component of the curriculum for which an educator bears instructional responsibility.

Guidance: Establish Accurate Baselines

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Do teachers have to use a pre-assessment to determine baselines?

WHERE ARE MY STUDENTS STARTING?

To establish expectations for student growth, educators must accurately determine and document what students know and are able to do at the beginning of the instructional period. Having access to quality baseline information forms the foundation for writing rigorous, attainable growth goals and provides educators with the data necessary to align instructional strategies to student needs.

- ✓ Quality baselines are based upon data that directly relates to the learning content.
- ✓ Data used to determine baselines should be comparable between the beginning and end of the instructional period.
- ✓ Devote portions of data retreats to allowing educators to work collaboratively to analyze data and develop student baselines.

USE DATA FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES

When establishing baselines, educators are encouraged to rely on more than a single assessment, such as a pre-test, to identify student starting points. By collecting data from multiple sources, educators can develop a better picture of student understanding of the priority content, which will ultimately improve SLO quality. When available, past educational records and end-of-year data from the previous year may be used, but educators should consider validating older information with more current data. Baselines can also be developed using data from other measures, including common district assessments, pretests, student work samples, benchmark or unit tests, or educator-developed assessments.

DIFFERENTIATE STUDENTS BY PREPAREDNESS LEVEL

When analyzing data to determine student baselines, it may be helpful to group students in three categories: students who are prepared, those who are not prepared (in need of remediation), and those who are very well prepared (in need of enrichment). Grouping student data may reveal patterns that allow teachers to establish a more authentic, differentiated growth goal that set expectations for students with varying levels of preparedness.

Guidance: Assessment Selection

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This section of the SLO Guidebook addresses the following concepts and questions raised by educators participating in the 2013-14 Teacher Effectiveness Pilot and the 2013-14 Principal Effectiveness Pilot.

1. How is SLO implementation impacted by the change to the Smarter Balanced Assessment?
2. Where can I find pre-existing assessments aligned to Common Core?
3. How can I assess student learning if I do not teach in a grade or subject assessed by the Smarter Balanced assessment?

WHAT ASSESSMENTS ARE AVAILABLE?

The selection of one or more assessments to measure student growth is an important decision and is necessary to ensure all teachers are developing rigorous, achievable SLOs.

- ✓ Quality assessments are aligned to course content standards and to the learning content established in the SLO.
- ✓ Quality assessments are reliable and capable of producing accurate and consistent results.
- ✓ Quality assessments are valid because the assessment measures what it is designed to measure.
- ✓ Select assessments that are realistic in terms of the time required for administration.

CHOOSE THE MOST COMMON ASSESSMENT AVAILABLE

High quality SLOs are based on the most common assessment available. Common assessments are consistent across classrooms and are based upon commonly defined and agreed-upon criteria. Choosing assessments with the highest degree of commonality ensures educators are basing student results on the most credible, valid, and reliable assessment. Figure 7 groups assessments into three categories based on the degree of commonality associated with the assessment. The most common assessments are listed at the top of the chart, and assessments become less common toward the bottom of the chart.

Figure 7: Available Assessments Ranked in Order of Commonality

	STATE MANDATED ASSESSMENTS
	<p>This category includes assessments mandated for use statewide and includes assessments required by state and federal law.</p> <p>Examples: Smarter Balanced Assessment, Dakota Step Science Assessment (or the state-required science assessment)</p>
	COMMON STATE AND DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS
	<p>This category includes assessments not mandated for state use but are widely used by several districts and schools. Assessments in this category include commercially available assessments, district-developed pre- and post-tests or course-level assessments. Assessments could also take the form of established rubric-scored performance-based assessments.</p> <p>Examples: Assessments available through the South Dakota Assessment Portal, End-of-Course Exams, Write-to-Learn, WIDA-Access Placement Test (English-Language learners), National Career Readiness Certificate, DIBELS, AP Exams, STARS reading/math, MAPS, AIMS Web, CTE Performance Contests/Judging.</p>
	TEACHER-DEVELOPED ASSESSMENTS
	<p>This category of assessments includes classroom assessments used by a single course for a particular teacher.</p>

COLLABORATIVELY DEVELOP ASSESSMENTS

When no common state or district assessment exists for a given course or grade level, educators may develop an assessment to measure SLO goal attainment. Whenever possible, educators should collaborate to develop assessments. All developed assessments must be approved by evaluators.

- ✓ The South Dakota Assessment Portal allows educators to create assessments aligned to South Dakota State Standards (<https://doe.sd.gov/oats/sdap.aspx>).

ASSESSMENTS ALIGNED TO COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Beginning in the 2014-15 school year, teachers assigned to subjects and grades in which statewide assessments are mandated must use state-mandated assessments as one measure of SLO goal attainment. Educators in tested grades and subjects may opt to use a secondary assessment to measure goal attainment, provided the assessment is aligned to the concepts and standards reflected by the SLO.

- ✓ The South Dakota Assessment Portal provides access to assessments aligned to Common Core State Standards, including benchmark and formative assessments.
- ✓ For more information about the South Dakota Assessment Portal, visit <https://doe.sd.gov/oats/sdap.aspx>.

ASSESSMENT SOURCES IDENTIFIED BY PILOT PARTICIPANTS

The following list of assessment options was developed during a summer training held in support of the educator effectiveness pilots.

STAR Reading	AIMS	APEX
STAR Math	DIBELS or DIBELS Next	Learning.com – STEM
MAP	SD Assessment Portal	Informal Observations
DRA testing	Study Island	Checklists
Fonas/Pinell testing	Write to Learn	Conferencing
Results of D-Step	Smarter Balance	Rubrics
PreACT – PLAN	NWEA	1-on-1 assessments
AVMR	Ren Place (Math & Reading)	Phonics screener
AR Reading	IXL	SuccessMaker
AR Math	Plato	

Guidance: Writing Quality SLOs

PILOT FEEDBACK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How many SLOs do I write?
2. Is there a process to help teachers write quality goals?

WHAT CAN I EXPECT MY STUDENTS TO ACHIEVE?

High-quality SLOs reflect a rigorous, yet realistic expectation of student growth that can be achieved during the instructional period. Evaluators will play a key role in ensuring all teachers are writing goals that are comparable across grade levels and subjects.

- ✓ Encourage teams of teachers to work collaboratively to establish expectations for student growth.
- ✓ Schedule calibration sessions with all district evaluators to compare and contrast SLO quality.
- ✓ Begin building a bank of high quality SLO examples that the district can use to guide implementation.

USE THE S.M.A.R.T. GOAL-SETTING FORMAT

Using the S.M.A.R.T. goal format, educators develop goals that are s(S)pecific, (M)easurable, (A)ppropriate, (R)ealistic and rigorous, and (T)ime-bound. The S.M.A.R.T. goal format provides an easy-to-understand framework for writing quality goals. For additional information about student growth goal-setting, refer to the following books by James Stronge:

- ✓ Effective Teachers=Student Achievement: What Research Says (2010)
- ✓ Student Achievement Goal-Setting: Using Data to Improve Teaching and Learning (2009)
- ✓ Evaluating What Good Teachers Do: Eight Research-Based Standards for Assessing Teacher Excellence (2010).

INCLUDE ALL STUDENTS IN THE SLO

When developing SLOs, educators should focus on establishing goals that include all students in a given course or class. Though the type of goal chosen may vary depending on the class, course, school or district, goals should be written to set rigorous, realistic expectations for all students. The recommended SLO process provides educators with wide latitude to exercise professional judgment when developing goals, and evaluators are expected to require strong justification prior to approving goals that do not include all students.

SELECT THE MOST APPROPRIATE GROWTH GOAL TYPE

During the 2013-14 year, educators may opt to develop a ***Class Mastery Goal***, a ***Differentiated Growth Goal***, or a ***Shared Performance Goal***.

CLASS MASTERY GOAL

A Class Mastery Goal is based on students' starting points relative to the content identified in the SLO. If a class mastery goal is selected, educators must be confident that the SLO is based on an accurate and appropriate baseline determination. When developing a class mastery goal, educators must also define what constitutes mastery. When writing this type of goal, a teacher determines the number or percentage of students in his or her class who will achieve mastery of the content identified in the SLO. While an educator may establish a goal that expects less than the full class to attain mastery (80 percent of students in a class, for example), it is important that student population identified in the SLO includes all students in the teacher's class.

DIFFERENTIATED GROWTH GOAL

A Differentiated Growth Goal establishes tiered expectations for student growth for groups of students in a class or course. When developing a differentiated goal, educators examine data and group students based on how well students understand the content at the beginning of the course. The educator then establishes differentiated growth goals that outline what expected growth looks like for each group of students. Differentiated growth goals represent the most direct connection to student needs, and, as SLO implementation progresses, it is expected that differentiated growth goals will become the norm.

SHARED PERFORMANCE GOAL

When appropriate, teams of teachers may develop Shared Performance Goals. Shared performance goals work to foster collective responsibility for the learning of all students within a content area, grade level or school. When developing a shared performance goal, teams of teachers must agree to work collaboratively and share responsibility for student learning. At the discretion of teachers and evaluators, all teachers who participate in the development of a shared performance goal may receive the same student growth rating for the evaluation period.

SELECT AN APPROPRIATE NUMBER OF GOALS

During the 2013-14 pilot year, educators may focus on developing a single SLO. Educators teaching multiple grade levels or multiple subjects are encouraged to confer with evaluators to determine the student population and learning content that will be the focus of the SLO. When considering whether developing multiple SLOs is necessary, educators should establish an expectation evaluations of student growth should be rigorous and realistic across grade levels and subjects.

For example, a teacher responsible for 6-12 English-language arts may develop SLOs that span several classes based on content that stretches across curriculum and grade levels. Or, a teacher responsible for three sections of Algebra and two sections of Geometry may write one goal that spans just the three Algebra sections. If multiple goals are established, SLOs may be weighted according to the student population served by the goal and then combined and scored to determine a student growth rating.

CONSULT SLO EXAMPLES

Educators participating in the 2013-14 educator effectiveness pilots will be asked to share examples of high-quality SLOs, which will be included in future revisions of this guidebook. For the pilot year, educators can refer to SLO examples from the state of Wisconsin. Wisconsin's repository of SLO examples includes SLOs written at the elementary, middle and high school levels, and also presents examples for non-tested grades and subjects.

- ✓ Access Wisconsin's SLO Repository: <http://bit.ly/18l7qy6>.
- ✓ For an example of an SLO developed by one of the 2013-14 Teacher Effectiveness pilot schools, refer to Appendix B.

Glossary

Class Mastery Goal

One type of growth goal that establishes expectations for student growth based on the percentage of students who will achieve mastery of the identified learning content.

Differentiated Growth Goal

One type of growth goal that establishes tiered expectations for student growth for groups of students in a class or course relative to how prepared students are at the beginning of the course. This type of goal establishes unique growth expectations for each group of students.

Educator Effectiveness Model

A collection of recommended best practices that establishes clear expectations for educator performance, provides educators with meaningful performance feedback, and supports continuous professional growth.

Educator Effectiveness System

A strategic initiative designed to continually improve educator quality through effective performance assessment and targeted professional development.

Goal-setting Conference

A step in the annual teacher evaluation and professional growth process in which the teacher and evaluator agree upon professional practice goals, discuss appropriate sources of evidence to support professional practice evaluations, and either discuss or approve SLOs.

Preparing for the Summative Conference

A step in the SLO Process in which teachers assemble and submit evidence of SLO goal attainment to the evaluator.

Professional Practice Rating

A rating of Unsatisfactory, Basic, Proficient or Distinguished that is calculated and assigned following an assessment of educator performance relative to professional performance standards.

Shared Performance Goal

One type of growth goal that establishes expectations for student growth for all students in a subject, grade-level or school. This type of goal is developed collaboratively by teachers who assume shared responsibility for student learning and may, at the discretion of teachers and evaluators, allow all teachers involved in the development of the goal to be assigned the same student growth rating.

SLO Approval

The step in the SLO Process in which the teacher and evaluator agree upon an SLO that will be used as the official measure of student growth for the evaluation period.

SLO Conference

A face-to-face meeting that provides an opportunity for teachers and evaluators either approve SLOs or discuss progress toward SLO development. This conference may be scheduled in conjunction with other face-to-face meetings required as a part of the broader teacher evaluation and professional growth process.

SLO Development

The step in the SLO Process that asks teachers and principals to collaboratively establish and document expectations for student growth.

SLO Process

A four-step process that guides the evaluation of teacher impact on student growth.

SLO Review Team

A group of educators that provide teachers with feedback on SLO quality prior to the submission of the SLO for approval by the evaluator.

Student Growth

A positive change in student achievement between two or more points in time.

Student Growth Rating

A rating of either Low, Expected, or High that reflects and quantifies an educator's impact on student growth for the specified evaluation period.

Student Learning Objective

A teacher-driven goal or set of goals that establish expectations for student academic growth during a specified period of time.

Summative Conference

A step in the evaluation and professional growth process in which the teacher and evaluator meet face-to-face to reflect upon all evidence collected during the evaluation period and discuss the teacher's summative teacher effectiveness rating.

Summative Educator Effectiveness Rating

A single rating that combines multiple measures of professional practice and student growth to differentiate educator performance into one of three performance categories: Below Expectations, Meets Expectations or Exceeds Expectations.

Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Process

An annual process that outlines practices and procedures necessary to assess educator effectiveness, provide meaningful performance feedback, and implement plans that guide professional growth.

Additional Resources

SLO GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS FROM AIR

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) is a non-profit organization that specializes in behavior and social science research. Their work includes helping states implement high-quality educator effectiveness systems, and the organization is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and several states for their work in furthering state efforts to implement effectiveness systems that include Student Learning Objectives. AIR resources can be found at the links below:

- ✓ Student Learning Objectives as Measures of Educator Effectiveness – The Basics (<http://bit.ly/14TT7FX>).
- ✓ Student Learning Objectives – Benefits, Challenges and Solutions (<http://bit.ly/1eT23NM>).
- ✓ Implementing Student Learning Objectives – Core Elements for Sustainability (<http://bit.ly/1eT2ebW>).

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Appendix A: SLO Process Guide

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE PROCESS GUIDE

2013-14 PILOT DRAFT

Teacher:	
School:	
Evaluator:	

STEP ONE: SLO DEVELOPMENT

<p>Prioritize Learning Content: Identify standards and content.</p>	<p><i>What is the most important learning that needs to occur during the instructional period? Specify which standard(s) the SLO addresses.</i></p>
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<p>Identify the Student Population: Describe the context of the class.</p>	<p><i>How many students are addressed by the SLO? Detail any characteristics or special learning circumstances of the class(es).</i></p>
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<p>Interval of Instruction: Specify the time frame in which growth will be measured.</p>	<p><i>What is the time period in which student growth is expected to occur? Identify the length of the course or provide rationale for a time period that is less than the full length of the course.</i></p>
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<p>Analyze Data and Develop Baseline: Detail student understanding of the content at the beginning of the instructional period.</p>	<p><i>Where are my students starting? Identify the specific data source or trend data used.</i></p>
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<p>Select or Develop an Assessment: Describe how the goal attainment will be measured.</p>	<p><i>What specific assessment or instrument will be used to measure goal attainment? Describe the source of the assessment and the connection to identified content and standards.</i></p>

<p>Growth Goal: Establish expectations for student growth.</p>	<p><i>What can I expect my students to achieve? Establish rigorous expectations for student performance.</i></p>

<p>Provide Rationale: Describe how your SLO benefits student learning.</p>	<p><i>How do the content, baseline data, assessment and growth goal support student progress and growth? Describe why you chose to develop this SLO.</i></p>

<p>Learning Strategies: Describe your plan to meet student needs.</p>	<p><i>How will you help students attain the goal? Provide any specific actions that will lead to goal attainment.</i></p>

STEP TWO: SLO APPROVAL

The SLO has been reviewed jointly between the teacher and evaluator and will serve as the agreed-upon measure to determine the teacher's student growth rating.

Teacher Signature:

Date:

Evaluator Signature:

Date:

STEP THREE: ONGOING COMMUNICATION

Progress Update: Describe student progress toward the growth goal.	Are your students on track toward meeting the growth goal? Specify the assessment used to track progress.
Strategy Modification: If necessary, document changes in strategy.	Does data suggest I need to adjust my instructional strategy? Describe how you plan to meet the goal.
SLO Adjustment: If justified, describe changes to the SLO.	Are there circumstances beyond the teacher's control that will impact growth goal? If needed, attach a revised SLO.

Teacher Signature:

Date:

Evaluator Signature:

Date:

STEP FOUR: PREPARE FOR THE SUMMATIVE CONFERENCE

This section documents the preliminary student growth rating, which will be discussed during the end-of-year Summative Conference.

SCORING

High Growth: <i>The growth goal was 86% to 100% attained.</i>	<i>What does high growth mean? Detail end-of-course achievement levels that equate to high growth.</i>

Expected Growth: <i>The growth goal was 65% to 85% attained.</i>	<i>What does expected growth mean? Detail end-of-course achievement levels that equate to expected growth.</i>

Low Growth: <i>The growth goal was less than 65% attained?</i>	<i>What does low growth mean? Detail end-of-course achievement levels that equate to low growth.</i>

PRELIMINARY STUDENT GROWTH RATING

PRELIMINARY STUDENT GROWTH RATING		
Based on final assessment data, the student growth rating is:		
LOW	EXPECTED	HIGH
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REFLECTION

Professional Growth: <i>Detail what you learned.</i>	<i>What worked? What should be refined? Describe the support you need to improve instruction and student learning.</i>

Appendix B: Pilot SLO Example

This SLO example was the first submitted by a pilot school working to implement SLOs. It is provided here as a reference only. During the pilot year, additional SLO examples will be requested. In this example, a team of teachers worked collaboratively to develop the SLO document.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE (STEP ONE: SLO DEVELOPMENT) 2013-14 PILOT DRAFT

Teacher:	Pilot School Educators
School:	Kindergarten
Evaluator:	Pilot School

STEP ONE: SLO DEVELOPMENT

<p>Prioritize Learning Content: <i>Identify standards and content.</i></p>	<p><i>What is the most important learning that needs to occur during the instructional period? Specify which standard(s) the SLO addresses.</i></p>
	<p>Students need to count forward from any number to 100. Students need to count backwards from 10. Students also need to identify numbers 0-20. K.cc.1 Count to 100 by ones and tens. K.cc.2 Count forward beginning from a given number within the known sequence. K.cc.3 Write numbers from 0-20. Represent a number of objects with a written numeral 0 –20. K.cc4c. Understand that each successive number name refers to a quantity that is one larger. K.OA.5-Fluently add and subtract within 5.</p>

<p>Identify Student Population: <i>Describe the context of the class.</i></p>	<p><i>How many students are addressed by the SLO? Detail any characteristics or special learning circumstances of the class(es).</i></p>
	<p>This goal will address all students in kindergarten. Teacher 1- 19 students Teacher 2 19 students Teacher 3 - 20 students Teacher 4 - 20 students Number of students not exposed to preschool learning: 10 Number of students on IEP's for math: 8</p>

<p>Interval of Instruction: <i>Specify the time frame in which growth will be measured.</i></p>	<p><i>What is the time period in which student growth is expected to occur? Identify the length of the course or provide rationale for a time period that is less than the full length of the course.</i></p>
	<p>The interval of instruction will be the 2013-14 school year.</p>

<p>Analyze Data and Develop Baseline: <i>Detail student understanding of the content at the beginning of the instructional period.</i></p>	<p><i>Where are my students starting? Identify the specific data source or trend data used.</i></p>
	<p>All classrooms used the AVMR Number Words and Numerals pretest as a data baseline. This assessment gives scores in forward number sequence, backward number sequence, and number identification. The class averages on the assessment are as follows: Teacher 1: FWNS: 1.3 BWNS: .8 NID: .5 Teacher 2: FWNS: 1.3 BWNS: .8 NID: 1 Teacher 3: FWNS: 1.3 BWNS: .6 NID: .4 Teacher 4: FWNS: 1 BWNS: .5 NID: .4</p>

<p>Select or Develop an Assessment: Describe how the goal attainment will be measured.</p>	<p><i>What specific assessment or instrument will be used to measure goal attainment? Describe the source of the assessment and the connection to identified content and standards.</i></p>
	<p>The data will be collected using the AVMR Number Words and Numerals assessment as a pre and post assessment. The AVMR is a math recovery research-based assessment. The AVMR Number Words and Numerals assessment correlates with the standards KCC.1, KCC.2, KCC.3, KCC.4.C, K.OA.5</p>
<p>Growth Goal: Establish expectations for student growth.</p>	<p><i>What can I expect my students to achieve? Establish rigorous expectations for student performance.</i></p>
	<p>All of our students will show growth, and 80% of our students will improve their pre-test score to an ending score of 5 on FWNS, 3 on BWNS, and 2 on NID.</p>
<p>Provide Rationale: Describe how your SLO benefits student learning.</p>	<p><i>How do the content, baseline data, assessment and growth goal support student progress and growth? Describe why you chose to develop this SLO.</i></p>
	<p>We chose this SLO because kindergarten is the only grade that focuses on counting and cardinality in the common core standards. We also chose the goal because forward counting and backward counting are a prerequisite skill for fluently adding and subtracting. By looking at our baseline data, we can see that our students' scores are not where they need to be in the counting and cardinality standards. We will address those standards in our instruction. We will know students have made growth if they show improvements in their post-assessment scores.</p>
<p>Learning Strategies: Describe your plan to meet student needs.</p>	<p><i>How will you help students attain the goal? Provide any specific actions that will lead to goal attainment.</i></p>
	<p>In whole group instruction, we will provide instruction in the counting and cardinality standards. In our small group math interventions, we will use strategies from the AVMR program. In our third tier interventions, we will meet individually with students who have not shown progress in meeting the standards in the whole group and small group settings.</p>

Appendix C: SLO Quality Checklist

SLO QUALITY CHECKLIST

	Yes	No	?
Is the SLO SPECIFIC?			
1. Does the SLO state exactly what learning content needs to be addressed and the specific standards to which the learning content relates?			
2. Is the learning content aligned to Common Core State Standards, state content standards or credible national standards?			
Is the SLO MEASURABLE?			
3. Will the SLO be measured using a standards-based assessment that is comparable across classrooms?			
4. Are expectations for student growth stated by rate, percentage, number, level of benchmark, rubric standards or juried level of standard?			
Is the SLO APPROPRIATE?			
5. Was the SLO developed using baseline data that is comparable between the beginning and end of the instructional period?			
6. Is the SLO directly related to a teacher's subject, grade-level and students?			
7. For a Class Mastery Goal, does the goal include all students in the class or course?			
8. For a Differentiated Growth Goal, does the goal include a growth goal for all groups of students?			
Is the SLO REALISTIC and RIGOROUS?			
9. Does the SLO contain a growth goal that identifies expected student growth that stretches the outer bound of what is attainable?			
10. Is the SLO rigorous when compared to SLOs established by teachers in similar grades or subjects?			
Is the SLO TIME BOUND?			
11. Does the SLO contain a definitive timeline that allows for determining goal attainment?			

Appendix D: Members of the South Dakota Commission on Teaching and Learning

THE SOUTH DAKOTA COMMISSION ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

TEACHERS	Sue Podoll <i>Rapid City</i>	ADMINISTRATORS	EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS
Donna DeKraai <i>Brookings</i>	Pam Oberembt <i>Sioux Falls</i>	Melinda Jensen* <i>Principal, Brookings</i>	Wade Pogany <i>ASBSD</i>
Sami Peil <i>Duebrook</i>	Jared Baumann <i>Sioux Falls</i>	Jeremy Hurd* <i>Principal, Custer</i>	Alan Neville <i>Northern State University</i>
Lou Ann Jensen <i>Estelline</i>	Tammy Meyer <i>Sisseton</i>	Kyley Cumbow* <i>Assistant Principal, Pierre</i>	Sandy Arseneault* <i>SDEA</i>
Kathy Meyer <i>Huron</i>	Linda Mallory <i>Spearfish</i>	Don Kirkegaard <i>Superintendent, Meade</i>	Sharla Steever* <i>TIE</i>
Pat Moller <i>Mitchell</i>	Amy Engel <i>Todd County</i>	Brad Seamer* <i>Principal, McCook</i>	Jill Thorngren* <i>South Dakota State Univ</i>
Mary McCorkle <i>Mobridge</i>	Steve O'Brien <i>Watertown</i>	Kevin Lein* <i>Principal, Harrisburg</i>	Cheryl Medearis* <i>Sinte Gleska University</i>
Katie Anderson <i>Rapid City</i>	Darlene Dulitz <i>Webster</i>	SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Nicole Keegan <i>Rapid City</i>	Robin Curtis <i>Winner</i>	Pam Haukaas <i>Colome</i>	Abby Javurek-Humig <i>SD DOE</i>
Heather Whetham* <i>Agar, Blunt Onida</i>	Jeannine Metzger* <i>Shannon County</i>		Carla Leingang <i>SD DOE</i>
			Lanette Johnston <i>SD DOE</i>

* South Dakota Commission on Teaching and Learning Principal Effectiveness Sub-Committee