

## Frequently Asked Questions- SLOs

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### **Why continue Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) with the Every Student Succeeds Act?**

Going forward, student growth measures will continue to be included in the evaluation of educators in South Carolina. SCDE emphasizes the use of formative assessments and local measures in the SLO process to drive instructional decisions regarding student growth. The Office of Educator Effectiveness has gathered educator feedback with regards to possible ways to embed student growth (SLOs) as an artifact in teacher evaluation instead of a stand-alone measure.

### **How many SLOs are required as part of the Expanded ADEPT Support and Evaluation System?**

SCDE is requiring one SLO be created annually as part of a teacher's evaluation. It is recommended that Elementary teachers (generalists) focus their SLO on either literacy or math. Early Childhood teachers must focus their SLO on literacy. Teachers with multiple subjects will select one subject as the focus of their SLO. Districts may choose to have teachers complete more than one SLO, however no more than two SLOs should be required each year.

### **Who writes SLOs for use as a student growth measure?**

Measuring student growth through Student Learning Objectives is appropriate for classroom-based teachers who plan, deliver, and assess instruction. This includes certified teachers of core academic subjects, related subjects (e.g. physical education, career and technology education) and special education. The term classroom teacher does not include special area personnel (e.g. school counselors, library media specialists, speech-language therapists).

### **Is it recommended that a teacher give a mid-course assessment within the SLO interval?**

That depends on the amount of data the teacher will have access to within the SLO interval. The mid-course conference provides an opportunity to adjust the SLO goal provided that evidence supports an adjustment. Some teachers prefer to administer a "mini assessment" similar to the pre/post in order to complete the evidence to date. Others feel they have enough evidence through summative assignments, quizzes and unit tests, etc.

Note: all adjustments must be approved by the evaluator. SLO growth targets should not be adjusted arbitrarily, or outside of the Mid-Course Conference.

### **Will I be required to use summative assessment data in my SLO?**

The SCDE is not requiring the use of high stakes summative test data in teacher's SLOs. However, districts can require the use of this data at their discretion.

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### **How might a teacher without access to standardized assessment measure growth for an SLO?**

Districts, teacher teams or individual teachers will develop a pre/post assessment for use within the SLO process. This may be a performance assessment that is measured with a rubric.

### **What if I use a post assessment where the results will not be available in time for my district's evaluation cycle timeline?**

If this is the case, other on-going formative assessments collected as part of the SLO process could be used in determining student growth. The teacher may look at all the assessment data collected during the SLO interval to inform student growth targets.

### **How does a teacher without access to historical/trend data set appropriate growth targets?**

This might be challenging in the beginning years of implementation. Trend data might be qualitative in nature until the teacher has data from which to draw. Talking to teachers in similar courses or teachers from previous years might provide some historical data to draw from. Additionally, specialists that support unique learning needs within a student population might be able to provide insight into expected growth.

### **Will the SCDE be collecting SLO templates?**

No. The template is designed for use in developing and monitoring SLO progress. SCDE may audit district records on annual student growth results, but only the final summative rating (or depending upon rulings under the Freedom of Information Act, "met" or "not met") is submitted to SCDE. Districts maintain the SLO planning template and related documentation.

### **Will 2016-2017 SLOs be scored?**

SLOs have been aligned with the Long Range Planning (LRP, TT1) document in order to reduce redundancy and paperwork. Components of the SLO template that are aligned to the LRP through the APS Key Indicators can influence ratings in the related APS standards as they have in the past. The *growth targets* section of the SLO is NOT aligned to the LRP and is to be scored using the SLO Feedback Rubric. The growth targets score is to be used for feedback, reflection and professional growth and development unless otherwise indicated in the local ADEPT plan.

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### **How should districts approach SLO scoring in time to inform employment decisions?**

It is appropriate for teachers with yearlong intervals to administer the post assessment in March-April. It is recommended that semester long SLOs be focused on first semester courses to keep as much of the interval in place in order to track student growth over time. This (suggested timeline) will allow districts to factor student growth results into their local employment decisions.

### **Will the state audit the assessments used within the SLO process?**

No. SLO evaluators will need to approve the assessment used within the SLO as part of the SLO approval process. SCDE has provided guidance on how to determine the quality of an assessment.

### **Will there be one SLO scoring rubric for the state?**

A scoring rubric will be developed for use in assessing SLOs for both the process and the progress towards reaching student growth goals, with guidance on how the score influences ratings in the appropriate APS standards. Districts may choose to use an alternative SLO scoring rubric(s) and must include those in their district's ADEPT plan.

### **What if I teach a subject that does not have state standards?**

All courses have content that students are expected to know and be able to use in order to demonstrate proficiency. These expectations form the basis of what's taught in those courses. These enduring understandings form the basis of the content related to the SLO.

### **Will SLOs take the place of GBE?**

The requirements for Goals-Based Evaluation can be satisfied through the completion of the SLO. In the event that additional goals are needed, the educator will complete Section II of the SLO template.

### **Are educators required to complete the Long Range Planning Document (LRP) in addition to the SLO?**

Effective 2016-2017 completion of the 2016-17 SLO planning template (Form A) will satisfy the requirement for the LRP. Key indicators related to the LRP are indicated on the SLO planning template (Form A).

### **What will special education teachers do for student growth as their instruction is based on IEP goals?**

While IEP goals can inform SLO goals, they cannot be directly used as a student growth measure as they are specific to the individual. SLOs are academic growth goals for groups of students. In

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instances where IEP goals reflect academic (vs. behavior) growth, the teacher can use those goals as the basis for writing a broad SLO goal that runs the full interval of time the teacher is responsible for the instruction of that student.