





## 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:

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;



## 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 developme

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](#).



- 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?

There are templates available for various types of SLOs (teacher- or course-specific; collectively attributed through school-, program-, district-, or BOCES-wide measures









## 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

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

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<sup>2</sup>.



STEP 1:







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

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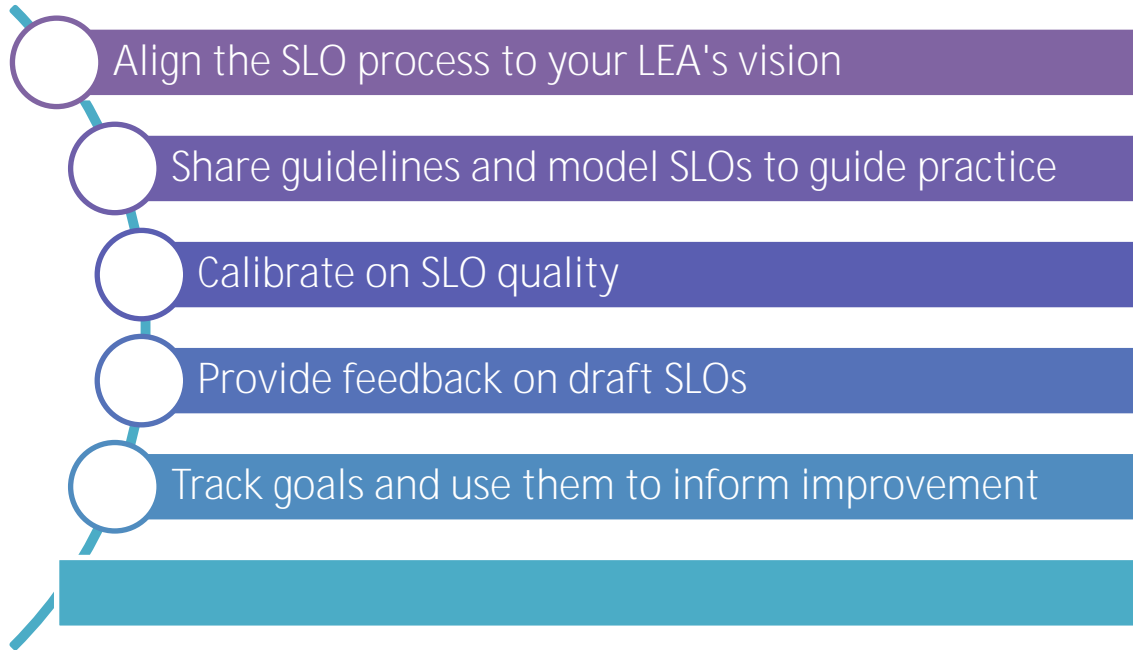






## SECTION SEVEN: ENSURING HIGH QUALITY SLOS

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

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.

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.

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.



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

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.

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 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

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?

