

APPR Guidance

D. Student Growth on State Assessments or Other Comparable Measures

State-Provided Growth Measures

D1. What is the State providing for 11-12 for the Teacher or Principal Growth scores?

The State-provided teacher and principal growth scores will be provided for all teachers and principals in grades 4-8 ELA and/or Math. Detailed documentation and training materials will be available on EngageNY in May. Briefly, the growth scores will be calculated as follows:

- For each student in grade 4-8, a student growth percentile (SGP) will be calculated based on his or her ELA and Math State assessment results. The calculated SGP will compare each student's 2011-12 results with his/her 2010-11 results to determine how much growth has occurred. Each student's growth will then be compared to the growth of students with similar academic test history. Student test history will include up to three years of assessment data, with adjustments made to account for test measurement error.
- Before determining teacher or principal evaluation ratings based on the SGPs, the results will be adjusted for whether a student lives in poverty, is an English Language Learner or has a disability.
- Students will be assigned to teachers and schools based on linkage information provided by districts and attribution rules established by SED. (See <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/sirs/documentation/Teacher-CourseDataCollection-final-5-2-11-2.pdf> for detailed guidance on teacher-student data linkage).
- For 2011-12, students will have to be linked to teachers for a minimum time period to be included in the teacher's review. This is defined as the number of calendar days (exclusive) between "BEDS Day" (October 5, 2011) and the first day of the elementary/middle-level ELA or math assessment administration window (April 17 and 25, 2012, respectively) or 195 calendar days for teachers of grades 4-8 ELA and 203 calendar days for teachers of grades 4-8 math. And they will have to meet the definition of "continuous enrollment" for State accountability purposes to be included in the principal growth score.
- The median student growth percentile (MGP) score will then be determined for each applicable teacher and principal—the MGP is simply

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the SGP that is in the middle of the distribution of student SGPs for that teacher or school.

- Subject to meeting the minimum number of students required for an evaluation score (number TBD in spring 2012), the MGP adjusted for the student demographics noted above, will be combined across all grades and subjects for the teacher or principal and will then be used to classify the teacher or principal into one of four rating categories (Highly Effective, Effective, Developing or Ineffective). A score from 0-20 points will be assigned to each educator and it will be possible for an educator to earn each point, including 0 for the Growth subcomponent.

D2. When will the State-provided teacher or principal growth scores be provided to Districts, schools, and teachers?

In 2011-12, the State assessment results for students will be provided to districts in July and teacher and principal growth scores will be provided to districts to incorporate into educator evaluations within three weeks of that date.

The State will provide the information needed for districts who have selected through collective bargaining to use different locally-selected measures based on State tests at the time the State provides the State growth scores to districts.

Online reporting that will be accessible to teachers, principals, and other district staff, will be available in the Fall of 2012. The online reports will include detailed information about the calculation of the growth scores for each teacher and principal.

D3. What is a “value-added score” and how is it different from the Teacher or Principal Median Student Growth Percentile Score?

When the Board of Regents approves the use of a “value-added model” for use with particular grades and subjects for 2012-13 or later years, educators who teach these courses will receive from 0-25 points on their evaluations based on their teacher or principal value-added (VA) score, for the Growth Subcomponent. As with the “growth score”, the State plans to calculate a student growth percentile (SGP) for each student, comparing the progress that each individual student makes each year on the applicable State assessments to the progress of other students in that grade/subject with similar past achievement on New York State assessments.

To determine the teacher or principal value-added score, the State will assign students to their teacher of record according to rules in effect at that time (see Question B2 above), and to their principal. The value-added score provider will then take into account any of a wide range of student, classroom, and/or school characteristics that the provider, with approval from the Board of Regents,

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determines are necessary, for empirical and policy reasons, to compare the growth performance of classes and schools to those with similar characteristics.

As with the growth scores for 2011-12, the State's growth and value-added model provider will make a recommendation to the State regarding how to account for test measurement error and statistical uncertainty in determining scores for individual educators in 12-13 and beyond. The provider will begin by making recommendations for value-added models covering teachers of grades 4-8 ELA and/or 4-8 Mathematics and their building principals, and will recommend models for additional grades/subjects in future years.

The provider will also be asked to provide analyses in support of policy decisions. For example, the provider will be asked to ensure that small changes in student learning do not result in extreme positive or negative results for educators because of students clustered at either the high or low end of achievement scales or other statistical anomalies. The result of these analyses will be teacher or principal value-added scores, and will lead to the assignment of 0-25 points for the Growth Subcomponent for evaluation purposes

Teacher and principal value-added results for all grades and subjects applicable to that educator will be aggregated into a single result from which one of the four rating categories (Highly Effective, Effective, Developing, Ineffective or HEDI) and a score from 0-25 will be assigned according to the narrative descriptions and scoring bands in regulation.

D4. How will the teacher and principal growth score be determined if there is no value-added or growth model based on State assessments?

Beginning in the 2012-13 school year, it is expected that the State will have approved value-added measures for teachers and principals in ELA and/or Mathematics for grades 4-8. However, if a value-added model is not approved for any of these educators, the State will continue to use the growth model used for the 2011-12 school year to calculate student growth, and the Growth Subcomponent of these teachers' and principals' evaluations will count for 20 points until such time that the State is able to calculate a value-added model for these subjects in these grades. For High School principals, the State expects to have an approved value-added growth score for this subcomponent in 2012-13. If that does not happen, High School principals will construct SLOs for 2012-13.

In all other grades and subjects (i.e., those for which the State does not have an approved growth or value-added model), Education Law §3012-c requires that teachers' and principals' evaluations be based in part on comparable measures of student learning growth. For these grades/subjects, districts will be required to utilize the Student Learning Objective process (see subsection below for further information on SLOs as well as: <http://engageny.org/wp->

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content/uploads/2012/03/slo-guidance.pdf). Districts will be required to assign 0-20 points to each educator based on the students' results compared to the targets set in the goal-setting process.

D5. When will the percentage of the composite score that is based on the Growth Subcomponent increase from 20 to 25 points?

In school year 2012-13 and beyond, if a value-added scoring methodology has been approved by the Board of Regents for use in a grade/subject, it will be the basis for the teacher or principal's score on the student growth subcomponent and the State will determine the score for each educator based on a 0-25 point scale.

For teachers who have a mix of SLOs and State-provided growth measures, the Growth subcomponent will *not* increase from 20 to 25 points if a value-added scoring methodology has been approved by the Board of Regents. The 25 point score will *only* be applicable to those teachers for whom more than 50% of students are covered by a value-added measure.

For principals, the State-provided growth measures are only applicable if 30% of their students are included in the applicable assessments. Most elementary and middle school principals will therefore be covered by State value-added measures in 2012-13 and all High School principals will be covered when the High School value-added measure is approved by the Board of Regents. The High School Principal value-added measure will be based on student growth in passing Regents exams each year compared to similar students. We expect this approval for the 2012-13 school year. Principals with SLOs will include those with only early-childhood grade configurations (K-3); or principals of programs for Career and Technical Education or programs for students with disabilities where less than 30% of students take the State assessments.

D6. Which subjects besides ELA/mathematics in grades 4-8 will have value-added models and when? Will there be any new State tests because of this?

If resources become available, the State will propose adding new State test sequences in grades 6-8 science and social studies and ELA in grades 9 and 10 to allow for a 3 year sequence in ELA. These new tests, along with the Regents exams that exist in 2010-11, could be the basis of value-added scores. The exact schedule depends on whether and when NYSED determines, with its value-added score provider, that a valid and reliable methodology can be constructed for existing State assessments.

D7. What characteristics of students, classrooms, and schools will be considered in constructing the value-added scores for the 2012-2013 school year and beyond?

All of the data necessary to research the impact of the factors suggested by the Regents Task Force (see Table 1) has been provided to the value-added score vendor by NYSED. Other factors may be researched as the work progresses. Policy considerations and empirical results will determine the final specifications of the State’s value-added model, which could differ for teachers and principals. The specifics of the recommendations will be determined before the 2012-13 school year begins after consultation with representatives of the Regents Task Force and approval by the Board of Regents.

Table 1. Student Characteristics and Data Elements that may be Utilized for Value-Added Model

<u>Student Characteristics</u>	<u>Other Characteristics</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student State assessment history 	<u>Classroom characteristics</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Poverty indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Class size
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disability indicators (disaggregated indicators) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● % with each demographic characteristic in a class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● English language learner indicators (disaggregated indicators) 	<u>School characteristics</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ethnicity/race 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● % with each demographic characteristic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Average class size
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● % daily student attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grade configuration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student suspension data 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Retained in grade 	Educator experience level in role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summer school participation 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student new to school in a non-articulation year 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student age (especially overage for grade) 	

D8. How will you take into account factors like whether students are homeless or living in transitional housing or shelters in the value-added growth scores?

Currently NYSED collects data that may be able to account for whether students are homeless or living in transitional housing or shelter. We have provided the data to our growth/value-added vendor to determine empirically if these characteristics should be factored into value-added scores for teachers and/or principals.

D9. What research does NYSED have that growth and value-added measures should be part of evaluation?

There are many articles and studies that discuss the use of “value-added” or “growth” measures to assess teacher and principal impact on student achievement based on state assessments. Among the places to learn more are the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (<http://www.tqsource.org/webcasts/evaluateEffectiveness/resources.php>) and The Center for Public Education (<http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Staffingstudents/Building-A-Better-Evaluation-System/References.html>); The Long-term Impacts of Teachers (Chetty, Friedman, Rockoff) http://obs.rc.fas.harvard.edu/chetty/value_added.html and Measures of Effective Teaching research project at <http://www.metproject.org>.

D10. How can we be sure that educators with a high number of students at the highest or lowest ends of the achievement spectrum receive fair results?

NYSED has instructed its provider for the growth and value-added measures that every precaution must be taken to avoid false extreme results for educators (either negative or positive). We have required use of confidence intervals and inclusion of measures of test measurement error. We have also explicitly required that the provider ensure that the highest and lowest scores for student growth go to teachers and principals whose students demonstrated meaningful differences in learning, not small changes that somehow become statistical outliers.

D11. What data are required for a student in grades 4-8 ELA and/or mathematics to have a growth score?

A student must have at least 2 consecutive years of state assessment data in that subject.

D12. Is there a minimum number of students with growth scores required in order for NYSED to calculate a growth score for a teacher/principal?

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Yes, there will be minimum numbers of students required for a growth score to be generated by the State. The specific number will be determined by NYSED in consultation with the provider of the growth and/or value-added model based on empirical analysis and policy considerations in spring 2012. NYSED recognizes this is of particular importance to school districts with very small elementary grade classes and to self-contained special education classrooms composed of several grade levels of students.

D13. In the case of English Language Learners, the teacher providing instruction is the "common branch" classroom teacher to whom these students are assigned for instruction for all subjects, with the exception of the time that they are "pulled-out" for ESL/ELA instruction by the ESL teacher. Will the common branch teacher receive a State-provided growth score, and if so, will the NYSESLAT be used to generate the score? Will the ESL teacher have SLOs only for the NYSESLAT or will they have a mix of SLOs and State-provided growth measures?

The common branch teacher will have a State-provided growth score if enough students take the ELA/Math State assessments; if not the teacher will have SLOs for ELA or Math (*please see NYSED SLO Guidance Document for further details as to the rules of SLOs: <http://engageny.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/slo-guidance.pdf>*). At this time, the NYSESLAT will not be used to generate the State-provided growth score. NYSED will work with its value-added provider to determine whether and how the NYSESLAT score may be used in a value-added measure for students who are English language learners. Districts may also use the NYSESLAT as the basis of locally-selected measures for classrooms with students who take this assessment.

The ESL teacher may have a State-provided growth score if enough students take the ELA State assessment. If there are not enough students who take the State assessments, then the ESL teacher will have SLOs for ELA, and if more than 10 students take the NYSESLAT, then one SLO will also use the NYSESLAT as evidence of student learning. Or, the district/BOCES may wish to consider having the ESL push-in/pull-out teacher use a school- or BOCES-wide, group, or team results based on State assessments if that is more applicable and/or to collaboratively set goals with those classroom teachers whose students they work with during the school year.

D14. What is the role of NYSAA in determining student growth? What happens in a classroom where some students take the NYSAA, but others take the State ELA and Math assessments?

The State will not be able to generate a State-provided growth measure or VA score for students who take the current NYSAA test and do not take a State assessment with a growth/VA model. If enough students in a teacher's class take

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State assessments to generate State-provided measures for the teacher, then the teacher will have a State-provided growth score. However, if there are not enough students to generate these measures, then the teacher is required to set SLOs and the teacher will need to set one of his/her SLOs using the NYSAA performance assessment as evidence. Additional SLOs are also set based on the subject area taught. Please see NYSED SLO Guidance Document for further details as to the rules of SLOs for teachers who have students who take the NYSAA: <http://engageny.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/slo-guidance.pdf>

Regardless of whether or not children take a State assessment, *all* students' achievement should in some way be represented in a teacher's evaluation score. Districts may also use their choice of different locally-selected measures to hold teachers accountable for these students. The decision of which locally-selected measures to use is subject to collective bargaining. Additionally, classroom observations will look for evidence of practices that engage *all* students in learning.

Student Learning Objectives

Please Note: The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has released [important resources](#) for district leaders as they implement a critical component of the new teacher evaluation system, including the [Student Learning Objective \(SLO\) Guidance Document](#), [Student Learning Objective \(SLO\) Road Map](#), and [a series of introductory webinars](#). These resources explain how New York State will assess the learning growth of students in classrooms where there is no State assessment that can be used for a State-provided growth or value-added measure (sometimes called non-tested subjects).

D15. What is the State-determined district- or BOCES-wide student growth goal-setting process?

The State determined district- or BOCES-wide student growth goal-setting process is the Student Learning Objective (SLO) process. NYSED worked with representatives of the Regents Task Force and other states and districts with experience using student-growth goal-setting processes to prescribe standards and best practices for districts and BOCES to implement the SLO process. Please see: <http://engageny.org/news/student-learning-objectives/> for further information including guidance, webinars, and training resources related to SLOs.

D16. What is NYS' definition of an SLO?

A Student Learning Objective is an academic goal for an educator's students that is set at the start of a course. It represents the most important learning for the

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year (or semester, where applicable). It must be specific and measurable, based on available prior student learning data, and aligned to Common Core, State, or national standards, as well as to any other school and district priorities. Educators' scores are based upon the degree to which their goals were attained.

*New York State Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) **must** include the following Basic Elements:*

- **Student Population:** which students are being addressed?
 - Each SLO will address all students in the teacher's course (or across multiple course sections) who take the same final assessment.
- **Learning Content:** what is being taught? CCSS/national/State standards? Will specific standards be focused on in this goal or all standards applicable to the course?
- **Interval of Instructional Time:** what is the instructional period covered (if not a year, rationale for semester/quarter/etc)?
- **Evidence:** what assessment(s) or student work product(s) will be used to measure this goal?
- **Baseline:** what is the starting level of learning for students in the class?
- **Target and HEDI Criteria:** what is the expected outcome (target) by the end of the instructional period?
- **HEDI Criteria:** how will evaluators determine what range of student performance "meets" the goal (Effective) versus "well below," (Ineffective), "below" (Developing), and "well above" (Highly Effective). These ranges translate into HEDI categories to determine educators' final rating for the growth subcomponent of evaluations. Districts must set their expectations for the HEDI ratings and scoring: HEDI criteria can be determined at the time of target-setting or districts can choose to let principal judgment apply.
- **Rationale:** why choose this learning content, evidence and target?

D17. Which principals must have SLOs for the growth subcomponent of their evaluations, and how will SLOs be set? Are they set based on every student in the school?

There are two categories of principals in NYS' evaluation system. Principals with 30 – 100% of students covered by State-provided growth measures and principals with 0 – 29% of students covered by State-provided growth measures. Principals with 30 – 100% of students covered by State-provided growth measures will receive a growth score from the State for the full Growth subcomponent score of their evaluation. Principals with 0 – 29% of students covered by State-provided growth measures must have SLOs for the other comparable measures subcomponent.

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The principal's SLOs for growth will be built around school-wide student results, using assessments discussed below, until at least 30% of students are covered. This rule matches the 30% minimum student coverage of state-provided measures for principals. Generally, very few principals will have SLOs. Principals of elementary and middle schools will have value-added measures based on State assessments in grades 4-8 ELA/Math. High School principals will have a value-added measure based on student growth in passing Regents exams each year compared to similar students. Principals who typically will have SLOs are principals of schools with grade configurations of K-3, PK-3, or similar configurations, as well as principals of certain specialized programs and settings such as CTE or students with severe disabilities.

SLOs for principals must use the school-wide student growth results on State assessments for ELA and Mathematics (if available). If the State assessments do not cover at least 30% of students, then additional SLOs must be set beginning with the grade(s)/course(s) that have the largest number of students until at least 30% of students in the principal's school or program are covered. SLOs for these grade(s)/course(s) without State assessments must use school-wide student results from one of the following assessment options: State-approved 3rd party assessments or district-, regional-, or BOCES-developed assessments that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

D18. What will happen if a principal is in a K-4 building, but fewer than 30% of students receive a State-provided growth measure?

These principals will have SLOs built around school-wide student results until at least 30% of students are covered. The SLOs will begin first with the 4th grade results from the State-provided growth measures for ELA and Mathematics. Additional SLOs will then be set based on the 3rd grade ELA and Mathematics State assessment results. If 30% or more of students are now covered by SLOs, then no additional SLOs are necessary. If, however, less than 30% of students are covered by SLOs, then additional SLOs will be set beginning with the grade(s)/course(s) that have the largest number of students using school-wide student results from one of the following assessment options: State-approved 3rd party assessments or district, regional, or BOCES-developed assessments provided the district or BOCES verifies comparability and rigor.

D19. Which teachers will have State-provided growth measures and which teachers must have SLOs as comparable growth measures?

There are two categories of teachers in NYS' evaluation system. Teachers with 50 – 100% of students covered by State-provided growth measures and teachers with 0 – 49% of students covered by State-provided growth measures. Teachers with 50 – 100% of students covered by State-provided growth measures will

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receive a growth score from the State for the full Growth subcomponent score of their evaluation. Teachers with 0 – 49% of students covered by State-provided growth measures must have SLOs for the Growth subcomponent of their evaluation.

For teachers who have SLOs, if any course/section has State-provided growth measures, at least one SLO must use it (for example, a teacher with one section of 7th grade Math and 4 sections of 7th grade Science must have an SLO associated with the State-provided growth measure for Math). SLOs must cover the courses taught with the largest number of students, combining sections with common assessments, until a majority of students are covered. If any of the largest courses has a State assessment, but does not have a State-provided growth measure, the State assessment must be used as evidence in the SLO.

D20. How will a teacher’s score on the State Growth or Other Comparable Measures subcomponent be calculated for teachers who teach some “tested” and some “non-tested” subjects?

If less than 50% of a teacher’s total students are covered by a State-provided growth measure then the teacher will have SLOs. Each SLO is weighted proportionately based on the number of students in each SLO, regardless of whether the SLO is based on a State-provided growth measure or not. The State will provide a score for the SLO that uses the State-provided growth measure; however, this score must still be weighted proportionately with the other SLO(s). Please see Example Model 1(B) in the SLO Guidance document: <http://engageny.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/slo-guidance.pdf>.

D21. If we choose an SLO with a school-wide measure for Growth, how might it work in practice for our teachers? Does it have to be based on State assessments or can a group, team, or school- or BOCES-wide measure be based on something else?

A growth SLO using School- or BOCES-wide, group, or team results must be based on State assessments and for the purposes of APPR, group measures can never be based on any other assessment. (Please keep in mind that locally-selected measures have different rules for the use of group, team, or school- or BOCES-wide measures: <http://engageny.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/nys-evaluation-plans-guidance-memo.pdf>).

District and BOCES leaders may decide that all Kindergarten teachers, for example, will have a school-wide measure based on 4-8 Math and ELA assessment results, while all health teachers will have a team measure based on 8th grade ELA and Math assessment results. Please see the SLO Guidance Document for other examples: <http://engageny.org/resource/student-learning-objective-guidance-document/>.

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Keep in mind that teachers who teach core subjects, which are defined in the regulation as science and social studies in grades 6-8 and high school courses in ELA, math, science and social studies that lead to a Regents examination in the 2010-2011 school year, or a State assessment in the 2012-2013 school year or thereafter may not use SLOs with school- or BOCES-wide, group, or team results.

D22. Are any adjustments allowed in setting SLOs for Growth for any grades and subjects?

All students in the course sections subject to an SLO must be included in the SLO. Students may not be excluded from a course they are enrolled in based on poor attendance (this applies to both State Growth and locally-selected measures).

The only adjustments that a district or BOCES can consider for SLOs for Growth are those also used in State Growth measures, which include students with disabilities, English language learners, students in poverty, and, in the future, any other student-, classroom-, and school-level characteristics approved by the Board of Regents.

The rationale for including adjustment factors and processes that will be used to mitigate potentially problematic incentives associated with the control or adjustment must be described in the district/BOCES' APPR plan. Assurances must be made that enrolled students in accordance with teacher of record policies are included and may not be excluded, and that use of locally developed controls will not have a disparate impact on underrepresented students in accordance with any civil rights laws. For any adjustment factors selected, there must also be assurances by the district/BOCES in the APPR agreement that the application of locally-developed controls will be rigorous, fair, and transparent and that procedures for ensuring data accuracy and integrity are being used.

D23. What happens if principals and teachers cannot agree to the terms of the SLO? Does the principal overrule the teacher? Can district leaders dictate that all teachers of the same grade/subject use a common SLO, or a common assessment with differing targets?

District/BOCES leaders must determine district-wide/BOCES-wide processes for setting, reviewing, and assessing SLOs, and for determining teacher ratings for the growth component based on SLOs. These processes include who creates SLOs, who proposes SLOs, what the revision process will look like for SLOs, who has final decisions, etc.

In some cases, district and BOCES leaders may develop entire SLOs (or just targets and/or HEDI expectations) for all teachers or certain subject area teachers, and in other instances, district and BOCES leaders may leave the development of the SLO (or just targets and/or HEDI expectations) to principals and/or principals and teachers. In some cases, the district/BOCES may decide that all SLOs must use the same target expectations based on growth progress norms while in other instances the district/BOCES may allow principals and/or teachers to propose a target based on the starting level of the students covered within the SLO. Decisions as to whether all teachers of the same subject will use a common SLO (or whether principals may even dictate this) are allowable; however, these are decisions first to be made by district/BOCES leaders.

Elements of an SLO

Student Population

D24. Within the student population of an SLO, what is the minimum “n” size needed in order to properly validate an SLO score?

There is no minimum n size for SLOs.

D25. What is the date when the 50% rule is set for SLOs? That is, do we count students based on who is there on the first day of school or BEDS day?

The student population for SLOs is set on BEDS day.

D26. Does an SLO have to look at the growth of each individual student or can SLOs just look at the growth of a group of students?

SLOs must look at the growth of individual students. At the end of the instructional period, it is the aggregate growth of all of the individual students in the course section(s) that is used to determine whether or not the target of the SLO was met.

D27. What happens if the enrollment in the course that has a majority of the students at the beginning of the year fluctuates in the middle of the year such that this course no longer comprises a majority of the students? Would the SLO be abandoned and a new SLO be set that reflects the actual enrollment? What if there was an influx of new students to the class?

No, the original SLO would not be abandoned: the teacher would still have the original SLO even if the number of students has changed. If the teacher does not have State-provided growth measures, new arrivals should be included in a new SLO if the previous SLO(s) no longer cover a majority (≥50%) of the students across the course section(s) taught.

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Baseline and Evidence

D28. The SLO documents state that SLOs “must be specific and measurable, based on available prior student learning data” – what is meant by prior?

Teachers are encouraged to use a variety of student historical academic data, if available. This historical academic data might include prior course results, or it might only include the current baseline data from the course taken at the beginning of the interval of instruction.

D29. What should teachers use as a pre-assessment for establishing a baseline when students enter a sequence for the very first time and have little to no background information of a subject?

When thinking about setting an SLO for a course where students come in with no knowledge (or little) of the learning content, (for example, the first year of global studies or Spanish 1), it will be important for teachers to see what other courses they can draw on to provide other historical data. Any information about what entering students understand from other subject areas based on academic history in other courses, can give a teacher a wealth of information as to where the students may struggle or thrive. Further, SLOs look at growth, so if students come in knowing very little (as evidenced by the pre-assessment, baseline data) you will still want to know how much they learned of the critical content of the course (as evidenced by the summative assessment) in order to assess whether the teacher added instructional value as expected. The teacher may want to also collect other baseline information (e.g., collect a writing sample) in order to more broadly assess the student's skills that may impact instruction for the year.

D30. If our district has developed an assessment for 8th grade Science, can we have our 8th grade Science teachers set two SLOs for Growth: one SLO that uses the State assessment and one SLO that uses our district developed assessment?

No, the State's rules require all 8th grade Science teachers to use the 8th grade State Science assessment as evidence of student learning within the SLO for Growth. In this instance, the district may want to consider using the district developed assessment within the Locally-Selected subcomponent.

D31. Can district created SLOs include qualitative data, like transitioning from one activity to the next, or only quantitative data?

SLOs must be specific and measurable academic goals for students. Qualitative data, while important, is not included within an SLO. Qualitative data, such as

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transitioning from one activity to the next, can and should be measured by a rubric within observation of teacher practice.

Interval of Instruction

D32. Does the interval of instruction have to be a year (or even a semester/quarter) for an SLO? Can it be shorter, such as 6 or 10 weeks, if the unit we work on is actually the “major learning of the year” for the course?

An SLO must be set for the entire length of the course. Generally, SLOs will be set for an entire academic year. Please note that SLOs are **not** the same as unit tests or formative assessments used in Data-Driven Instruction. The unit work and formative assessments that educators do throughout the year give critical information regarding student learning to educators and their supervisors; however, this is not the same as an SLO. An SLO is set at the start of the interval of instruction, and the summative assessment that is used at the end of the interval must measure all of the most important learning content of the course. A unit test or formative assessment used in a Data-Driven Instruction cycle would not provide enough information to ascertain whether students learned all of the most important learning content for the course.

Learning Content

D33. Must SLOs focus on all of the standards of a course, or can they focus on a few of the more important standards?

Most SLOs will cover the entire learning content of the course, as measured by the relevant end-of-course assessment. Some learning standards may receive more emphasis than others during the interval of instruction, and in some cases the assessment may focus on certain priority standards.

It is up to the district to determine what the most important learning content is for the course, and there will be instances where each will be correct: The key is to ensure that all students are thoroughly prepared for the next level when they leave a course of study.

SLO Rules for Specific Teachers: What Assessments Must be Used as Evidence?

Elementary School Teachers and Common Branch Teachers

D34. Do all common branch teachers who have State-provided student growth scores for ELA and Math need to also develop SLOs for Social Studies and Science?

No. If a Common Branch teacher receives a State-provided growth measure for

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his or her entire Growth subcomponent score, he or she does not have to have SLOs for the Growth subcomponent. Districts and BOCES may, however, wish to cover these other subject areas under the locally-selected measures subcomponent. Please note: If a teacher receives a State-provided growth measure for the entire Growth subcomponent, then the teacher cannot use an SLO for the locally-selected measure (please see the summary of the Regulations: <http://engageny.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/nys-evaluation-plans-guidance-memo.pdf>).

D35. Although teachers in grade 5 are part of the “common elementary branch” it is our practice to assign particular grade 5 teachers to a particular subject area. For example, one of our grade 5 teachers teaches one section of Math and 4 sections of Social Studies. For which courses would he need to develop a SLO? Would he be at all responsible for the ELA scores?

In this scenario, less than 50% of the teacher’s students are covered by a State-provided growth measure so this teacher must have SLOs for the Growth subcomponent. Since the teacher has one section of Math and 4 sections of Social Studies, this teacher would set one SLO for his or her Math section, and the State would provide a Student Growth Percentile Model/Value-Added (SGP/VA) score for that SLO (see Example Model 1(B) of the SLO Guidance Document for a similar example: <http://engageny.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/slo-guidance.pdf>). Then, the teacher would have one SLO that would cover the 4 sections of Social Studies (this assumes that the Social Studies sections all use the same end-of-course assessment).

D36. In our district, we only have one teacher for multiple grades of art and one teacher for multiple grades of physical education. Students are combined due to scheduling limitations. How are SLOs set when the SLO seems so grade specific?

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) are not necessarily grade specific; they are course-specific. Additionally, the NYS Standards in these subject areas in particular are conducive to a teaching set-up that includes multiple grades because the standards are divided generally between elementary, intermediate, and commencement. If the students in the course are given the same learning content and same final assessment, then the SLO should be the same for all. SLOs measure the most important learning content at the beginning and end of the course. You may want to work with your district, region, or BOCES to develop a rubric around the most important learning and measure students on a continuum. The SLO target can be differentiated to recognize that some students are going to start (and end) below others, but all students should show meaningful growth.

High School Teachers and Teachers of Regents Subjects

D37. How can we construct SLOs for Regents courses? What do we use for the baseline, and how do we compare the baseline to final results given the general characteristics of Regents scale scores and how do we handle the fact that not all kids in a class take the Regents?

SLOs for Regents courses need to use the Regents exam results as the evidence of learning for students during the interval of instruction. There are a variety of ways to do this. The first step is to establish a baseline for all students. This can be done using a prior year Regents exam, or a district, regional, or BOCES developed “pre-test,” ideally one that has been shown to predict whether a student is likely to not pass, pass the Regents with a 65+, or pass at the mastery level. The resulting SLO target could be set around the percentage of students expected to pass based on this assessment. The district or BOCES should decide if the percentage predicted from the pre-test equates to “effective” performance or if a different standard should apply. Another way to set a baseline is to utilize student results from earlier State assessments and Regents exams since they too are generally predictive of whether a student will not pass, pass or excel. Note that it is not necessary to measure results on a scale score basis for Regents.

One special note with Regents exams: it is important that districts and BOCES not create incentives to discourage students from taking the Regents (or other advanced courses and assessments). Therefore, an SLO might include an assumption of exam take rates based on historical patterns or district/BOCES expectations. For example, if less than X% takes the Regents exam, the SLO will earn an Ineffective. Example Model 1(a) of the SLO Guidance Document includes an example of a teacher with a Regents section where the target is set based on the percentage taking the assessment.

D38. Can an SLO use a portion of a Regents exam as evidence of student learning? What if there are teachers where a school-wide goal is set using the Regents exam: can just the essay portion be used in the SLO for the group?

For courses that end in a Regents exam, the SLO must use the Regents exam, in its entirety, as evidence of student learning within the SLO. The entire Regents exam must be used whether it is in an individual SLO or a school- or BOCES-wide, group, or team result based on a Regents exam.

D39. For a subject that is associated with a Regents exam, but the district does not teach it as a Regents course (no Regents credit), must the district give the Regents associated with it? For example, we have a district that

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teaches non-Regents Physics. Is there any expectation that because of SLOs, the district has to start giving the Physics Regents?

If it is a non-Regents course, then the SLO does not have to use the Regents exam.

D40. Does a 9th grade Global Studies teacher need an SLO? What assessment will be used as evidence if the Regents is not actually taken until 10th grade?

Keep in mind that core subjects are defined in the regulation as science and social studies in grades 6-8 and high school courses in ELA, math, science and social studies that lead to a Regents examination in the 2010-2011 school year, or a State assessment in the 2012-2013 school year or thereafter. Since the Grade 9 Global Studies course does not lead to a State assessment in 2012-13, it is treated as a non-core subject and the following are the options that may be used as evidence of student learning within the SLO: a 3rd party assessment from the State-approved list (<http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/teachers-leaders/assessments/>); district, regional, or BOCES-developed assessments that are rigorous or comparable across classrooms; or school- or BOCES-wide, group or team results based on State assessments.

D41. In the case of a high school science course with a separate lab associated with it, does the teacher have an SLO for the lab and/or the science section?

If the students in the course are the same ones as those in the lab (and the lab is associated with the course) then the teacher will have one SLO to cover the students in the course and the lab.

Non-Grade Specific Teachers

D42. May student learning objectives for teachers of students in Career and Technical Education programs use assessments previously approved by the NYSED as elements of the approved CTE educational program?

No. At this time, student learning objectives for teachers of students in CTE programs may only use one of the following options as evidence of student learning within the SLO:

1. List of State-approved 3rd party assessments (<http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/teachers-leaders/assessments/>);
2. District, regional, or BOCES-developed assessments, provided the district or BOCES verifies comparability and rigor;
3. School- or BOCES-wide, group, or team results based on State assessment.

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NYSED encourages district and BOCES leaders to ask vendors they work with to submit their assessments to the RFQ for 3rd party assessments for potential inclusion on the State-approved list. No 3rd party assessment that is not on the State-approved list may be used for APPR purposes. Assessments previously approved by NYSED as elements of the approved CTE educational program ARE NOT at this point on the State-approved list of 3rd party assessments and are therefore not allowable as a district, regional, or BOCES-developed assessment.

D43. How are SLOs for Library/Media Specialists established if these teachers do not have regular classes scheduled and only schedule on-demand/teacher-requested basis for specific topics and projects?

Districts/BOCES will need to determine their specific rules around which courses must have SLOs when contact time varies following the State's rules and the general principle of including the courses with the most students first and making practical judgments about how to consider different course meeting schedules like those in this example.

D44. How do we determine the courses requiring an SLO when contact time with students varies greatly among a given teacher's assignments? For example, a music teacher may have a schedule that looks like the following: Band, 125 students, every other day; Music Theory, 75 students, every day; General Music, 180 students but each section only meets one day in a six day cycle.

Districts/BOCES will need to determine their specific rules and requirements around which courses must have SLOs when contact time varies following the State's rules and the general principle of including the courses with the most students first and making practical judgments about how to consider different course meeting schedules like those in this example. We suggest that teachers have SLOs based on courses that meet most often and are the longest in length. Districts/BOCES can then create a proportion and this will show which courses need to have SLOs. In the scenario above, for example, if the class periods are 40 minutes, then seeing 75 students for 200 minutes each week is much more time than seeing 125 students for 120 minutes each week. The general music that only meets one day in a 6 day cycle would not have an SLO.

Special Education Teachers

D45. Do co-teachers have to have the same SLO for the State growth subcomponent? Can they have similar SLOs that focus on the students they spend the most time with each day?

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Co-teachers must have the same growth measure for the State growth or other comparable measures subcomponent. The measure, for both teachers, will cover all of the students in the course section(s) covered by the SLO.

D46. How would a special educator define his or her classroom population for the SLO in a resource room or consultant model? If a resource room teacher does not focus on any particular subject area, what should he or she use as an SLO? What about AIS teachers, who often see many different populations of students based on need?

All students that are assigned to the teacher as teacher of record are the students that a resource room teacher or consultant teacher will include in his or her SLO. Please see NYSED SLO Guidance Document for further details as to the rules of SLOs for teachers such as those you mention here:

<http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/teachers-leaders/slo/slo-guidance.pdf>

AIS teachers may eventually have State-provided growth scores, depending on teacher of record rules for dosage; until then, AIS teachers will have SLOs. If AIS teachers see many different students throughout the school year with varied consistency, it may be more appropriate for these teachers to have a school- or BOCES-wide, group, or team measure based on State assessments and/or to collaboratively set goals with those classroom teachers whose students they work with during the school year. District/BOCES leaders will need to determine the option that is most appropriate for these teachers.

Similarly, if there is no specific subject area focus for a resource room teacher, District/BOCES leaders may wish to consider using a SLO based on school- or BOCES-wide, group, or team results based on State assessments and/or to collaboratively set goals with those classroom teachers whose students they work with during the school year. If, however, the resource room teacher focuses on literacy skills and/or other content-area-specific skills, then SLOs should be set for the relevant subject area.

D47. Can SLOs for students with disabilities have a different target for growth?

The target for students in any SLO may be differentiated because of the baseline (starting point of learning) and historical academic data. It is important to keep in mind that targets for all students, regardless of any special education classification, should be differentiated because of baseline data and not because of any special education classification.

D48. For special education teachers who have SLOs and also have students with individualized education plans, will the criteria for student learning set forth in the IEPs be used in the SLO?

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Teachers who have SLOs must follow the rules set forth in the State's Guidance: <http://engageny.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/slo-guidance.pdf>. District/BOCES leaders may determine that in certain circumstances academic goals in an IEP may be used as appropriate targets within an SLO.

The student learning objective must be specific and measurable, and compare learning data at the start and end of the course. SLOs must also be aligned to learning standards (Common Core Standards, NYS Learning Standards, or National Standards) which means that only academic goals contained in approved IEPs could ever become the basis of student learning objectives. For example, an IEP goal for literacy could be used; an IEP goal relating to occupational therapy could not be used.

D49. Some of our special education teachers in our BOCES have students that are bussed in each day from numerous districts. How will teachers set their SLO in this situation?

SLOs are course- and teacher-specific. The "sending" district of the students is not relevant for this purpose. Each BOCES teacher will set SLOs for his or her largest courses until at least 50% of students are covered, regardless of where the students come from. Other SLO rules may be established by the BOCES for their teachers.

E. Locally-selected Measures of Student Achievement

Use of State Assessments and Student Learning Objectives Within Locally-selected Measures

E1. Do the regulations require that 40% of a teacher's or principal's evaluation be based on State assessments?

No. The regulations do not require that 40% of a teacher's or principal's evaluation be based on State assessments.

Education Law §3012-c requires that 20% of a teacher's or principal's evaluation (increases to 25% with a Regents-approved value-added model) be based on student growth on State assessments or other comparable measures. The statute also requires that 20% be based on other locally-selected measures of student achievement (decreases to 15% with the approved value-added model). The law and regulations provide several local options for the 20% based on locally-selected measures of student achievement, including the use of State assessments.

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