

## 2016-2017 SLO GUIDANCE FOR PATHWAYS TEACHERS

Some Pathways schools have a unique purpose and alternative and innovative curricular systems. The basic premise of SLOs as a collection of best practices – monitoring student progress on high priority standards – still applies. However, it may be useful to consider a few additional points so that SLOs are serving Pathways teachers' needs and when linked to accountability are an equitable indicator of student learning.

**Concern:** If an evaluator approves an SLO, students can no longer be added to the SLO.

Midway through 2015-16 school year, the [SLO Application](#) added the ability for teachers to continue to include students in an SLO, even after the initial Long-Term Goal Phase of the SLO is approved. This was done in part to address Pathways' teachers' concerns on this issues. To do so, in either the Mid-Year or End-of-Year tab, click on the blue button at the top 'Add Student(s)'.

**Concern:** Teachers are unable to reach the minimum number of students (10) that should be in an SLO at the beginning of the year.

Per above, teachers can add students to an SLO throughout the year. Teachers need to include a preparedness level when adding students. Additionally, teachers can add multiple sections of the same course to an SLO. In fact, teachers should select a course for their SLOs that has multiple sections, if possible, and should attach those sections to the same SLO. Having multiple sections of a course in an SLO will likely increase the number of students available.

**Concern:** All students begin the year severely behind grade-level. Is it fair for a teacher's evaluation to be linked to these students?

The SLO system is designed to honor and reflect the growth that students make, regardless of where they might start in their understanding of the standards, knowledge and skills. Significantly Underprepared is a preparedness category for students who are significantly far behind in the content, i.e. more than 2 grade levels behind. (An example of this is a student entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade would have only not yet mastered 6<sup>th</sup> grade standards.) Growth is then determined from this starting point.

**Concern:** High mobility means students are unlikely to have 80% attribution. Additionally, the students don't have the opportunity to make '1 year's growth' in the short time they are with a given teacher.

The general recommendation, in line with other student growth measures, is that students should be with the teacher for at least 80% of the course to be included in the SLO. Based on the Pathways models and student population, it is in the teacher's best interest to include all students on the SLO. However, teachers have the ability to include or exclude students in the SLO application based on evidence. Teachers should not exclude students until the SLO has been completed. Teachers should only exclude students for whom they do not have a substantive, comprehensive body of evidence.

Body of evidence should not be restricted to traditional measurements; please see last "concern" below.

**Concern:** Due to shortened grading periods combined with high mobility of students, it is difficult to track students across a learning progression.

Think instead of performance criteria as specific learning targets.

*Example:* 9<sup>th</sup> Grade

ELA CCSS 3, GLE 1: Literary and narrative texts develop a controlling idea or theme with descriptive and expressive language.

Partially Met Expectations	Approached Expectations	Met Expectations	Exceeded Expectations
I can identify and explain another author's poetic techniques, figurative language, and graphic elements, and discuss how they are used to engage or entertain an intended audience.	I can write literary and narrative text with a limited number and/or range of poetic techniques, figurative language, and graphic elements which may or may not engage or entertain my intended audience.	I can write a narrative text using a range of poetic techniques, figurative language, and graphic elements to engage or entertain my intended audience.	I can write and defend literary narrative texts using a range of purposefully chosen poetic techniques, figurative language, and graphic elements to engage or entertain my intended audience and I can explain why I chose these techniques over others.

In this case, the teacher has identified a learning target for this standard and has written the corresponding learning progression. This would need to be done for each standard.

This approach will allow teachers to transition more easily to competency-based learning and will allow for capturing growth with all students consistently and equitably.

**Concern:** It is difficult to build a body of evidence on students with sporadic or short attendance, and it is hard to assign end-of-course expectation levels if teachers do not know when a student will be leaving the course.

This can be particularly difficult task for this population of students, teachers should creatively gather evidence. For example, while in class, ask students questions with direct relationships to the learning targets and assess their responses as a piece of evidence. If a student cannot stay the duration of a class, consider allowing them to orally present answers to test rather than writing the answers. Teachers can also afford students opportunities to work outside of class if they know the student will return after extended absence. Building a traditional body of evidence may not always be possible, but focusing on multiple ways for a student to access and express the learning targets will create avenues for assessing student growth.