Let's SLO Down: Making Student Learning Objectives Meaningful for All

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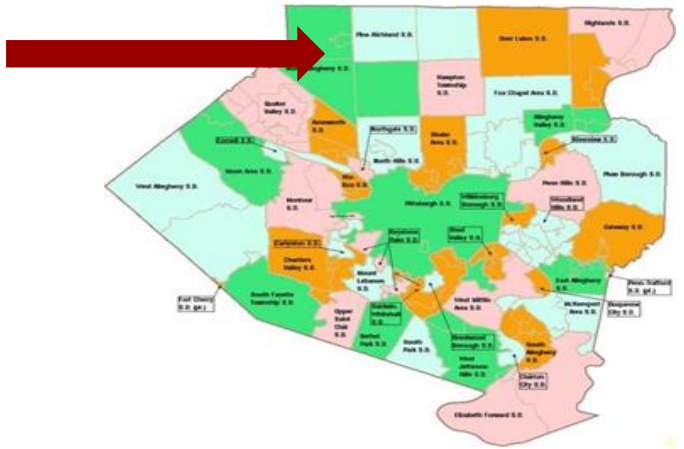
Student Achievement

The key to improved student achievement was moving beyond an individual teacher looking at his or her classroom data. Instead, it took getting **same-grade teacher teams** to meet, analyze the results of each interim assessment to **understand** what concepts in the curriculum were posing difficulty for students, **share ideas**, figure out the **best interventions**, and actually **follow-up in their classrooms** (Christman et al., 2009).

North Allegheny School District

- Located 12 miles north of Pittsburgh, PA
- Serves 4 communities over 48 square miles
- Largest suburban school district in Allegheny County with 8,300 students
- 12 school buildings
  - 7 elementary schools (K-5)
  - 3 middle schools (6-8)
  - 2 high schools (9-10 & 11-12)



About a year ago…

We had to “SLO” down and create SLOs.

- PDE required SLOs of school districts
- SLOs filled a void for non-tested areas (at first)
- SLOs provided more data before three-year rolling averages were ready
- Templates were rolled out for teacher use
- Growth evolved and surpassed Mastery
- Rules changed and required Mastery AND Growth

Getting started

We were proud that we had a place to start:

- Strong unit-based curriculum
- Curriculum management tool (Rubicon Atlas)
- Student achievement
- Educator Effectiveness underway (TowerMetrix)
- PVAAS understanding
- Cooperation with our Intermediate Unit (AIU3)
- Intranet on our District's website (Schoolwires)
- Department leadership

Common Assessments and *Not So* Common Assessments

"We made one of those tests a few years ago, but I changed mine to make it better."

"We give the same test, but she gives it as a take-home test, and I make it worth double points."

"Does it have to be a test or can we use another measure?"

"Are we going to use this again next year?"

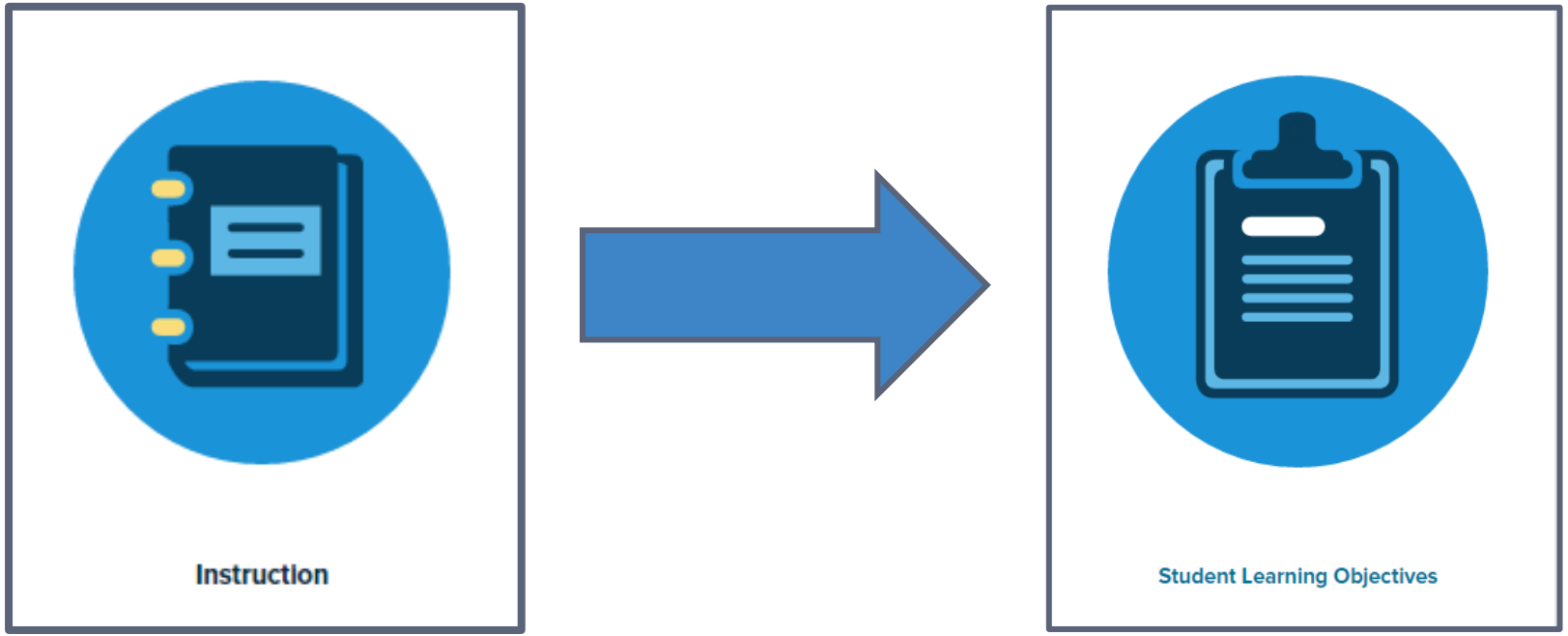
When your Assistant Superintendent freaks out

The research shows:

Reviews of accountability data from hundreds of schools reveal the schools with the **greatest gains in achievement** consistently **employ common assessments**, nonfiction writing, and **collaborative scoring by faculty** (Reeves, 2004).

So what did we do?

www.pdesas.org



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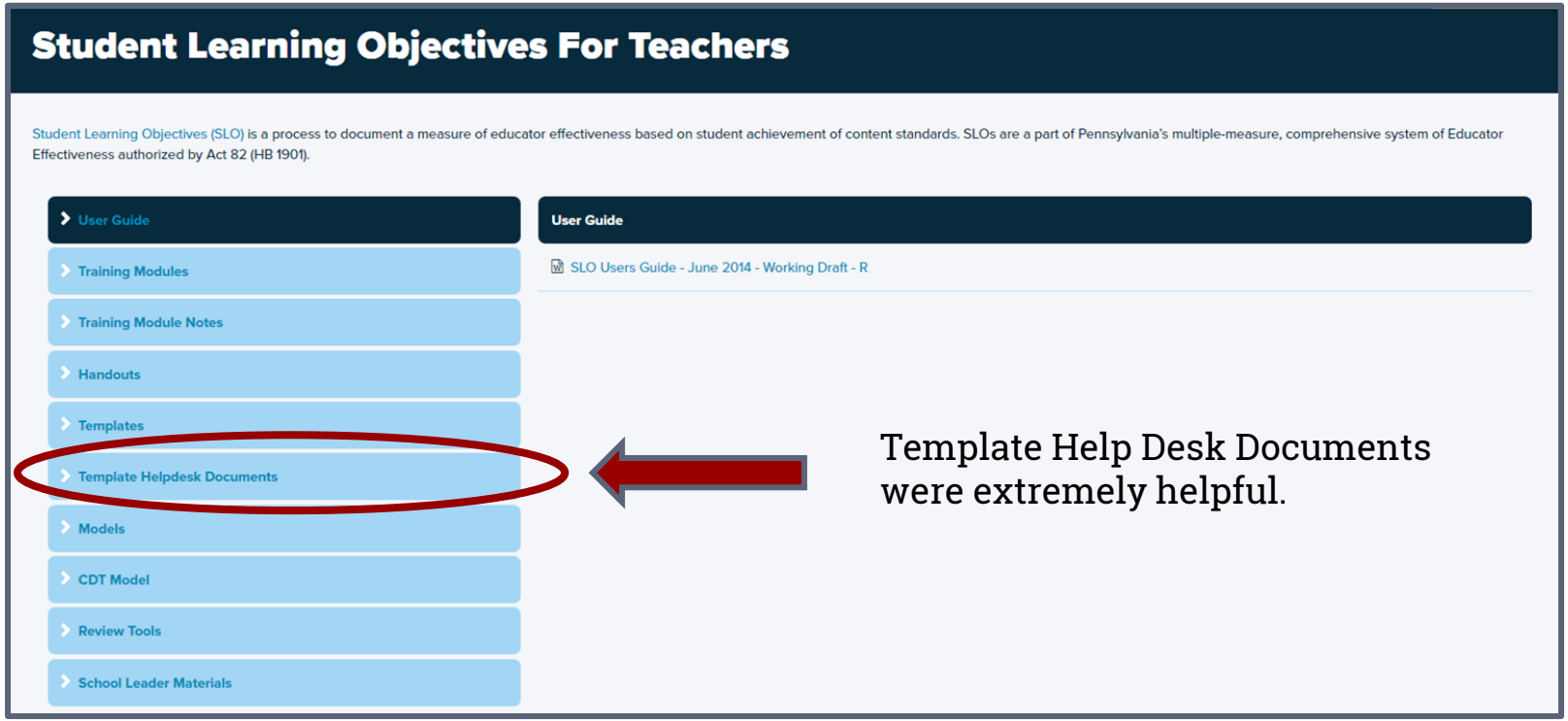
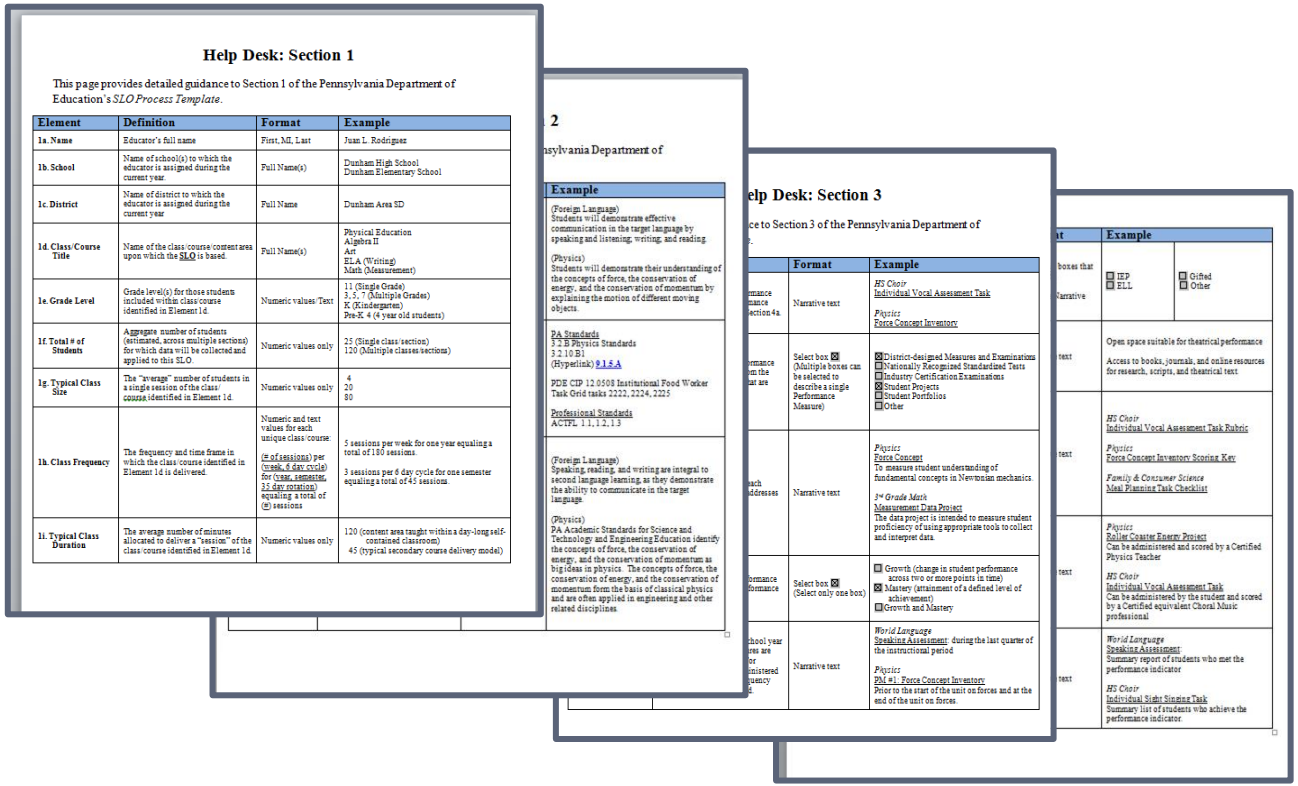


Template Help Desk Documents were extremely helpful.

Help Desk Documents



Help Desk: Section 1

This page provides detailed guidance to Section 1 of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's *SLO Process Template*.

Element	Definition	Format	Example
1a. Name	Educator's full name	First, MI, Last	Juan L. Rodriguez
1b. School	Name of school(s) to which the educator is assigned during the current year.	Full Name(s)	Dunham High School Dunham Elementary School
1c. District	Name of district to which the educator is assigned during the current year	Full Name	Dunham Area SD
1d. Class/Course Title	Name of the class/course/content area upon which the SLO is based.	Full Name(s)	Physical Education Algebra II Art ELA (Writing) Math (Measurement)
1e. Grade Level	Grade level(s) for those students included within class/course identified in Element 1d.	Numeric values/Text	11 (Single Grade) 3, 5, 7 (Multiple Grades) K (Kindergarten) Pre-K 4 (4 year old students)
1f. Total # of Students	Aggregate number of students (estimated, across multiple sections) for which data will be collected and applied to this SLO.	Numeric values only	25 (Single class/section) 120 (Multiple classes/sections)
1g. Typical Class Size	The "average" number of students in a single session of the class/course identified in Element 1d.	Numeric values only	4 20 80
1h. Class Frequency	The frequency and time frame in which the class/course identified in Element 1d is delivered.	Numeric and text values for each unique class/course: (# of sessions) per (week, 6 day cycle) for (year, semester, 35 day rotation) equaling a total of (#) sessions	5 sessions per week for one year equaling a total of 180 sessions. 3 sessions per 6 day cycle for one semester equaling a total of 45 sessions.
1i. Typical Class Duration	The average number of minutes allocated to deliver a "session" of the class/course identified in Element 1d.	Numeric values only	120 (content area taught within a day-long self-contained classroom) 45 (typical secondary course delivery model)

Help Desk: Section 3

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Format	Example
Narrative text	*HS Choir* Individual Vocal Assessment Task *Physics* Force Concept Inventory
Select box ☒ (Multiple boxes can be selected to describe a single Performance Measure)	☒ District-designed Measures and Examinations ☐ Nationally Recognized Standardized Tests ☐ Industry Certification Examinations ☒ Student Projects ☐ Student Portfolios ☐ Other
Narrative text	*Physics* Force Concept To measure student understanding of fundamental concepts in Newtonian mechanics. *3rd Grade Math* Measurement Data Project The data project is intended to measure student proficiency of using appropriate tools to collect and interpret data.
Select box ☒ (Select only one box)	☐ Growth (change in student performance across two or more points in time) ☒ Mastery (attainment of a defined level of achievement) ☐ Growth and Mastery
Narrative text	*World Language* Speaking Assessment: during the last quarter of the instructional period *Physics* PM #1: Force Concept Inventory Prior to the start of the unit on forces and at the end of the unit on forces.

Example	
☐ IEP ☐ ELL	☐ Gifted ☐ Other
Open space suitable for theatrical performance Access to books, journals, and online resources for research, scripts, and theatrical text	
HS Choir Individual Vocal Assessment Task Rubric *Physics* Force Concept Inventory Scoring Key *Family & Consumer Science* Meal Planning Task Checklist	
Physics Roller Coaster Energy Project Can be administered and scored by a Certified Physics Teacher *HS Choir* Individual Vocal Assessment Task Can be administered by the student and scored by a Certified equivalent Choral Music professional	
World Language Speaking Assessment: Summary report of students who met the performance indicator *HS Choir* Individual Sight Singing Task Summary list of students who achieve the performance indicator.	

We defined key terms.

- **Goal** - Standards-based “Big Idea” (essential concept) upon which the SLO is based
- **Performance Measure** - Common assessments used to measure the SLO (growth, mastery, or both)
- **Performance Indicators** - Expected level of achievement for each performance measure

We provided direction.

Teachers (department/grade level) composed a **goal**.

- Decisions were made regarding which courses and common assessments.

Teachers (department/grade level) selected **performance measures**.

- The performance measures will then be aligned to performance indicators. We asked for two PMs.

Individual teachers set **performance indicators** .

- Each performance indicator was a reasonable expectation that utilized data.
- The SLO contained multiple measures for reliability.

This required collaboration...which isn't always easy.

When your Assistant Superintendent freaks out

Powerful, proven structures for improved results are at hand. “It starts when a group of teachers meet regularly as a team to identify essential and valued student learning, develop common formative assessments, analyze current levels of achievement, set achievement goals, and then share and create lessons and strategies to improve upon those levels.” (Schmoker, 2004b, p. 48).

Important Considerations

SLOs should:

- Represent the **diversity of students** and courses/content areas taught.
- Align to a set of **approved indicators/targets** related to selected academic content standards.
- Be based upon **two time-bound events/data collection periods** and/or performance-defined levels of “mastery.”
- Be supported by **verifiable data** that can be collected and scored in a standardized manner.
- Include a set of **independent performance measures**.

Leading the process

Central Office

- Provided professional development
- Established parameters for Goals, Performance Measures, and Performance Indicators
- Reviewed templates and assessments
- Provided feedback
- Conducted a role-play of pre- and post-conferences with principals

Department Chairpersons & Elementary Facilitators

- Worked with teachers to identify content to be assessed
- Used in-service time to develop and or select assessment(s)
- Completed the Template from PDE

Webmaster & Secretary

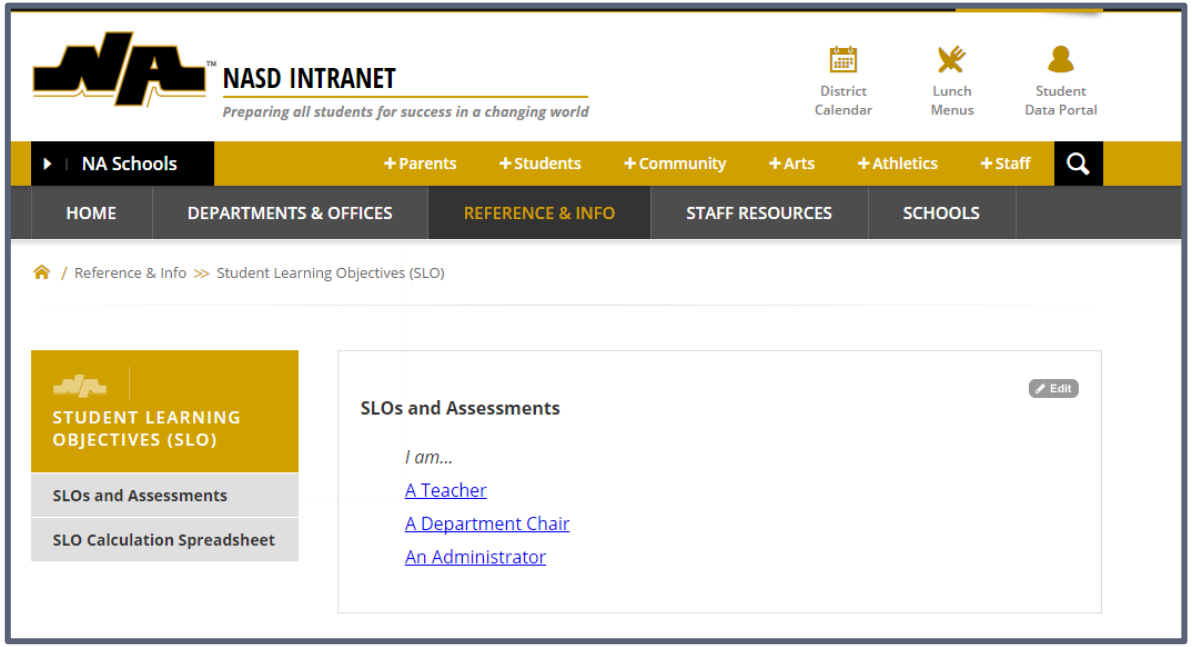
- Posted all templates and assessments

Principals

- Scheduled pre- and post-conferences
- Assisted teachers with establishing the Elective Rating prior to assessments

Making it Manageable

A web page on our staff only Intranet which provides different levels of access to SLO templates and assessments.



In October 2015, changes occurred.

SLO Guidance for 2015-2016

Question: Are the revised templates mandatory for all educators?

- LEAs are strongly encouraged to consider revising their SLO to reflect growth. LEAs do not need to use the new template. However, they should go back and revisit SLOs developed for the 2015-2016 school year and include baseline data to demonstrate growth.

- USDE requires that PDE collect summative evaluation data from LEAs in the annual evaluation collection. As a result of the waiver, PDE will be required to report to USDE aggregate component specific data. Therefore, teacher specific and elective SLO growth for teachers and principal SLO growth will be required data elements for the 2015-2016 school year data collection. LEAs will be responsible for submitting these data.

pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SLOs now must include baseline data to demonstrate growth.

Options for Demonstrating Growth

Growth PM – Half to 100 (Using percentages)

Students will demonstrate growth on the assessment by **cutting the gap to 100% in half *or* by scoring 90% or higher on the post-assessment.**

Target = (gap to 100%)x.5 + (pre-test score) OR achieving 90% or more

Growth PM – Half to 100 (Using percentage)

Student	Pre-Assessment Score	Gap to 100%	Post-Assessment Target	OR: Post-Assessment Target of 90% or Higher
Student A	10%	90%	55% = (90x.5 +10)	90% or more
Student B	20%	80%	60% = (80x.5 + 20)	90% or more
Student C	50%	50%	75% = (50x.5 + 50)	90% or more
Student D	80%	20%	90% = (20x.5 + 80)	90% or more

Growth PM – Half to 100 (Using Raw Score)

Students will demonstrate growth on the post-assessment by **cutting the gap of 50 pts. out of 50 pts.* in half *or* by scoring 45 pts. out of 50 pts., which is the equivalent of 90% or higher on the post-assessment.**

Target = (gap to 100%) x .5 + (pre-test score)

OR achieving the equivalent 90% or more

Growth PM – Half to 100 (Using raw score)

Student	Pre-Assessment Raw Score	Gap to a score of 50/50 max points	Post-Assessment Target	OR: Post-Assessment Target of 90% or Higher
Student A	10	40	30 points = 40 x .5 + 10	Min. 45/50 pts.
Student B	20	30	35 points = 30 x .5 + 20	Min. 45/50 pts.
Student C	50	0	50 points = 0 x .5 + 50	Min. 45/50 pts.
Student D	32	18	41 points = 18 x .5 + 32	Min. 45/50 pts.

NOTE: This example uses a 50-point assessment. The targets are **raw score** targets.

Growth PM – Using a Rubric

Students will demonstrate growth **by advancing to the next level on a rubric from the pre- to the post-assessment *or* by scoring "Advanced."**

4 categories (ranked highest to lowest)

- Advanced*
- Proficient
- Emerging
- Novice

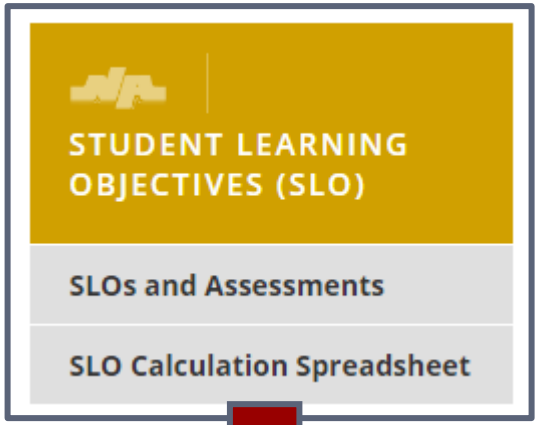
*If Advanced in pre-test, *is there still room for growth*?

Growth PM – Using a Rubric

Student	Pre-Test Score	Target
Student A	Emerging	Proficient
Student B	Proficient	Advanced
Student C*	Advanced	Advanced

If Advanced in pre-test, *is there still room for growth*?
If so, student should attempt to grow. Full credit for that student is still issued.

Calculating Elective Ratings



SLO Elective Rating Calcuation

Performance Measure #1		**Performance Measure #2**	
Total Number of students in SLO for performance measure #1		Total Number of students in SLO for performance measure #2	
Number of students meeting Performance Target #1		Number of students meeting Performance Target #2	
Weight for Performance Target #1 (enter as decimal)		Weigth for Performance Target #2 (enter as decimal)	
Elective Rating Percentage	#DIV/0!		

Let's SLO down one more time

THE POTHOLES WERE WORTH IT!

"[Common formative assessments provide] regular and timely feedback regarding student attainment of the most critical standards . . . [and] also foster consistent expectations and priorities within a grade level, course, and department regarding standards, instruction, and assessment. . . . Most importantly, common formative assessment results enable educators to diagnose student learning needs accurately in time to make instructional modifications." (Ainsworth, 2007, pp. 95–96)

...but they also use data to inform teachers' practice, to discuss why one teacher is having success in teaching a concept and others are not, and what the more successful teacher can teach his or her colleagues (Chenoweth, 2009).

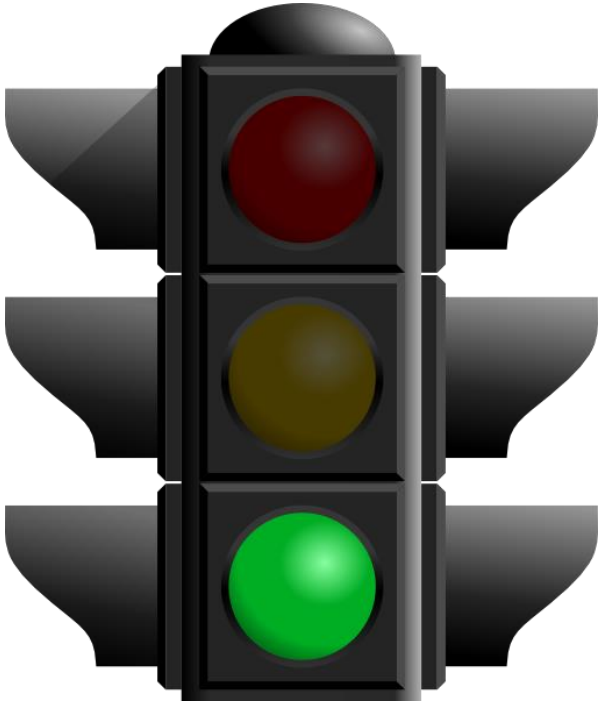
So what if SLOs go away?

We have learned a few **valuable** lessons:

- The value of collaboration and "commonness"
- The need for horizontal and vertical alignment of curriculum
- The complex practice of gathering and analyzing data
- The strength of internal leadership
- The complexity of change management
- *We underestimated how long this process took to complete for teachers, principals, and secretaries!*

We won't stop now!!!

Time to GO!



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