

1. What are Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)?

SLOs are one component of the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES). It is the component that serves as an indicator of teachers' impact on student academic growth. LEA developed SLOs are course specific, grade level learning objectives that are measurable, focused on growth in student learning, and aligned to curriculum standards. As a measure of teachers' impact on student learning, SLOs give educators and school systems an additional means by which to understand and recognize success in the classroom. SLOs are developed by LEAs and audited and approved by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE).

2. What is the purpose of SLOs?

One purpose of student learning objectives is to provide evidence of each teacher's instructional impact on student growth. This process requires teachers to implement pre and post assessments to determine student growth over the length of the course. Teachers plan for student success by ensuring that instructional strategies are reflective of student needs and will enable the student to demonstrate expected or high growth.

3. Which courses have SLOs?

Non-tested courses utilize SLOs. Tested courses utilize Georgia Milestones. Those results will be factored into the Student Growth Percentile (SGP) component of TKES. As such, tested courses will not require SLOs. The one exception is third grade, which will require SLOs because this grade level does not have prior testing history; third grade state assessments will serve as prior data for fourth grade. All other courses without these standardized assessments are considered non-tested courses.

4. In what ways have teachers been involved in the development of LEA student learning objectives?

The amount of teacher involvement is up to each LEA. However, the majority of LEAs have teachers serve as content experts on development teams. These teams may be involved in developing the SLOs, determining the growth targets, and/or developing or evaluating SLO assessments.

5. How do we know the SLO assessments are rigorous?

Assessment development teams utilize a Table of Specifications which ensures the created/selected assessment items are aligned to course standards, are at the same cognitive level of the standards, and the standard emphasis aligns with the classroom instructional emphasis. Teams that develop SLO assessments also utilize the Criteria Table to review the assessments for proper formatting, content validity, possible bias, administration procedures, scoring, etc. The use of these research-based processes and tools are required.

6. What is Depth of Knowledge (DOK)?

DOK is an element of the Webb Alignment Tool developed by Dr. Norman Webb, from the University of Wisconsin, to align standards with assessments. DOK focuses on the complexity of the task rather than the difficulty because it is descriptive in nature. Depth of Knowledge is represented by four levels of cognitive complexity: Recall, Skill/Concept, Strategic Thinking, and Extended Thinking. In the development of SLO assessments, the DOK of the selected standards is determined as well as the DOK of each item. All measurement items must be at the same DOK level of the standard or higher.

7. How will LEAs and teachers assess Pre-K students?

Pre-K teachers will use SLOs. GaDOE has worked closely with the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) to provide guidance regarding appropriate SLO assessments. The Pre-K SLO is implemented statewide and utilizes the Work Sampling Online (WSO) currently being administered by Pre-K teachers.

8. Is it possible to use GKIDS for Kindergarten SLOs?

GKIDS is a diagnostic performance based assessment. A kindergarten SLO may utilize a subset of the GKIDS assessment. Please refer to GKIDS guidance posted on SharePoint for more details.

9. If there is a collaborative co-teaching classroom that has a support teacher and a teacher of record and the support teacher has not previously been identified as the teacher of record, how will the support teacher participate in the SLO process?

SLOs are assigned by state course numbers and not to specific teachers and/or their students. If any teacher teaches a course with an SLO attached, the SLO is automatically assigned. Therefore, if the support teacher's course has an SLO attached, the support teacher will participate in the SLO process and will be responsible for student performance and any data produced as a result of the SLO. The teacher of record definition for TKES refers to the teacher who is responsible for the student's learning in the course, but not necessarily the teacher who assigns the course grade. With TKES, more than one teacher can be considered the teacher of record. This is applicable in collaborative co-teaching settings.

10. When determining teacher of record for the SLO process, will the teacher's Highly Qualified (HQ) status be considered?

No. A teacher's HQ status is not considered when determining teacher of record for SLO purposes.

11. In a collaborative co-teaching classroom model with a special education teacher and a general education teacher, how are the students assigned to each teacher's roster for SLO implementation?

In a collaborative co-teaching classroom model, teachers share accountability and collaboratively serve all of the students. Therefore, all students would be assigned to both the special education teacher and the general education teacher. Also, since both teachers are responsible for student learning in the course, the special education teacher and the general education teacher would both be considered the teacher of record.

12. If a course has fewer than 15 students (data sources) enrolled throughout the entire instructional day, will the SLO assessment data count toward the teacher's TEM?

No. The teachers will administer the SLO pre and post assessments. However, the results of the SLO assessment data will not be considered when calculating the teacher's TEM due to the small number of data sources. This number is sometimes referred to as the n-size.

13. If a teacher has several sections (classes) of the same course throughout an instructional day, will the number of students (data sources) in each section be added together?

Yes. When the teacher's course sections have the same name and state course number, the number of students (data sources) in each section will be combined to reach 15 or more. This would allow the SLO assessment data results to count toward the teacher's TEM.

14. Can the End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) be used as the SLO for CTAE courses?

No. End of Pathway Assessments are administered after the successful completion of several designated courses in the pathway. SLO assessment measures are administered at the beginning and ending of each applicable course.



Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent
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Georgia Department of Education Student Learning Objectives Frequently Asked Questions

15. Connections classes in middle school usually have very short instructional periods. Are SLOs required for these courses with 4.5 week or 9 week instructional periods?

Yes. SLOs are applicable for these courses. When determining SLO assessment measures and growth targets, LEAs should select measures and growth targets that reflect the shorter instructional period.

16. Are SLOs required for Math and/or Language support teachers?

SLOs are required if the support teacher's class is not scheduled in conjunction with the primary course; and, as a result, the support teacher is not being measured by the course SLO or held accountable for the student growth percentile (SGP) results from the Georgia Milestones. SLOs for support teachers are not required if the support teacher is being held accountable for the SLO or the SGP results.

17. How does the SLO data figure into the Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM)?

Student growth will count as 50% of the TEM. An SLO attainment rubric will be used to determine a teacher effectiveness rating which is based on the percentage of students within each teacher's course that demonstrated expected or high growth.

18. Where can one go for more information?

Teachers' greatest resource is their local school and LEA leaders. In addition, multiple resources are available on the Teacher and Leader Effectiveness page on the Georgia Department of Education website <http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Teacher-and-Leader-Effectiveness/Pages/Student-Learning-Objectives.aspx>