Using Tx SLOs as Student Growth under T-TESS

This checklist helps ensure Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) are used as a valid and aligned measure of student growth within the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS). It includes key points for foundational alignment, scoring models, and implementation strategies to ensure accuracy, equity, and impact.

Overview: The Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System, Student Growth, and SLOs The Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) was created by an educator steering committee comprised of teachers, principals, and representatives from higher education and educator organizations with a goal to support teachers in Texas with ongoing feedback and development to continually improve teacher practice.

The goal of T-TESS is to be a formative system, providing a framework for ongoing conversation and feedback to support teachers and students. To provide holistic support for teachers, T-TESS is comprised of three measures of teacher effectiveness.

The three measures are: • Goal-Setting & Professional Development Plan (GSPD), • Classroom Observation, and • Student Growth. The focus of this **overview is on Texas Student Learning Objectives (SLOs),** one option for measuring Student Growth as part of T-TESS or a locally developed appraisal system

1. Foundational Alignment
What makes an TX SLO count as valid "student growth" under T-TESS?
- Aligned to BOE and TSP: The SLO must include a clearly defined Targeted Skill Profile (TSP) and show growth across Check-Ins with authentic student work.
- Clear Growth Expectations: Rubrics and expectations must define what "Expected Growth" looks like (e.g., TSP progression).
- Evidence-Based: Each Check-In is paired with a Body of Evidence such as anchor artifacts, OER-aligned assessments, or performance tasks.
- Rater Calibration: Raters must use a common rubric and receive calibration training to ensure inter-rater reliability.

2. Appraiser Interaction

For appraisers, engagement with the SLO process should center on understanding how teachers think. Conferences should encourage teachers to articulate their reasoning, including how they selected the skill focus, synthesized data to determine students' starting points, identified end-of-course expectations, and differentiated instructional strategies based on individual student needs.

Appraisers do not need to verify the accuracy of every student's placement within an SLO. Instead, reviewing a representative sample of student work from the beginning, middle, and end of the year should provide sufficient insight.

One of the most impactful ways appraisers can support the SLO process is by ensuring regular opportunities, ideally once a month, for teachers to collaborate. These sessions should focus on discussing SLOs, monitoring student progress, and sharing instructional adjustments informed by both formal and informal data. This ongoing dialogue helps sustain the SLO process throughout the school year and fosters meaningful reflection among teachers.

3. Integration into T-TESS Domains

SLO T-TESS Crosswalk

Connections between Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and Dimensions of the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) Rubric

Dimension	Connection to SLOs	SLO Component	Dimension in Chapter 149
PLANNING			
1.1 Standards and Alignment The teacher designed clear, well-organized, sequential lessons that reflect best practice, align with standards and are appropriate for diverse learners.	Teachers select focus standards, determine foundational skills, write a skill statement and in select an approach for delivering instruction aligned to the standards and foundational skills.	Module 2: Set Goals: Skill Statement & Student Mapping	1B
1.2 Data and Assessment The teacher uses formal and informal methods to measure student progress, then manages and analyzes student data to inform instruction.	Teachers analyze data and use formative assessments to monitor each student's growth and adjust plans for student instruction. Teacher constructs a reliable body of evidence (BOE) of student work to document growth	Module 2: Set Goals: Skill Statement & Student Mapping	5C
1.3 Knowledge of Students Through knowledge of students and proven practices, the teacher ensures high levels of learning, social-emotional development and achievement for all students.	Teachers consider students' abilities and experiences and consult multiple data sources to determine the best instructional approach to address student needs and to set expected growth goals that reflect high expectations	Module 2: Set Goals: Skill Statement & Student Mapping	2A
1.4 Activities The teacher plans engaging, flexible lessons that encourage higher-order thinking, persistence and achievement.	Teachers consider the focus area and Skill Statement when planning lesson content and instructional activities so all students can make progress on their targeted growth goal.	Module 2: Set Goals: Skill Statement & Student Mapping	3E
INSTRUCTION			
2.1 Achieving Expectations The teacher supports all learners in their pursuit of high levels of academic and social-emotional success.	The instructional strategies analysis and corresponding adjustments made by the teacher in the SLO process helps teachers differentiate and elicit growth for every student.	Module 4: Middle of Year (MOY) Progress and BOE	3D
2.2 Content Knowledge and Expertise The teacher uses content and pedagogical expertise to design and execute lessons aligned with state standards, related content and student needs.	The SLO planning process for teachers is grounded in the subject matter/discipline and content-specific pedagogy, including opportunity for deeper learning and college and career readiness.	Module 3: Level Expectations	3A
2.3 Communication The teacher clearly and accurately communicates to support persistence, deeper learning and effective effort.	Teachers share SLO expectations for their learning with students; teachers also communicate closely during learning experience to engage students in their learning. Students are involved in tracking their own progress toward growth.	Module 4: Middle of Year (MOY) Progress and BOE	5B

How does this impact ratings in Domain 1 (Planning) and Domain 2 (Instruction)?

- **Domain 1.2**: Use of data and assessment—BOE aligned to the TSP.
- **Domain 1.3:** Planning for differentiation—Check-In data used for grouping.
- **Domain 2.4**: Differentiation
- **Domain 2.5:** Monitoring and adjusting—Instructional shifts tied to SLO analysis.
- **GSPD Goal-Setting:** Teacher connects their SLO to their professional growth goal.

4. Student Growth Summary in T-TESS End-of-Year Conference

Meet with Appraiser to Review SLO Outcomes
Near the end of the year, teachers and appraisers meet to:

- Review the **final SLO outcome** based on the Targeted Skill Profile (TSP) rating.
- Reflect on the overall SLO process, including successes and areas for growth.

This conference should take place alongside the final appraisal meeting whenever possible to streamline the process.

Prior to the meeting, teachers should prepare and submit the following to the appraiser:

- Completed **SLO Check-In Tracker** (reflecting all five check-ins with ratings and comments).
- Selected student work samples from the **Body of Evidence (BOE)** that support the final Targeted Skill Profile (TSP) rating.
- Documentation of progress discussions with colleagues and/or evidence of instructional adjustments made based on check-in data.

Appraiser Review and Conference Process

- **Prior to the Meeting – Teacher Preparation**

  Teachers should prepare and submit the following to the appraiser:
  ☐ Completed **SLO Check-In Tracker** (all five check-ins with ratings and comments).
  ☐ Selected student work samples from the **Body of Evidence (BOE)** that support the final **Targeted Skill Profile (TSP)** rating.
  ☐ Documentation of progress meetings with colleagues and/or evidence of instructional adjustments based on check-in data.

- **Before the Conference – Appraiser Preparation**

  ☐ Review all submitted materials.
  ☐ Request additional student work samples if needed.

- **During the Conference**

  ☐ Teacher walks the appraiser through end-of-year skill level decisions and how evidence informed those decisions.
  ☐ Teacher shares reflections on the SLO process (see reflection questions above).
  ☐ Appraiser discusses observations, trends, and areas for improvement.

- **After the Conference – Appraiser Finalization**

  The appraiser **confirms** the final SLO outcome by:

  - Verifying that the final **TSP rating** is supported by the submitted **Body of Evidence (BOE)** from all check-ins.
  - Ensuring all required check-in data is complete and accurately recorded in the SLO Check-In Tracker.
  - Confirming that instructional adjustments documented throughout the year are aligned to student progress trends.
  - Recording the verified final TSP rating in the designated system or form.

- **Reflection & Improvement Planning**

  ☐ Identify what worked well and what could be improved for future SLO cycles.
  ☐ Note instructional strategies that were less effective for certain student groups.
  ☐ Determine any needed student interventions and targeted professional development.

5. Final Growth Rating in T-TESS:

   T-TESS districts have multiple options when determining end-of-year appraisal ratings for teachers. Districts can keep the ratings disaggregated and provide individual ratings for teachers for each of the sixteen dimensions on the T-TESS rubric.

   For districts that adopt this method for summative ratings, student growth acts like the seventeenth (17th) dimension and is not weighted, as weighting does not apply to disaggregated ratings.

   17th Dimension:

SLO Student Growth Outcome	T-TESS Summative Rating
80–100% of students show significant growth	Distinguished
70–79% of students show growth	Accomplished
55–69% of students show growth	Proficient
40–54% of students show growth	Developing
Below 40% show growth	Improvement Needed

For T-TESS districts that decide to provide teachers a single overall summative rating, student growth must count at least 20% of the overall summative rating. In that sense, student growth acts like the **fifth (5th) domain,** with the four rubric domains accounting for the other 80% of the teacher's overall summative rating.

5th Domain:

Domain	Weight
Domain 1 - 4	80%
Domain 5	20%

Calculation Formula

Overall Composite Score = (Average of Domains 1–4 × 0.80) + (Domain 5 score × 0.20)

Distinguish: 5.0	Accomplish: 4.0	Proficient: 3.0	Developing: 2.0	Needs Improvement: 1.0

Example Calculation

Let's say a teacher receives:
- Domain 1 - 4 average = **3.2 (Proficient)**
- Domain 5 (Student Growth) = **2.0 (Developing)**

[3.2 (Average Domain 1-4) **× 0.80] + [2.0** (Student Growth Developing) **× 0.20]**
= 2.56 + 0.40
= 2.96 (Overall Composite Score)

Step-by-Step:

1. Multiply Domain 1–4 average by 0.80:
   3.2 × 0.80 = 2.56
2. Multiply Domain 5 score by 0.20:
   2.0 × 0.20 = 0.40
3. Add the two results:
   2.56 + 0.40 = 2.96

Final Composite Score = **2.96**

Step by step narrative

First, weight the average for Domains 1 to 4. The average is 3.2, and these domains count for 80 percent, so 3.2 × 0.80 = **2.56**.
Next, weight Domain 5, Student Growth. The score is 2.0, and this domain counts for 20 percent, so 2.0 × 0.20 = **0.40**.
Finally, add the two weighted values to get the overall composite: **2.56 + 0.40 = 2.96**.
Final composite score: 2.96.