

# **South Dakota Special Education Student Learning Objectives Types and Considerations**

## Individual SLOs

### Strengths

- Holds each teacher accountable only for the **students** for whom she or he is responsible

### Drawbacks

- Can be challenging for teachers with very small case loads or class sizes
- Does not recognize that more than one educator contributes to student growth

Example: 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Science, 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math, HS ELA Resource

## Team SLOs with Shared Accountability

### Strengths

- Encourages collaboration
- Promotes shared accountability of students
- Recognizes that more than one educator can contribute to student growth

### Drawbacks

- Potentially presents a “free rider” problem

Example: HS ELA inclusion

## Team SLOs with Individual Accountability

### Strengths

- Encourages collaboration
- Promotes comparability of SLOs among team members

### Drawbacks

- Does not promote shared accountability of students
- Does not recognize that more than one educator can contribute to student growth

Example: 1st grade ELA Resource

**There may be occasions in which an SLO needs to be written to address a functional skill such as communication. In these infrequent instances, the SLO should:**

- Address a skill critical to learning content
- Address a skill essential for showing what the student knows and/or can do related to the content
- Be instructed and assessed within the context of content-based activity(ies)
- Be written within any one of the 4 previous accountability models

**Example: 5<sup>th</sup> grade ELA Functional**

# Guiding Principles for Special Education Teachers Implementing

- SLOs should support the participation of students with disabilities in the general education curriculum to the maximum extent possible.
  - **Ex: Team SLOs with shared or individual accountability**
- SLOs should be developed in a way that holds all teachers accountable for the academic growth of SWDs.
  - **ARSD 24:05:13:02 Free Appropriate Public Education**
    - **FAPE must be provided to any child found eligible for special education and related services**
  - **ARSD 24:05:27:01.03(2)(a)**
    - **Must meet the students needs so he/she is enabled to be involved and progress in the general education curriculum**

## **Consideration 1: SLOs should not be based on the attainment of individualized education program (IEP) goals.**

- **Students with disabilities, when appropriate, should be instructed and assessed using the same college and career readiness standards as their general education peers.**
- **IEPs are legal documents designed to ensure individualized services to students with disabilities based on their needs. Including IEP goals within teacher evaluation systems may unintentionally move the focus away from the student.**

## Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004:

**“To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.”**

- **The Council for Exceptional Children published a “Position on Special Education Teacher Evaluation” in 2012.**
- **The position statement does not support the use of progress on IEP goals as a measure of growth for teacher evaluation.**

# Position on Special Education Teacher Evaluation 2012:

**“When measuring student growth, evaluations should not use a student’s progress on their goals, objectives, or benchmarks on the individualized education program (IEP) as a measure of a special education teacher’s contribution to student growth. Doing so may compromise the integrity of the IEP, *shifting its focus from what is designed to be a child-centered document to the performance of the teacher*” (emphasis added; p 10).**

**Source:**

[http://www.cec.sped.org/~media/Files/Policy/CEC%20Professional%20Policies%20and%20Positions/Position\\_on\\_Special\\_Education\\_Teacher\\_Evaluation\\_Background.pdf](http://www.cec.sped.org/~media/Files/Policy/CEC%20Professional%20Policies%20and%20Positions/Position_on_Special_Education_Teacher_Evaluation_Background.pdf)

## **Consideration 2: SLOs should focus on academic standards**

- **SLOs are written for content area standards (e.g., Common Core English language arts or mathematics standards). Special education is not a content area!**
- **However, SLOs written to encompass special education populations may differ in their established learning targets AND the types of services and supports provided to students with disabilities to access the general education curriculum.**

## Consideration 3: The structure of the IEP process can inform the development of SLOs.

- IEPs can be a source of evidence within the SLO process to document the types of services and supports that were provided to help students with disabilities achieve the standards.
- The IEP also may include documentation of student progress that could be a valuable source of evidence for SLOs.

- **Special education teachers can leverage work already performed within the context of the specialized instruction outlined in the IEP to gather data for SLOs.**
  - Progress monitoring
  - Specialized assessments
  - Team structures

Past student progress on IEP goals can help teachers identify student growth trends and inform the determination of growth targets.

### Stop and Think

- What are strengths and areas for improvement for individual students?
- Are there baseline or trend data already being collected as a part of the IEP process? Can the data be leveraged for SLO development?
- Are there baseline or trend data already being collected as a part of a progress monitoring initiative (e.g., RTI or MTSS)? Can't the data be leveraged for SLO development?
- Is the assessment scaled in a way that is sensitive to growth? Can the assessment accurately capture growth, even in small amounts?
- Does the assessment allow SWDs to adequately demonstrate their skills and knowledge?
- What has the growth and progress for these students looked like in the past?

## Consideration 3: The structure of the IEP process can inform the development of SLOs.

- SLOs and IEPs share many of the same components:

SLOs require:	IEPs require
Collection of baseline data	A statement of present levels of performance
Expected growth targets	Expected growth and attainment
Measurement of student progress	Statement of progress monitoring measures
Instructional strategies	Supports and accommodations

- **It may be appropriate to include related service providers within the SLO if they provide services and supports to help SWDs achieve the SLO.**

### Stop and Think

- What types of services and supports may be needed from related service providers to help SWDs achieve their targets?

# Consideration 1: Special education teachers should use the same SLO template and process that is used by other teachers in the district.

A unified template and process reinforces the expectation that all teachers are accountable for student growth.

## Stop and Think

- Are students accessing general education standards or alternate standards?
- What are the priority standards, concepts, and skills?
- What is the progression of skills needed to access the curriculum?
- Are students accessing the same grade-level curriculum on different functional levels?
- Do SWDs participate in regular education assessments?
- What instructional methods would best support the student achievement goals set forth in this SLO?

## **Consideration 2: In co-teaching situations, general education teachers and special education teachers should collaborate to create SLOs.**

- In a co-taught classroom, it may be appropriate for the general and special education co-teacher to share the same SLO and the results.

### **Stop and Think**

- If the general education and special education teacher both provide instruction to SWDs, should SWDs be included in the SLO of one or both teachers?

## **Consideration 3: SLOs for special education teachers must reflect the diverse education settings found in the continuum of special education services.**

- **Considerations across the continuum of services:**
  - Inclusion
  - Resource
  - Self-contained

### **Stop and Think**

- Is the interval of instruction appropriate for students who may be on a slower pace, require increased repetition, or spiraling to grasp the curriculum?
- Is there a need for increased frequency or intensity for supports?

- **Questions?**
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