Texas Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems
Student Learning Objectives (SLO) Pilot

TEA is seeking 20-30 districts for volunteer participation in the SLO pilot

In 2015-2016 the Texas Education Agency (TEA), in partnership with the Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC), will pilot the use of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) in the new teacher and principal evaluation systems. Pilot participants will guide and shape this instructionally focused student growth option.

What are SLOs?

SLOs are long-term goals for student learning crafted by teachers and administrators. Often in teams with peer, school and district support, teachers analyze data to determine student needs and devise instructional strategies to meet those needs and improve learning.

The SLO process strives to bring together the varied pedagogical considerations a teacher juggles throughout the year – curriculum, instruction, assessment, adjustment, and evaluation. The SLO process encourages and prompts continual reflection and self-assessment so that teachers can focus on aligning curriculum, instruction, and student performance.

TEA has developed a framework for SLO implementation, including recommended policies and procedures, and will engage participating districts in conversations to refine the framework throughout the pilot period.

Participation

The SLO pilot is geared toward, although not limited to, districts that will have already completed a year of T-TESS implementation. Participation can be an entire campus or as small as a single grade or subject on a single campus, although it is recommended, for the sake of efficiency, that districts participate with no less than 10 teachers.

Benefits

Districts participating in the pilot year will benefit with opportunities to:

- Send representatives to the free SLO training from content experts;
- Get continued SLO support throughout the pilot year from TEA, ESC staff, and CTAC, including webinars and support sessions to assist in implementation;

- Customize policies and procedures to fit the local context while using a general framework; and
- Provide feedback for refinement of the SLO process.

Requirements

Districts participating in the pilot year will be asked to commit to the following:

- Adopting a general SLO framework as defined by TEA;
- Ensuring that representatives of each participating school attend a two-day SLO training in the summer of 2015, including principals, assistant principals, and teacher leaders, as well as relevant district personnel;
- Participating in surveys and focus groups designed to collect data for the refinement of the SLO process;
- Documenting SLO implementation processes, including policies and procedures enacted;
- Providing access to SLOs, including outcomes, to the SLO evaluation team; and
- Implementing the SLO process with fidelity.

Training

Regional trainings at ESCs throughout the state will be held in late July through early August 2015. Trainings require a two-day commitment. Participants will be provided hands-on experience with SLO creation and approval, as well as evaluation of outcomes. There is no registration fee. Support from the ESCs and the consultants will continue throughout the year in the form of videos, webinars, and drop-in support chat rooms.

Data and Portal Use

TEA will provide a portal that will be the primary source for materials and support for the SLO system. The site will include templates, quality instruments, process guidelines, and video training modules. All will be available for download.

Districts will choose a method for crafting, approving, and storing SLOs, based on TEA guidance. Instructions will be provided to the pilot districts on where and how to upload SLOs. These data will provide the basis for analyzing and refining the SLO process.

Student Growth

Pilot-year SLO outcomes will not be counted in a teacher's overall evaluation rating. Districts should view the pilot year as a year to familiarize themselves with the SLO process and the value of the feedback it yields.