Selecting Student Population

Increasing Student Achievement
Advancing Teacher Practice

About this document: This document helps educators as they analyze data to select a student population for their SLO. Guided steps are provided to help educators think through the important factors that go into the selection of students for an SLO.

Washoe County School District

ctac | COMMUNITY TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE CENTER

About TIF 4 and CTAC: As part of the Teacher Incentive Fund 4 (TIF 4) work, Washoe County School District (WCSD) has partnered with the Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) in the use of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). CTAC provides technical assistance to the district and TIF 4 working groups based on 16 years of research and practice with SLOs.

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*The following is a set of guiding questions and information to support **generalist teachers of elementary grades** as they complete the student population element of an SLO.*

1. What students should be in my SLO?

Below is a definition for whom elementary generalist teachers should include in their SLO:

The entire group of students seen during an instructional period of the day.

Examples: An instructional period might be the 120 minutes of ELA instruction, a 90-minute block of time for math, a 45-period for science, etc. It is important to note that no students within the period should be excluded from the SLO.

2. What data will inform my choice?

Below are some possible sources of data to help inform which student group for a particular instructional period should be selected. The first row include more general data sets for screening/diagnosing at a general level. The second row include more targeted data sets that can speak more specifically to the learning content as it becomes established in an SLO.

Example Data Types		
General	Report Card Data *Knowing how students performed in various content areas can inform which content area to target.*	MAP®/DRA® Data *This type of data can point to general areas of need for a particular content area.*	Prior Summative Data *Looking at prior summative scores can point to areas of need by content area and sometimes within a particular content area.*
Specific	Baseline Data *If aligned well to the learning content, this type of data speaks directly to specific needs. (Note: Pre-assessment/baseline scores should usually be low.)*	Early Classroom Work *Early coursework can point to and confirm specific areas of need for a particular content area.*	Knowledge of Trend Data *Teacher knowledge of past performance trends for students, at a classroom, school, or even district level can help inform the selection of standards for students.*

3. How do I describe my students?

A key goal in describing students is to demonstrate a strong knowledge of students that informs the SLO, the teacher, and ultimately instruction. High quality descriptions include specific and relevant student abilities and needs, describing these areas for the class as a whole, rather than an itemized breakdown by individual student. Be sure the abilities and needs are specifically connected to the identified learning content, rather than globally related.

Example for Grade 3 Math: *Students in my homeroom performed lower in math than any other subject. The standards related to number and operations for base ten and fractions are the greatest areas of need as evidenced on the pre-assessment and early coursework. Students are able to complete some rote computation and articulate some relationships of number, but lack a full conceptual understand of what occurs during computations and in some cases what fractions truly represent.*

*The following is a set of guiding questions and information to support **secondary classroom teachers** as they complete the student population element of an SLO.*

1. What students should be in my SLO?

Below is a definition for whom secondary classroom teachers should include in their SLO:

The entire group of students seen during an instructional period of the day.

Examples: An instructional period might be the 4 period class, the 2nd section of honors level for a course, or the remedial block of instruction during the first hour of the day, etc. It is important to note that no students within the period should be excluded from the SLO.

2. What data will inform my choice?

Below are some possible sources of data to help inform which student group for a particular instructional period should be selected. The first row include more general data sets for screening/diagnosing at a general level. The second row include more targeted data sets that can speak more specifically to the learning content as it becomes established in an SLO.

Example Data Types		
General	Report Card Data *Knowing how students performed in prior years can inform which student group to target.*	MAP®/Adaptive Data *This type of data can point to general areas of need for a particular content area.*	Prior Summative Data *Looking at prior summative scores can point to areas of need by content area and sometimes within a particular content area.*
Specific	Baseline Data *If aligned well to the learning content, this type of data speaks directly to specific needs. (Note: Pre-assessment/baseline scores should usually be low.)*	Early Classroom Work *Early coursework can point to and confirm specific areas of need for a particular course.*	Knowledge of Trend Data *Teacher knowledge of past performance trends for students, at a classroom, school, or even district level can help inform the selection of students.*

3. How do I describe my students?

A key goal in describing students is to demonstrate a strong knowledge of students that informs the SLO, the teacher, and ultimately instruction. High quality descriptions include specific and relevant student abilities and needs, describing these areas for the class as a whole, rather than an itemized breakdown by individual student. Be sure the abilities and needs are specifically connected to the identified learning content, rather than globally related.

Example for US History: *The students in all of my classes scored the lowest on concepts related to the Guilded Age and Progressive Era, and my 4th period class had the lowest scores on these standards. These students are able to recognize and provide some information about key people and events, but lack the understanding of broader concepts such as capitalism and a pluralistic society…and how these shaped and influenced our country's history. I have found that in years past, students struggle with these standards as well, so these students in particular need my best efforts to help advance their learning in US History.*

*The following is a set of guiding questions and information to support **specialists and other certified staff** as they complete the student population element of an SLO.*

1. What students should be in my SLO?

Below is a definition for whom for specialists/other staff should include in their SLO:

A group of students that have a common need, usually seen during the same instructional period of the day.

Examples: An elementary physical education teacher might select a low-performing 5th grade classroom she teaches once a week, a secondary counselor might select a group of 15 students he pulls to work with twice a week, a speech pathologist might select a group of 2nd graders seen throughout the day with a common need, etc.

2. What data will inform my choice?

Below are some possible sources of data to help inform which student group for a particular instructional period should be selected. The first row include more general data sets for screening/diagnosing at a general level. The second row include more targeted data sets that can speak more specifically to the learning content as it becomes established in an SLO.

Example Data Types		
General — **Report Card Data** *Knowing how students performed in years past can inform which students to target.*	**MAP®/Adaptive Data** *This type of data can point to general areas of need for students, as well as indicate trends.*	**Prior Summative Data** *Looking at prior summative scores can point to student areas of need by content area and sometimes within a particular content area.*
Specific — **Baseline Data** *If aligned well to the learning content, this type of data speaks directly to specific needs. (Note: Pre-assessment/baseline should usually be low.)*	**Early Classroom Work** *Early coursework can point to and confirm specific areas of need for a group of students.*	**Knowledge of Trend Data** *Teacher knowledge of past performance trends for students, at a classroom, school, or even district level can help inform the selection of students.*

3. How do I describe my students?

A key goal in describing students is to demonstrate a strong knowledge of students that informs the SLO, the teacher, and ultimately instruction. High quality descriptions include specific and relevant student abilities and needs, describing these areas for the class as a whole, rather than an itemized breakdown by individual student. Be sure the abilities and needs are specifically connected to the identified learning content, rather than globally related.

Example for Grade 7 ELA Inclusion (Special Education Teacher): *Students across my classes are struggling with non-fiction reading, but none more so than this 3rd period of students I have selected for my SLO. Our common pre-assessment and teacher-developed diagnostic assessment both point to non-fiction as an important area of need. Students are able to decode most selections and get the main idea, but struggle immensely using evidence from the text to draw conclusions, to understand aspects of an author's craft, and connecting different texts.*