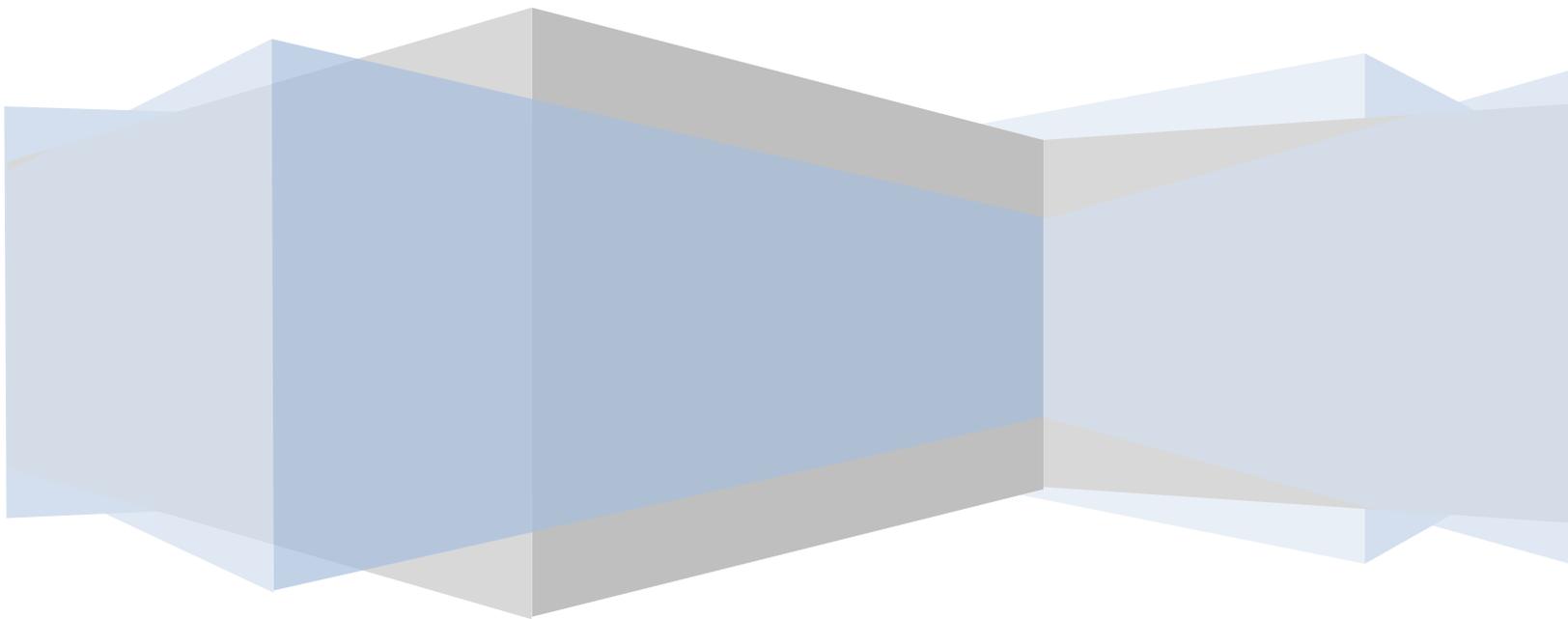


Student Growth Objectives

Developing and Using Practical Measures of
Student Learning



Revised for 2014-15

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Part 1: Introduction

About This Guidebook

This guidebook is intended to help teachers develop Student Growth Objectives (SGOs) with the support of their administrators. This version has been revised to include lessons learned from the 2013-14 school year in section 2 and to incorporate emerging best practices in section 3. The guidebook is written primarily for teachers but should also be used by administrators for training and completing the SGO component of evaluations under **AchieveNJ**. An administrator-specific section is included in section 4. An appendix containing revised and commonly used forms can be found at the end.

At various places in the document, you will see **red “Required” text boxes**. These boxes contain the State requirements, such as how many SGOs you must set and the role of your supervisor in the process. However, the majority of this guidebook contains procedures, forms, examples, and other **suggested processes** that are provided to help you and your supervisor develop quality SGOs; *their use is not mandated by the New Jersey Department of Education*.

This guidebook should serve as a good starting point for your work with SGOs, but please visit the [SGO Section of the AchieveNJ website](#) for updates to this resource and to access individual forms found in the Appendix.

Why SGOs?: Required Measures of Student Learning

The *TEACHNJ Act*¹ requires that the evaluation of teachers in New Jersey include multiple measures of student learning. As part of this requirement, all teachers now set Student Growth Objectives. The basic requirements for SGOs as outlined in AchieveNJ are highlighted in the box to the right.

In addition to these requirements, teachers set one or two SGOs depending on their teaching assignment; teachers who receive a median Student Growth Percentile (mSGP) score must create **one or two** SGOs, as determined by the district superintendent. Teachers who do not receive an mSGP score must create **two** SGOs.² SGO scores will comprise 20% of every teacher’s evaluation in the 2014-15 school year.

Requirement

A Student Growth Objective is a long-term academic goal that teachers set for groups of students and must be:

- Specific and measurable;
- Aligned to state academic standards;
- Based on student growth and/or achievement;
- Set using available student learning data;
- Developed by a teacher in consultation with his or her supervisor; and
- Approved and scored by a teacher’s supervisor.

¹ The [TEACHNJ Act](#) was signed into law on August 6, 2012, reforming the tenure process and mandating new evaluation procedures for New Jersey educators.

² The Department recommends that teachers of 4th-8th grade Language Arts/Math set 2 SGOs if they have 25 students or fewer (30 or fewer in districts where student mobility is high). This ensures that a teacher will have at least two measures of student achievement even if she becomes ineligible to receive an mSGP during the year.

Part 2: Lessons Learned from 2013-14 and Developing High-Quality SGOs in 2014-15

The Department acknowledges all the educators who worked hard in 2013-14 to develop and complete SGOs. Throughout 2013-14, staff from the Office of Evaluation conducted numerous focus groups, training sessions, district visits, and surveys. Through these interactions with educators, we have identified several important factors that contribute to the success of SGOs to emphasize for 2014-15. Below is a summary of the benefits, challenges, and facilitators to developing high-quality SGOs.

Benefits of High-Quality SGOs

1. Thoughtful goal-setting improves performance.

The *TEACHNJ Act* requires a measure of student achievement be included in the evaluation of teachers. In SGOs, student achievement is linked to a goal-setting process. Research consistently indicates that performance in a variety of activities can be improved by setting well-developed goals, and initial research indicates that this is also true for goals set by teachers for student learning.³

2. SGOs help make teachers' contributions to learning evident and concrete

For all teachers, SGOs provide a method clearly demonstrate the impact of their practice on their students' learning.

3. SGOs focus standards, instruction, and assessment for the benefit of students.

SGOs provide a powerful framework within which teachers must ask "What do I want my students to learn, what methods will I use to ensure they learn it, and how will I know they have learned it?" Teachers must choose standards by which they can and assessments at the beginning of the instructional period and ensure their instruction is focused on measurable student success.

4. Teachers track student progress more closely.

An advantage of any type of goal-setting is that it helps keep the individual focused on the ultimate desired outcome. Teachers found that they more closely watched and measured the progress of their students this past year. This extra attention helped teachers adjust their instruction as needed to stay on track.

5. Teachers differentiate instruction more effectively.

Through SGOs, a teacher can set differentiated targets for groups of students based on how well prepared the students are for the teacher's course. This allows educators to set ambitious and achievable targets for more students. This practice also allows teachers to focus on the particular needs of students who warrant more attention to help them succeed in the course.

Challenges and Facilitators in Developing High-Quality SGOs

Understandably, as with any new initiative, implementation of AchieveNJ in 2013-14 presented challenges to educators. Developing high-quality SGOs yielded a set of specific challenges. Several of these are described below, organized by four of the suggested steps for SGO development that

³ <http://www.ctacusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/MoreThanMoney.pdf>

posed the most significant challenges and examples of how teachers and administrators responded productively to them.

Step 1: Choose or develop a quality assessment aligned to standards.

Low-quality assessments reduce the value of SGOs as a measure of teacher effectiveness and a tool to help improve teacher practice and student achievement.

SGO quality is critically dependent on assessment quality. Many educators are working hard to improve the assessments they use for their SGOs so they can set meaningful targets and truly know how much students have learned by the end of the SGO period.

SGOs that are too broad or too narrow in standards, or too narrow in student population, do not accurately reflect typical teacher practice.

Many 2013-14 SGOs were either too broad or too narrow in scope – the former leading to less meaningful goals and the latter to SGOs that were not reflective of the practice of the teacher. The combination of a teacher’s SGOs should aim to include a significant proportion of the appropriate standards and students. Importantly, educators who thoughtfully developed high-quality SGOs selected a range of standards critical for students to learn for their future success. In addition, high-quality SGOs also included a significant proportion of the teacher’s students, thereby creating a measure that fairly reflected their professional responsibilities.

The Department has devoted resources to helping educators improve their assessments through statewide [workshops](#), [documents](#) on the website, and in [SGO Process Step 1](#) section of this guidebook.

Step 2: Determine students’ starting points.

Overreliance on low-quality pre-tests provides little information about student starting points.

Understandably, at the beginning of a course, when a summative assessment is given as a pre-test, students generally score poorly. This can be frustrating for teachers and students alike as the pre-test process takes time and yields little actionable information to help students learn. Additionally, when used as a sole measure of a student’s starting point, pre-tests provide only a narrow view of what can be expected of the student over the next school year.

While there can be a place in the SGO process for high-quality pre-testing that helps inform instruction, teachers are beginning to realize the benefits of determining approximate starting points using measures other than, or in addition to, pre-tests. There is a wide range of information that might be used; grades and assessment scores from the current year prior to setting the SGO, grades and assessment scores from previous years and subjects, and markers of future success such as homework completion and academic independence. Each teacher must determine what the most useful data is and how to use it for determining the starting points of his or her students.

The Department has added to guidance on determining starting points using multiple measures, which can be found in [SGO Process Step 2](#) section below.

Step 3: Set ambitious and achievable SGOs with the approval of the principal/supervisor.

Adopting a pre-test/post-test model can lead to the creation of arbitrary and unrealistic growth targets.

In many cases, overreliance on the pre-test/post-test model forced educators to take guesses about the percentage of growth or number of points students could be expected to improve over the course of the year. This led to overinflated or underinflated SGO scores in some cases. Educators are

realizing that using approximate starting points based on a variety of information typically collected by the teacher provides more authentic information about the learning trajectories of their students. Additionally, rather than trying to determine a percentage of “growth” that is appropriate for a student based on a difference between pre- and post-tests, many educators have viewed goal-setting for SGOs the way teachers have traditionally measured success – by setting standards of performance (70%, 80%, 90% etc.). The achievement or growth of the students of these teachers is based on whether they attained a particular target score on the SGO assessment.

Setting the same targets for all students can lead to overly ambitious or overly cautious goals for many students.

In 2013-14, roughly half of teachers in the state grouped their students according to their relative starting points – the so-called “tiered” approach. Teachers who used this approach found they could set good targets for a wider range of students and had SGOs that were more reflective of their efforts in the classroom.

When SGOs are developed by administrators with little input from teachers, the value and effectiveness of the SGO process is reduced.

An SGO, as with any type of goal, works best when the process is internally driven and yields a sense of autonomy for the practitioner rather than when imposed from outside. Educators who have been able to develop their own SGOs with careful guidance from their supervisors have a more positive experience during this process.

Understandably, with the newness of SGOs, administrators have adopted different strategies to make sure their teachers have measurable goals for their students. However, even though principals are still ultimately responsible for ensuring SGOs are rigorous, they should consider allowing teachers to take ownership of the process and provide time and support for teachers to do this important professional work. The Department encourages educators to view the SGO process as a valuable tool to enhance student learning at the classroom level through the mindset of SGOs as “teacher-driven, administrator-supported, and student-centered.”

See the [SGO Process Step 3](#) section below for suggestions about setting learning goals for students.

Step 5: Review results and score in consultation with your principal/supervisor.

Changes in student populations create uncertainty in scoring SGOs.

In most cases, educators who set scoring plans using the percentage of students expected to meet a goal were able to score their SGOs without difficulty, and this is a good option for most educators. However, there are certain circumstances in which percentages of students meeting a particular goal is not appropriate – because of small class sizes, for example. In these cases, there are alternative approaches to setting measurable goals that can be adopted, which are addressed in the [SGO Process Step 5](#) section below.

Poor attendance, not taking the SGO assessment, and other student-centered issues can lead to a low SGO score that does not fairly reflect the efforts of the teacher.

Effective supervisors have dealt with scoring of SGOs in unique situations on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the SGO score remains a fair reflection of the teacher’s efforts. During the scoring process, they have used their discretion to determine whether students should be included in the final SGO score of the teacher based on the evidence provided about the student such as attendance, failure to complete or make appropriate effort on the SGO assessment, and other relevant factors.

High variability in SGOs and assessments can reduce the comparability of SGO results for teachers in the same grade and subject in a district.

The value of providing autonomy to teachers in setting SGOs and developing assessments can be diminished when done at the expense of reliability and comparability of SGO results. To offset this challenge, districts can adopt a number of approaches including the following;

- Teachers who teach similar grades and subjects in a school use common assessments for their students;
- Administration and scoring of common assessments is conducted in a standardized way to increase the reliability of results;
- Job-alike teachers agree to collect similar information that counts towards determining the starting points of students; and,
- Teachers of similar groups of students agree upon a particular learning target for students based on their starting points.

The preceding information is summarized in the following table along with descriptors from the [SGO Quality Rating Rubric](#) and resources that may help educators develop their SGOs.

Table of Challenges, Facilitators, and Resources for Developing High-Quality SGOs

SGO Component	Challenge	Facilitator	SGO Quality Rating Rubric Language (complete rubric)	Resources
Step 1 Choose or develop a quality assessment aligned to standards	Low-quality assessments reduce the value of SGOs as a measure of teacher effectiveness and as a tool to help improve teacher practice and student achievement.	Increase the quality of the SGO summative assessments and develop common assessments where possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment format, construction and item design is consistently high-quality. Includes rubrics, scoring guides, and/or answer keys for all items, all of which are accurate, clear, and thorough. A common assessment is in use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SGO Process Step 1 SGO 2.0 Presentation Part 2 Assessment Blueprint Assessment Item Rules
	SGOs too broad or too narrow in standards, or too narrow in student population, do not accurately reflect typical teacher practice.	Include a significant proportion of the standards critical for future success of students. Include most or all students. ⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority of standards are critical to enduring understanding of the subject area, success in future classes, and readiness in college, career, and life. Number of students in combined SGOs represents all or a large majority of the teacher's students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SGO Process Step 1 SGO Quality Rating Rubric SGO 2.0 Presentation part 2 Grade 8 World History SGO Example
Step 2 Determine students' starting points	Overreliance on low-quality pre-tests provides little information about student starting points.	Determine approximate starting points using multiple pieces of information typically gathered to group students and set targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple, high-quality measures are used to thoughtfully determine students' starting points. Pre-assessment, if used, provides a high-quality measure of skills, is administered reliably, is vertically aligned with the post-assessment, and is used in conjunction with other measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SGO Process Step 2 Examples of multiple measures SGO 2.0 Presentation part 3
Step 3 Set ambitious and achievable SGOs with the approval of your supervisor	Adopting a pre-test/post-test model can lead to the creation of arbitrary and unrealistic growth targets.	Group students according to approximate starting points and set targets based on a vision of student mastery for a particular set of content and skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' starting points are used thoughtfully to justify student learning goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SGO Process Step 3
	Setting the same targets for all students can lead to overly ambitious or overly cautious goals for many students.	Set differentiated targets for different students based on their approximate starting points.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' learning goals are differentiated to be ambitious and achievable for all or nearly all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SGO Process Step 3
	SGOs developed by administrators with little input from teachers reduce the value and effectiveness of the SGO process.	Administrators should encourage teachers to take ownership of the SGO process as a powerful way to improve teacher practice and student achievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most, or all, key decisions were made collaboratively between teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6A:10-4.2 (e)3 Graphic

⁴ In some cases, including teachers with multiple discrete courses, or several hundred students, educators should strive to set SGOs for the courses and students that best reflect their work even if they cannot incorporate a *majority* of the classes and students for which they are responsible.

SGO Component	Challenge	Facilitator	SGO Quality Rating Rubric Language (complete rubric)	Resources
Step 5 Review results and score in consultation with your supervisor	Changes in student populations created uncertainty in scoring SGOs.	Use scoring plans based on percentages where possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scoring range is justified by analysis of student starting points and the rigor of the assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SGO Process Step 5
	Poor attendance, not taking the SGO assessment, and other student-centered issues can lead to a low SGO score that does not fairly reflect the efforts of the teacher.	Supervisors use the evidence provided and professional judgment to determine whether students should be included in the final SGO score of the teacher.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scoring range for “full attainment” accurately reflects a teacher’s considerable impact on student learning. Scoring range is justified by analysis of student starting points and the rigor of the assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SGO Process Step 5 Evaluating Teachers with Extended Leaves of Absence
	High variability in SGOs and assessments can reduce the comparability of SGO results for teachers in the same grade and subject in a district.	Within grades and subjects, develop common assessments, agree upon common expectations for student performance, use similar data to determine starting points, and standardize assessment administration and scoring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most, or all, key decisions were made collaboratively among teachers. A common assessment is in use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administering and Scoring Assessments

Part 3: The SGO Process

SGO Quick Start and Resource Guide

The following summarized steps of the SGO process are explained in full beginning on [page 12](#) of this guidebook.

Before beginning:

- Review the [AchieveNJ SGO Web Page](#) for the most updated materials and resources.
- Decide how much of the SGO process can be done collaboratively with your colleagues, e.g.
 - develop a high-quality department-wide assessment,
 - agree to the types of information that will count for student starting points, and
 - set similar standards for SGO success.
- Review the SGO Quality Rating Rubric ([PDF](#) | [Word](#)).
- Schedule time during team/faculty/PLC/PD meetings to complete the work.

Step 1: Choose or develop a quality assessment aligned to State Board -approved academic standards

- Select and prioritize the standards you will be teaching during the SGO instructional period.
- Choose an assessment method appropriate to your content area and grade level.
- Make sure the assessment will accurately measure how well your students have learned the selected standards by:
 - Aligning the assessment to standards,
 - Aligning the assessment to the rigor of content, skills, and instruction,
 - Ensuring the assessment is accessible to all students, and
 - Ensuring the assessment can be administered and scored reliably.

Assessment Blueprint and Completion Guide ([PDF](#) | [Word](#))

SGO 2.0 Presentation ([PPT](#) | [PDF](#)) on elements of design for high-quality assessments

Rules of Assessment Item Design ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))

Step 2: Determine students' starting points.

- Determine what sources of information you can use to judge your students' starting points.
- Choose two, three, or more sources of information to get a rough sense of how prepared your students are to learn the information you will be teaching to the level you expect them to learn it.
- Group your students according to their starting points.
- If using a pre-assessment, make sure it will be:
 - Used **in conjunction with other** starting point information
 - Evaluating improvement in a **set of skills**,
 - **High-quality** and **vertically aligned**; and
 - **Normally used** for instructional purposes

Resources:

SGO 2.0 Presentation ([PPT](#) | [PDF](#)) on determining starting points using multiple measures

Step 3: Set ambitious and achievable SGOs with the approval of the principal/supervisor.

- Using knowledge of the students, standards, and SGO assessment, set a vision for student mastery of the standards you have selected for your SGO.
- Set learning goals, i.e. predicted scores on assessment or predicted development across a range of skills for your students differentiated by their starting points.
- Ensure learning goals are ambitious and achievable for all students.

- Complete the **SGO Form** ([PDF](#) | [Word](#)) and consult with your supervisor to discuss your assessment, SGOs and scoring plan.

Resources:

SGO 2.0 Presentation ([PPT](#) | [PDF](#)) on setting learning targets

Assessing and Adjusting SGOs ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))

Evaluating SGO Quality Presentation ([PowerPoint](#) | [PDF](#))

Step 4: Track progress, refine instruction.

- Frequently monitor your students' progress towards the goals you have set for them using formative and benchmark assessments or by examining portfolio quality.
- Modify your instruction as needed.
- Meet with supervisor at optional mid-year check-in.

Resources:

Mid-course Check-in ([PDF](#) | [Word](#))

Step 5: Review results and score in consultation with your supervisor.

- Collect information about student learning from the SGO assessment and calculate your SGO score according to the approved scoring plan.
- Consult with your supervisor to share the information and discuss your final score.
- Discuss lessons learned with your supervisor and steps for setting SGOs in the following year based.

Resources:

Administering and Scoring SGO Assessments ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))

SGO Scoring Checkpoints and Considerations ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))

SGO Scoring Checklist ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))

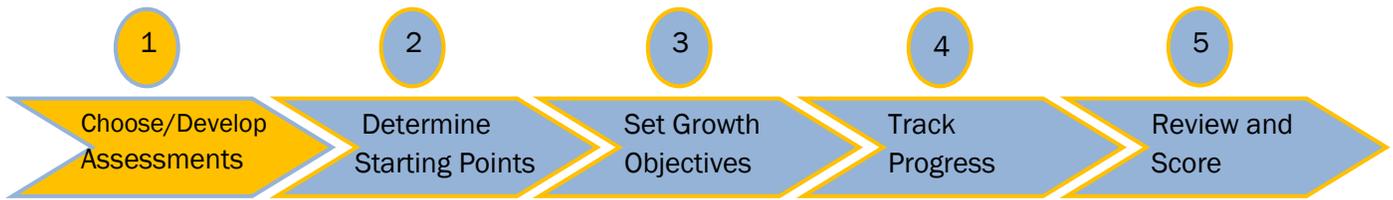
Optional Annual Conference Forms ([mSGP teacher/non-mSGP teacher](#))

Getting a Head Start

Because you must develop your SGOs and have them approved by October 31, starting the SGO process as early as possible is beneficial. This will give you time to identify or create assessments on which you might set objectives or gather baseline information at the beginning of the year. Figure 1 depicts a suggested timeframe for various parts of the SGO process.

Time Window	Component of SGO Process
April - October	Choose or develop assessments
September – October	Determine starting points and set learning goals
October 31	Deadline for having SGO approved by supervisor
October – May	Track goals and refine instruction
January – February	Optional mid-year check in with supervisor
May – June	Review results, evaluator scores SGO

Figure 1: Timeframe for steps of the SGO process.



Step 1: Choose or Develop Quality Assessments

Required

SGOs must be specific and measurable, and aligned to State-approved academic standards.

The Value of Quality Assessments

Teachers, principals, and others who are directly responsible for the educational growth of students in a school district have a professional responsibility to determine what and how much students are learning. Good assessment is integral to the art and science of teaching and allows educators to make informed decisions about the wide range of school-based factors that influence each child's development. In your classroom, the quality of the assessments you use is inextricably linked to the quality and value of your SGOs. Only with high-quality assessments can you be sure that your students have learned what you set out to teach them and effectively demonstrate the impact of your instruction. This is shown in Figure 2.

Beginning with the End in Mind

Effective teachers begin the year asking themselves:

- What should my students learn by when?
- What methods will I use to ensure they learn it?
- How will I know they have learned it?

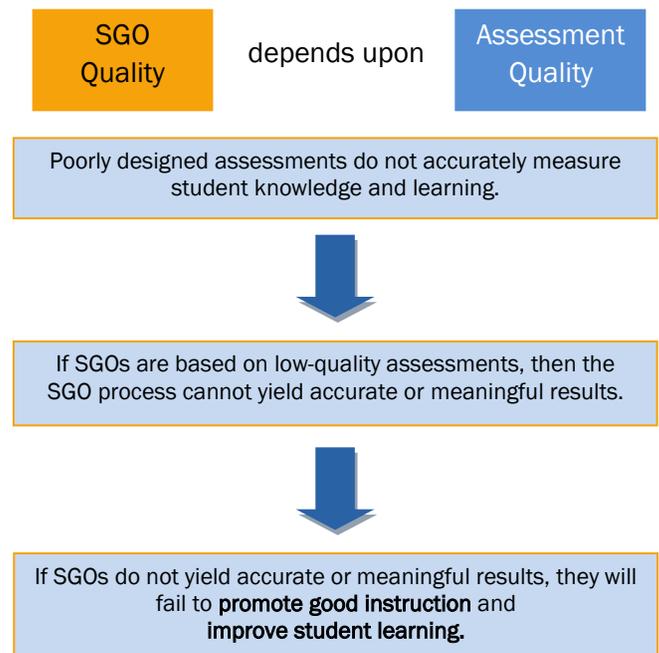


Figure 2: SGO quality and assessment quality.

These questions represent the standards, instruction, and assessment components of a teacher's work and converge within the structure of an SGO. "Beginning with the end in mind"⁵ is a well-recognized approach for improving performance and is fundamental to "Understanding by Design"⁶ methods that many educators already use. However, thinking critically about the scope of standards that should be taught and designing an assessment that faithfully represents these standards will be a new approach for many educators. The following sections provide suggestions for how to approach assessment design using this backwards planning approach and are summarized in the box below.

⁵ <https://www.stephencovey.com/7habits/7habits-habit2.php>

⁶ <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/103055.aspx>

High-quality assessments must:

1. **Align with standards** taught during the SGO instructional period;
2. **Align with the rigor** of the standards, content, and instruction of the course;
3. Be **equally accessible** to all students regardless of background knowledge, cultural knowledge, and personal characteristics; and
4. Be **administered** and **scored accurately and consistently**.

Assessment Blueprint

An assessment blueprint is a tool that can be of great value for constructing assessments or evaluating the value of those that have already been created. Just as architects and contractors use a blueprint to guide their work in designing and building a house, educators can use a blueprint for assessment design and development. This helps make sure that your assessment is well-constructed in an agreed upon manner and documents the nature of the assessment in a simple and clear format for review by colleagues and administrators. The Department's optional [Assessment Blueprint](#) defines the:

- ✓ Standards measured
- ✓ Relative importance of the standards on the assessment
- ✓ Item types, number, and point value
- ✓ Depth of knowledge of each item

In addition, the blueprint form has a checklist to help you check for other important aspects of assessment such as:

- ✓ Appropriateness of individual item design
- ✓ Consistency in administration and scoring
- ✓ Appropriate length and format

Suggested Activity

- ✓ Review the Assessment Blueprint and Completion Guide. ([PDF](#) | [Word](#))

The Assessment Blueprint comes with a guide that provides information for using and completing the document and is available in [PDF](#) and [Word](#) formats.

Elements of Assessment Design

The following four numbered sections on pages 13 -15 provide information about the elements of assessment design summarized on the previous page that you should be familiar with as you develop, modify, or choose an assessment for your SGO.

1. Assessments should be aligned with the standards taught during the SGO period.

Why? By aligning your assessment to academic standards⁷ you make sure that the assessment is measuring the degree to which your students learned those standards you were teaching during the SGO period. This increases the validity – or accuracy – of the conclusions you can draw about what

⁷ New Jersey [Core Curriculum Content Standards](#) including the [Common Core State Standards](#), and other standards approved by the State Board of Education

your students have learned. Additionally, educators often face significant challenges in adequately teaching all of the grade-level standards to all of their students each year. A well-designed SGO and assessment provides an opportunity to focus on standards most critical for students' future success and assess these at a more meaningful level.

How? A high-quality assessment contains a variety of items proportional in number and point value to the relative value of the standards taught. For example, a standard that students are expected to master in order to move on to the next level of instruction would be weighted more heavily in the assessment than a supporting standard. For example, in algebra, a critical standard that would have more weight in the assessment requires students to “interpret parts of an expression, such as terms, factors, and coefficients” (HSA.SSE.1.a). A supporting standard with proportionally less assessment weight requires students to “factor a quadratic expression to reveal the zeros of the function it defines” (HSA.SSE.3.a).

The suggested process of standards alignment can be broken down into three steps, the first two of which reflect the backwards planning approach discussed above:

- Identify Standards**
 - ✓ Determine the instructional goals of the district, school, and content/grade department and which standards must be taught to meet these goals.
 - ✓ Identify the standards normally taught during the SGO instructional period.
- Prioritize Standards**
 - ✓ Identify those standards that take more time to teach, lead to enduring understanding, are critical for college/career/life, and/or are most important for your students to learn based on their starting points.
- Align Assessment to Identified Standards in Proportion to Their Relative Importance**

Use an [Assessment Blueprint](#) (see description below) to determine and document how to allocate items and point values proportionally to the relative importance of the standards being taught; higher relative importance = more questions/higher point value.

Suggested First Steps

- ✓ Review the standards alignment information in part 2 of the [SGO 2.0 Presentation](#).
- ✓ Complete the [Determine Relative Importance of Standards](#) activity.

2. Assessments should be aligned with the rigor of the standards, content, and instruction of the course.

Why? When you ask questions in an assessment that reflect the cognitive rigor, or depth of knowledge, of your course and instructional methods, you also ensure that the assessment accurately measures the level at which students have been expected to perform throughout the course. In addition, a wide range of cognitive demand in an assessment provides a more accurate picture of student learning across the performance spectrum.

How? Here is a suggested approach to aligning the assessment to rigor of the course:

- Review the cognitive demands of the standards you will be teaching.
- Review the types of assessment items (formative and summative) you typically provide your students and check level of cognitive demand.
- Create an approximate profile of the range of rigor you expect in your class using the [Depth of Knowledge Wheel](#), Bloom's Taxonomy, or some other table of cognitive demand.

- Use the [Depth of Knowledge/Rigor Chart and Checklist](#) to develop a profile of your SGO assessment.
- Use the [Assessment Blueprint](#) to map out how question items proportionally represent the level of thinking you have expected your students to demonstrate throughout the course.

3. Assessments should be equally accessible to all students regardless of background knowledge, cultural knowledge, and personal characteristics.

Why? To be an effective measure of what you have taught students, assessments must be constructed in a way that decreases bias and increases the accessibility of the assessment for all students. An assessment must be carefully vetted to remove or modify questions that could unfairly advantage or disadvantage certain students based on their socio-economic status, sex, religious affiliation, race, personal characteristics, and/or extra-curricular background knowledge.

How? Consider using the following steps to ensure assessment accessibility:

- Use the [SGO 2.0 Presentation](#) (part 2) to practice analyzing assessment items that have low accessibility.
- Inspect all assessment items and the underlying structure of the assessment and modify as needed to ensure they are accessible to all students.

4. Assessments should be administered and scored accurately and consistently.

Why? No matter how well constructed an assessment is, if it is administered or scored inconsistently, it will fail to provide a reliable measure of learning over time and groups of students taking the assessment. Ensuring consistent high-quality administration and scoring makes the conclusions you can make about what your students have learned - and how effective your teaching has been - more reliable.

How? Assessment experts recommend a variety of approaches for increasing the reliability of assessments including the following:

- Provide a physical and emotional environment that encourages students to do their best.
- Provide clear directions and scoring criteria to students before they start the assessment.
- Allow enough time to complete the assessment.
- Make the assessment long enough (longer assessments are generally more reliable).
- Ensure scoring is done by educators trained using clear criteria; use multiple scorers when possible.
- Keep the assessment secure before and after test.

More detailed suggestions for administering and scoring assessments can be found [here](#).

Use Assessment Approaches that Make Sense

A variety of assessment options is available: Bearing in mind that assessments should always be an authentic and accurate measure of what your students know and can do, evaluate your options when deciding on the right way to develop SGO assessments. As well as typical pencil and paper tests, there is a wide range of assessment options to choose from. Some of these are shown below in Figure 3.

Traditional Assessments	Portfolio Assessments	Performance Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National/State tests (e.g., Advanced Placement, DIBELS, EOC Biology) District, school and departmental tests (e.g., final exams, modified as necessary) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching Strategies Gold® (pre-K, K) Writing and reflection samples (LAL) Laboratory research notebook (sciences) Portfolio of student work (visual and performing arts, etc.) Student project-based assessments (all subjects) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lab Practicum (sciences) Sight reading (music) Dramatic performance (drama) Skills demonstration (physical education) Persuasive speech (public speaking)

Figure 3: Some types of assessments appropriate for SGO setting.

Consider using more than one assessment method: Using multiple measurements of student performance has value not just when determining starting points but also when evaluating how much your students have learned. For example, a science teacher might set learning targets in an SGO for a written, content-based assessment plus a performance-based assessment. A writing teacher might assess her students' progress over several assignments using a portfolio based approach.

Embed SGO assessments in the current testing schedule: Whenever possible, avoid making the SGO assessment *an additional test* students must take. Instead, plan to incorporate the assessment into the typical testing schedule. There are several approaches that might be used:

- Make existing assessments do “double duty,” both for their prior purpose and for SGOs, e.g., end of unit tests in the [model curriculum](#), or reading assessments typically used by elementary school teachers;
- Use a portfolio-based approach and collect information on students over an extended period of time, e.g., a collection of different pieces of artwork.
- Replace an existing test with the SGO assessment.

Quality check commercial assessments: All assessments, even those that are commercially available, should measure what they purport to measure. Often, commercial assessments will have a high level of rigor and reliability that provides value to educators. However, it is particularly important to check that the assessment is closely aligned to the standards that you are teaching.

Suggested Activity

- ✓ Create an [Assessment Blueprint](#) of any commercial/standardized assessment in use and ensure it contains the elements of high quality assessment design described above.

Note: *The results on some commercial or standardized assessments may not be available until after the school year ends. In this case, the district must weigh the benefits of the rigor and reliability of the tests with the inconvenience of not having data in time for a teacher's summative rating before the end of the school year. If test scores are not available in time for annual conferences, a conference should be held during the next school year once the SGO ratings are available.*

Use common assessments:

Whenever practical, consider using the same assessment as your colleagues who teach the same subject and grade. Not only will this help provide consistency in instruction, it will increase the comparability of SGOs. If there is no common assessment for a subject and grade level, working to

develop one can be a valuable way to use professional development time. Even if you teach a stand-alone course, such as Introduction to Finance, you may still be able to obtain your colleagues' input on the structure of the test and quality of the questions.

Administrators Inspect and Approve SGO Assessments

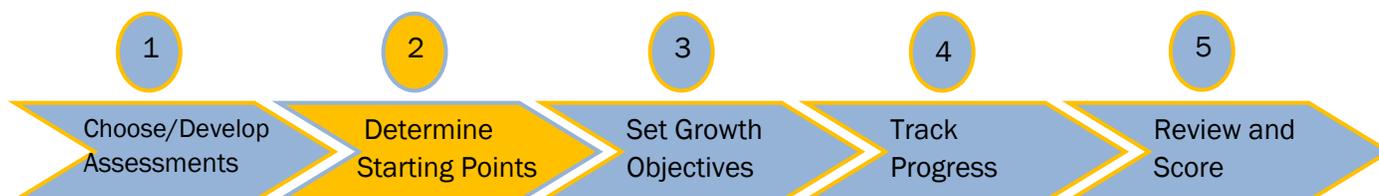
By October 31, SGOs must be developed by teachers and approved by their administrators. Because the goals set on each SGO depend on the SGO assessment, a critical part of the approval process is to inspect these assessments. Administrators should allocate time to review and provide feedback on the assessments that are submitted. Below is a suggested approach for supervisors reviewing SGO assessments:

- Ask teachers to submit a complete [Assessment Blueprint](#) with their SGO assessments. Having department or grade-wide assessments will substantially streamline this process.
- With the help of content experts as needed, evaluate the quality of the assessment using the information in the assessment blueprint.
- Provide feedback to the teacher and ask for revisions as needed before final approval of the assessment.
- Evaluate the quality of the submitted SGO checking for alignment between the assessment and the rationale section, rigor of goals, and logic of the scoring plan proposed.

Suggested Activity

Prior to beginning the SGO and assessment approval process, administrators should at a minimum review:

- ✓ [Assessment Blueprint and Completion Guide](#)
- ✓ [SGO 2.0 PowerPoint](#) on elements of design for high quality assessments
- ✓ [Rules of Assessment Item Design](#)



Step 2: Determine Students' Starting Points

Required

SGOs must be based on available student learning data.

Note: Districts should develop SGOs based on student learning data in ways that make sense for them; the number and types of measures teachers use for determining starting points, the number and name of preparedness groups teachers create, etc. should be determined by teachers in collaboration with colleagues and supervisors.

The Value of Determining Starting Points

A key to setting ambitious and achievable learning goals for students is to collect evidence on what students already know and understand and the types of skills they already possess. Not only does

this help predict the learning trajectory of your students, it can also provide valuable information about the standards you need to focus on and the type of instruction you might need to deliver.

Consider Alternatives to Pre-tests

Although appealing because of its apparent simplicity, using pre-tests to determine starting points and set learning goals can have unintended consequences and seriously compromise the educational value of the SGO process. Educators who use this approach for their SGOs report a variety of challenges:

- ! When the summative assessment is given as the pre-test, students generally score poorly.
- ! When scores are very low, teachers do not have actionable learning data that can help inform instruction.
- ! Students who score poorly on the pre-tests are often demoralized by their performance.
- ! Students lose valuable instructional time while taking pre-tests.

When well-designed and appropriately administered, pre-tests can provide valuable information. However, you should consider using other sources of readily available information to develop a rough sense of student starting points. Some of these are shown in Figure 4.

Source of Performance Data to Determine Students' Starting Points	Examples and Notes
Results from prior-year tests that assess knowledge and skills that are pre-requisites to the current subject/grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NJ state tests for Language Arts, Math, and Science • DRA for reading • End of course assessments, e.g. results on English 9 writing portfolio scores are used by the English 10 teacher
Results from assessments in other subjects related to the current course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A physics teacher uses results of her students' prior math assessments as an indicator of important math skills and knowledge required in physics
Students' prior grades in classes that are closely related to the current course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers should make sure they understand the basis for the grades given by students' previous teachers
Results from beginning-of-course diagnostic tests or performance tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department-generated pre-assessment • Early course test
Markers of future success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Components such as homework completion, academic independence, class participation, etc.

Figure 4: Example of data sources for collecting evidence of students' starting points.

Use Multiple Measures to Determine Starting Points

Just as the number of pixels on a screen increases the quality of the picture you are viewing, using more data points on students gives you a better sense of their current and future performance. You should use more than one source of information to get a sense of what you students know and can do and how well prepared they are for your class. You can then use this information to set learning goals that make sense for groups of students that may start your class with different knowledge and skill sets.

Differentiate Students by Preparedness Level

Teachers often have students with a wide range of preparedness and ability in a course or class. A single learning target for all students based on average performance of the class will likely be too low for some students and too high for others. By developing different targets for students based on how well they are prepared to meet the expectation of your class, your goals are more likely to be ambitious and achievable for a much wider range of students. In addition, recognizing the different starting points of your students through multiple measures provides another tool to help you differentiate instruction for a variety of learners. Grouping students can be done in a number of ways. The suggestion below is for three groups although it may be appropriate to use more or fewer based on needs:

- ✓ **Low level of preparedness:** Students who have yet to master pre-requisite knowledge or skills needed for this course
- ✓ **Medium level of preparedness:** Students who are appropriately prepared to meet the demands of the course
- ✓ **High level of preparedness:** Students who start the course having already mastered some key knowledge or skills

Note: *Determining starting points allows teachers to set better goals for their students and ensure that they deliver the right type of instruction to help them meet those goals. In no way should these groupings imply that a student who comes to class less well prepared for learning cannot make the same sort of growth gains as his peers who come better prepared for class. In many instances, in the classroom of an effective teacher, students who start further behind can make greater gains than their peers who may be already on grade level. However, to avoid any implied negative connotations with “low,” “medium,” and “high” groups, educators may wish to name their student groups using terminology such as 1, 2, 3 or A, B, C, etc. The examples in this guidebook use 1, 2, and 3, to denote high, medium, and low levels of preparedness.*

In the example below in Figure 5, a teacher uses three sources of data to develop groupings of students. She uses prior year test scores, an average of the first two short unit tests, and an estimate of the general skills she considers important for success in her class as measured on a rubric. (An example of the [Markers of Future Success Rubric](#) can be modified for use by educators as needed.)

Student	Prior Year Test Scores	Current Year Test Scores			Markers of Future Success (see rubric)				Preparedness Group
		Unit 1	Unit 2	Average Score	Active Participant (1-4)	Attendance (1-4)	Academic Independence (1-4)	Total Points	
1	252	100	97	98.5	4	3	3	10	1
2	201	62	83	72.5	2	4	3	7	2
3	143	57	75	66	2	1	3	6	3

Figure 5: Using multiple measures to determine starting points and group students.

The teacher uses the following key (Figure 6) to place the students into group 1, 2, or 3. In some cases, students might qualify for more than one preparedness group. For example, a student might have high prior year test scores, low current year test scores, and medium markers of future

success. In this case, the teacher may place the student according to which indicators might be weighted more heavily.

Prior Year Test Score	Current Year Test Score Average	Markers of Future Success	Preparedness Group
250 - 300	85 - 100	9-12	1
200 - 249	70 - 84	5-8	2
<200	<70	0-4	3

Figure 6: Key for determining preparedness groupings.

Using Pre-assessments Appropriately

Pre-assessments have always been a valuable way for teachers to learn about the needs of their students and this should not change with AchieveNJ. However, when used for SGO purposes, teachers should make sure that pre-assessments are used:

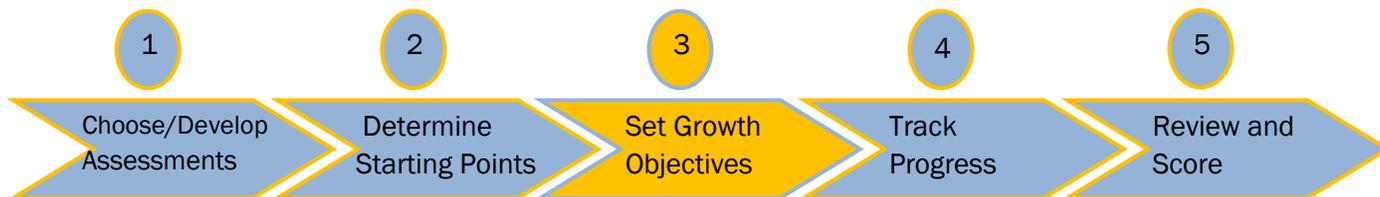
- ✓ Where improvement in a **set of skills** is being evaluated;
- ✓ When assessments are **high-quality** and **vertically aligned**;
- ✓ When **normally used** for instructional purposes; and,
- ✓ **In combination with other measures** to help group students according to preparedness level.

Even if a high-quality pre-assessment score is available, this is still only one data point. You should aim to include other measures to provide a clearer picture of your students and set learning targets that make sense for them.

In the example in Figure 7, the reading teacher has a high-quality initial DRA score but uses other measures to ensure the DRA targets set for her students are appropriate. More detailed information about target setting can be found in the next section of this guidebook.

Student	Initial DRA Level	High Frequency Word Recognition	Markers of Future Success	Preparedness Group	DRA Target
1	3	25	7	2	14
2	1	26	4	3	4
3	3	35	8	2	14
4	6	62	10	1	18

Figure 7: Using pre-assessments in conjunction with other measures to determine starting points.



Step 3: Set Ambitious and Achievable Student Growth Objectives

Required

SGOs must be specific and measurable and be based on student growth and/or achievement.

Note There are several ways you might consider setting SGOs within the broad required framework. The percentages and approaches that follow are only suggestions. Teachers and supervisors should collaborate to ensure that SGOs and their scoring plans make sense for the multitude of circumstances, classes, and groups of students in their district.

After you have developed or chosen a high-quality SGO assessment and have documented the starting points of the students in the course, the next step is to combine this information to define SGOs that are ambitious, but achievable. Developing quality learning goals is highly dependent on expert knowledge of your students and assessments and the professional collaboration that occurs between you and your supervisor.

General and Specific, and Simple and Tiered SGOs

In 2013-14, the Department provided a variety of options to consider when setting SGOs including distinguishing between general and specific (broad vs. narrow scope), and simple and tiered (whole class goals vs. class group goals). In some cases, educators may find value in these distinctions and may continue to make them. However, to ensure our SGO guidance reflects emerging best practices, these distinctions are no longer used by the Department. Therefore, rather than specifying general and specific SGOs, we emphasize that your combined SGOs should reflect a significant proportion of your students and the standards you are responsible for teaching. Also, educators have recognized the “tiered” SGO approach is beneficial for students and teachers. While other approaches are allowed by regulation, the Department’s guidance focuses on setting learning targets that are differentiated by students’ starting points.

Describing Success on an SGO

SGOs must be scored based on a 1 to 4 scale. Shown in Figure 8 are four descriptors for each of the four attainment levels.

Teacher’s Attainment of Student Growth Objective			
Exceptional 4	Full 3	Partial 2	Insufficient 1
Teacher has demonstrated an exceptional impact on learning by exceeding the objective.	Teacher has demonstrated a considerable impact on learning by meeting the objective.	Teacher has demonstrated some impact on learning but did not meet the objective.	Teacher has demonstrated an insufficient impact on learning by falling far short of the objective.

Figure 8: Descriptions of attainment levels for SGOs.

A variety of approaches can be used to set goals for students. The first approach shown below has been widely adopted by educators and is discussed in detail. However, there are other approaches to goal setting below on pages 22-24 that may be considered when dealing with particular situations.

1) SGOs based on the percentage of students meeting an achievement target

Determine the following:

- A target score that represents a **vision of success for a given assessment**;
- The percentage of students in a group that should meet this mark and demonstrate that you have had a **considerable impact on learning** in the class; and
- A **reasonable range** around this percentage for the other categories of performance on the SGO.

For example:

- You and your supervisor decide that 80% on a challenging assessment indicates considerable success in your course. In other words, a “B” on this assessment is a good score; teachers make this type of decision all the time, setting standards for tests, quizzes, and courses using an alphanumeric grading system.
- Based on multiple measures of student starting points, your evaluator agrees that about 75 percent of students should be able make this score at the end of the year. So, to achieve a score of a 3 on your SGO, 75 percent or greater of your students must earn 80 percent or greater on the SGO assessment
- You set ranges around this student percentage that make sense. In the example below, adding or subtracting 10 percent provides ranges for scores of 4, 2, and 1. See Figure 9 below.

Student Target Score on Assessment	Attainment Level in Meeting Student Growth Objective Percent of Students Meeting Target			
	Exceptional 4	Full 3	Partial 2	Insufficient 1
≥80% on SGO Assessment	≥85%	≥75%	≥65%	<65%

Figure 9: SGO learning goals based on number of students meeting a target score.

The process above can be repeated to set goals for several groups of students differentiated by their starting points. Determine the target score that would make most sense for them and add to the scoring plan. The example below in Figure 10 shows three groups of students whose target score changes while the percentage of students remains constant.

Preparedness Group	Student Target Score on Assessment	Attainment Level in Meeting Student Growth Objective Percent of Students Achieving Target Score			
		Exceptional 4	Full 3	Partial 2	Insufficient 1
1	≥90%	≥85%	≥75%	≥65%	<65%
2	≥80%	≥85%	≥75%	≥65%	<65%
3	≥70%	≥85%	≥75%	≥65%	<65%

Figure 10: SGO learning goals based on the percentage of students meeting an assessment score.

2) Small class sizes: Goals based on the number of students meeting an achievement target

For small numbers of students, stating a percentage of students that will meet a target may be impractical. For example, if there are five students in a group, each student represents fully 20 percent of the group. This makes it challenging to create a scoring plan that makes sense and the teacher may decide to use numbers of students meeting the goal instead. For example, as shown in Figure 11, an elementary school teacher groups her 24 students according to how well prepared they are to improve their reading level during the year as measured by the DRA. She does not use a precise percentage of students but numbers of students instead. If students leave or enter the class during the year, she can make adjustments to the numbers in each group accordingly.

Preparedness Group	Student Target Score on Assessment	Attainment Level in Meeting Student Growth Objective Number of Students Achieving Target Score			
		Exceptional 4	Full 3	Partial 2	Insufficient 1
1	≥4	5/5	4/5	3/5	<3/5
2	≥14-16	≥12/13	≥10/13	≥8/13	<8/13
3	≥18-20	≥5/6	4/6	3/6	<3/6

Figure 11: SGO learning goals for three groups of students based on the number of the students attaining the target score.

3) Small class sizes: Goals based on the average score of a group of students

In the following example (Figure 12), a resource room teacher has two preparedness groups in a class of seven students. Rather than being limited by the number of students meeting the goal, which can be quite fluid as students enter and leave the classroom, she sets her goal based on the average score on the assessment for each group. She also includes a provision for students who graduate from her program during the year. Using an average score approach when students are grouped by starting points is an approach that can also be adapted to larger groups of students.

Preparedness Group	Attainment Level in Meeting Student Growth Objective Average Student Performance on Assessment			
	Exceptional 4	Full 3	Partial 2	Insufficient 1
1	≥80% or tests out of program	≥70%	≥65%	<65%
2	≥90% or tests out of program	≥80%	≥75%	<75%

Figure 12: Learning goals for two groups of students based on average student performance in each group.

Small Class Sizes: Goals for Individual students

For some classes, it might be practical and make more sense to set individualized targets for students. This may be especially appropriate in classes where there is a wide variety of needs and performance levels such as in some special education classrooms. Here, rather than clustering

students in groups, the teacher tailors a student specific goal for each student based on information about the student including prior learning data and an inspection of each child’s IEP. See this [Evaluation of Special Education Teachers](#) overview for more information about the relationship between IEPs and SGOs.

4) Using high-quality pre- and post- assessments: Goals that measure changes in proficiency level
 When pre- and post-assessments are used appropriately as described in the information on page 20, change in proficiency using high-quality assessments such as the DRA, MAP, or other standardized assessment, can yield useful measures of success. When choosing this approach, you might consider setting differentiated growth goals recognizing that some students are further behind than others when entering your class. Your SGO can focus on bringing these students closer or up to grade level.

Figure 13 shows three groups of students and their starting points according to their current reading level. More growth is expected by this teacher for students starting further behind. When adopting this approach to goal-setting, make sure you consider data **in addition** to the scores on the first diagnostic assessment to set good goals for all students. See [Step 2 of the SGO process](#) for more information on determining starting points using multiple measures.

Preparedness Group	Attainment Level in Meeting Student Growth Objective Student Proficiency Growth on Reading Assessment (years)			
	Exceptional 4	Full 3	Partial 2	Insufficient 1
More than 2 years below grade	≥2.0	≥1.5	≥1.0	<1.0
1 to 2 years below grade	≥1.5	≥1.25	≥1.0	<1.0
Above grade level to 1 year below grade level	≥1.25	≥1.0	≥0.75	<0.75

Figure 13: Learning goals for three groups of students with degree of expected growth differentiated by starting points.

5) Gathering more Information from SGO scores: Goals set in smaller increments

In some circumstances, it may make sense to adopt a goal setting strategy that recognizes success in increments smaller than can be captured on a whole number 1 - 4 scale. While using whole numbers is simpler, more information can be gathered from a scoring plan that is divided into finer scores. A suggested approach is shown below – as with all the examples in this guidebook, these numbers are for illustrative purposes only and are not required by the Department.

Attainment Level in Meeting Student Growth Objective Percent of Students Achieving Target Score on Assessment						
4.0	3.5	3.0	2.5	2.0	1.5	1.0
≥95	≥85	≥80	≥75	≥70	≥65	<65

Figure 14: Scoring guide using 0.5 increments.

Completing a Student Growth Objective Form Prior to the Approval Deadline

Revised SGO Form

Based on educator feedback, we have revised several of the optional SGO resource documents including the SGO Form to align with this guidebook.⁸ This optional form should be modified by districts to meet their own specific needs. Reminders that modifications can be made are embedded throughout the form. A blank copy of this form can be found in the [Appendix](#) and on the [AchieveNJ website](#).

Example SGO Form and Completion Notes

Examine Mr. Newton’s form in Figure 15 below and the brief narrative for each section to help guide your own form completion process.

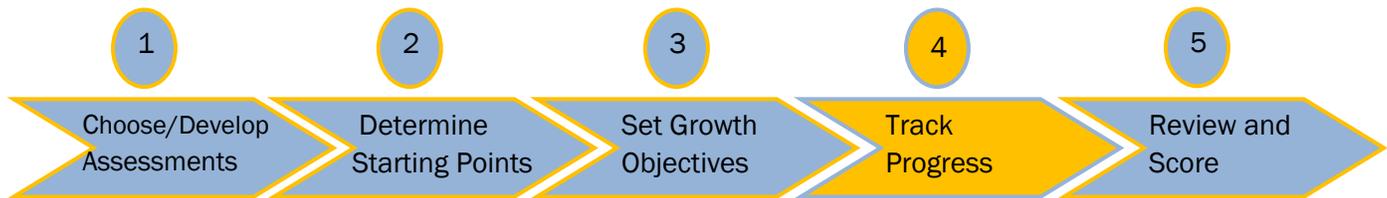
- In the top section of the form, Mr. Newton includes general information including number of students and the time span of the SGO.
- The standards, rationale, and assessment section can be filled in following completion of [Step 1](#) of the SGO process. Mr. Newton states and briefly describes the standards. He provides the reasons why these standards are important for future success of his students. He also describes the assessment method he will use, noting that the assessment is used across the physics department at a time typically set aside for testing in the school.
- Mr. Newton describes the three information categories he uses to determine starting points ([Step 2](#)) and provides a rationale for making decisions where students do not fit cleanly into one category or another.
- Based on [Step 3](#) of the SGO process, the teacher clearly states his objective for the different preparedness groups of students and describes in the table the scores he expects them to earn.
- Mr. Newton’s scoring plan is aligned with other parts of the form and describes performance levels in terms of the percentage of students who are expected to meet the target score.

A	Name	School	Grade	Course/ Subject	Number of Students	Interval of Instruction
	I. Newton	Einstein Academy	9	Physics 1	65/65	October 15 to April 15
B	<p>Standards, Rationale, and Assessment Method Name the content standards covered, state the rationale for how these standards are critical for the next level of the subject, other academic disciplines, and/or life/college/career. Name and briefly describe the format of the assessment method.</p> <p>Standards NJCCCS physical science 5.2.12 C, D and E (energy, energy transformation, force and motion) NJCCCS science practices 5.1.12 A-D (scientific explanations, investigation, reflection, and participation)</p> <p>Rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This SGO includes all of the NJCCCS related to physics creating a foundation important for students who will take AP and/or college-level physics and is fundamental to many careers including architecture, mechanics, engineering, medicine. The SGO also includes all of the science practice standards crucial in helping student become scientific thinkers. This mindset is valuable for making decisions when a large amount of information is available and must be analyzed for value and accuracy. It is critical in most academic disciplines. 					

⁸ Copies of 2013-14 documents can be found on the [AchieveNJ website](#).

	<p>Assessment Physics department's common assessment administered at the end of the 3rd marking period. Written: 60 multiple choice (4 choice), 5 short response questions, 1 essay. Practical: Students design a simple apparatus, take measurements, and collect data.</p>					
C	<p>Starting Points and Preparedness Groupings State the type of information being used to determine starting points and summarize scores for each type by group. Modify the table as needed.</p>					
	Preparedness Group	Information #1	Information #2	Information #3		
		Grade 8 math NJ ASK	Markers of Future Success	Physics department pre-assessment		
	3	<200	<5	35-49		
	2	200-250	5-10	50-66		
	1	>250	>10	67-80		
<p>Students who score at the same level in at least two information categories will be placed in that level. In cases where students are close to the next highest category, I will consider student's current grades when making an appropriate placement determination.</p>						
D	<p>Student Growth Objective State simply what percentage of students in each preparedness group will meet what target in the space below, e.g. "75% of students in each group will meet the target score." Describe how the targets reflect ambitious and achievable scores for these students. Use the table to provide more detail for each group. Modify the table as needed.</p>					
	<p>At least 70% of my students will attain the scores shown below according to their preparedness group.</p>					
	Preparedness Group (e.g. 1,2,3)	Number of Students in Each Group		Target Score on SGO Assessment		
	3	36/65		70		
	2	21/65		80		
1	8/65		90			
E	<p>Scoring Plan State the projected scores for each group and what percentage/number of students will meet this target at each attainment level. Modify the table as needed.</p>					
	Preparedness Group	Student Target Score	Attainment Level in Meeting Student Growth Objective Percentage of Students Achieving Target Score			
			Exceptional 4	Full 3	Partial 2	Insufficient 1
	3	70	≥85%	≥75%	≥65%	<65%
	2	80	≥85%	≥75%	≥65%	<65%
1	90	≥85%	≥75%	≥65%	<65%	

Figure 15: Completed SGO form prior to administrator approval



Step 4: Track Progress and Refine Instruction

The value of goal-setting becomes particularly apparent when educators track progress towards these goals and can then make adjustments to stay on track. In the classroom, tracking goals means monitoring student performance through some sort of assessment. These assessments could be benchmark assessments that are already in place, for example. They could also be the components in a portfolio.

During the middle of the school year or course, you and your supervisor should check in to evaluate the progress your students are making towards the targets you have set for them. The [Mid-Course Check-in Form](#) (also found in the [Appendix](#)) may help to facilitate the discussion, encouraging you to reflect on the following questions:

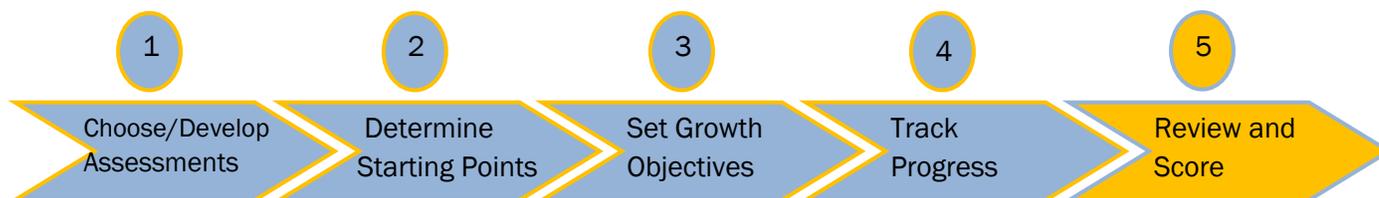
- How are your students progressing toward your SGOs? How do you know?
- Which students are struggling/exceeding expectations? What are you doing to support them?
- What additional resources do you need to support you as you work to achieve your SGOs?

During this check-in, you can share evidence of learning that supports answers to these questions and adjustments to your teaching strategy. This is an excellent opportunity for you to demonstrate responsiveness to student needs and for your supervisor to provide guidance and support as necessary.

At this time, it may also be appropriate to make adjustments to the scoring plan of the SGO to take into account students who have left or entered the class, or take into account significant changes in the course or instruction that may influence the predicted outcomes of the students. Any changes that are made to the SGO must be approved by the superintendent and may be documented in the section of the optional SGO form shown below.

<p>Notes Describe any changes made to SGO after initial approval, e.g. because of changes in student population, other unforeseen circumstances, etc.</p>

Figure 16: Section on SGO Form for documenting changes to SGO.



Step 5: Review Results and Score

Required

A teacher's supervisor and/or a member of the School Improvement Panel will calculate a rating for the SGOs.

Note *The approved SGO scoring plan and assessment should be consulted when determining the final score. In rare instances where there have been significant changes in a teacher's class that affect the teacher's SGO score, such as truly exceptional or unusual circumstances leading to poor teacher or student attendance, the supervisor may use his or her professional judgment to provide a fair and accurate score.*

At the end of the school year, you will compile the results of the assessment(s) used for SGOs and your supervisor will use them to formulate an SGO score.

In the example below in Figure 17 on page 29, Mr. Newton uses results on his SGO assessment to determine how many students met their objective. He then circles the number his SGO scoring plan and transfers the information to the results section of the form as shown. By using a weighted method to calculate his provisional score prior to meeting with his supervisor, Mr. Newton generates a score that proportionally represents the learning in his three unevenly-sized preparedness groups. This method is described in more detail in the next section.

Scoring Plan

State the projected scores for each group and what percentage of students will meet this target at each attainment level. Modify the table as needed.

Preparedness Group	Student Target Score	Attainment Level in Meeting Student Growth Objective			
		Percentage of Students Achieving Target Score			
		Exceptional 4	Full 3	Partial 2	Insufficient 1
Low	70	≥85%	≥75%	≥65%	<65%
Medium	80	≥85%	≥75%	≥65%	<65%
High	90	≥85%	≥75%	≥65%	<65%

Results of Student Growth Objective

Summarize results using weighted average as appropriate. Delete and add columns and rows as needed.

Preparedness Group	Students at Target Score	Teacher SGO Score	Weight (based on students per group)	Weighted Score	Total Teacher SGO Score
Low	31/86%	4	0.56	2.24	3.56
Medium	16/76%	3	0.32	0.96	
High	6/75%	3	0.12	0.36	

Figure 17: Determining a weighted score using the approved scoring plan.

Weighted Method for Calculating Tiered Student Growth Objective Scores

The simplest way to generate a score for an SGO that includes several groups of students is to assign a point value to the attainment level for each group. However, this does not take into account that the number of students in each preparedness group may significantly differ. For example, if 85 percent of students in the medium level group made their target, this might result in four points as “exceptional attainment” of the goal. However, perhaps only 65 percent of the high level group made their goal, giving a score of only “partial attainment” and two points. If both groups were of the same size, an average score of a three would fairly represent the teacher’s work. However, if there were 50 students in the medium level group and only 10 in the high level group, giving equal weight to each score would not fairly represent the overall achievement. Using a weighted score solves this problem. This can be seen in the next two tables (Figures 18 and 19).

Preparedness Group	Number of Students in Each Group	Percentage of Students in Each Group	Weight Assigned to Attainment Score*
Low	36/65	56%	0.56
Medium	21/65	32%	0.32
High	8/65	12%	0.12

*rounded to produce 1.

Figure 18: Calculating weights for attainment scores based on proportion of students.

The calculated weights from Figure 18 can then be applied to the straight scores obtained, as shown in Figure 19.

Preparedness Group	Number of Students at Target Score	Objective Attainment Level	Weight	Weighted score
Low	31	4	x 0.56	2.24
Medium	16	3	x 0.32	.96
High	4	3	x 0.12	.36
			Total	3.56

Figure 19: Determining a weighted score for a tiered SGO.

Calculating a Total Student Growth Objective Score

A teacher with two SGOs can do a simple calculation to work out the final SGO score regardless of type of SGO, or how the score was calculated. Figure 20 demonstrates the calculation used if placing equal weight on both SGOs. A district may decide to use different weightings for each SGO.

Student Growth Objective	Score	Weighting	Weighted Score
SGO 1	2	x 0.50	1.0
SGO 2	3	x 0.50	1.5
			Total
			2.50

Figure 20: Determining a final SGO score.

Using Student Growth Objectives to Improve Practice and Student Learning

When the SGO process is carried out diligently, the information that SGOs provide will be valuable to teachers who are seeking to improve their practice. Not only can this information be used during the year to make course corrections in instruction, it can be used to develop a well-thought out instructional plan for the following year. You might use the results from your SGOs to inform your professional development plan, choosing to focus on areas of challenge through which you or your students struggled. Conversely, while planning for the next school year, it may be clear from your SGO results that you should keep or expand particularly successful strategies or materials.

The SGO form contains a section where you can document your reflections on the current year's SGO and plan for the next. See Figure 21 below.

Review SGO at Annual Conference
Describe successes and challenges, lessons learned from SGO about teaching and student learning, and steps to improve SGOs for next year.

Figure 21: Section on SGO form for documenting end of year reflections on SGOs.

Part 5: SGOs for Educational Service Professionals and Guidance for Administrators

SGOs for Educational Service Professionals

SGOs are *required for all teachers* under AchieveNJ, but are currently *only recommended by the Department for those who provide educational services* such as school counselors, nurses, media specialists, CST members, and others. However, many districts are requiring these educators to set SGOs and in some cases, including scores in their evaluations.

The services delivered by these specialists are diverse and differ significantly from those delivered by classroom teachers. Therefore, districts should consider approaching the SGO process differently for these educators. For all educators, no matter their role, SGOs should be specific and measurable goals that authentically measure how effectively the educator provides his or her services, whether that is helping students learn to add single digit numbers or decide which college to attend. In addition, SGOs should improve the outcomes in the educator's area of responsibility and help him or her grow in their professional practice.

Within this framework, if you are an educator who typically works in schools outside of a classroom setting first consider what type of goal you should set based on your primary responsibilities. For example, do you teach specific content to students similar to a classroom teacher, deliver educational programs or services within the school, or provide some combination of these? If a good deal of your work is directly instructing groups of students, your SGOs might look similar to those of a classroom teacher. If you provide programs or services to students, how you set and measure goals will probably look different.

For certain types of objectives, the term Student Growth Objective may not be appropriate; perhaps you are delivering a service to parents or teachers, for example. You might consider using the term Professional Growth Objective, Growth Objective, or some other term that makes sense.

Different situations with suggested approaches are shown below.

Direct Instruction to Students

You may be a nurse, media center specialist, or other certificated staff member who regularly meets with students in a more typical classroom setting and/or are responsible for direct student instruction.

Examples

- A media center specialist, who teaches a marking period course of research skills, sets goals for student learning and measures student success just as a typical classroom teacher would.
- A school nurse sets goals that help students learn about and manage health conditions, such as asthma.

Education Programming

If you provide educational services to students, staff, or the greater community, it might be appropriate to set growth objectives that capture this important work. This may include measuring growth in awareness of proper procedures for dealing with food allergies, the college application process, nutrition, internet safety and cyber-bullying, etc.

Examples

- A student assistance counselor presents a school-wide program to raise awareness of bullying and uses before and after surveys to determine how much students had learned from the program.
- A school counselor hosts information sessions for parents regarding various elements related to the college application process and survey the parents' knowledge before and after the sessions.

Outreach Effectiveness

Specialists can also measure the *reach* of their services.

Example

- A learning disabilities teacher consultant develops an education program to help teachers address executive function disorder issues. She would like to increase the number of attendees to the information sessions. She develops an outreach plan and measures the increase in number of participants in the program.

Examples of growth objectives for educators who provide special services can be found in the [Exemplar Library](#). The Department is grateful for the efforts of dozens of practicing educators who collaborated to produce these examples.

SGO Implementation Advice for School and District Leaders

Administrators involved in teacher evaluation must fully understand the nature and purpose of SGOs. Only then can they effectively train teachers, monitor SGO development and quality, and provide accurate SGO ratings to teachers at the end of the year. Providing support for high-quality SGOs is not only beneficial for teachers; the evaluations of principals, assistant principals, and vice principals are closely linked to the effective implementation of SGOs and resulting success of their teachers. The following is a list of steps and resources that administrators can use to help facilitate SGO implementation.

Step 1 - Learn about SGOs

- a) Review data provided by SciP and/or DEAC on prior year's SGOs.
- b) Attend [available NJDOE workshops](#) on SGOs.
- c) Read most current SGO guidance:
 - [SGO Overview](#): 2-page overview explaining SGOs
 - [SGO Guidebook](#): In-depth "how-to" guide for setting SGOs, including forms in the [Appendix](#)
 - [SGO Quick Start Guide](#): 2-page summary of SGO Guidebook.

Step 2 – Introduce Teachers to SGO Development for Upcoming School Year

Provide overviews of SGOs for the year in faculty meetings and other large group meetings, possibly using:

- A district-developed overview presentation reviewing SGO challenges and successes
- SGO 2.0 Presentation ([PPT](#) | [PDF](#))
- District-specific goals, timeline, and training for SGOs

Step 3 – Provide Time and Resources for Teachers to Develop High-Quality SGOs

During time set aside for PD, PLC and team meetings, encourage teachers to use:

- Resources in the SGO guidebook
- [SGO Exemplars](#): Examples of SGOs that can be used as learning tools during SGO development

Step 4 – Evaluate SGO Quality, Approve, and Monitor Progress

Before the SGO submission deadline, review SGO quality using the following tools and guidance:

- [Quality Rating Rubric](#): Short rubric developed to help evaluate SGOs
- [Evaluating SGO Quality](#): Presentation developed to walk through the ideal process of reviewing SGOs
- [SGO Approval Inventory and Scoring Chart](#): Adaptable Excel spreadsheet that can be used by evaluators as a database to track SGO development, approval, conferences and scores for teachers

During the SGO timeframe, check-in with teachers to discuss progress and provide support:

- [Mid-Course Check-in Form](#); Optional form to promote teacher reflection and structure mid-course conversations

Step 5 – Adjust SGOs Where Necessary and Score

Revise SGOs when necessary by February 15 using the following suggested procedures and then score once teachers have collected SGO assessment information from their students:

- [One-page explanation](#) of the SGO assessment and adjustment process
- **SGO Scoring Checkpoints and Considerations**: Annotated guide with examples and resources for developing SGO scoring policies and completing the SGO process with teachers ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))
- **SGO Scoring Checklist**: Simple list that administrators may use prior to or during annual conference to ensure important aspects of SGO scoring are completed ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))
- **Administering and Scoring SGO Assessments**: Table including a series of optional steps districts and schools can take to increase the quality of SGO assessing and scoring ([Word](#) | [PDF](#))

Appendix: Forms for Setting, Assessing, and Scoring Student Growth Objectives

The forms on the following pages may be used to set, assess, and score SGOs, and evaluate the assessments that you use when setting your growth objectives. These forms can be found in Word and PDF forms on the [AchieveNJ website](#). Their use is optional.

Student Growth Objective Form

Name	School	Grade	Course/Subject	Number of Students	Interval of Instruction
Standards, Rationale, and Assessment Method Name the content standards covered, state the rationale for how these standards are critical for the next level of the subject, other academic disciplines, and/or life/college/career. Name and briefly describe the format of the assessment method.					
Starting Points and Preparedness Groupings State the type of information being used to determine starting points and summarize scores for each type by group. Modify the table as needed.					
Preparedness Group	Information #1	Information #2	Information #3		
Student Growth Objective State simply what percentage of students in each preparedness group will meet what target in the space below, e.g. "75% of students in each group will meet the target score." Describe how the targets reflect ambitious and achievable scores for these students. Use the table to provide more detail for each group. Modify the table as needed.					
Preparedness Group (e.g. 1,2,3)	Number of Students in Each Group	Target Score on SGO Assessment			
Scoring Plan State the projected scores for each group and what percentage/number of students will meet this target at each attainment level. Modify the table as needed.					
Preparedness Group	Student Target Score	Teacher SGO Score Based on Percent of Students Achieving Target Score			
		Exceptional (4)	Full (3)	Partial (2)	Insufficient (1)

Approval of Student Growth Objective

Administrator approves scoring plan and assessment used to measure student learning.

Teacher _____ Signature _____

Date Submitted _____

Evaluator _____ Signature _____

Date Approved _____

Results of Student Growth Objective

Summarize results using weighted average as appropriate. Delete and add columns and rows as needed.

Preparedness Group	Students at Target Score	Teacher SGO Score	Weight (based on students per group)	Weighted Score	Total Teacher SGO Score

Notes

Describe any changes made to SGO after initial approval, e.g. because of changes in student population, other unforeseen circumstances, etc.

Review SGO at Annual Conference

Describe successes and challenges, lessons learned from SGO about teaching and student learning, and steps to improve SGOs for next year.

Teacher _____ Signature _____

Date _____

Evaluator _____ Signature _____

Date _____

Student Growth Objective Quality Rating Rubric

This rubric is a teaching tool that may be used by teachers and administrators to work towards producing high-quality SGOs. This rubric describes activities and components of SGOs that align with guidance documents and presentations previously published by the Department. The State requirements for SGOs can be found in regulations at NJAC 6A:10-4.2(e). **Any score generated using this rubric cannot be used as part of a teacher's required evaluation rating.**

Excellent	Good	Fair	Inadequate
NUMBER OF STUDENTS/INTERVAL OF INSTRUCTION			
Number of students in <i>combined</i> SGOs represents all or a large majority of the teacher's students. ⁹	Number of students in <i>combined</i> SGOs represents at least half of the teacher's students.	Number of students in <i>combined</i> SGOs represents at least a quarter of the teacher's students.	Number of students in <i>combined</i> SGOs represents less than a quarter of the teacher's students.
Includes start and stop dates that include a significant proportion ¹⁰ of the school year/course length.	Includes start and stop dates that include at least half of the school year/course length.	Includes start and stop dates that include some of the school year/course length.	Includes start and stop dates that include little of the school year/course length.
RATIONALE FOR STUDENT GROWTH OBJECTIVE/STANDARDS CHOSEN			
Names the standards group addressed by the SGO and references content at the most specific level of applicable standards.	Names the standards group addressed by the SGO and references content at a general level of applicable standards.	Names the standards group addressed by the SGO.	Does not name standards addressed by the SGO.
Includes a significant proportion of standards for which the teacher is responsible during the instructional period. ¹¹	Includes at least half of the standards for which the teacher is responsible during the instructional period.	Includes some of the standards for which the teacher is responsible during the instructional period.	Includes few of the standards for which the teacher is responsible during the instructional period.
Articulates how the majority of selected standards are critical to enduring understanding of the subject area, success in future classes, and readiness in college, career, and life.	Articulates how some selected standards are critical to enduring understanding of the subject area, success in future classes, and readiness in college, career, and life.	Articulates how some selected standards lead to future success.	Does not justify how the standards chosen lead to future success or does so poorly.

⁹ The mSGP rating of teachers in tested subjects and grades includes a significant number of standards and students. Therefore, SGOs for these teachers may address a more targeted student group, content area or set of skills. SGOs may be designed to reinforce standards required for success on NJ's state tests or address areas on which the teacher would like to increase instructional focus. Additionally, in some cases, including for teachers with multiple discrete courses, or several hundred students, educators should strive to set SGOs for the courses and students that best reflect their work even if they cannot incorporate a *majority* of the classes and students for which they are responsible.

¹⁰ Significant: somewhere between 51 and 100%; deliberately leaves room to allow districts to make choices appropriate for their local contexts.

¹¹ See footnote 1.

Excellent	Good	Fair	Inadequate
STARTING POINTS			
Multiple, high-quality measures are used to thoughtfully determine students' starting points.	Multiple measures of varying quality are used to thoughtfully determine students' starting points.	Multiple measures of varying quality are used to determine students' starting points.	A single measure is used to determine students' starting points.
Pre-assessment, if used, provides a high-quality measure of skills , is administered reliably, is vertically aligned with the post-assessment, and is used in conjunction with other measures to determine starting points.	Pre-assessment, if used, is a quality measure of skills , is administered reliably, is mostly vertically aligned with the post-assessment, and is used in conjunction with other measures to determine starting points.	Pre-assessment, if used, is based on skill and content, is administered reliably , is somewhat vertically aligned with the post-assessment, and is used in conjunction with other measures to determine starting points.	Pre-assessment, if used, is heavily content-based , is not administered reliably , is not vertically aligned with the post-assessment, and is used as the sole measure of student starting points.

ASSESSMENTS			
Aligns all items ¹² to the selected standards that were taught during the SGO period.	Aligns most items to the selected standards that were taught during the SGO period.	Aligns some items to the selected standards that were taught during the SGO period.	Aligns few or no items to the selected standards.
All selected standards have at least one assessment item. All critical standards ¹³ have multiple items.	Most selected standards have at least one assessment item. Most critical standards have multiple items.	Some selected standards have at least one assessment item. Some critical standards have multiple items.	Few or no selected standards have an assessment item. Critical standards are not identified or do not have multiple items.
Range of rigor in assessment accurately reflects rigor of instruction, content, and skills of course.	Range of rigor in assessment mostly reflects rigor of instruction, content, and skills of course.	Range of rigor in assessment somewhat reflects rigor of instruction, content, and skills of course.	Range of rigor in assessment does not reflect rigor of instruction, content, and skills of course.
Highly accessible to all students regardless of background knowledge, cultural differences, personal characteristics, and special needs.	Mostly accessible to all students regardless of background knowledge, cultural differences, personal characteristics, and special needs.	Somewhat accessible to all students regardless of background knowledge, cultural differences, personal characteristics, and special needs.	Clearly disadvantages certain students because of their background knowledge, cultural differences, personal characteristics, and special needs.
Assessment format, construction and item design is consistently high-quality. Includes rubrics, scoring guides, and/or answer keys for all items, all of which are accurate, clear, and thorough.	Assessment format, construction and item design is mostly high-quality. Includes rubrics, scoring guides, and/or answer keys for all items, most of which are accurate, clear, and thorough.	Assessment format, construction and item design is of moderate quality. Includes rubrics, scoring guides, and/or answer keys for some items, most of which are accurate, clear, and thorough.	Assessment format, construction and item design is of low-quality. Includes rubrics, scoring guides, and/or answer keys for some items, few or none of which are accurate, clear, and thorough.

¹² Items: Performance-based or portfolio tasks, or questions on an assessment that measure learning.

¹³ Critical standards: Those that lead to enduring understanding and/or future success in school/college/career/life.

Excellent	Good	Fair	Inadequate
STUDENT GROWTH OBJECTIVES/SCORING PLAN			
Student starting points are used thoughtfully to justify student learning goals.	Student starting points are used to set student learning goals.	Student starting points are present but their relationship to student learning goals is not clear.	Student starting points are not considered when setting student learning goals.
Student learning goals are differentiated to be ambitious and achievable for all or nearly all students.	Student learning goals are differentiated to be ambitious and achievable for a majority of students.	Student learning goals are differentiated to be ambitious and achievable for some students.	Student learning goals are not differentiated or are set too low.
Scoring range for “full attainment” accurately reflects a teacher’s <i>considerable</i> impact on student learning. Scoring range is justified by analysis of student starting points and the rigor of the assessment.	Scoring range for “full attainment” accurately reflects a teacher’s <i>considerable</i> impact on student learning. Scoring range is implied by presented student starting points and the rigor of the assessment.	Scoring range for “full attainment” reflects less than a teacher’s <i>considerable</i> impact on student learning. Scoring range may not be reflected by student starting points and the rigor of the assessment.	Scoring range for “full attainment” is too low or too high to accurately represent a teacher’s considerable impact on student learning.
COLLABORATION/COMPARABILITY			
Most, or all, key decisions ¹⁴ were made collaboratively between teachers. A common assessment is in use. ¹⁵	Many key decisions were made collaboratively between teachers. A common assessment is in use.	Some key decisions were made collaboratively between teachers. A common assessment is not in use.	Few or no key decisions are made collaboratively by teachers. A common assessment is not in use.

¹⁴ Key Decisions: Those that surround assessment development, baseline measures, and scoring plan parameters, etc.

¹⁵ In cases of teachers who teach the only course of a particular type that is offered, this component can be used to assess general collaboration within a department or team.

Depth of Knowledge/Rigor Chart and Checklist

Use the following chart to help create and categorize assessment items. The range of rigor of the assessment items should reflect the rigor of the course content and instruction. Use in conjunction with the [Depth of Knowledge](#) wheel and transfer this information to your assessment blueprint.

Level	Learner Action	Key Actions	Sample Question Stems	Question Numbers/Portfolio Components
Level 1: Recall	Requires simple recall of such information as a fact, definition, term, or simple procedure.	List, Tell, Define, Label, Identify, Name, State, Write, Locate, Find, Match, Measure, Repeat	How many...? Label parts of the... Which is true or false...?	
Level 2: Concept	Involves some mental skills, concepts, or processing beyond a habitual response; students must make some decisions about how to approach a problem or activity.	Estimate, Compare, Organize, Interpret, Modify, Predict, Cause/Effect, Summarize, Graph, Classify	Identify patterns in... Use context clues to... Predict what will happen when... What differences exist between...? If x occurs, y will....	
Level 3: Strategic Thinking	Requires reasoning, planning, using evidence, and thinking at a higher level.	Critique, Formulate, Hypothesize, Construct, Revise, Investigate, Differentiate, Compare	Construct a defense of... Can you illustrate the concept of...? Apply the method used to determine...? Use evidence to support....	
Level 4: Extended Thinking	Requires complex reasoning, planning, developing, and thinking, most likely over an extended time. Cognitive demands are high, and students are required to make connections both within and among subject domains.	Design, Connect, Synthesize, Apply, Critique, Analyze, Create, Prove, Support	Design x in order to.... Develop a proposal to.... Create a model that.... Critique the notion that...	

Assessment Blueprint: Aligning an Assessment to Course Standards, Content, Skills, and Rigor

PRIOR TO TEST DESIGN		DURING TEST DESIGN				
Standard and Description of Standard (NJCCCS, CCSS, etc.)	Relative Importance of Standard 4= High 3= Medium-high 2= Medium-low 1= Low	Type of Question (multiple-choice, constructed-response, essay, etc.)	Depth of Knowledge of Question 4 = Extended Thinking 3 = Strategic Thinking 2 = Skill/ Concept 1 = Recall	Question Number(s)	Points	Total Point Value/ Percentage of Test
4.NBT.B.4 Add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers	4	MC	2	#1	5	30 pts /10%
		MC	3	#3	5	
		CR	3	#6	20	

AFTER TEST DESIGN CHECKLIST
<input type="checkbox"/> Is the assessment of a length and format that is appropriate for subject/grade level?
<input type="checkbox"/> Is the complete assessment and each assessment item accessible to all students?
<input type="checkbox"/> Can the assessment be administered under comparable conditions across classrooms?
<input type="checkbox"/> Can the assessment be scored consistently with a readily accessible scoring guide and/or rubric?
<input type="checkbox"/> Does each item follow the rules of assessment item design ?

Note: Information about quality assessment design can be found in the presentation [SGO 2.0: from Compliance to Quality](#). Delete the information populating the first rows of the table above and add more rows to make your own assessment blueprint in Word.

PRIOR TO TEST DESIGN	
Standard/ Description of Standard (NJCCCS, CCSS, etc.)	Select and describe the standard to be assessed. In a course, <i>during the instructional period of the SGO</i> , is this a content/skill standard that the student will be taught?
Relative Importance of Standard 4= High 3= Medium-high 2=Medium-low 1=Low	Determine the relative importance of the standard. How much time (days/percent of course) is spent teaching the standard? Does the standard have value beyond the current year – either in the next level of the subject, in other academic disciplines, or in life/college/career? (Ideally, time spent teaching a standard should align to its relative importance)
DURING TEST DESIGN	
Type of Question (multiple-choice, constructed-response, performance assessment, essay, etc.)	Determine the type(s) of question(s) used to measure the standard. What is the best way for the student to demonstrate understanding of each standard? When considered with other items for the standard, is the question type appropriate for the relative importance of the standard?
Depth of Knowledge of Questions 4 = Extended Thinking 3 = Strategic Thinking 2 = Skill/ Concept 1 = Recall	Determine the depth of knowledge that will be used to assess the standard. Are content standards of greater importance assessed for greater depths of understanding? Is there an appropriate variety of items at different DOK levels? Refer to Depth of Knowledge Wheel/Chart
Question Number(s)/ Point Value	Indicate the question number(s) and the point value for the item. Is the individual item point value weighted appropriately for the demands of the question? e.g. lower for multiple choice, higher for constructed response.
Total Point Value/ Percentage of Test	What is the total point value of the question set for the standard? Is the total point value available for each standard weighted proportionally to the importance of the standard?
AFTER TEST DESIGN CHECKLIST	
Length and format	Overall, is the length and format appropriate for subject/grade level?
Accessibility	Is the complete assessment and each assessment item accessible to all students?
Consistent administration	Can the assessment be administered under comparable conditions across classrooms; instructions, available resources, format, time available, etc. are standardized over each administration. Is there a system in place to ensure consistent test administration ?
Consistent scoring	Are there a clear scoring guide, rubric and rules for scoring? Have multiple scorers discussed how they will score consistently? Is there a system in place to check for consistency of scoring ?
Quality of assessment item	Does each item, depending on its type, follow the rules of assessment item design ?

Mid-Course Check-in

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Grade Level/
Subject/Period: _____

Evaluator: _____

In preparation for the mid-course progress check-in, please complete this questionnaire and submit it to your evaluator. You may attach your responses to this form or write them here directly.

- 1) How are your students progressing toward your student growth objectives? How do you know?

- 2) Which students are struggling/exceeding expectations? What are you doing to support them?

- 3) What additional resources do you need to support you as you work to achieve your student growth objectives?

- 4) Are there any student attendance issues substantial enough to affect your student growth objectives?

Please return this form to your primary evaluator, along with your SGO forms, and any interim student learning data you would like to discuss during the check-in.