



School District U-46 Student Growth Component of the Teacher Appraisal Plan
Frequently Asked Questions
Updated August 2018

For ease of navigation, this FAQ is organized under seven main themes. Use the following links to skip to the desired section. If viewing in Google Docs, you may also select *Tools - Document Outline* to open the list of questions on the left, and navigate directly to those you desire.

SLO Process	Frequency & Duration	Reflective Partner
Appraisal & Rating	Training & PD	Resources
Administrator		

SLO PROCESS

What does 'SLO Process' stand for?

SLO Process stands for Student Learning Objective Process.

Can I use the same SLO twice, with different students?

Yes, if it is relevant. Some non student specific elements of the SLO can remain the same from one SLO to the other (learning objective, rationale, etc), but student specific components should be altered to reflect the students in your classroom.

I have a split grade classroom, can I complete both SLOs (in the same year) on the same skill (SLO 1 with one grade level and SLO 2 with the other grade level)?

Yes, if the skill is aligned to a standard for each grade level. Non student specific elements of the SLO can remain the same from one SLO to the other (learning objective, rationale, etc), but student specific components should be altered to reflect the students in your classroom.

How should I determine which students to focus my SLO on?

The students your SLO focuses on should directly relate to your learning objective and, ultimately, your SLO in its entirety. While you are still instructing all students in your classroom, your learning objective may identify a specific skill that you choose to be the focus for a select group of students. It is recommended that teachers use data to inform student groups.

How narrow does my learning objective need to be?

Your learning objective should be specific enough to effectively identify the focus of your SLO, while also tying to a standard. A learning objective that is left too broad, and encompassing too many skills, may become a hindrance as you complete the rest of the SLO process.

What do I do if I don't have standards?

All courses and content areas should have accompanying state and/or national standards for use in this process. If you are unsure of which standards to use, please contact the U-46 Office of Teaching & Learning, or your content/program coordinator directly. Emails can also be sent to StudentGrowth@u-46.org.

Which assessment(s) do I have to use?

As defined in the School District U-46 Student Growth Component of the Teacher Appraisal Plan, the assessments used in the U-46 SLO Process are the teacher's choice. The assessments used in the process can be any combination of type I, II, and/or III assessments. The assessments chosen should assess the same skill(s) and standard(s) identified in the Learning Objective.

Can I align my SLO to Social/Emotional Learning (SEL) standards?

Yes. Teachers may align their SLOs to standards such as the Social/Emotional Learning standards.

Does my SLO need to align to standards, the District Strategic Plan, and my building's SIP?

As indicated on the SLO Process and Student Growth Level of Performance, "student learning objective(s) are aligned to standards, SIP, or District Strategic Plan."

Do both SLOs need to be on the same subject?

No. While it is possible to have both SLOs in the same subject area, it is not necessary to this process.

If a student in my class is frequently absent, will he still be considered in the calculation of my SLO score?

If a student is frequently absent, it is the teacher's choice whether or not to include that student in the final outcome of the SLO.

Who is excluded from this process?

*All active teachers utilizing their professional educator license assigned to an area designated as requiring this endorsement, including but not limited to school counselor, school psychologist, nonteaching school speech and language pathologist, school nurse, school social worker, or school marriage and family counselor, or as identified annually by the TAP Oversight Committee shall not utilize student growth measures for the purpose of performance appraisal. **In cases where an individual holds a position that includes both teaching and non-teaching duties (e.g., AVID Coordinators, PBIS coordinators), student growth must be a part of the performance evaluation of the teaching duties.** Please click [here](#) to access the Student Growth Website which houses the TAP Oversight Committee Student Growth Component Position Exclusion List.*

Do modifications at Midpoint, or any other part of my SLO, need to be approved by the appraiser?

No. The teacher, in consultation with his or her reflective partner, will complete the SLO template (beginning, midpoint, and ending columns). The appraiser will receive an automatic electronic notification at the completion of each column in the template.

How much time should I expect to spend on SLO forms?

The amount of time spent on the SLO template will depend on multiple factors, including the components of the SLO Process itself.

How will Fine Arts and PE teachers create an SLO?

Fine Arts and PE teachers will create an SLO by focusing on skills they would like to show growth on, using applicable standards. The assessments used for these groups may look different from others, but can also show student growth.

What are the timelines for checkins, dates, or intervals?

If completing an SLO in preparation for a Summative conference, the SLO Process must be completed before the Summative. The deadline for SLO completion for Pre-Tenured teachers is March 1, while for Tenured teachers the deadline is April 15 in the year of the Summative Conference. There are no other deadlines or timelines to adhere to during the SLO Process, other than the relevant TAP timelines.

Who decides the criteria that students are evaluated on in the SLO?

The teacher, in consultation with his or her reflective partner(s) will determine the components of each SLO Process, including the criteria that students are evaluated on.

Will there be deadlines for submitting work in the online system?

Yes. The Pre-Tenure SLO Process completion deadline is March 1, while the deadline for Tenured teachers is April 15 (of the year requiring a Summative).

How does uploading data into the online system impact aspects of confidentiality?

It is important to remember that the documents and information uploaded into the online system become part of a teacher's personnel file. Please take the appropriate measures to respect and ensure confidentiality. It is recommended that teachers do not use full student names - instead use initials or other means of identifying students.

How many students are involved in each SLO Process, and who selects those students?

The teacher determines which students should be included within the specific Learning Objective of the SLO, including the number of students that this includes. The students your SLO focuses on should directly relate to your learning objective and, ultimately, your SLO in its entirety. While you are still instructing all students in your classroom, your learning objective may identify a specific skill that you choose to be the focus for a select group of students. We recommend letting the data inform the selection of students for your SLO Process.

How will the growth of special education students be measured?

A special education teacher will identify an appropriate learning objective, interval of instruction, and assessment(s) for the students identified as part of the SLO.

Where do the objectives for a SLO come from?

Student learning objective(s) are aligned to standards, SIP, or District Strategic Plan. These objectives are also based on data that shows what students need and are rooted in standards.

Can I use the same SLO every cycle?

It is possible to use the same Learning Objective for more than one Cycle if it is appropriate for the students in the group. However, the SLO itself would not be the same as data for specific students changes from group to group, and therefore Strategies and Assessment tools may change to meet the needs of the students in the group.

Do I need to create a rubric for my SLO?

Teachers need a method to measure growth for the identified Learning Objective in their SLO Process. Rubrics are a great way to measure varying levels of proficiency in a skill, as well as monitor progress in the identified skill.

I have two positions in my building, one teaching and one non-teaching. Do I still need to complete the SLO Process(es)?

In cases where an individual holds a position that includes both teaching and non-teaching duties (e.g., AVID Coordinators, PBIS coordinators), student growth must be a part of the performance evaluation of the teaching duties. In cases where one position is listed as "exempt," but one is not, the teacher is still responsible for Student Growth in the teaching position.

My students are not performing at grade level. Can I use a lower grade level standard as part of my SLO?

All SLO Processes must be standards based, with a tie to grade level standards that identify what students should know and be able to do in that grade level. A previous grade level standard could serve as a foundation for the learning appropriate to the grade level, however, a direct connection to the grade level standard should be made.

Do I *HAVE* to upload all SLO artifacts/evidence in the TAP Online System? Or am I able to hand carry physical copies into my Summative Conference?

Teachers are encouraged to upload artifacts/evidence that support their SLO Process. This may be attached to the SLO at any stage of submission or during the Summative Conference before the event is closed. When physical copies are shared at the Summative Conference, they are not documented in the online system unless they are uploaded or referenced in the notes of the conversation.

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

Can my SLO take place over multiple years?

Yes. Tenured teachers requiring a Summative evaluation every two years can use the span of those two years to complete their SLOs, provided the students remain the same and the objective is still appropriate.

Is there a suggested length of time for the SLO?

The length of a SLO will vary depending on multiple factors that impact the work (content, course length, learning objective, etc). In the U-46 SLO Process, the teacher may choose the length of time that is most appropriate.

Do I get to pick when I do my SLO?

Yes. The teacher gets to choose when the SLO will take place during the year, and the interval of instruction that is appropriate. SLOs can take place during years when a Summative evaluation is not taking place (Tenured Teacher).

Do the two (2) SLO Processes have to be done in one year, or can I have one from each year if I'm in a two year Summative cycle?

Teachers in a two year Summative cycle can choose when their SLO Processes will take place in those two years, as long as the two are completed by the April 15 deadline of the Summative Conference year. Teachers could choose to complete one (1) SLO each year of their cycle, both SLOs in a single year, or span a SLO Process over two years.

Why would a teacher have more than one SLO template active in the same year?

Teachers are able to choose when they would like to complete their SLO Processes. A teacher on a two year Summative evaluation cycle could choose to overlap the two Processes. Likewise, beginning in the 2017-2018 academic year when teachers requiring a Summative Conference every year will be completing two SLOs, a teacher may choose to have two overlapping SLO Processes.

Do teachers in the last year of teaching before retirement need to complete an SLO Process, if it is not their Summative evaluation year?

No. However, this does not preclude a teacher from using any of the template or other supporting documents to enhance his or her professional practice.

When can we start an SLO Process for the next Summative cycle?

Each SLO Process should be authentic to each Summative Cycle, including the students chosen. In addition, the TAP Online System will not populate new SLOs for you to enter information into until the beginning of your next Summative Cycle.

As a Tenured teacher in a non-Summative year, do I need to adhere to the April 15th deadline every year or only in the year of my Summative Conference?

Tenured teachers in a non-Summative year do not need to adhere to the April 15 deadline. The deadline only applies in the year of a Summative Conference.

I was hired late, how many SLOs am I responsible for?

Please refer to the Late Hire, Appraisal Plan Adjustment Chart for information about your Late Hire status and TAP requirements (both observation cycles and SLOs).

REFLECTIVE PARTNER

Is it possible to change my reflective partner during this process?

Once your reflective partner has been identified, he/she must remain as your partner unless an unforeseen circumstance should occur (extended leave of absence, etc.) Additional reflective partners, up to four (4) total, may be added in the system after the initial partner is selected.

What is the role/responsibility of the reflective partner vs. that of the appraiser?

The reflective partner has a formative role in the SLO process, in a non-evaluative way. The appraiser will continue the same responsibilities as currently held within TAP.

Does the reflective partner give me my rating for Student Growth? How does the appraiser figure into determining my rating?

The teacher, in consultation with his or her reflective partner, will establish the rating for each Individual SLO Process, using the SLO Process and Student Growth Level of Performance. The rating will be submitted into the Online System, in the Ending column, by the teacher prior to the TAP Summative Conference. The system will combine the Professional Practice and Student Growth ratings to form the Overall ISBE Summative Rating.

What happens if I can't find a reflective partner?

If a teacher cannot identify a reflective partner, he or she will default to the appraiser completing his/her Summative.

If the language (Spanish, content, etc) of a type III assessment is a barrier between reflective partners, what support will be available for them when looking at the assessment?

It is recommended to be intentional when identifying a reflective partner, to provide the best reflective situation possible.

What makes an ideal Reflective Partner?

Your Reflective Partner should be someone who will support you as you journey through the SLO Process. This person could be another teacher, an administrator, your appraiser, or a group/team of people throughout the district. Likewise, your Reflective Partner could be from the same building or from a different building or program throughout the district. In addition, your Reflective Partner does not need to be of the same content area, or be working through a SLO at the same time.

How many times should you meet with your Reflective Partner?

At a minimum, you will need to have a conversation with your Reflective Partner 3 times, at the beginning, midpoint, and ending of the process. These conversations will inform the completion of each of the 3 columns of the SLO template. These conversations can take place in the manner that is most appropriate and convenient for the partnership (ie. face-to-face, email, Google Doc, etc). It is the sole determination of the partnership as to the frequency of conversations, outside of the those to complete the template.

Is there a maximum number of Reflective Partners?

No. A teacher can choose his or her Reflective Partner(s). Up to four total partners may be recorded in the TAP Online System.

Does our reflective partner see our SLO and rating?

Yes. The reflective partner will receive email notification when each stage of the SLO is submitted. The rating is a part of the ending stage of the SLO, and therefore the reflective partner can see all information in the SLO, including the rating.

APPRAISAL/RATING

What happens if I don't achieve my targeted growth?

The SLO Process and Student Growth Level of Performance should be used to determine the implications of targeted growth not being met. Ultimately, achieving/not achieving targeted growth is one of several categories being evaluated on the Level of Performance.

What if my administrator doesn't approve my SLO, or says that it is not good enough?

The SLO template is completed in conversation with the reflective partner. Conversations about the SLO may take place between teacher and administrator at any time throughout the school year, however, the teacher decides the focus of the SLO.

Can I drop down to a lower summative rating based solely on my SLO?

The Overall ISBE Summative Rating is composed of 70% TAP ISBE Professional Practice and 30% Student Growth. The chart below provides a visual for how the two ratings are combined within the TAP Online System.

		Included Teachers					
		TAP ISBE Professional Practice					
		U	NI	P	E		
Overall Student Growth	U	U	NI	NI	P	Overall ISBE Summative Rating	
	NI	U	NI	P	P		
	P	NI	NI	P	E		
	E	NI	P	P	E		

U: Unsatisfactory NI: Needs Improvement P: Proficient E: Excellent

How will my Overall Student Growth rating be determined?

The teacher, in consultation with his or her reflective partner(s) will use the Level of Performance to determine the Individual SLO Summative Ratings. When combined, the ratings from SLO 1 and SLO2 are equally weighted and averaged to determine the Overall Student Growth rating.

The Overall Student Growth rating equals 30% of the Overall ISBE Summative rating (15% per SLO Process). Please refer to the chart below for the combination of SLO1 with SLO 2:

OVERALL STUDENT GROWTH SUMMATIVE RATING					
		Individual SLO Summative Rating I			
		Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Proficient	Excellent
Individual SLO Summative Rating II	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Needs Improvement	Proficient
	Needs Improvement	Needs Improvement	Needs Improvement	Proficient	Proficient
	Proficient	Needs Improvement	Proficient	Proficient	Excellent
	Excellent	Proficient	Proficient	Excellent	Excellent

Overall Student Growth Summative Rating

Do I need to complete a SLO the year I don't have a Summative?

Beginning in the 2017-2018 School Year, every teacher shall complete two (2) SLO processes during his or her respective TAP Summative Appraisal Cycle (Cycle) regardless of the duration of the cycle. For teachers in two year Cycles, the teacher decides when each SLO process should occur during those two years. Any SLO to be utilized in the determination of the Overall Student Growth Summative Rating must be completed prior to the teacher's TAP Summative Conference.

What happens when your administrator wants to have your Summative Conference prior to March 1 (Pre-Tenure) or April 15 (Tenure), and you have not finished your SLO?

Teachers must complete their SLO(s) before their Summative Conference. The TAP Online System will not allow the submission of the Summative Conference information without a completed SLO, or passing the applicable deadline for SLO Process completion (March 1st for Pre-Tenured, April 15th for Tenured teachers).

Does Student Growth combine with our TAP ISBE rating?

Beginning in the 2016-2017 academic year, the Overall ISBE Summative Rating will be obtained by combining the Overall Student Growth Summative Rating with the TAP ISBE Professional Practice Summative Rating. 30% of the Overall ISBE Summative Rating will be Student Growth, whereas 70% will come from professional practice.

Does the Individual SLO Summative Rating get determined by the teacher and Reflective Partner? Not the appraiser?

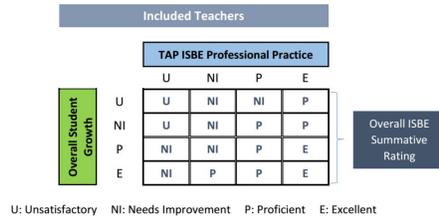
Yes. The teacher, in consultation with his or her Reflective Partner, will use the SLO Process and Student Growth Level of Performance to determine the Individual SLO Summative Rating.

Does this replace Form G or do we still need to continue that as well?

The SLO Process does not replace any forms that currently reside in the TAP. Although a teacher may identify areas of focus for the following year, based on the work in an SLO Process.

Will the Student Growth rating replace the TAP rating?

No. The Overall Rating will be obtained by "averaging" the two individual student growth ratings established within the teacher's appraisal cycle. Each individual student growth rating shall carry equal weight. The Overall ISBE Summative Rating used to establish a teacher's statutory grouping will be determined by combining the Overall Student Growth Summative Rating with the TAP ISBE Professional Practice Summative Rating. The Overall Student Growth Summative Rating shall account for 30% of the Overall ISBE Summative Rating with the TAP ISBE Professional Practice Summative Rating accounting for 70% of the Overall ISBE Summative Rating. The following table summarizes the possible outcomes.



If a teacher is completing an SLO over a two-year period, can an administrator ask the teacher to be evaluated in the “off year”?

If two years have passed since the teacher’s last Summative Conference then the teacher shall have a Summative Conference. If only one year has passed since the last Summative Conference, then a summative may be held provided the teacher was informed by the appraiser of his/her intent at the beginning of the school year during the Benchmark Conference and a Formal Observation cycle has been completed by the appraiser that school year. A Summative Conference also requires the teacher to complete two SLOs prior to the April 15th deadline of that school year.

What evidence or artifacts do I need to upload to support my rating on the SLO?

Using the Level of Performance as the guide, the teacher, in collaboration with the reflective partner can determine what evidence might be best to support the rating for the process. There is no right or wrong to how much evidence is uploaded, and some of the evidence might be written in the template instead of in an uploaded file. The teacher can decide what evidence shows the different components of the level of performance. Evidence pieces can be uploaded in the beginning, midpoint, and/or ending column since they all support the same SLO.

Can the appraiser disagree with the rating on the SLO?

The rating for the SLO Process is determined in collaboration with the Reflective Partner. Informal Observation Conferences, Formal Observation Conferences, and other professional conversations may include a reflection upon submitted SLO evidence. An appraiser may disagree with an SLO rating and engage in conversation around it, however, the rating established by the teacher and Reflective Partner remains.

Why can't I unlock a column on my SLO?

The SLO Process is intended to promote reflective practice. Upon the submission of each column (Beginning, Midpoint, and Ending) teachers should verify that all information is correct and appropriate. Safeguards are in place and require the teacher to verify the submission of each SLO column. SLO columns will not be unlocked once submitted. Information can be updated in the Midpoint and Ending columns, as appropriate, and designated as such.

Should the SLOs receive a rating before walking into the Summative Conference, or during the Summative Conference?

All SLO information, including a rating for each SLO, must be fully submitted in the TAP Online System before attending the Summative Conference.

What happens to my SLO(s) after 11:59pm, on the applicable deadline, if they are “in progress” or “not started?”

Incomplete or missing SLO Processes will default to UNSATISFACTORY in the TAP Online System on the applicable deadline (March 1 or April 15) at 11:59pm. Please note that April 15th at 11:59pm is a firm deadline. SLO Processes will be locked from future editing after this deadline.

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Will there be training on the Student Growth TAP Online System?

Yes. Ongoing training and professional development is available throughout the year, including web-based videos that can be accessed on the Student Growth website.

Will training be available at sites for further information and/or clarification?

Yes. Requests for training at sites for further information and/or clarification can be made through the Teacher Leader for Student Growth at StudentGrowth@u-46.org or by contacting the Systems Manager for the Teacher Appraisal Plan at TAPAdm@u-46.org.

What are the basic things that we are going to learn at trainings and professional development opportunities?

Trainings will cover the SLO Process and Online System, with an opportunity to ask questions for further clarification. Professional development opportunities have been identified to support best practices that will aid in the completion of the SLO Process.

Will this become part of the Teacher Mentor Program?

Yes. The Teacher Mentor Program will support this process for teachers new to U-46.

RESOURCES

Are there sample SLOs to view as I work through this process?

Yes. The [U-46 Student Growth Website](#) has a collection of examples to view, as well as a variety of other resources to help you navigate through this process.

Where can I find resources and other documents to help me through the process?

The [U-46 Student Growth Website](#) houses all of the supporting documents to support teachers and administrators through this process.

ADMINISTRATOR

If a teacher is uploading student work, should student names be removed?

If a teacher uploads student work to support his or her process, it is best practice to not use full student names. It is encouraged to correlate the uploaded work with the same "coding system" as used in the SLO template (ie. Student A, Student AW, etc).

Can we talk about the evidence submitted by the teacher?

Discussing the evidence presented can be part of a professional conversation. Questions about the SLO and the evidence submitted could include some of the following questions:

- *Tell me about your SLO Process.*
- *Do you think this may influence goals for next year?*
- *What did you learn about students and your practice?*

I was asked to be a Reflective Partner by a teacher who is reluctant to start the process.

How many reminders am I responsible for sending out?

The SLO is ultimately the teacher's responsibility. As a reflective partner, engaging in conversation about the process, the learning objective, and the students in the targeted group is appropriate, but the teacher is responsible for the work.

What happens if we come across an SLO that we think doesn't quite match the rating the teacher submitted?

The SLO rating is determined by the teacher, in collaboration with the reflective partner. The appraiser may have a professional conversation about the SLO process, including the assigned rating, at any time.

There could be a considerable timeline between when a teacher completes an SLO and when it is discussed at the Summative, is that ok?

Yes. The teacher may select when to complete each SLO within the TAP Summative Appraisal Cycle. The timeline and interval of instruction will be dependent on the needs of students and the learning objective selected. Once complete, the SLO will remain in the TAP Online System throughout the appraisal cycle.

What does Making Practice Public Mean?

Throughout the SLO Process teachers are expected to have reflective conversations with Reflective Partners. The line on the Level of Performance about "making practice public" refers to sharing the process, reflection, and/or learning obtained as a result of the process outside of that Reflective Partnership conversation. This could mean teachers share with staff at a meeting, or with a grade level team, host other teachers on a PPDay to share, present on a DCD, etc.

Can teachers use a Pre and Post-test for data?

Baseline data may come from many different sources. A pre-test is one option for collecting data to inform a learning objective and student group. Other options could include data from prior teaching, a triangulation of data from multiple sources such as MAP, F&P, DLB, and other classroom assessments.

Do I need to calculate the Overall ISBE Summative Rating to include professional practice and student growth?

The Overall ISBE Summative Rating will be obtained by combining the Overall Student Growth Summative Rating with the TAP ISBE Professional Practice Summative Rating. 30% of the Overall ISBE Summative Rating will be Student Growth, whereas 70% will come from professional practice. The following table summarizes the possible outcomes, however, all calculations are completed by the computer with no need for manual calculations by the teacher or administrator.

		Included Teachers				
		TAP ISBE Professional Practice				
		U	NI	P	E	
Overall Student Growth	U	U	NI	NI	P	Overall ISBE Summative Rating
	NI	U	NI	P	P	
	P	NI	NI	P	E	
	E	NI	P	P	E	
<small>U: Unsatisfactory NI: Needs Improvement P: Proficient E: Excellent</small>						

Can a teacher start an SLO in the spring and carry it over into the following year?

Yes. Tenured teachers requiring a Summative evaluation every two years can use the span of those two years to complete their SLOs, provided the students remain the same and the objective is still appropriate.

Can I have the summative conversation prior to April 15 if a tenured teacher hasn't completed an SLO?

The TAP Online System will allow an appraiser to start, but not complete, a Summative Conference for tenured staff before April 15th even if the educator has not completed his/her required SLOs. Once the April 15th deadline has passed, the appraiser will be able to submit the Summative regardless of SLO status (missing or incomplete will default to unsatisfactory). The system will behave similarly for pre-tenured staff and the March 1st deadline.

Do teachers have to do an SLO if they have a summative? Even if they select to do a summative to get staff on a more balanced schedule?

Beginning in the 2017-2018 School Year, every teacher shall complete two (2) SLO Processes during his or her respective TAP Summative Appraisal Cycle (Cycle) regardless of the duration of the cycle. For tenured teachers in two-year Cycles, the teacher decides when each SLO process should occur during those two years. Any SLO to be utilized in the determination of the Overall Student Growth Summative Rating must be completed prior to the teacher's TAP Summative Conference.

Does the reflective partner assign the rating?

The SLO Process and Student Growth Level of Performance focuses on the following: Baseline, Student Group/Interval, Learning Objective Rationale, Strategies, Assessment, Targeted Growth, Outcome, Reflection, and Collaboration. The teacher, in consultation with his or her reflective partner(s) will use this Level of Performance to determine the Individual SLO Summative Ratings.

How much evidence should be uploaded to support a teacher's rating?

The teacher may decide what evidence is needed to support the rating based on the Student Growth Level of Performance. Evidence may include information written in the SLO template or documents and artifacts uploaded at the Beginning, Midpoint, or Ending column of the SLO.

Can an appraiser see the SLO rating before the Summative begins?

The SLO rating is included in the Ending column of the SLO. Appraisers and reflective partners are notified via email when a teacher submits each stage of the SLO, including the Ending column. In addition, the SLO rating will display in the TAP Online System.

Should I walk through the SLO Process Guiding Questions in my SLO conversation?

A professional conversation about the SLO process can take place at any time. The conversation could be about specific parts of the SLO, including some of the Guiding Questions, or open-ended with questions like:

- *Tell me about your SLO process.*
- *What did you learn about your students and your practice?*
- *Do you think this may influence goals for next year?*

Can there be a Benchmark Conference in the Spring instead of in the Fall?

Yes, a Benchmark Conference could occur in conjunction with a Summative Conference, in late Spring, or by September 30 of the subsequent year. This conference provides the teacher an opportunity to share reflections as they relate to the teacher's self-directed professional growth with the appraiser. Specific expectations exist for pre-tenured teachers. This collaborative conversation may also confirm decisions made by the teacher pertaining to the teacher's individual SLO Process as governed by the Student Growth Component of the TAP. The

conference is mandatory, but may, by the choice of the appraiser, be held in conjunction with the Summative Conference. If the Benchmark Conference is not held in conjunction with the Summative Conference, then the Benchmark can occur in either late spring or by September 30 of the subsequent year.

How has the Summative Conference process changed as a result of the Student Growth component?

The purpose of this conference is to collaboratively reflect upon the collective professional practice of the teacher; for pre-tenured staff this is over a one-year period while for tenured staff this is up to a two-year period. The collective professional practice can include evidence and artifacts from the Portfolio (Year 1 & 2), Goal Setting (pre-tenured Year 3 & 4), from the self-directed professional development (tenured staff), Conferences, and Observations. The parties will also confirm any recorded Individual SLO Summative Rating and the appraiser will then submit each rating for the calculation of the Overall ISBE Summative Rating. For a pre-tenured teacher, a decision to recommend continued employment of the teacher is provided to Human Resources.

Can we place a reminder in our Summative invitation about the role of the SLO in the Summative Conference?

Teachers and administrators can and should have conversations about professional practice and Student Growth at any time.