

Educators' Guide to Developing SGOs and PGOs that  
Increase Student Achievement  
and Improve Professional Performance



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This abbreviated guide is intended to help educators develop high quality SGOs and PGOs that meet the requirements of the TEACHNJ Act, support school and district goals, and improve student outcomes. The information is based upon “lessons learned” during the first year of implementation by educators within our district and across the State. The best practices referenced in this guide are based upon the New Jersey Department of Education’s newly revised handbook, *Student Growth Objectives: Developing and Using Practical Measures of Student Learning*, which can be accessed at <http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/teacher/14-15SGOGuidebook.pdf>.

What follows is a step-by-step process for developing high quality SGOs and PGOs. Each step begins with a brief description of the thinking and decision-making required for each action step followed by a question or task designed to elicit the information necessary to proceed to the next step. Examples are provided as a reference.

### ***Important Note about Growth Objectives***

<b>Student Growth Objectives (SGOs)</b>	<b>Professional Growth Objectives (PGOs)</b>
<b>1 or 2 SGOs</b> are required of every teacher/staff member instructing students in a classroom setting and/or providing direct instruction to students.	<b>PGOs</b> are recommended for educational service providers who do not meet with students on a regular basis in a typical classroom setting or deliver direct instruction.
<b>Examples of Staff</b> K-5 classroom teachers, 6-12 content area teachers, special subject area teachers, special education teachers, etc.	<b>Examples of Staff</b> Guidance Counselors, Nurses, CST members, Achievement Specialists, Media Specialists, Ed. Technology
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Definition of SGO</b></p> <p>A long-term academic goal that teachers set for students that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific, <b>Measurable</b>, <b>Attainable</b>, <b>Results-orientated</b> &amp; <b>Time-bound</b>;</li> <li>• Aligned to NJCCCS and/or Common Core State Standards;</li> <li>• Record results that are based on student growth and/or achievement over a period of time <b>no less than half</b> of the school year or course period;</li> <li>• Developed using <b>multiple</b> sources of valid and reliable student data;</li> <li>• Drafted by teachers in consultation with building administration, supervisors, colleagues, etc.;</li> <li>• Approved and scored by a teacher’s supervisor.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Definition of PGO</b></p> <p>A long-term goal that educational service providers/specialists set that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific, <b>Measurable</b>, <b>Attainable</b>, <b>Results-orientated</b> &amp; <b>Time-bound</b>;</li> <li>• Aligned to best practices for providing quality services;</li> <li>• Record results that are based on professional growth and/or achievement <b>over an extended</b> period of time;</li> <li>• Developed using <b>multiple</b> sources of valid and reliable department/school/district data;</li> <li>• Drafted by staff in consultation with building administration, supervisors, colleagues, etc.;</li> <li>• Approved and scored by a staff member’s supervisor.</li> </ul>

## Step-by-Step Process for Developing High Quality SGOs

### Step 1

Identify critical academic standards that are essential for students' success in the current course/grade level and for success in the courses/grade levels that follow. These may include standards that support the major claims that will be assessed by PARCC, anchor standards that are developed across grade levels, over-arching skills/concepts that span mathematical domains, or enduring understandings that will extend students' knowledge and prepare them for future studies in the content area.

Guiding question:

1. *What new learning must students master by the end of the SGO instructional period in order to ensure they will be successful by the end of the course/year and in future years? (Record the standards below.)*

### Step 2

Choose or develop a means to assess students' mastery of the selected standards. The assessment(s) must be rigorous and aligned to the standards, and may include standardized assessments, district or school-based assessments, portfolios of student work, project-based assessments or performance-based assessments.

Guiding question:

2. *What assessment(s) will I use to measure students' growth and degree of mastery?*

### Step 3

Determine students' starting points by identifying, collecting and analyzing data that reflect "where students are" and the growth they are likely to achieve. According to the NJDOE, "You should use more than one source of information to get a sense of what your students know and can do and how well prepared they are for your class." Examples of data sources for collecting evidence of students' starting points are provided below.

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"> <li>NJASK: Math, ELA and Science</li> <li>DRA for Reading</li> <li>End of course assessments in each subject</li> </ul>
Results from assessments in other subjects related to the current course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers use past assessments as indicators for important required skills and knowledge</li> </ul>
Students' prior grades in classes that are closely related to the current course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers should understand the basis for grades given by students' previous teachers</li> </ul>
Results from beginning-of-course diagnostic tests or performance tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department-generated pre-assessment</li> <li>Early course test</li> </ul>
Markers of future success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance, homework completion, academic independence, class participation, etc.</li> </ul>

**Note:**

Avoid using pre-tests that assess content knowledge or the application of skills students have not been taught, as these provide little data that are useful for instructional purposes or for determining a learner's potential for success in the course/grade. Instead, gather and analyze a variety of data points (2-4 measures) that best reflect what students know and the type/range of skill sets they possess.

In addition to using academic measures, teachers are encouraged to consider using factors such as attendance, academic independence, class participation or homework completion that may impact a student's achievement during the SGO period. (See the attached *Markers of Future Success Rubric*, which can be modified to reflect the demands of the course/grade level.

**Guiding question:**

3. *What data most significantly influence students' progress and performance in my course/grade level? (List a minimum of three data sources under the appropriate category. You must have at least 1 Academic Measure. Markers of Future Success are optional.)*

Academic Measures\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Markers of Future Success\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 4**

Collect, organize and analyze the data for **all or the majority of students**.

**Guiding Question:**

4. *How many and which of my students will be included in my SGO? How many and which data sources will I use to determine students' preparedness levels?*

<u>Student</u>	<u>Data Source #1</u>	<u>Data Source #2</u>	<u>Data Source #3</u> (Source #4)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

### Step 5

Determine your students' preparedness levels. Levels can be determined by using mathematical averages, considering the majority of categorical ratings, and professional judgment. While the number of preparedness levels may vary (typically 2 or 3), the use of tiered SGOs has been found to be better for teachers because they take into account the variation that exists among students and the manner in which these differences often influence growth and achievement.

Guiding question:

5. *Based on the number of students and the data that reflect their starting points, how many preparedness levels best represent the levels of my students? (Teachers who have fewer than 25 students may wish to use numbers instead of per cents.)*

<u>Preparedness Level</u>	<u># or % of Students</u>
High	_____
Medium	_____
Low	_____

### Step 6

Establish “reasonably ambitious” target scores on the assessments selected in Step 2 based on students' starting points. Target scores should represent students' success or mastery of the knowledge and/or skills, demonstrate that a teacher had a “**considerable impact on learning**” and include a “reasonable range” of proficiency levels (high-medium-low). There are a variety of ways that targets can be set. Two options are provided below. Other strategies can be discussed with an administrator.

Option 1: Same target score, different % of attainment for each preparedness level.

Example

Preparedness Group	Target on Assessment	Attainment Level in Meeting Student Growth Objective (percentage of students)			
		Exceptional 4	Full 3	Partial 2	Insufficient 1
High	>85%	>100%	>90%	>80%	<80%
Medium	>85%	>90%	>80%	>70%	<70%
Low	>85%	>80%	>70%	>60%	<60%

Option 2: Different target score, same or similar % attainment for each preparedness level.

Example

Preparedness Group	Target on Assessment	Attainment Level in Meeting Student Growth Objective (percentage of students)			
		Exceptional 4	Full 3	Partial 2	Insufficient 1
High	≥90%	≥90%	≥80%	≥70%	<70%
Medium	≥80%	≥90%	≥80%	≥70%	<70%
Low	≥70%	≥90%	≥80%	≥70%	<70%

Example for a class of less than 25 students

Preparedness Group	Target on Assessment	Attainment Level in Meeting Student Growth Objective (number of students)			
		Exceptional 4	Full 3	Partial 2	Insufficient 1
High n = 6	≥90%	≥5	≥4	≥3	<3
Medium n = 11	≥80%	≥10	≥8	≥6	<6
Low n = 5	≥70%	≥4	≥3	≥2	<2

Guiding question:

6. *What targets will lead to measurable improvements in student outcomes while balancing the importance of reasonableness and high expectations? Given the number of students included in my SGO, will I use percentages or number of students to determine my attainment categories?*

Preparedness Group	Target on Assessment	Attainment Level in Meeting Student Growth Objective (percentage of students)			
		Exceptional 4	Full 3	Partial 2	Insufficient 1
High		≥	≥	≥	<
Medium		≥	≥	≥	<
Low		≥	≥	≥	<

**Step 7.**

Identify strategies that will support achievement of the goal.

Guiding question:

7. *What will I do to ensure that my students achieve the goal?*

**Step-by-Step Process for Developing High Quality PGOs**

**Step 1**

Identify critical outcomes associated with the role of the educational service provider that most impact students' success. These may include the programs or services supported by the provider or the provider's professional knowledge or skills. The selected goal may seek to improve the knowledge and skills of the provider, the quantity of students, staff or parents served by the provider, or the effectiveness and/or efficiency of programs that fall within the provider's primary responsibilities.

Guiding question:

1. *Which skills, programs or services will I focus on during the PGO period to enhance my ability to improve students' success? (Record the focus area(s) below.)*

**Step 2**

Choose or develop a means to measure improvement in the selected area(s). Consider using rubrics, surveys and/or portfolios to determine the degree of growth achieved during the PGO period.

Guiding question:

2. *What tool, assessment or instrument will I use to measure growth in the targeted area(s)?*

**Step 3**

Identify multiple data points that reflect the current status of the selected knowledge, skills, programs or services. Choose 2-3 measures that best reflect the provider's knowledge and skills or the effectiveness of programs or services offered. Examples of data sources may include the number of students, staff and/or parents who participate in programs, feedback regarding the quality of programs or services, or the number of incidents of targeted behaviors or outcomes (i.e. absences, bullying, academic failure).

Guiding question:

3. *What data best reflect my current standing in the targeted area(s)? (List a minimum of three data sources.)*

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**Step 4**

Create a goal that clearly articulates the nature and degree of professional growth or improvement in programs and services that the provider seeks to achieve. Target scores should represent success or mastery of knowledge and/or skills, improvement in programs and/or services, and include a reasonable range of improvement levels. Examples of growth objectives for educators who provide special services can be found in the “Exemplar Library” in the NJDOE’s handbook, *Student Growth Objectives: Developing and Using Practical Measures of Student Learning* (<http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/teacher/14-15SGOGuidebook.pdf>).

Guiding question:

*4. What degree of improvement would reflect a “considerable impact” on my area of focus? What would represent a reasonable, yet ambitious range of growth levels?*

### **Step 5**

Identify strategies that will support achievement of the goal.

Guiding question:

*5. What will I do to ensure that I achieve my goal?*

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