
How states use student learning objectives in teacher evaluation systems: a review of state websites

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Summary

Student learning objectives (SLOs) are one way to measure individual teachers' contributions to their students' learning growth. The SLO process is a "participatory method of setting measurable goals, or objectives, based on the specific assignment or class, such as the students taught, the subject matter taught, the baseline performance of the students, and the measurable gain in student performance during the course of instruction." This method is an alternative to the more generally used value-added modeling with standardized test scores, which may not be available or appropriate for all teachers and subjects. This report presents information on the use of SLOs in teacher evaluation systems in 30 states. It aims to inform state and local policymakers engaged in creating or supporting the development of teacher evaluation systems that include SLOs.

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Summary

Motivated by the need to improve teaching and learning and by federal priorities reflected in requirements for grant programs such as Race to the Top and the Teacher Incentive Fund, many states are developing teacher evaluation systems that include measures of individual teachers' contributions to their students' learning growth. One way to measure teacher impact is with student learning objectives (SLOs)—an alternative to the more generally used value-added modeling with standardized test scores, which may not be available or appropriate for all teachers and subjects. This report gathers information on the use of SLOs in educator evaluation systems in 30 states. It aims to inform state and local policymakers involved in creating or supporting the development of teacher evaluation systems that include SLOs.