

Student Growth

When will student growth become a required component of T-TESS?

Student growth will be a required component of T-TESS moving forward from the 2018-2019 school year. This delayed rollout gives districts time to focus on successfully implementing the rubric portion of T-TESS, and it also gives teachers and appraisers time to adjust to the primary purpose of T-TESS, which is to provide formative feedback to teachers and support them as they seek to improve their practice.

What does student growth measure?

Student growth measures how much a student progresses academically during his or her time with a particular teacher. It takes into consideration a student's entering skill level when measuring how much the student grew over time, and, as opposed to measuring student proficiency on an assessment, student growth isn't concerned with whether or not a student passes a particular test or reaches a predetermined and uniform benchmark. It considers equally students who enter behind grade level, on grade level, and beyond grade level, tailoring growth expectations to each student's context.

By measuring growth, a teacher develops a better understanding about the academic impact of his or her instructional choices. In a formative appraisal process like T-TESS, feedback derived from student growth acts as a complimentary piece to the feedback derived from the appraisal rubric. Whereas the rubric captures how the teacher's practice impacts students holistically, student growth captures how the teacher's practice impacts students academically.

How should student growth data be used?

Student growth data should be used just as observation data and goal-setting and professional development data are used in T-TESS – as feedback that will help inform teachers about what worked, what didn't work, and what they can do to improve their practice moving forward.

Student growth is one measure in a multiple-measure appraisal system, and the inclusion of student growth data in a formative appraisal process provides for a more complete understanding of the impact of instructional and professional practices teachers deploy over the course of a school year.

What are the options for measuring student growth for teachers?

Districts have options for measuring student growth including: 1) student learning objectives (SLOs); 2) portfolios; 3) district-level pre- and post-tests; and 4) value-add measures (VAM) for teachers in state-tested subjects.

Districts are free to choose any measure for their teachers – no single measure must be used for a particular grade or subject (e.g., VAM doesn't have to be used for teachers of tested grades and subjects). Districts can also use different measures for different grades or subjects. For example, a district could use SLOs for elementary generalists, but portfolios for secondary foreign language teachers.

Value-added Measures (VAM) based on state assessments:

When considering the use of VAM, please note that there are multiple models that could be used to calculate VAM, depending on the entity using the model, similar models can take different names.

Help

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Research will capture both pros and cons for any given model of VAM a district could pursue, so districts are encouraged to weigh the relative importance of certain considerations when choosing a model. Some of those considerations could be:

- The data it produces. Does it signal to teachers potential growth areas based on the entering achievement levels of students (how well low-achieving students progress in the teacher's class, for example) or based on demographic data (how well do male students progress in the teacher's class, for example)?



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