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## Negative Impacts of Mandatory Standardized Testing on Teachers and Students

Nicole Stefanko  
*Grand Valley State University*

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Negative Impacts of Mandatory Standardized Testing on  
Teachers and Students  
by  
Nicole Stefanko  
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## **Abstract**

Mandatory standardized testing was implemented in the United States to hold schools and teachers accountable for students' growth; however, testing has negatively impacted both teachers and students in the classroom. There is currently not enough research on the benefits to testing and whether there are more effective ways to hold schools and teachers accountable. It is important to further research the effects of heavy test preparation that is done in classrooms as well as how students' test results can be an inaccurate representation of their abilities. This project explores the negative impacts of standardized testing as well as providing a plan to address these issues.

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **Problem Statement**

Mandatory standardized testing has a major influence on education in many states across the country. The No Child Left Behind Act and the Race to the Top program made testing a high-stakes event for schools across the country. It has become crucial for schools to demonstrate proficiency, so much so that teachers are feeling constrained to teach to the test and are spending far more time completing test preparation practice rather than providing opportunities for authentic learning (Davis & Willson, 2015). If students are not passing the state tests by standardized testing guidelines, schools are penalized with less funding to help enhance their school. Standardized testing is an unreliable measure of student performance (Loeb & Byun, 2019). There are too many extenuating factors that can influence a student's score and that can lead to an inaccurate representation of student growth or achievement (Loeb & Byun, 2019).

Standardized assessments have been a huge component of education in the United States, and it has directly impacted our nation's schools and classrooms (Bausell & Glazier, 2018). The greatest repercussions from state testing are felt most by teachers and students. The No Child Left Behind Act and the Race to the Top programs have caused an increased accountability in schools. The No Child Left Behind Act requires annual reading and math tests in grades three through high school (Wexler, 2019). The Race to the Top program led to an increase in the use and weight of standardized tests as well as tying student test scores to teacher evaluations

(Bausell & Glazier, 2018). Teachers are experiencing increased stress and anxiety due to the yearly evaluation process as well as experiencing more competition and less collaboration with other teachers (Anderson et al., 2019). This has a direct effect on what is being taught in classrooms. As a result, classrooms are focused on test preparation and scripted curriculum (Bausell & Glazier, 2018).

### **Importance and Rationale of the Project**

Since testing is held to such a high standard in the United States, schools and teachers are trying to find numerous different variations in their teaching strategies to help students pass their state tests. Various schools are finding “Jackpot Standards,” or standards that will show up on the state test year after year (Wexler, 2019). According to Wexler (2019), Nevada’s state tests are tied to their state standards, but only 18 percent of the standards would show up on the test year after year. Teaching students’ specific standards so they can choose the correct multiple-choice answer on a test is not the way to teach students to become lifelong learners. Teacher evaluations are also being tied to student test scores which contributes to the issue of teaching to the test (Wexler, 2019).

Teaching to the test has been the remedy for schools to avoid penalties such as loss of funding if students do not perform well on standardized testing. Most of the school year is devoted to test preparation, practice tests, benchmark tests, and other ways for schools to predict how students will score (Wexler, 2019). The classroom should be focused more on educating students rather than focusing on test preparation as much as it is. A school’s primary responsibility is to create productive citizens in

our society. Instead, many schools are teaching students how to pass standardized tests.

There is currently not enough research on the topic of standardized testing being beneficial to students and holding schools accountable. Stakeholders in education need to hold someone accountable for students' growth and they are using standardized tests to do so, but this has not been proven to be an effective way. There are not any journal articles or empirical articles that give another solution besides testing to hold schools accountable for student growth. Testing has been viewed as the method of guaranteeing that all children in schools receive a high-quality education, but in many ways, it has had the opposite effect (Wexler, 2019). Researchers need to investigate further to decide if preparing students for a standardized test is benefiting students in the long run.

### **Background of the Project**

The curriculum being taught in classrooms has been a problem since the start of standardized testing. Classrooms have shifted from learning content, ideas, and skills to learning how to take a standardized test (Bausell & Glazier, 2018). Students are not always engaged in content being taught and they are not learning skills to help them become successful adults when they are reviewing test prep problems in class. Math and reading are the focus in classrooms because of standardized testing, other subjects such as history, the arts, and geography are often neglected in schools since students are not tested on those subjects every year (Stotsky, 2016).



Students may test differently when they feel nervous or have test anxiety when it comes time to perform on a standardized test. Segool et al. (2013) designed a study to examine how elementary students recognize state testing and the impact of test anxiety on young children. During this study, students reported having significantly greater test anxiety on state testing compared to their classroom tests. (Segool et al., 2013). It is difficult to show a student's full potential if they are not performing well on a test because of anxiety.

Test scores from standardized testing can be an inaccurate representation of a student's true abilities in the classroom. There are many factors that can cause a student to not perform well on a test. Davis and Willson (2015) notes that schools identify students who are just below the passing score and schools focus their instruction and resources to helping those students achieve while students who are well below passing will receive minimal attention. The researchers also compared test preparation in affluent schools and less affluent schools. The more affluent schools had less students for teachers to work with and more time to teach and prepare students. At the less affluent schools, teachers had more students to work with and less time to prepare (Davis & Willson 2015).

The No Child Left Behind Act allowed families to transfer from low performing schools to higher performing schools through school of choice (Hursh, 2005). School of choice allows parents to choose a school outside of their home district that will best fit the needs of their children. Allowing students to leave schools and transfer to higher performing schools makes it difficult to tell whether that school

is performing well on its own versus having high performing students transfer to the school through school of choice. According to Hursh (2005), there is a lot of pressure to raise test scores in schools, especially in the urban school districts. Teachers feel obligated to teach the skills and knowledge that will be tested even if it means disregarding other complex aspects of the subject and eliminating some subjects altogether (Hursh, 2005). Educators are neglecting teaching skills and subjects for the benefit of students and focusing on jackpot skills and standards so students can pass the standardized test at the end of the year.

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE, 2019) writes about the Public Act 173 of 2015, which is the legislation that governs teacher evaluations. Public Act of 173 states that evaluations on teachers should be conducted annually, and student growth will be incorporated at 40% of the evaluation (MDE, 2019). Of this section on the evaluation, 50% of student growth will be demonstrated by the state test while the other 50% can include student growth on other assessments (MDE, 2019). The state of Michigan is holding teachers accountable for student growth by incorporating it into teacher evaluations as well as tying student growth to school funding.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this project is to limit the negative impacts of accountability placed on teachers by standardized testing. To accomplish this purpose, this project will set a plan to address the issues of teacher evaluations, which according to the state, currently consists of 40% of the evaluation being based on student test scores. Many school districts are also tying teacher raises and bonuses to their students'

growth on these standardized tests. Teachers are then teaching to the test and focusing their attention on students that are on the borderline of passing the state test when a teacher's focus should be on helping and improving all their students. This project will address these problems and give ideas on how to start resolving the issues that standardized tests bring to education.

### **Objectives of the Project**

The object of this project is to help eliminate the stress that standardized testing puts on teachers and students. Since student growth has a large impact on yearly teacher evaluations, the stress of standardized testing often trickles down to the students. In order to successfully minimize the effects of standardized testing, accountability needs to not solely fall on teachers. Testing can be an inaccurate representation of students' abilities since there are so many different factors that can contribute to students' test scores. There is also so much classroom time devoted to test preparation and benchmark tests which in return, creates less of a focus on curriculum and skill mastery. The intention of this project is to take some of the pressure off teachers by educating teachers on the current laws focused on teacher evaluations. In turn, this will allow teachers to help their students by focusing on doing what is best for their students in the classroom.

### **Definition of Terms**

*High-stakes testing:* Involves a series of tests in which the outcomes evaluate schools, teachers, and students (Minarechová, 2012).

*Jackpot standards:* standards that will be tested on the state standardized test and focused on in the classroom (Wexler, 2019).

*No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB):* NCLB was passed in 2001. It requires annual reading and math tests in grades three through high school and threatens significant consequences if schools fail to get 100 percent of their students to proficiency by 2014 (Wexler, 2019).

*Race to the Top (RTTT):* RTTT was passed in 2009. It led to an increase in the use and weight of standardized tests as the form of accountability in schools. It also tied teacher evaluations to their students' test scores (Bausell & Glazier, 2018).

*SES:* Socioeconomic status; household income (Im et al., 2020).

*Standardized test:* is any form of test that requires all test takers to answer the same questions, or selections from a common bank of questions, in the same way, and that is scored in a 'standard' or consistent manner, which makes it possible to compare the relative performance of individual students or groups (Stotsky, 2016).

*Standardized testing pressure:* the amount of emphasis that principals or administrators place on teachers to raise the academic outcomes on standardized tests (Youn, 2018).

*Student learning objectives (SLO):* are an alternative tool teachers can use to measure students' academic gains and assess teacher performance based on student goals being met (Lin et al., 2020).

*Teaching to the test:* The practice of devoting extra time and attention in the classroom to the skills and knowledge that will be assessed on the district or state test (Stotsky, 2016).

*Test anxiety:* is associated with impaired test performance and impaired knowledge acquisition in academic skill areas (Segool et al., 2013).

### **Scope of the Project**

The goal of this project is to provide districts with a plan to implement in their school buildings which will help manage the focus that standardized testing has taken away from all aspects of teaching, while overshadowing the learning experience for students. There are many factors that can affect how a student will score on a standardized test. It is important to ensure that educators are not taking the brunt of the weight of the test. The focus of this project will be to lessen the accountability placed on teachers when it pertains to their yearly evaluations and allowing teachers to have more autonomy over their evaluation, specifically the student growth component. This project will provide school districts with suggestions to not tie teacher raises and bonuses to their students' test scores. In return, teachers will be able to teach their students the full curriculum instead of just focusing on the jackpot

standards. Teachers will also be able to focus on all students instead of just the students who are on the borderline of passing the end of the year test.

This project is not designed to fix all the issues that are associated with high-stakes testing. It will not address how to help student anxiety during testing, although it may be lessened if teachers are not putting so much pressure on their students. It will also not address state and federal funding that are tied to state testing.

The successful implementation of this project is dependent on the school and how they manage teachers' pay and evaluations. A limitation to this project is how schools are being funded. State and federal funding are directly associated with student test scores and funding is cut when a school is not showing adequate growth based on the government's expectations. When a school's funding is dependent on student growth, they are less likely to take the pressure off teachers.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

There are many issues regarding implementing mandatory standardized testing into schools and classrooms. Standardized testing is a form of test that requires students to answer a set of questions which will be scored in a standard or consistent manner to compare to scores of other students or groups (Stotsky, 2016). Standardized tests are not well aligned with learning. These tests cannot measure all that students learn, possibly even the greatest parts of their learning, and it only improves their test performance not their learning when teachers are consistently working with test-maker workbooks and administering practice tests (Stotsky, 2016).

This chapter includes a review of the literature that focuses on the problems associated with standardized testing as addressed in Chapter One. After discussing the theory and rationale behind standardized testing, the literature will be reviewed. The research/evaluation section is broken down into six different topics: Accountability and Funding, Curriculum and Test Preparation in Classrooms, Teacher Attrition, Students Emotional Well Being and Test Anxiety, and Inaccurate Representation of Students' Abilities. The next section will summarize the main points and findings of the research discussed. Finally, the last section will explain the conclusions drawn from these sources.

### **Theory/Rationale**

Across the country, mandatory standardized testing affects educators across the country, students, their families, and their communities. Our society believes that educators need to be held accountable for student growth (William, 2010). Most stakeholders: politicians, administrators, and taxpayers, believe the only way to do this is through standardized tests. According to William (2010),

All those with a stake in the outcomes of education—learners, teachers, parents, other taxpayers, employers, and the wider community—want to know what students have learned, and it seems plausible that this can easily be evaluated through the use of straightforward and familiar instruments, such as achievement tests. (p. 107)

Standardized testing is not the simple answer for which these stakeholders are looking. The use of high-stakes testing for accountability purposes has some substantial shortcomings that call into question some of the interpretations that are generated every year from these tests (William, 2010).

There have also been concerns of the validity of these tests since they are used for policy analysis, program evaluation, research, and educational accountability (Kane, 2013). It is important to make sure these high-stakes tests are testing students adequately, and their test scores are valid. When tests are developed, there is usually a specific purpose in mind, and the general purpose of the testing program is to provide some elements that need to be assessed and in return, the test scores will provide what



should be achieved and a rationale for thinking that the scores will serve a purpose (Kane, 2013).

According to Darling-Hammond (2007), the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was originally implemented to raise the achievement levels of all students as well as closing the achievement gap for students. There were many unintended negative consequences that emerged because of NCLB. It has been increasingly clear that since the No Child Left Behind Act was implemented, more students have been harmed than have benefited. NCLB seemed to devastate the nation's education system rather than help to improve it (Darling-Hammond, 2007). Much of the harm from NCLB has come from underfunding schools because "unmeetable test score targets that disproportionately penalize schools serving the neediest students, while creating strong incentives for schools to keep out or push out those students who are low achieving in order to raise school average test scores" (Darling-Hammond, 2007, p. 246).

Educational reform initiatives are increasingly using high-stakes accountability testing to try and improve the quality of education (Chalhoub-Deville, 2016). The quality of education in the United States has not necessarily improved. Instead, standardized testing is being used to hold schools accountable, teachers are switching up their curriculum and teaching to the test, and student test scores are being tied to teacher evaluations. Classrooms are saturated with test preparation instruction and frequent benchmark testing (Davis & Willson, 2015). Even with all the test preparation in classrooms, student test scores have not increased. Since the

United States has implemented standardized testing, the curriculum and the teaching in schools have also standardized by teachers being required to use scripted curriculum that is targeted specifically at increasing the test scores of students (Au, 2011). Teachers are also required to teach to the test and review test questions throughout each school year to help their students pass. Schools have since started focusing their time and curriculum on reading and math, pushing science and social studies to the backburner.

### **Research/Evaluation**

#### **Accountability and Funding**

From 1965-2001, the earliest form of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) did not hold anyone accountable for students' test results (Stotsky, 2016). When the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) was signed into law, it required students to take standardized tests in reading and math, starting in third grade and continuing through high school. NCLB was intended to close achievement gaps in students and provide all students with a fair and equal opportunity for a high-quality education. Under NCLB, schools and school districts were held accountable for students' test scores (Stotsky, 2016). Before this law, the federal government did not govern education and it was primarily governed at the local level (Hursh, 2005). In 2009, Race to the Top was passed and led to an increase in the weight of standardized tests to hold schools accountable for students test scores (Bausell & Glazier, 2018). Race to the Top permitted the U.S. Department of Education to award grants to public schools for implementing the Common Core standards and

standardized testing, while holding teachers accountable for student test results (Stotsky, 2016).

According to Hursh (2005), under the No Child Left Behind Act, schools must develop and assess students, put their test scores into groups by their gender, race, etc., as well as making the scores public. These scores are then compared to the state's testing requirements to determine if these groups are meeting the adequate yearly academic progress. If any of the groups are considered failing to meet the state standards, then the school is labeled as failing. Students will be given the option of transferring to a non-failing school and will be provided transportation at the expense of the failing school. Under the NCLB schools are also penalized for low test scores by decreasing their funding (Hursh, 2005). Since the start of the abundance of mandated standardized testing, the consequences of poor student performance under federal guidelines have placed the accountability to fall more on teachers than students (Stotsky, 2016).

According to Gallagher (2000), education in the United States is in a crisis. There are two main factors that are contributing to this crisis. The first factor is the amount of money that the testing industry is making off standardized testing, and the second factor is the distrust our society has pertaining to teachers and schools (Gallagher, 2000). There is such a distrust of teachers and schools ever since the accountability movement started and schools are continuing to fail and fall behind. Taxpayers need to see that their investment into schools is paying off. When schools

are labeled as failing, they need to hold someone accountable, and the fault is put on schools and teachers (Gallagher, 2000).

There are different ways schools can be held accountable for student growth and proficiency. According to Loeb and Byun (2019), there are political accountabilities from the elected officials, such as the school board, to create the foundation for running schools. School of choice systems also hold schools accountable for their performance and quality because families can choose to leave a school or district and find another one that better meets their needs (Loeb & Byun, 2019).

Even after the NCLB established mandatory standardized testing in every state, the inequities in education remain. According to Shelton and Brooks (2019), the NCLB was swiftly criticized for not taking into consideration the variations in student population across states and districts. New legislation allowed states and parents the ability to opt-out of testing, but the federal government has hundreds of millions of dollars tied to maintaining standardized testing requirements (Shelton & Brooks, 2019). If more than 5% of a school district has students who opt-out, the federal government requires the district to report the “non-scores” and then the government labels those populations as “non-proficient” (Strauss, 2017).

With the increase in accountability measures on high-stakes testing, teacher quality has been linked to student performance on these tests. According to Smith and Holloway (2020), standardized tests were not designed to measure teacher effectiveness, but it has now been a common practice for schools to incorporate

student test results on their teacher evaluations. There are multiple measures included for teacher evaluations, but now student test scores are prioritized and a focused part of teacher evaluations. (Smith & Holloway, 2020).

Another way teachers can be held accountable for student growth is by using Student Learning Objectives (SLO). SLO are a way to measure student growth and academic gains and can be used to assess teacher performance based on what goals were attained for students (Lin et al., 2020). Teachers can also use SLOs during their instructional planning by allowing teachers to set up their goals and implement their instruction towards the goal (Lin et al., 2020). According to Lin et al. (2020), there are three steps involved in using SLOs for teacher evaluations. The first step is setting targets, the second is assessing student growth, and the third step is to evaluate teachers based on whether students reached their goal (Lin et al., 2020).

### **Curriculum and Test Preparation in Classrooms**

Curriculum changes and test preparation have increased since mandatory standardized testing. “One researcher has estimated that if teachers tried to cover all the standards they’re supposed to, schools would need to go up through grade twenty-one or twenty-two” (Wexler, 2019, p. 194). The same researcher, Aaron Grossman, also figured out that only 18% of those standards show up on the state tests each year, so all teachers had to do was focus on teaching those specific standards (Wexler, 2019). These standards are sometimes called power standards or jackpot standards. Only focusing on certain skills so students can pass the test at the end of the year is not benefiting students in the long run.

With standardized testing carrying so much weight, the expectations of curriculum in the classroom are based on student performance on these tests. Students are being taught the test instead of learning the curriculum (Duncan & Stevens, 2011.) Teachers are feeling more pressure for their students to do well on these standardized tests and are aligning their instruction with the test and engaging students in more test preparation (Schroeder, 2013). There is also a rise in scripted curriculum where teachers have no creative involvement or decisions in how they teach in schools in the United States (Au, 2011). According to Stotsky (2016), test scores are becoming less of a measure of subject matter and more of a measure of a student's ability to understand the meaning of the test directions. This causes teachers to increase their time in classrooms on practicing drills to improve the test performance of low-achieving students which causes them to spend less time on instruction of the subject matter (Stotsky, 2016). Currently, schools are focusing on students passing the state test at the end of the year when the focus should be on teaching students and creating lifelong learners.

According to Duncan and Stevens' (2011) research study, it was concluded that 92% of the participants either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that other subjects are being pushed aside to spend more classroom time on reading and math. Also, nearly 75% of participants "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that standardized tests are flawed and do not perfectly measure a school's effectiveness (Duncan & Stevens, 2011). There is so much pressure placed on schools for students to pass the state tests, but the effectiveness of these tests is not taken into consideration.

## **Teacher Attrition**

When Race to the Top was implemented, the negative outcomes of standardized tests filtered down to teachers when their evaluations became tied to their students' test scores (Bausell & Glazier, 2018). Bausell and Glazier (2018) completed their empirical research study where they gathered data from 2009 through 2015. The participants included fifty-one elementary teachers from rural, suburban, and urban schools with a vast range of demographics. Researchers listened to their discourse over six years and whether they were discussing high-stakes assessments over time. Bausell and Glazier (2018) found that as high-stakes testing became more prevalent, the testing culture and discourse amongst teachers increased. In Phase One (2009-2010) the focus of their discourse was on their individual teaching experiences, philosophies, and personal objectives for teaching. During Phase Two (2010-2012) participants started using mandated curriculum and standardized testing within their own classrooms. Even though testing was present in their day-to-day work, participants continued to refer to high stakes testing as an "entity separate from themselves and their practice" (Bausell & Glazier, 2018, p. 320). During Phase Three (2013-2015) teacher evaluations were tied to student proficiency on state testing. Participants seemed to be fully absorbed into a new way of teaching and teacher discourse was fully focused on test scores, student growth, data, and progress monitoring. The researchers concluded that as testing took over schools, teachers became more proficient in testing lingo and were less likely to talk about their philosophies and practice (Bausell & Glazier, 2018).

There is an ongoing debate whether the effects of standardized testing are positive or negative and how the pressure affects teachers and their working environment (Youn, 2018). Youn (2018) started an empirical study to research the influence of test pressures on teachers and their sense of empowerment. The data from this study came from ECLS-K from the US National Center for Education Statistics and randomly selected 1,277 public and private schools that offer kindergarten. Kindergarten teachers were used to ensure the generalizability to teachers across the nation and the study focuses on public schools since testing policies affect them the most. Youn (2018) found that social support has a significant positive influence on teachers' sense of empowerment and their sense of community. It was also found that raising academic performance has a significant negative influence on teachers' sense of empowerment, their community, and their professional commitment. "Regardless of whether the school provides a high level of support, the emphasis on raising students' academic performance may still deteriorate teachers' empowerment, sense of community, and their professional commitment" (Youn, 2018, p. 14).

Teacher appraisals that were traditionally used for continuous formative teacher feedback are now progressively transforming into summative tools for standardized testing accountability purposes (Smith & Kubacka, 2017). When the Race to the Top program started in 2009, the intent was to promote improvements in low-performing schools by incorporating test scores into teacher evaluations (Smith & Kubacka, 2017). This has not been the case for most schools; there have been



many unintended consequences from high-stakes testing. A significant number of elementary teachers have said that the high-stakes tests have caused them to teach in ways that contradict their ideas of good, quality instructional practices (Schroeder, 2003). There are also many teachers who decide to quit their public-school job and go work at a private school or leave the profession entirely to avoid the negative consequences and the pressure that is associated with high-stakes testing (Minarechová, 2012).

Yearly teacher evaluations have an immense impact on teachers. Starting in the 2019-2020 school year, Michigan increased the student growth component on teacher evaluations to 40% (MDE, 2019). Of the student growth component, 50% of student growth needs to be the state standardized test (MDE, 2019).

Anderson et al. (2019), completed a mixed-methods study investigating teachers' and administrators' perceptions based on the evaluation process and teacher wellbeing. A survey was given to 1,746 public school educators including teachers and administrators. An additional phone interview was completed using a portion of the participants; 128 teachers and 48 administrators. The researchers found that administrators perceived that the evaluation process positively supported teacher wellbeing more than teachers did (Anderson et al., 2019). Teachers reported feeling increased stress and anxiety due to the evaluation process as well as more competition and less collaboration with other teachers (Anderson et al., 2019). Nearly 99% of the teacher participants were rated Highly Effective or Effective and it was determined

that these ratings do not determine teachers' job satisfaction and wellbeing (Anderson et al., 2019).

### **Students' Emotional Well-Being and Test Anxiety**

Test anxiety is a state of distress that students may feel while completing standardized tests. There are two major elements of test anxiety, the first being worry, which encompasses all cognitive processes, and the second being emotionality which refers to the psychological changes stemming from the nervous system (Lohbeck et al., 2016). Lohbeck et al. (2016) conducted a study to examine test anxiety among 192 fourth graders from six different elementary schools. Test anxiety in students was measured by a subscale of trait anxiety from the Anxiety Questionnaire for Students. The results of this study showed that students' test anxiety was relatively high and that girls reported higher levels of test anxiety than boys (Lohbeck et al., 2016).

The emotional well-being of students should be considered when creating standardized tests and analyzing student test scores. Segool et al. (2013) completed a study to examine whether students experience a greater amount of test anxiety while taking a high stakes assessment compared to classroom tests. Segool et al., (2013) completed a study with 335 students in third through fifth grade participated in this study. Test anxiety in students was measured with two different scales; the first was Children's Test Anxiety Scale (CTAS) and the second was the Behavior Assessment Scale for Children, Second Edition (BASC-2-TA) (Segool et al., 2013). Both tests use self-report scales that are designed to measure test anxiety in children. Teachers also reported their observations of students' anxiety before and during the test, as well as

their own anxiety correlated to students' performances. Data was collected immediately following students' completion of the state tests. A month later, students and teachers completed the surveys again but answered them with regard to a regular classroom assessment. After analyzing the data, the researchers found that students and teachers reported significantly greater anxiety for the high stakes test compared to the classroom assessment (Segool et al., 2013).

### **Inaccurate Representation of Students' Abilities**

Mandatory standardized testing was implemented to test students to determine whether they are making adequate growth in school. When analyzing test scores, schools generally do not take into consideration how the test taker performed under certain conditions. Instead, the test scores are used to analyze whether the student reached a specific level of achievement or the likeliness of the student succeeding in an educational program (Kane, 2013).

The National Association for the Education of Young Children determined their position for testing to be inappropriate for young children because of their developmental stage and not being cognitively ready to understand the goals of standardized testing (Im, 2017). According to Im (2017), there have been very few empirical studies completed on early childhood and the impacts of standardized testing. To help fill the gap, the researchers investigated the direct and indirect effects that standardized testing has on kindergarten students and their reading achievement. Im (2107) used data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Cohort of 2010-2011 for the study. The data concluded that reading scores in

kindergarten were positively correlated with students' ages, and those who came from higher socioeconomic status (SES) of families with English as their first language were more likely to score higher (Im, 2017). Even though we are holding testing to such a high standard in schools, there still is no evidence that it is an effective way of assessing student knowledge and growth.

Even with standardized testing having well-defined standards, there can still be problems with reliability (precise test), validity (whether the test measures what it is designed to measure), and comprehensiveness (the test captures all domains of interest) (Loeb & Byun, 2019). Since high-stakes tests are being used to determine funding for a school, are being included on teacher evaluations, and used to determine how much a student has grown academically in a school year, these tests need to adequately reflect the progress that students have made. Even if the test did accurately measure a student's learning, it cannot accurately measure the school's contribution to that student's learning (Loeb & Byun, 2019). There are too many outside factors that could influence student learning and invalidate test scores.

The empirical research also suggests that the test scores from these standardized tests are not always an accurate representation of what a student is capable of. These tests do not measure all the skills that a student learns in school. Results on state tests can also be impacted on the socioeconomic status of families. It was found that students who come from higher socioeconomic families with English as their home language score much higher than students who come from lower socioeconomic families or may have English as a second language (Im et al., 2020).

The research also shows that some students may experience test anxiety and they may not perform to the best of their abilities on the standardized test. The research also suggests that schools should more effectively prepare students to cope with taking high-stakes tests. The research also suggests that policymakers and other stakeholders reconsider the effects of frequent standardized testing and instruction for students in primary grades (Im et al., 2020).

According to Nichols et al. (2012), there are some claims that argue high-stakes tests are beneficial and well established, although most research fails to support that high-stakes testing increases student learning. The researchers' goal in this empirical study is to re-assess the relationship between high-stakes tests and the data that arose after the NCLB enactment. The researchers used the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data for reading and math from 2005-2009 for fourth and eighth graders. The results found that high SES students scored consistently higher than any other subgroup, while African American students consistently scored the lowest average (Nichols et al., 2012). The research also concluded that "in math, pre-NCLB achievement gains were greater than post-NCLB gains" which means "students were progressing in math at a much faster rate before the national high-stakes testing movement spawned by NCLB" (Nichols et al., 2012, p. 23).

Since the start of high-stakes testing, many schools have given greater attention and more focus onto students that are close to passing these tests. Minarechová (2012) calls students who are on the border of passing or failing the

high stakes tests “borderline” students. These students have an immense impact on the school district’s score. Researchers that conducted a study in the *National Science Foundation* interviewed teachers that admitted to focusing more on their borderline students to help them pass the test while spending less time with students that will fail the test (Minarechová, 2012). Extra attention should not be given to specific groups of students just so the school will end with a passing grade. The students who are on grade level or above are also negatively affected by high-stakes testing similarly to students that would not pass the test because they are not being challenged (Minarechová, 2012).

### **Summary**

Considering all the research reviewed, our country has a significant problem which stems from standardized testing. If students are not passing the state tests, schools are penalized through funding. The schools that are failing are punished with less funding to help students that may need it the most. Testing companies are making billions of dollars while schools are suffering and losing funding when students are not showing proficiency (Gallagher, 2000).

Educators across the country are feeling the pressure to raise test scores. This inevitably causes teachers to teach to the test and spend most of their time completing test prep. “Because of the pressure to raise test scores, particularly in the urban school districts, teachers are compelled to teach the skills and knowledge that will be tested, neglecting other usually more complex aspects of the subject and some subjects altogether” (Hursh, 2005, p. 613). Schools are primarily focused on teaching reading

and math every day while science and social studies are being taught only a couple of times a week (Wexler, 2019; Minarechová, 2012).

Many states continue to include students' test scores on teacher evaluations to indicate whether they are effective teachers. The United States continues to use tests that are high stakes for teachers but low stakes for students (William, 2010). High-stakes tests are relatively rare in other developed and developing countries, where the testing methods are either low stakes for teachers and high stakes for students or high-stakes for both (William, 2010). Teacher job satisfaction and their motivation has also decreased since concerns of test scores are included on teacher evaluations (Smith & Kubacka, 2017).

Testing does not always measure students' full capability. Students can experience high levels of nervousness or test anxiety before a standardized test and their scores may not be an accurate representation of what that student is capable of (Segool et al., 2013). There have been a few claims that argue high-stakes testing is beneficial for schools and students although most research fails to support that high-stakes testing enhances student learning (Nichols et al. 2012).

### **Conclusion**

Standardized testing affects schools, educators, students, families, and the communities. Standardized testing is increasingly having negative impacts on students and teachers. Educators in schools are being required to teach to the test and end up spending a lot of time during the school day working on test-taking strategies

as well as test preparation which does not benefit students. High-stakes testing has led to many unintentional consequences in the classroom, such as teachers restricting the curriculum, teaching to the test, and focusing on the students who will pass or are close to passing to help improve test results (Smith & Kubacka, 2017).



## **Chapter Three: Project Description**

### **Introduction**

Many educators feel the negative impacts that standardized testing has placed on teachers and students in classrooms. Due to the high-stakes assessments and the federal and state funding tied to testing, many schools will do anything it takes to have students pass the state test at the end of the school year. This includes having classrooms focus on jackpot standards (Wexler, 2019) and borderline students (Minarechová, 2012). If schools have poor student performance on the state tests, those schools will lose Title 1 funding which can be used to increase staffing and provide better curriculum for their school where a large population of students are identified as low income (Bausell & Glazier, 2018).

Schools are also incorporating test prep practice and frequent benchmark tests into classrooms more regularly, which takes away from curriculum and skill mastery. Test preparation only improves a student's ability to take a test; it does not improve their learning (Stotsky, 2016). According to Loeb & Byun (2019), issues with testing can arise from reliability, validity, or comprehensiveness. These problems can arise because the test may not adequately address the standards or the schools' progress towards those standards. Even if a student scores well on one of the tests, the test does not accurately portray the schools' involvement towards the student's learning (Loeb & Byun, 2019).

The objective of this project is to help teachers take ownership of their end of the year evaluation, more specifically the student growth component. This project is also designed to help educators understand the Michigan law where it pertains to teacher evaluations. This project will provide districts with a professional development plan for implementing student learning objectives into their schools as the solution to teacher accountability. The following sections in this chapter will further detail the professional development plan for implementing “The Effects of Standardized Testing in the Classroom.” The first few slides of the professional development presentation give the learning objectives for teachers as well as some research to provide the participants evidence as to the rationale behind this project. This chapter also provides all the project components as well as a description of the evaluation and tools needed to implement in schools. When this plan is implemented, teachers should feel more at ease when the state test is taken. Teachers will also feel more empowered and in control of their end of the year evaluation where it pertains to the student growth component. Educators will also be able to focus on growing all students in the classroom, not just the borderline students needing to pass the state test.

### **Project Components**

The professional development, “The Effects of Standardized Testing in the Classroom,” is designed to be administered at the beginning of the school year, ideally before school starts (see Appendix A). This will give teachers time to process the information as well as becoming familiar with the components of the Student

Learning Objectives Rubrics (see Appendix B) and the Student Learning Objective Plans for Teachers (see Appendix C). The Google slide show is designed to help guide the presenter through the professional development training (see Appendix A).

The Google slide show starts off by giving the participants some learning objectives that will be accomplished by the end of the training (see Appendix A). The next couple of slides also share with the participants the goals of implementing this professional development into their school. The presentation will also give participants research to back up the impacts standardized testing can have in classrooms as well as the impacts standardized testing places on teachers and students specifically. The presentation then discusses the Michigan laws pertaining to student growth on teacher evaluations. A solution of incorporating student learning objectives is also provided to help ease the burden high-stakes testing can put on teacher evaluations. Many teachers have reported feeling enhanced stress and anxiety due to the end of the year evaluation process (Anderson et al., 2019).

Towards the end of the presentation, the student learning objectives will be introduced, and research about the student learning objectives will be presented to the participants. The rubrics for the student learning objectives will also be reviewed and explained (see Appendix B). The slide show will then review the next steps for teachers. Ideally, this professional development will take place just before school starts. Teachers will be given the month of September to get to know their students' abilities as well as have time to give students the beginning of the year benchmark assessments. Then in October, teachers will need to fill out the Student Learning

Objective Plan for Teachers (see Appendix C). With this plan, teachers will be able to look at their student data and choose the goals their classroom will be working on throughout the school year. Teachers will include student data on this form as well as the interval of time needed to meet the goal, the evidence they will use to measure the outcome, the goal for student growth, and what strategies and support teachers will be using as interventions in their classrooms. The following section will address the Student Learning Objective Results and Reflections for Teachers that will be used in the evaluation process (see Appendix D).

### **Project Evaluation**

The effectiveness of this project will be measured using the Student Learning Objective Results and Reflections for Teachers (see Appendix D). The reflections form is designed for teachers to complete at the end of the school year once the benchmark assessments have been given to students and the data has been analyzed. Teachers will fill out the form and include the benchmark and assessment data from students that were used to measure student growth. Teachers will also include what strategies and support methods they used in the classroom to help students meet the goal as well as what the challenges were for the students who did not meet the goal. The last section of this form is for teachers to write their thoughts and reflections about the process. These answers will provide administration with valuable information about their teachers' progress towards their goals as well as being able to use the information to help their teachers continue to grow.

If this project is effective, teachers will feel empowered and will be able to take ownership over student growth that was shown in their classroom. Frequently, schools only use the M-STEP data and possibly another district assessment in the student growth category of the evaluation, and teachers tend to feel like they do not have control over that section of their evaluation. Teachers also only see which student passed or failed the state test, and it does not give teachers specific information about what skills their students did well on or not so well on. Incorporating the SLO into classrooms will allow teachers to analyze how well they are teaching different skills in their classroom as well as helping them to identify their strengths and weakness teaching in their classroom.

### **Project Conclusions**

Mandatory standardized testing has been a huge factor in education in the United States, and it has directly impacted our schools. Testing was introduced as the means of guaranteeing that all children will receive a high-quality education, but in many ways, it has been just the opposite (Wexler, 2019). There is an unnecessary amount of pressure placed on schools, and teachers specifically, to have students show growth on these high-stakes assessments. The pressure that testing places on teachers lowers teachers' sense of a professional community and their commitment to teaching (Youn, 2018). Another negative impact testing has on schools is that schools identify students who are just beneath the passing score then schools focus their instruction and resources toward helping those students achieve, while students who are well below passing will receive nominal attention (Davis & Wilson 2015).

Implementing the student learning objectives into classrooms will be a beneficial way to create more realistic goals for teachers to meet and in turn, will benefit all students in the classroom.

### **Plans for Implementation**

Incorporating student learning objectives into schools can potentially empower teachers to feel more in control of their end of the year evaluations. Teachers will also be able to focus on helping all their students grow in the classroom and not just the borderline students that many schools focus their time and resources on helping. This project is intended to be used as a resource for administration and teachers to help minimize the negative effects of standardized teaching that can be placed on schools. Ideally, this professional development should be presented at the beginning of the school year before students are in attendance to provide an adequate amount of time for teachers to prepare themselves to implement this plan into their classrooms.

In order for this plan to be successful, there must be administration and teacher buy in. Both parties need to fully understand how the student learning objectives could benefit the school, staff, and students. The successful implementation of this project should start with the principal of the school. The principal should be knowledgeable and helpful to teachers to implement and execute in their classrooms. Once teachers have decided on their classroom goals based on student data, the plan for teachers should be filled out (see Appendix C). The principal of the school should become familiar with their staffs' goals to help teachers

implement them and achieve them. During the principal's rounds of teacher observations, the principal should be looking for opportunities to help the teacher succeed in their goal as well as offering some strategies to help students succeed. This plan could be implemented in all grades, kindergarten through twelfth grade.

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## Appendix A

### Staff Presentation

# The Effects of Standardized Testing in the Classroom



## OBJECTIVES

- ★ Understand the impacts standardized testing can have on teachers and students.
- ★ Understand the Michigan law where it pertains to teacher evaluations.
- ★ Understand and implement Student Learning Objectives (SLO) to be used as part of your evaluation.



## Goals for Today's Professional Development

- ★ To help eliminate some of the stress that standardized testing puts on teachers and students.
- ★ Allow teachers to create more authentic learning experiences for students and put less of a focus on test preparation.
- ★ Lessen the accountability from standardized testing that is placed on teachers and their yearly evaluations.

## Goals for Today's Professional Development

- ★ Allow teachers to have more autonomy over their evaluation, specifically the student growth component.
- ★ District will give out pay raises and bonuses based off completed evaluations and not solely on test scores.

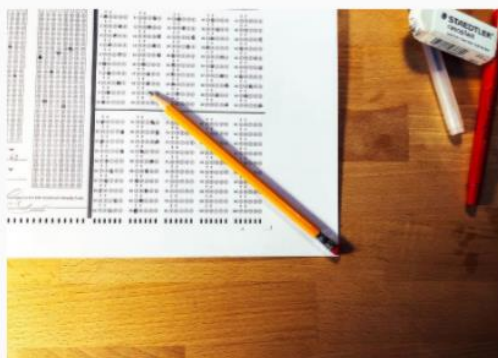
## Let's Get Started!

When you think about standardized testing, more specifically the M-STEP, what comes to mind?



Speaker Notes: Allow teachers to have some time to think, share their thoughts with teachers at their table, and then allow teachers to share out to the group.

## The Influence of High-Stakes Testing



We all know that mandatory standardized testing has a major influence on education and how we operate our classrooms. The No Child Left Behind Act and the Race to the Top program made testing a high-stakes event for schools across our country. Accountability for these test scores are falling predominately on teachers. Teacher evaluations now include a student growth category at 40% of your evaluation.



## The Problem

- ★ Teaching to the test-there is an increase in the amount of schools and teachers that are teaching to the test and only teaching subjects upon which students are tested.
- ★ Test preparation- teachers are prioritizing assessments and having students practice taking tests without the focus of creating lifelong learners, the only focus is on hitting the mark for testing numbers.
- ★ Jackpot Standards- the focus is on standards that will be tested and taught in the classroom with the others coming second to the tested standards.

## The Problem

- ★ Borderline students-teachers are focusing their time and attention on students who are close to passing the test and are spending far less time focusing on the other students.
- ★ Students may opt out of testing, but if more than 5% of the school districts' population opts out, then the federal government requires the district to report the non-scores and the government labels those populations as non-proficient.
- ★ Teacher pay and bonuses-are tied to student M-STEP scores

## Impacts of Standardized Testing on Teachers

- ★ Schools are held accountable for for students' test scores.
- ★ Federal and State funding are dependent on student test scores.
- ★ Accountability of scores fall on teachers more than students.

## Impacts of Standardized Testing on Teachers

- ★ Standardized testing was not designed to measure teacher effectiveness, but the test is now being used in that way.
- ★ 40% of teacher evaluations are tied to student growth on state tests.
- ★ Teachers are not staying in the classroom and often leave for other careers.

## Impacts of Standardized Testing on Students

- ★ Students are being exposed to a modified version of the curriculum, usually just the standards that show up on the standardized test.
- ★ Many students are also not being exposed to science and social studies.
- ★ Classrooms are saturated with test preparation and practice tests instead of authentic learning experiences.

## Impacts of Standardized Testing on Students

- ★ High-stakes testing and the pressure can give students test anxiety.
- ★ The test scores of students are not always an accurate measure of their abilities.
- ★ Focus in classrooms is on the students who are on the borderline of passing.

## Michigan State Law Public Act 173 of 2015

- ★ Starting in the 2019-2020 school year, the student growth component of teacher evaluations will be growing to 40%
- ★ 50% of the student growth component needs to be the state test. The other 50% may include alternative, rigorous assessments or student learning objectives.
- ★ Teachers and administrators with three consecutive years of highly effective ratings may receive biennial reviews.

## Michigan State Law Public Act 173 of 2015

- ★ Unless a teacher has received effective or highly effective on the most recent evaluations, there must be at least two observations and one needs to be unscheduled.
- ★ Teachers that are rated as ineffective for three consecutive years, must be dismissed from employment.



SOLUTION

- ★ We can fix the impacts students are having in the classroom by taking some pressure off of teachers which in turn, will take some pressure off of students.
- ★ Our district is committed to using the evaluation as a whole to give raises and bonuses to teachers rather than just using student test scores.



SOLUTION

- ★ We will use student learning objectives for the other 50% of the student growth component.
- ★ We believe that allowing teachers to have some input and accountability over student growth will empower teachers to make the difference needed in their classrooms while improving student achievement.

## Student Learning Objectives (SLO)

- ★ Student learning objectives are another way our district will be able to hold teachers accountable while still giving teachers the autonomy they need in their classroom.
- ★ SLO are a way to measure student growth and academic gains and will be used to assess teacher performance based on what goals were obtained for students.
- ★ There are three main steps that we will follow.
  - Setting targets
  - Assessing student growth
  - Evaluate teachers based on whether students reached their goal

## SLO Rubric for Student Growth Measures

Table I: Student growth measures that will be used for 2021-2022

Data Point	Rubric Rating (4-1)	Weight	Student Percentage
SLO Objective (2X this year)		20%	
SLO Reflective practice (2X this year)		10%	
Growth Plan including progress and reflective practice (reflection in iObservation 3X this year)		10%	

(Meyer-Looze, 2016)

Speaker Notes: Hand out copies of the rubrics. Discuss the weight of each data point.

SLO Reflection Rubric	
<b>Table II: SLO Reflection Rubric</b>	
Effective Rating	Criteria
<b>Highly Effective</b>	All questions were clearly answered in both a Pre and Post SLO Reflection. If using pre and post assessments, the pre assessment data was used to inform instruction and this was explicitly explained. Changes in instruction and/or modifications were explicitly described. Assessment(s) given were appropriate and relevant. Targeted student growth included Learning Goals and Scales or rubrics.
<b>Effective</b>	All questions were answered in both a Pre and Post SLO Reflection. If using pre and post assessments, the pre assessment data was used to inform instruction. Assessment(s) given were appropriate and relevant. Targeted growth was explained clearly. State standards are aligned with growth targets.

(Meyer-Looze, 2016)

Speaker Notes: Discuss the criteria for receiving a highly effective and effective rating.

SLO Reflection Rubric	
<b>Minimally Effective</b>	Some of the questions were answered in both a Pre and Post SLO Reflection thoughtfully and comprehensively. Change in instruction and/or modifications may or may not have been described. Student growth targets were selected but targeted growth wasn't clearly described.
<b>Ineffective</b>	SLO reflections were not completed or turned in.

(Meyer-Looze, 2016)

Speaker Notes: Discuss the criteria for receiving a minimally effective and ineffective rating.

## SLO Growth Plan Reflection Rubric

Table III: Growth Plan Reflection Rubric

Effective Rating	Criteria
<b>Highly Effective</b>	<p>The goal is measurable and achievable with specific strategies included. Strategies include some sort of professional learning plan. It supports the overall district vision of Every student, every classroom, every day. The use of new knowledge and skills will support the overall collaboration and collegiality (K-12) of the district. Reflections include how achievement of this goal area will benefit students and/or the district community.</p> <p>Assessment(s) of the goal area is evidence based, appropriate and relevant. Targeted growth included Learning Goals and Scales or rubrics.</p> <p>The response is thorough with meaningful connections and there are relevant details and accurate facts to support the reflection. The reflection describes with specific detail, examples, and comparisons how understanding has changed. The reflection also raises important questions for further exploration, learning or understanding with open and honest self-disclosure. (Meyer-Looze, 2016)</p>

Speaker Notes: Discuss the criteria for receiving a highly effective rating on the growth plan.

## SLO Growth Plan Reflection Rubric

<b>Effective</b>	<p>The goal is specific and relevant to improving practice and includes strategies to be implemented. The use of new knowledge, skill and practice supports the overall collaboration and collegiality of the school building. Reflective practice shows growth in the goal area chosen. Assessment(s) of the goal area is appropriate and relevant. Targeted growth was explained clearly.</p> <p>The response is adequate with some meaningful connections to important ideas and concepts. The reflection describes how understanding has changed and there is general information to support the response. The reflection mentions potential new areas of growth and/or questions for future learning. The self disclosure is cautious and guarded.</p>
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(Meyer-Looze, 2016)

Speaker Notes: Discuss the criteria for receiving an effective rating on the growth plan.



SLO Growth Plan Reflection Rubric	
<b>Minimally Effective</b>	<p>The goal is specific and relevant to improving practice and includes strategies to be implemented. The use of new knowledge, skill and practice supports the overall classroom climate but not beyond. Growth targets were selected, but targeted growth wasn't clearly described.</p> <p>Response is incomplete and lacks connections to important ideas or concepts. Reflective practice doesn't give specifics on how moving toward this goal area improved practice. Response provides information about how understanding has changed but lacks examples or evidence. The reflection might allude to further growth areas and the self disclosure is cautious and guarded. It is written more out of compliance as opposed to real growth in the area chosen.</p>
(Meyer-Looze, 2016)	

Speaker Notes: Discuss the criteria for receiving a minimally effective rating on the growth plan.

SLO Growth Plan Reflection Rubric	
<b>Ineffective</b>	<p>Growth Plan reflections were not completed or turned in. Response is random without connections to important concepts. There is no information to support the reflection and it does not show how understanding or behaviors have changed. The reflection does not raise questions or areas of future growth. There is no self disclosure or appraisal of the growth goal area.</p>
(Meyer-Looze, 2016)	

Speaker Notes: Discuss the criteria for receiving an ineffective rating on the growth plan.

## Next Steps...

- ★ We will go over the SLO plan for teachers as well as the SLO reflection.
- ★ You will not be filling out the SLO plan until the beginning of October.
- ★ Use the month of September to get to know your students' abilities as well as giving the beginning of the year benchmark assessments. This will help you to create your goals for the school year.
- ★ At the end of the school year, you will give your end of the year benchmark tests to students and then complete the SLO results and reflection.

Speaker Notes: Pass out the handouts for the SLO Plan and Reflection

## SLO Plan for Teachers

### Student Learning Objective (SLO) Guide for Teachers

After reviewing data and identifying the student population for whom the SLO will apply, create an SLO Plan. Submit the SLO Plan to your evaluator.

NAME:

CONTENT AREA/GRADE LEVEL:

SCHOOL BUILDING:

LEARNING CONTENT (What content will the SLO address?)

BASELINE DATA AND RATIONALE (Why did you choose this objective?):

STUDENT POPULATION (Who are you including in this objective?)

(Meyer-Looze, 2016)

Speaker Notes: Review each section of the plan.

SLO Plan for Teachers	
<b>INTERVAL</b> (How long will you focus on this objective?)	
<b>ASSESSMENT/EVIDENCE SOURCE(S)</b> (How will you measure the outcome of your objective?)	
<b>TARGETED GROWTH</b> (What is your goal for student growth?) to include <b>LEARNING GOALS AND SCALES</b>	
<b>STRATEGIES AND SUPPORT</b> (What methods or interventions will you use to support this objective?)	
<b>Educator Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Administrator Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

(Meyer-Looze, 2016)

Speaker Notes: Review each section of the plan.

SLO Results and Reflection for Teachers
<p align="center"><b>Student Learning Objective (SLO) - Results and Reflection</b></p> <p align="center">After implementing the proposed SLO and reviewing assessment data, please provide a written reflection below. Submit the SLO Reflection to your evaluator.</p>
<b>NAME:</b>
<b>CONTENT AREA/GRADE LEVEL:</b>
<b>SCHOOL BUILDING:</b>
<b>TARGETED GROWTH</b> (What was your goal for student growth?) to include <b>LEARNING GOALS AND SCALES:</b>
<b>ASSESSMENT/EVIDENCE SOURCE(S)</b> (How are you measuring the outcome of your objective? Did the assessment accurately reflect student learning as it relates to state, district, or schoolwide goals? What additional student data might help explain why certain students did or did not meet their growth target?):


(Meyer-Looze, 2016)

Speaker Notes: Review each section of the results and reflection page.

SLO Results and Reflection for Teachers	
<b>BASELINE DATA AND RESULTS DATA</b> (Pre and post. Did you meet your intended objectives? Why or why not?):	
<b>STRATEGIES AND SUPPORT</b> (What methods or interventions did you use to support this objective? What instructional strategies might increase the likelihood for success? What seems to be the challenges for those students who are not meeting the target?)	
<b>OTHER THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS</b> (If most or all students met the target, was it a cognitively complex target? What makes you say that?):	
<b>Educator Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Administrator Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

(Meyer-Looze, 2016)

Speaker Notes: Review each section of the results and reflection page.

<p>Questions? Comments?</p> <p>Thank you for your time and effort.</p>	 <p><b>THE ROOTS OF EDUCATION ARE BITTER, BUT THE FRUIT IS SWEET.</b> - ARISTOTLE</p>
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## Appendix B

### Student Learning Objective Rubrics

**Table I: Student growth measures that will be used for 2021-2022**

Data Point	Rubric Rating (4-1)	Weight	Student Percentage
SLO Objective (2X this year)		20%	
SLO Reflective practice (2X this year)		10%	
Growth Plan including progress and reflective practice (reflection in iObservation 3X this year)		10%	

(Meyer-Looze, 2016)

**Table II: SLO Reflection Rubric**

Effective Rating	Criteria
<b>Highly Effective</b>	All questions were clearly answered in both a Pre and Post SLO Reflection. If using pre and post assessments, the pre assessment data was used to inform instruction and this was explicitly explained. Changes in instruction and/or modifications were explicitly described. Assessment(s) given were appropriate and relevant. Targeted student growth included Learning Goals and Scales or rubrics.
<b>Effective</b>	All questions were answered in both a Pre and Post SLO Reflection. If using pre and post assessments, the pre assessment data was used to inform instruction. Assessment(s) given were appropriate and relevant. Targeted growth was explained clearly. State standards are aligned with growth targets.
<b>Minimally Effective</b>	Some of the questions were answered in both a Pre and Post SLO Reflection thoughtfully and comprehensively. Change in instruction and/or modifications may or may not have been described. Student growth targets were selected but targeted growth wasn't clearly described.
<b>Ineffective</b>	SLO reflections were not completed or turned in.

(Meyer-Looze, 2016)

Table III: Growth Plan Reflection Rubric

Effective Rating	Criteria
<b>Highly Effective</b>	<p>The goal is measurable and achievable with specific strategies included. Strategies include some sort of professional learning plan. It supports the overall district vision of Every student, every classroom, every day. The use of new knowledge and skills will support the overall collaboration and collegiality (K-12) of the district. Reflections include how achievement of this goal area will benefit students and/or the district community.</p> <p>Assessment(s) of the goal area is evidence based, appropriate and relevant. Targeted growth included Learning Goals and Scales or rubrics.</p> <p>The response is thorough with meaningful connections and there are relevant details and accurate facts to support the reflection. The reflection describes with specific detail, examples, and comparisons how understanding has changed. The reflection also raises important questions for further exploration, learning or understanding with open and honest self-disclosure.</p>
<b>Effective</b>	<p>The goal is specific and relevant to improving practice and includes strategies to be implemented. The use of new knowledge, skill and practice supports the overall collaboration and collegiality of the school building. Reflective practice shows growth in the goal area chosen. Assessment(s) of the goal area is appropriate and relevant. Targeted growth was explained clearly.</p> <p>The response is adequate with some meaningful connections to important ideas and concepts. The reflection describes how understanding has changed and there is general information to support the response. The reflection mentions potential new areas of growth and/or questions for future learning. The self disclosure is cautious and guarded.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Meyer-Looze, 2016)</p>

<p><b>Minimally Effective</b></p>	<p>The goal is specific and relevant to improving practice and includes strategies to be implemented. The use of new knowledge, skill and practice supports the overall classroom climate but not beyond. Growth targets were selected, but targeted growth wasn't clearly described.</p> <p>Response is incomplete and lacks connections to important ideas or concepts. Reflective practice doesn't give specifics on how moving toward this goal area improved practice. Response provides information about how understanding has changed but lacks examples or evidence. The reflection might allude to further growth areas and the self disclosure is cautious and guarded. It is written more out of compliance as opposed to real growth in the area chosen.</p>
<p><b>Ineffective</b></p>	<p>Growth Plan reflections were not completed or turned in. Response is random without connections to important concepts. There is no information to support the reflection and it does not show how understanding or behaviors have changed. The reflection does not raise questions or areas of future growth. There is no self disclosure or appraisal of the growth goal area.</p>

(Meyer-Looze, 2016)

## Appendix C

### Student Learning Objective Plan for Teachers

#### Student Learning Objective (SLO) Guide for Teachers

After reviewing data and identifying the student population for whom the SLO will apply, create an SLO Plan. Submit the SLO Plan to your evaluator.

<b>NAME:</b>	
<b>CONTENT AREA/GRADE LEVEL:</b>	
<b>SCHOOL BUILDING:</b>	
<b>LEARNING CONTENT</b> (What content will the SLO address?)	
<b>BASELINE DATA AND RATIONALE</b> (Why did you choose this objective?):	
<b>STUDENT POPULATION</b> (Who are you including in this objective?)	
<b>INTERVAL</b> (How long will you focus on this objective?)	
<b>ASSESSMENT/EVIDENCE SOURCE(S)</b> (How will you measure the outcome of your objective?)	
<b>TARGETED GROWTH</b> (What is your goal for student growth?) to include <b>LEARNING GOALS AND SCALES</b>	
<b>STRATEGIES AND SUPPORT</b> (What methods or interventions will you use to support this objective?)	
<b>Educator Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Administrator Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

(Meyer-Looze, 2016)



## Appendix D

### Student Learning Objective Results and Reflection for Teachers

#### Student Learning Objective (SLO) - Results and Reflection

After implementing the proposed SLO and reviewing assessment data, please provide a written reflection below. Submit the SLO Reflection to your evaluator.

<b>NAME:</b>	
<b>CONTENT AREA/GRADE LEVEL:</b>	
<b>SCHOOL BUILDING:</b>	
<b>TARGETED GROWTH</b> (What was your goal for student growth?) to include <b>LEARNING GOALS AND SCALES:</b>	
<b>ASSESSMENT/EVIDENCE SOURCE(S)</b> (How are you measuring the outcome of your objective? Did the assessment accurately reflect student learning as it relates to state, district, or schoolwide goals? What additional student data might help explain why certain students did or did not meet their growth target?):	
<b>BASELINE DATA AND RESULTS DATA</b> (Pre and post. Did you meet your intended objectives? Why or why not?):	
<b>STRATEGIES AND SUPPORT</b> (What methods or interventions did you use to support this objective? What instructional strategies might increase the likelihood for success? What seems to be the challenges for those students who are not meeting the target?)	
<b>OTHER THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS</b> (If most or all students met the target, was it a cognitively complex target? What makes you say that?):	
<b>Educator Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Administrator Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

(Meyer-Looze, 2016)

## Appendix E

### Copyright Permissions Form

July 1, 2021

Dr. Cathy Meyer-Looze  
Grand Valley State University

Dear Dr. Cathy Meyer-Looze

I am currently enrolled in the Grand Valley State University (GVSU) Educational Leadership Program, and I am writing a Master's Project for the completion of my Master's Degree in Education. My Project is entitled "Negative Impacts of Mandatory Standardized Testing on Teachers and Students." May I receive permission to include in the appendixes of my Master's Project copies of the following items?

Meyer-Looze, C. (2016). Student learning objectives: Rubric, plan, and reflection. Frankfort, MI: Frankfort Elberta Area Schools.  
Student Learning Objectives Rubric, Plan, and Reflection.]

Your signature at the bottom portion of this letter confirms your ownership of the above item. The inclusion of your copyrighted material will not restrict your re-publication of the material in any other form. Please advise if you wish a specific copyright notice to be included on each page. My project may be cataloged in the GVSU library and will be available to other students and colleges for circulation.

Sincerely,

Nicole Stefanko

-----  
PERMISSION IS GRANTED to Nicole Stefanko to include the requested material(s) in their GVSU Master's of Education Project.

Name: Nicole Stefanko  
Address:  
Date: 7/3/2021

Use the following permission signature format if a publishing house or other organization owns the copyright.

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Permission granted by: Catherine L. Meyer-Looze  
Title: Author  
Date: July 3, 2021



The signature of the individual below indicates that the individual has read and approved the project of Nicole Stefanko in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Educational Leadership.

*Catherine L. Meyer-Looze*

Catherine L. Meyer-Looze, Project Advisor

Date 7/7/2021

Accepted and approved on behalf of the  
Educational Leadership Program

Accepted and approved on behalf of the  
Educational Leadership and Counseling Unit

*Rich Vandermolen*

Richard Vandermolen, Graduate Program Director

*Catherine L. Meyer-Looze*

Catherine L. Meyer-Looze, Unit Head

\_\_\_\_\_7/7/2021\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_7/7/2021|\_\_\_\_\_

Date