# Handout 3.2. Sources of Data for Informing Growth Targets

|  |
| --- |
| **Setting Growth Targets Without Pre-assessments** |
| ***Sources of Data to Inform Targets*****Surveys.** A survey may be helpful to gauge if students have had exposure to course-related information outside of school. This information can help ensure you have a complete picture of your students when you set your growth targets. **Interim Assessments (e.g. Unit tests)** Teachers may need to use assessments from early in the year, such as a unit test, to project reasonable growth targets for the end of the year. An early course assessment or interim assessment may have a very limited scope in terms of content coverage, so it should be used in conjunction with other student data in order to inform growth targets on the final assessment.**Prior-year student performance in the course.**In some cases, teachers may be able to use prior-year scores from other students who took the course in question as a means of estimating appropriate growth targets in the current year. **Prior student performance in related subjects.** Prior student performance in related subjects may help to determine what skills or content knowledge students bring into the course, and therefore help the teacher to anticipate what growth is appropriate for the student.**GPA*.*** Whenever possible, subject-specific GPA should be used and used in conjunction with other types of information. In some rare cases where other data are not available, a student’s overall GPA may be used to help estimate performance. For example, if an analysis of historical data shows that students who have a GPA of 3.5 usually score 90 or higher on the end-of-course exam in question, it may be reasonable to set a growth target for current students based in part on their GPA.  |
| **Setting Growth Targets With Pre-assessments** |
| **Pre-assessments*.***Where appropriate, the pre-assessment should mirror the post assessment in terms of the content and skill attainment tested, but the two test forms should not be identical. Other sources of data such as those mentioned above should still be consulted if available to base growth targets on multiple sources of information. ***When the assessments are similar in scope and difficulty***, the maintenance of baseline scores does not demonstrate growth.  |

# Handout 3.3. Thinking About Growth Targets—Where to Begin?

Setting growth targets is not a science, but here is one approach to setting growth targets. This sequence of steps uses a backward mapping approach. This example assumes that you are using similar pre-assessment and post-assessments.

Step 1: Determine your baseline data sources (pre-assessment, prior year test scores, etc.) and select a high-quality post-assessment that:

* + Is aligned to the curriculum
	+ Contains stretch
	+ Is valid and reliable

Step 2: Determine performance tiers for the post-assessment by establishing score ranges.

* + What is the passing score?
	+ What score would represent high performance?

**Example 1:**

* Basic (score of 0-60)
* Approaching Proficient/Proficient (61-86)
* Advanced (87-100)

**Step 3:** Determine performance tiers for the baseline data by establishing score ranges.

* + What is the passing score?
	+ What score would represent high performance?

**Example 2:**

* Very low achievement (score below 60)
* Low-mid achievement (61-76)
* Mid-high achievement (77-86)
* High achievement (87-93)
* Exceptional achievement (94-100)

**Step 4:** Categorize the student performance data on the baseline assessments by the tiers of performance you established in Step 2.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Performance Level on Pre-assessment | Number of Students Performing at that Level on the Pre-assessment |
| Very low achievement (score is <60) | 5 |
| Low-mid achievement (61-76) | 21 |
| Mid-high achievement (77-86) | 12 |
| High achievement (87-93) | 11 |
| Exceptional achievement (94-100) | 1 |

For example, think about where students are and where they should be at the end of the year. Note that in the diagram below, the slope of the line varies. Based upon the assessment, expected growth may be greater for some students than others. In general, it might be expected that those on within a lower achieving tier would achieve more growth on the assessment than those already in a higher achieving tier.

**Step 5:** Determine what growth expectations are reasonable based upon post-assessment or trend data.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Student** |  | **Pretest****(out of 100)** |  | **Posttest****(out of 100)** | **Growth** |
| **Student A** |  | 61 |  | 79 | **18 pts** |
| **Student B** |  | 63 |  | 81 | **18 pts** |
| **Student C** |  | 65 |  | 82 | **17 pts** |
| **Student D** |  | 65 |  | 81 | **16 pts** |
| **Student E** |  | 66 |  | 83 | **17 pts** |

Mean Growth: (18+18+18+16+17)/5 = 17.5 Median Growth: 17



**Step 6:** Set your growth targets based upon the information available to you.

Example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Baseline Score****(based on pre-assessment)** | **Number of Students** | **Growth Target****(for post-assessment;****whichever is greater)** |
| Very low achievement(score < 60) | 5 | Score 70 orincrease score 15 points |
| Low-mid achievement(61-76) | 21 | Score 81 orincrease score by 13 points |
| Mid-high achievement(77-86) | 12 | Score 90 or increase score by 10 points |
| High achievement(87-93) | 11 | Score 97plus 80 on capstone project |
| Exceptional achievement(94-100) | 1 | Score 97 or maintain higher score, plus 85 on capstone project |