

Guidance on Rationale to Support Adjustments to Growth Targets

Introduction

The process of setting student learning objectives (SLOs) allows teachers to determine individualized goals for students based on assessments of students' knowledge of content and contextual factors. To streamline this process and make it both manageable and equitable for teachers, Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) uses common assessments for SLOs and provides teachers with suggested growth targets based on how students with the same preassessment scores have performed, on average, in the past. If CMSD is to improve student performance in the district, it is critical that teachers, parents, and students establish high expectations for student performance. CMSD also recognizes that contextual factors may impede or encourage student growth. For this reason, teachers have the opportunity and responsibility to adjust growth targets based on their knowledge of each student.

Adjusting targets can help ensure that each student's target is rigorous yet attainable. This process, however, can be challenging. CMSD and the Cleveland Teachers Union (CTU) developed this document to provide guidelines and suggestions for when and how to adjust targets. This document is intended for teachers, teacher development and evaluation system (TDES) teams, and evaluators to use as they prepare or approve SLOs.

CMSD has identified five factors teachers should consider when deciding to adjust growth targets (see Figure 1). Each of the following sections identifies challenges associated with measuring student growth given such factors, considerations of when to adjust targets, and questions to guide teachers.



An Important Note on the Principal's Role in SLOs

Although Teacher Development and Evaluation System team members may review and provide feedback on SLOs, the principal is ultimately responsible for SLO approval. The principal should pay particular attention to the teachers' growth targets and supporting rationale to ensure that growth targets are rigorous yet attainable and comparable across teachers.

Students Receiving Special Education Services

Challenges

The special education population is not homogenous. Teachers support students who have a range of exceptionalities and varying levels of severity. Thus, generalizing special education students is neither advisable nor possible. In addition, general education and special education teachers provide instruction in a variety of configurations and settings. Consequently, determining how to adjust targets for students receiving special education services can be challenging. Statistics such as the average growth of students with disabilities are not widely available for all assessments and, given the diversity of students' disabilities, might provide only limited information.

Bassiri and Allen (2012) recently used the ACT to examine growth patterns of students with disabilities. Although it is important to interpret the findings of a single study cautiously, it is worth noting that the study found that whereas some students with disabilities demonstrated less than average growth, other students' growth rates were not statistically different from their peers' rates. In particular, the study found the following:

- Students with physical disabilities did not have growth rates that were statistically different from their peers with no disabilities.
- In general, students with cognitive/learning disabilities showed significantly less growth than did their peers with no disabilities. However, in absolute terms, the difference was small. For example, the average growth of students with a cognitive/learning disability was only 0.28 points less than the average growth of 5.1 points in mathematics between Grade 8 and Grade 11/12.

The following guidelines are intended to help teachers decide whether adjustments to growth targets are needed and provide suggestions for adjusting targets for students with disabilities.

Considerations

Consider whether the student's disability affects his or her ability to demonstrate growth in the particular skills and content addressed in your SLO in the given time frame.

In some cases, a student's disability is minor or does not affect performance in a particular subject. Therefore, do not automatically lower targets if a student has an individualized education program (IEP). Instead, consider whether the student's disability affects his or her ability to demonstrate growth in that **particular skill** within the **given time frame**.

Use various data sources when examining data.

Teachers are likely to have multiple sources of data to draw on when setting growth targets for students with disabilities, such as response to intervention data, SLO data from the previous year, IEP goals, and standardized assessment data. These data can provide valuable information about each student's strengths and weaknesses as well as about growth

demonstrated in the past. Data from related subjects may also be helpful. For example, a social studies teacher might want to know how a student is doing in English language arts and consider such data when deciding to adjust the growth targets. After reviewing the data and considering the supports students receive, determine whether you can expect students to reach the district-provided target or whether adjustments up or down are needed.

Collaborate with other staff members when deciding how to adjust targets.

It is important for teachers to collaborate with other staff members, such as coteachers and resource teachers who work with the same students, when considering adjustments to growth targets. This approach will help ensure that the educators have similar expectations for growth.

- In a coteaching service delivery model, in which students with disabilities receive services in a regular education classroom from both a regular education teacher and a special education teacher, coteachers should work together and consider adopting the same growth targets.
- Special educators working in resource settings should develop their growth targets in collaboration with regular classroom teachers.
- Special educators working in a self-contained classroom should consider consulting with involved service providers to determine appropriate growth expectations.

Questions to Consider

1. Has the student shown more or less than a year's worth of growth in the past? That is, has the student shown more or less growth than similar students in the past? What accommodations or modifications is the student currently receiving? Are there other accommodations or modifications that could be even more effective in the student's learning (and growth) that the IEP team should discuss?
2. How much growth have students with similar disabilities and of similar severity shown in the past?

Examples of Strong Rationales for Adjusting Growth Targets for Students Receiving Special Education Services

The following examples of strong rationales come from SLOs written by Cleveland teachers. In these examples, the teachers provide data about the student's diagnosed disability.

Example 1. "I adjusted the target for one student with a reading disability down by 4 points. According to the results of the Star Reading Assessment and the Burns and Roe Reading Assessment, the student currently reads at a preprimer level, which will directly affect her ability to read questions on the mathematics portion of the assessment. Despite many interventions, including repeating the first grade, she still continues to struggle with reading skills and did not demonstrate growth in reading or mathematics last year. I expect this student to show less than one year's worth of growth this year."

Example 2. "I expect four students to show less than a year's worth of growth and adjusted the target down for these students. All four students have been diagnosed with learning disabilities in reading. These students continue to struggle with reading comprehension despite numerous interventions, which may directly affect their learning in science. Last year, students with similar

disabilities showed between 4 and 6 points lower growth than their projected student growth targets.”

Examples of Weak Rationales for Adjusting Growth Targets for Students Receiving Special Education Services

Example 1. “I expect one student to show less than a year’s worth of growth because she receives special education services. I adjusted this student’s target down by 5 points.”

Explanation: Adjusting targets just because the student receives special education services is unacceptable. The teacher should determine the area of disability, how that could potentially affect student growth, and how the student performed in the past. If the teacher reviews this information and then determines a target adjustment is needed, the teacher must provide more specific details in the rationale, including the specific disability and how the teacher expects it will affect student growth.

Example 2. “I adjusted the target for one student in my English class down from 79 to 40 because the student has a reading disability.”

Explanation: Although adjusting the target because of a student’s reading disability might be an acceptable reason for adjusting growth, the teacher should provide a more detailed rationale. In addition, adjusting the growth target by 39 points is a drastic change and likely is inappropriate.

Students Identified as Gifted and Talented

Challenges

Teachers of gifted and talented students may face unique challenges when writing SLOs. Because such students are generally very high performing, it can be difficult to capture their true ability or growth. Many assessments have been designed for all students—not just gifted and talented students—and the samples of gifted and talented students are fairly small. Measurement-related issues including regression to the mean, conditional measurement error, and ceiling effects can make assessing student growth of gifted and talented students challenging.

Because of the challenges of measuring student growth for gifted students, CMSD has selected assessments designed to be sufficiently flexible to capture student growth.

These assessments include some computer adaptive assessments such as the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). The district's projected growth targets take measurement issues into consideration. The following guidelines are intended to help teachers decide whether adjustments to growth targets are needed and provide suggestions for adjusting targets for gifted and talented students.

Definitions

Regression toward the mean: “the tendency for those with extreme initial scores to score closer to the average score on subsequent assessments” (McCoach, Rambo, & Welsh, 2012, p. 61)

Conditional measurement error: “the degree of imprecision in test scores at a particular ability level” (McCoach, Rambo, & Welsh, 2012, p. 61)

Ceiling effects: when students receive the highest test score but that score does not reflect their true ability

Considerations

Growth expectations for gifted and talented students can vary based on students' starting places and contextual factors that may affect growth.

The population of gifted and talented students is diverse. These students have varying strengths and needs. Do not automatically adjust targets if a student is identified as gifted and talented. Determine if the student is gifted and talented in a particular area, and then consider other contextual factors, such as ELL status or other exceptionalities. As Castellano (2002) notes, “One does not need to speak English to be gifted or academically talented” (p. 96). Gifted and talented ELLs can benefit greatly from goals focused on high-level thinking skills as well as on students' strengths, interests, and cultures (Bianco & Harris, 2014). Also keep in mind that ELLs may show higher than average growth as they learn more English (Bassiri & Allen, 2012). Similarly, students who may have disabilities along with giftedness might not mirror the growth patterns of other students with giftedness or disabilities. Teachers should consider twice-exceptional students' giftedness and disabilities together because each affects the other (Willard-Holt & Morrison, 2013).

Questions to Consider

1. Has the student shown more or less than a year's worth of growth in the past? That is, has the student shown more or less growth than students with similar preassessment scores in the past? What gifted and talented services is the student currently receiving? Are there other supports that could assist the student's learning (and growth)?
2. Is the student twice exceptional (identified as being gifted and talented but also as having a disability), or is the student an ELL? How, if at all, might the student's disability or language proficiency affect his or her ability to show growth?
3. How much growth have gifted and talented students shown in the past?

Examples of Strong Rationales for Adjusting Growth Targets for Gifted and Talented Students

In the following examples, a teacher uses data from previous years to justify adjusting the targets up or down for gifted and talented and twice-exceptional students.

Example 1. "I adjusted the target up by 3 points for one student who has exceeded projected scores on NWEA MAP in mathematics for the past two years. Last year, this student exceeded his growth target by 5 points. This student has been identified as being gifted and talented in mathematics."

Example 2. "I adjusted the target down by 2 points for one student who has grown at a slower-than-projected rate in reading for the past two years. This student has been identified as gifted and talented and as having dyslexia."

Examples of Weak Rationales for Adjusting Growth Targets for Gifted and Talented Students

Example 1. "I expect one student to show more than a year's worth of growth because this student has been identified as being gifted and talented. I adjusted the student's target up 5 points."

Explanation: This rationale does not provide sufficient detail about why the teacher is adjusting this student's target. Is the student identified as gifted and talented in that subject? Did the student's performance exceed district-provided growth targets last year? Teachers should not adjust targets up just because the student has been identified as gifted and talented.

Example 2. "I adjusted the target down 5 points for one student because, although the student is identified as gifted and talented in mathematics (the subject of my course), the student is an English language learner. The student will need time to acquire the English language."

Explanation: This rationale would benefit from additional details about the student's performance. Has the student been performing poorly in class? How did the student perform on the preassessment? The teacher should not assume that the student will show less than a year's worth of growth; some ELL students show higher-than-average growth as they become more familiar with the English language.

English Language Learners

Challenges

Finding appropriate assessments for ELLs can be challenging. The linguistic complexity of test items can interfere with ELLs' abilities to respond and demonstrate their content knowledge on an assessment (Abedi & Gándara, 2006; Wolf et al., 2008). However, CMSD has worked carefully, with support from ELL specialists, to identify assessments that are appropriate for ELLs.

ELLs vary widely as a student population. Variables include linguistic background, level of English proficiency, level of native language proficiency, degree of formal schooling in the student's native language, degree of formal schooling in English, experience with standardized testing, and degree of familiarity with U.S. culture (ETS, 2009). Because there are so many factors to consider, determining expected growth for an ELL can be challenging.

Considerations

Keep in mind that in some cases ELLs may show higher-than-average growth rather than lower-than-average growth.

It is clear that growth patterns for ELL and non-ELL students differ, but research on whether ELL students tend to show more or less growth than non-ELL students is mixed (Abedi & Dietel, 2004; Bassiri & Allen, 2012; Chiappe, Siegel, & Wade-Woolley, 2002; Han, 2008; Lakin & Young, 2013; Mancilla-Martinez & Lesaux, 2011). For example, some studies have found that the average rate of growth of ELL students can exceed that of national norms for their non-ELL peers—even after reclassification (Bassiri & Allen, 2012; Han, 2008; Kim & Herman, 2012; Mancilla-Martinez & Lesaux, 2011). Therefore, do not automatically adjust targets down if a student is an ELL. Instead, take into consideration what you know about the individual student's background and factors that may contribute to academic growth.

Consider carefully various factors that contribute to students' academic growth.

Multiple factors can contribute to ELLs' performance and growth, including the following:

- **Age of English proficiency.** Limited research suggests that English and mathematics performance among ELL students varies based on when they reached English proficiency. A recent study found that students who achieved English proficiency at kindergarten entry performed as well or better than English-speaking peers in reading and mathematics and grew at the same or faster rates as native English-speaking peers. Students who achieved English proficiency by the spring of first grade had initial gaps in reading and mathematics achievement compared with native English-speaking peers, although the mathematics achievement gap closed over time. Furthermore, ELL students who did not reach proficiency by the spring of first grade had substantially worse outcomes in reading and mathematics, both initially and through fifth and eighth grades, compared with non-ELL peers (Halle, Hair, Wandner, McNamara, & Chien,

2012). It is important to consider these findings cautiously because they come from just one study.

- **Language spoken at home.** In a recent study of 180 ELL students, children in homes where English was spoken more frequently than Spanish had high levels of English vocabulary initially and through age 12. However, children from homes where equal amounts of Spanish and English were spoken and children from homes where more Spanish than English was spoken experienced significantly higher rates of English vocabulary growth (Mancilla-Martinez & Lesaux, 2011). It is important to consider these findings cautiously because they come from just one study.
- **School environment.** Literature suggests that the performance gap between ELL students and their peers is partially a result of inequitable schooling conditions (Abedi & Gándara, 2006); for example, immigrants from schools with high poverty levels, poor school academic performance, and poor school safety may perform less well than those from schools with better conditions.

Questions to Consider

1. Has the student shown more or less than a year's worth of growth in the past? That is, has the student shown more or less growth than students with similar preassessment scores in the past? What linguistic accommodations is the student currently receiving? Are there other accommodations or modifications that could assist the student's learning (and growth)?
2. What do formative assessments or other information suggest about the student's familiarity with academic language?
3. Does the student have a disability that will have an impact on his or her ability to acquire new language and show growth in that language?

Examples of Strong Rationales for Adjusting Growth Targets for English Language Learners

These rationales include previous-year data and other sources of information (e.g., current data, information from parents) to inform adjustments of the growth target.

Example 1. "I adjusted the target up for one student who is a second-year ELL student. The student exceeded his growth target last year. In addition, the student is highly interested in the subject matter (science); the parents indicate that the student reads books at night in Spanish and English about the content matter."

Example 2: "I adjusted the target up for one second-year ELL student who I expect to show more than a year's worth of growth. Although this student did not score well on his fall science NWEA score, he exceeded his growth target last year. The student has demonstrated knowledge of science concepts and has passed or nearly passed all exams and performance assessments thus far. I have been using multiple strategies and providing support as needed with academic vocabulary. His parents have expressed an interest in supporting the student at home; I worked with the media specialist to locate appropriate English and Spanish science texts that the student and his parents can read at home."

Examples of Weak Rationales for Adjusting Growth Targets for English Language Learners

Example 1. “I adjusted the target down for five ELL students who I expect to show less than a year’s worth of growth. ELL students typically show less than average growth.”

Explanation: The second sentence of the rationale reflects a misunderstanding. Research shows that in some cases the growth rate of ELL students may exceed those of their English-speaking peers. In addition, rather than lump all five ELL students together, the teacher should consider the experiences and factors that may affect each child’s growth rate.

Example 2: “I adjusted the target up 20 points for one ELL student because I expect this student to show more than a year’s worth of growth. The student has already shown great progress in class and currently has a C average.”

Explanation: A target adjustment of 20 points is too much. Teachers should adjust targets up or down no more than a few points.

Conditions for Learning

Challenges

Optimal conditions for learning include a safe and respectful climate, academic challenge, student support, and social and emotional learning. Research suggests that these conditions are necessary components for educational improvement, especially for students of color and students who are at high risk levels (Osher, Sidana, & Kelly, 2008). Research also suggests that improving the conditions for learning can help improve student achievement; for example, in a recent study, at-risk students placed in first-grade classrooms offering strong instructional and emotional support had achievement scores that were commensurate with their low-risk peers (Hamre & Pianta, 2005).

Teachers can play a critical part in improving learning conditions. However, in some cases the conditions for learning are beyond the control of the teachers. Identifying when teachers should not be held accountable for such conditions can be challenging and often requires professional judgment on a case-by-case basis. In addition, when adjusting targets based on learning conditions, teachers often need to make informed choices about how much they should adjust their learning targets. Teachers should change the targets of individual students rather than of the entire class.

Considerations

Some conditions may help accelerate learning, whereas others may limit it.

Consider not only the conditions for learning that may make it more difficult for one or more students to show growth but also the conditions for learning that may make it easier. For example, coteaching with a special educator or having a highly qualified, well-trained paraprofessional in the classroom might improve learning conditions for students, making academic growth more likely, whereas out-of-class bullying could decrease growth.

Adjust targets down only when conditions for learning are beyond the teacher's control.

Teachers should adjust targets down only when conditions for learning are beyond their sphere of influence. For example, a teacher should not adjust targets when a student has been the subject of bullying or bullying behaviors in his or her class, but a teacher might adjust the target for a student who has been a victim of bullying in other classes and subsequently shows anxiety and poor performance in his or her class.

Questions to Consider

1. What data do you have to support adjusting targets based on conditions for learning?
2. Do some students receive additional academic interventions or learning supports in school, in which case you might expect to see students show more than a year's worth of growth?

Examples of Strong Rationales for Adjusting Targets Based on Conditions for Learning

In the following examples of strong rationales, the teacher clearly explains how conditions for learning affect the student's performance and provides sufficient detail to help the reviewer. When targets are adjusted down, the change should be related to conditions for learning that are beyond the teacher's control.

Example 1. "I adjusted the target down for one student who has been the victim of out-of-school bullying and cyberbullying. The student is receiving treatment and support for anxiety, but the student remains withdrawn in class. She struggles to pay attention in class and has failed the first three class assignments."

Example 2. "I adjusted the target up for one student who recently transferred to the school. Both the student and parent have noted on multiple occasions that the student feels safer and much more supported than at her previous placement. The student receives additional mathematics support in a pull-out intervention class and has shown significant growth in performance since taking the NWEA in the early fall. I expect this student to show more than a year's worth of growth."

Examples of Weak Rationales for Adjusting Targets Based on Conditions for Learning

Example 1. "I adjusted the targets down 5 points for all students because there is no parent involvement in my school."

Explanation: Although increased parent involvement in the school might help improve conditions for learning, it does not affect the *teacher's* ability to establish a safe and respectful climate, provide academic challenge, offer student support, and foster social and emotional learning. In addition, the teacher should not adjust growth targets for all students.

Example 2. "I adjusted the target down for one high-performing student who I expect to show less than a year's worth of growth. This student's current understanding of the content is exceptional; this student will not find this course sufficiently challenging."

Explanation: In this case, the teacher is responsible for providing sufficient academic challenge to this student. The teacher should not adjust the growth target. Instead, the teacher should seek opportunities to provide enrichment for this student and differentiate lessons as needed to ensure the student is academically challenged.

Out-of-School Factors

Challenges

CMSD and CTU recognize that certain events and situations occurring in students' lives outside of school may affect students' ability to demonstrate expected growth. In addition, certain out-of-school factors, such as additional support from family members, out-of-school tutoring, or mentoring/internship programs, may accelerate the rate of student growth. Therefore, teachers may adjust growth targets for individual students when out-of-school factors beyond the teacher's control affect student growth. When adjusting targets based on out-of-school factors, teachers must make informed choices about how much they should adjust the learning targets.

Considerations

Consider the research on the academic achievement and growth of currently homeless and formerly homeless students.

In many cases, it is reasonable to lower growth targets for students who are homeless. Recent studies have found that, overall, students who are homeless or highly mobile tend to show less growth and achievement than low-income students with more-stable living situations do (Cutuli et al., 2012; Rafferty, Shinn, & Weitzman, 2004). However, research has also found that many homeless students show resiliency—either while they are homeless or after gaining more stable housing. One study found that 45 percent of homeless or highly mobile students showed growth within the average range (Cutuli et al., 2012), and another study found no effects on student achievement five years after formerly homeless or highly mobile students found a more stable housing situation (Rafferty, Shinn, & Weitzman, 2004).

Provide sufficient detail about other extenuating circumstances that may affect growth.

When adjusting targets for other out-of-school factors, provide sufficient detail so a reviewer could understand how these factors might affect student growth. Some reasons for lowering targets include an extended illness in the family, a recent death in the family, or a recent traumatic event. Some reasons for raising targets include a positive change in a housing situation, more family support, or out-of-school academic support.

Questions to Consider

1. What extenuating circumstances may negatively affect a student's ability to demonstrate growth?
2. What circumstances may enable a student to demonstrate more than a year's worth of growth?

Examples of Strong Rationales for Adjusting Targets Based on Out-of-School Factors

These examples identify out-of-school circumstances that either enhance or negatively affect the student's ability to demonstrate student growth. The circumstances for which the teacher adjusts growth targets down should be ones that affect the student both mentally and physically and are beyond the student's control.

Example 1. "I adjusted the target down for one student who I expect to show less than a year's worth of growth. This student has a transient homelessness situation, which is affecting her sleep and therefore attentiveness and behavior in class. The student's work is inconsistent and frequently lost or left at the location that the family stayed at most recently."

Example 2. "I adjusted the target down for one student who is continuing to struggle with the death of a close family member. The student receives counseling but has struggled to stay focused in class and often cries during instruction. I expect this student to show less than a year's worth of growth"

Example 3. "I adjusted the target down for one student because he is living with an elderly, incapacitated grandparent. This student is caring for himself and the grandparent. This is affecting the student's attention and performance in class, which is why I expect him to show less than a year's worth of growth."

Example 4. "I adjusted the target up for one student who I expect to show more than a year's worth of growth. This student transitioned to a more stable home environment, and, although she previously showed average growth, she has already shown strong progress to date, scoring in the 80s on all class quizzes. She is living with her grandparents and receives additional encouragement, support, and tutoring from a Big Sister volunteer."

Example of a Weak Rationale for Adjusting Targets Based on Out-of-School Factors

Example 1. "I adjusted the target down for one student who participates in too many after school activities. The student rarely completes homework, so I do not expect this student to show a year's worth of growth."

Explanation: Without additional details, this reason for a lack of growth provided by the teacher is not an extenuating circumstance. First, the rationale does not discuss how this student's circumstance has affected in-class performance. Second, the student may be overcommitted, but the circumstance can likely be adjusted through conversations with parents and coaches. If, in a very rare circumstance, there is unwillingness to adjust priorities (e.g., the student, parent, and coach are committed to preparation for the upcoming Olympics), this unwillingness and the student's current in-class performance should be documented; only then would an adjustment to growth targets be justified.

References

- Abedi, J., & Dietel, R. (2004). *CRESST policy brief: Challenges in the No Child Left Behind Act for English language learners*. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation, CSE/CRESST. Retrieved from https://www.cse.ucla.edu/products/policy/cresst_policy7.pdf
- Abedi, J., & Gándara, P. (2006). Performance of English language learners as a subgroup in large-scale assessment: Interaction of research and policy. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 25(4), 36–46.
- Bassiri, D., & Allen, J. (2012). *Grade 8 to 12 academic growth patterns for English language learners and students with disabilities*. Retrieved from http://www.act.org/research/researchers/reports/pdf/ACT_RR2012-1.pdf
- Bianco, M., & Harris, B. (2014). Strength-based RTI: Developing gifted potential in Spanish-speaking English language learners. *Gifted Child Today*, 37(1), pp. 169–176.
- Castellano, J. A. (2002). Renavigating the waters: The identification and assessment of culturally and linguistically diverse students for gifted and talented education. In J. A. Castellano & E. I. Diaz (Eds.). *Reaching new horizons* (pp. 94–116). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Chiappe, P., Siegel, L. S., & Wade-Woolley, L. W. (2002). Linguistic diversity and the development of reading skills: A longitudinal study. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 6(4), 369–400.
- Cutuli, J. J., Desjardins, C. D., Herbers, J. E., Long, J. D., Heistad, D., Chan, C., Hinz, E., & Masten, A. S. (2012). Academic achievement trajectories of homeless and highly mobile students: Resilience in the context of chronic and acute risk. *Child Development*, 84(3), 841–857.
- ETS. (2009). *Guidelines for the assessment of English language learners*. Retrieved from http://www.ets.org/s/about/pdf/ell_guidelines.pdf
- Halle, T., Hair, E., Wandner, L., McNamara, M., & Chien, N. (2012). Predictors and outcomes of early versus later English language proficiency among English language learners. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 27, 1–20.
- Hamre, B. K., & Pianta, R. C. (2005). Can instructional and emotional support in the first-grade classroom make a difference for children at risk of school failure? *Child Development*, 76(5), 949–967.
- Han, W. J. (2008). The academic trajectories of children of immigrants and their school environment. *Developmental Psychology*, 44(6), 1572–1590.
- Kim, J. & Herman, J.L. (2012) Understanding patterns and precursors of ELL success subsequent to reclassification. (CRESST Report 818). Los Angeles, CA: National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED540604.pdf>.

- Lakin, J. M., & Young, J. M. (2013). Evaluating growth for ELL students: Implications for accountability policies. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 32(3), 11–26.
- Mancilla-Martinez, J., & Lesaux, N. K. (2011). Early home language use and later vocabulary development. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 103(3), 535–546.
- McCoach, B., Rambo, K. E., & Welsh, M. (2012). Assessing the growth of gifted students. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 57(1), 56–67.
- Osher, D., Sidana, A., & Kelly, P. (2008). *Improving conditions for learning for youth who are neglected or delinquent*. Washington, DC: National Evaluation and Technical Assistance Center for the Education of Children and Youth Who Are Delinquent, Neglected, or at Risk.
- Rafferty, Y., Shinn, M., & Weitzman, B. C. (2004). Academic achievement among formerly homeless adolescents and their continuously housed peers. *Journal of School Psychology*, 42, 179–199.
- Willard-Holt, C. & Morrison, K. (2013, Fall). Uncovering buried treasure: Effective learning strategies for twice-exceptional students. *Teaching for High Potential*.
- Wolf, M. K., Kao, J. C., Bachman, L. F., Bailey, A. L., Bachman, P. L., Farnsworth, T., & Chang, S. M. (2008, January). *Issues in assessing English language learners: English language proficiency measures and accommodation uses*. Retrieved from <http://www.cse.ucla.edu/products/reports/r731.pdf>