Colorado MSL System Project Overview

During the 2014-15 school year, The Colorado Education Initiative (CEI) and Slope Research studied the changing MSL landscape in Colorado. Twenty-five districts participated in the study, and the sample covers nearly one third of the total student and teacher populations in the state. It also represents districts from diverse geographical settings, including rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Weighting

During the 2014-15 school year, districts were given the option to weight MSLs from 0 – 50%, potentially allowing another year of practice.

55% of participating districts weighted their MSLs at 50%

- Some districts felt confident in their systems and wanted to prepare teachers for accountability in the future.

**45% of participating districts weighted their MSLs at 0%**

- Some districts indicated they did not have sufficient data to set cut points or establish baselines to fairly rate teachers within their MSL systems.
- Weighting MSLs at 0% afforded districts time to practice and refine their systems for mandatory implementation in the 2015-16 school year.

Ongoing Areas for Improvement

Most districts reported a growing familiarity and comfort with MSLs in their districts. Compared to the 2013-14 MSL study results, teachers reported fewer concerns, and implementation went more smoothly in many cases.

However, some common issues still emerged:

1. A number of districts were surprised at the low level of assessment literacy among teachers. This was particularly evident in the selection of measures and targets.

2. While districts remain committed to using Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), the fear that administrators and teachers are not equipped to implement them properly is salient. Many districts reported that they wanted more resources and examples of good SLOs.

SPF 12%
DPF 2%
Vendor Assessments 3%
SLOs 1%
Vendor Assessments 10%
TCAP 5%
Local Assessments* 4%
SLOs 13%
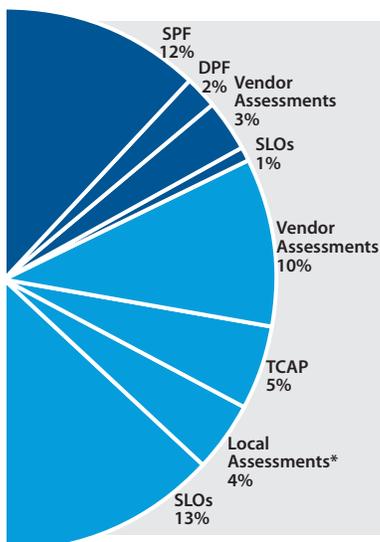
MSL Systems Around Colorado

The average weight of collective attribution was 18% and ranged from 5% - 25%.

- 83% of districts used SPF as a major component of their collective attribution. The average weight assigned to SPF was 12% with a range of 4% - 29%.

The average weight of individual attribution was 32% and ranged from 0% - 45%
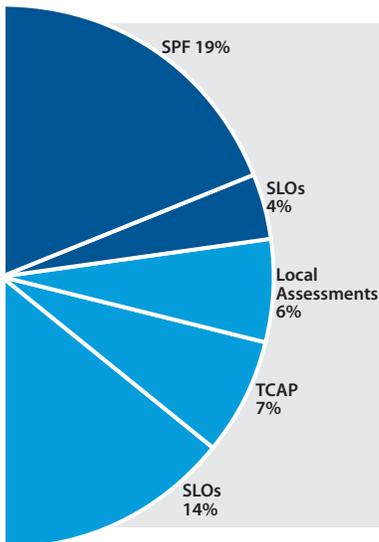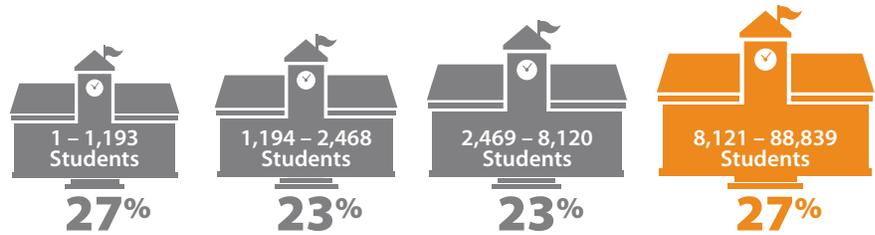
- SLOs were a staple of individual attribution in MSL systems across the state. 50% of districts reported using SLOs for individual attribution. It seemed to be growing in popularity in response to uncertainty surrounding state assessments.
- Some districts reported staying away from individual state assessments due to the lack of data to set baselines and the fear that they would not be able to use them in the future. Vendor assessments and measures appeared to be more popular in response to this concern.

* Local assessments refer to assessments such as curriculum-based assessments, end-of-unit assessments, and locally created assessments

Your District and Similarly Sized Districts

Proportion of Participating Districts by Student Population

We divided the sample into four size categories by student population. Your district's category is indicated in **orange**.

1 – 1,193 Students	1,194 – 2,468 Students	2,469 – 8,120 Students	8,121 – 88,839 Students
27%	**23**%	**23**%	**27**%

SPF 19%

SLOs 4%

Local Assessments 6%

TCAP 7%

SLOs 14%

What are Similarly Sized Districts Doing?

Collective attribution:
- The average weight of collective attribution was 23% and ranged from 5% - 50%.
- The average number of collective measures used in MSL systems in this group was 2.
- The most commonly used collective measure is SPF. All of the districts in this group used SPF as a large portion of their collective attribution.
- One third of districts in this group also used SLOs as part of their collective attribution.

Individual attribution:
- The average weight of individual attribution was 27% and ranged from 0% - 45%.
- The average number of individual measures used in MSL systems in this group was 2.3.
- SLOs and TCAP were the most commonly used individual measures in these MSL systems. 57% of the districts in this group used SLOs as a major component of their individual attribution.

Observations About Your District

Your district's participation creates learning and progress in MSL system implementation across the state. Thank you.

- We commend you for continuing with implementation even though you weighted MSLs at 0%. This is particularly impactful for the implementation of MSLs.

- It is encouraging to see the activities your district used to both engage and educate teachers and other stakeholders about the evolving MSL process in your district.

Questions to Consider Moving Forward

Balanced Assessment System: Overall this system is very reliant on state and vendor-based measures. How do these assessments represent the range of skills you want students to have?

Collective Attribution: For teachers with a large proportion of collective attribution, have you considered whether the collective attribution may be masking individual teacher performance?

Informing Teaching and Learning: How can you make assessments part of the teaching and learning cycle so that they are not being done merely for the sake of accountability but also to inform teacher practice? (e.g., assessment PLCs, curriculum-embedded assessments)

Underlined text is hyperlinked to **CEI's MSL Guiding Questions**, which provides more detail on key topics.