






# The Importance of SMART Goals

## What is a SMART goal and why is it important?

A goal is much more than simply saying that you want to learn about and/or improve on something; rather, it more specifically describes what you want to achieve. SMART goals for school improvement plans should be grounded in student outcomes – measures of what students know and are able to do. SMART goals, with their detailed structure, provide focus as well as a clear idea of what you want to achieve. This structure makes it easier to:

- plan relevant action steps/activities
- measure progress toward achieving the goal
- know when you have met your goal

	 <b>SPECIFIC</b>	 <b>MEASURABLE</b>	 <b>ACHIEVABLE</b>	 <b>RELEVANT</b>	 <b>TIMEBOUND</b>
<b>Definition</b>	When setting a goal, be specific, focused, and clear.	Use metrics to keep your plan on track and measure results.	Know how you will accomplish the goal and if you have the tools/skills needed.	Focus your goal so it aligns with the school and district vision/mission and larger, long-term goals.	Set a timeline for action items, benchmarks and deliverables.
<b>Guiding questions</b>	Answer the “W” questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who should be involved?</li> <li>• What do we want to accomplish?</li> <li>• When do we want to accomplish the goal?</li> <li>• Where will the goal have an impact? (school, grade level, department)</li> <li>• Why do we want to accomplish the goal?</li> <li>• Which requirements or constraints could influence the goal?</li> </ul>	How much?  How will I know when it is accomplished?  What are indicators of progress?	What steps are necessary to achieve the goal?  What steps to take, in what order, on what timeline and involving whom?	Why is this goal important to our students and school?  Will achieving this goal help our students and school?  Does this match our identified need?  How will this goal contribute toward our long-term goals? Does this goal align with the district and other school goals?	Does my goal have a deadline?  What is the timeline to achieve this goal?

Below are examples of SMART goals that pertain to improving student academic and non-academic outcomes.

SMART Goal Focus	SMART Goal Examples	
English Language Arts (ELA)	The elementary school will increase the percentage of students scoring in the "On Grade Level" range from 16% of students on the spring 2025 benchmark to 45% of students on the spring 2026 benchmark as reported by the i-Ready Diagnostic Results report for reading.	By May of 2026, 35% of all middle schools students will score at or above the 60th percentile on the spring Fastbridge reading assessment.
Math	Middle school students scoring at or above the 61st percentile in math will increase by 5% from fall 2025 to spring 2026 as calculated using the Fastbridge grade level report.	Based on STAR benchmarking data, the total number of students in Grades 2-5 scoring in the high-average or high-performance bands for math will increase from a spring 2025 of 15% to a spring 2026 of 25%.
Chronic Absenteeism	90% of students will meet the expectation of at least 85% present for attendance each month as measured by monthly attendance data.	By spring 2026, we will decrease the number of students who are chronically truant by at least 5% as indicated by a December and May attendance report.
Children with Disabilities (CWD)	By the spring of 2026, 5% of students with disabilities will score at or above the 60th percentile as measured by Aimsweb Plus scores.	By the end of the 2025-26 school year, office discipline referrals for children with disabilities will decrease by 10% from the 2024-25 school year as monitored by referrals in the School-Wide Information System. (SWIS).
English Learners	By the spring of 2026, 70% of English learners will meet their growth targets in English proficiency, as measured by an interim English language proficiency assessment (e.g., WIDA MODEL or LAS Links).	By the spring of 2026, 80% of English learners will meet their Progress to Proficiency target as measured by ACCESS.
Former English Learners	By the spring of 2026, 100% of the former English learners will meet their growth targets as measured by STAR.	
Graduation Rate	Within the four years of their ninth-grade entry date, we will increase the graduation rate from 62% to 69%, as measured by the U.S. Department of Education's Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate.	Within the four years of their ninth-grade entry date, increase by 15% the number of seniors that complete high school with a traditional diploma by June 2026 as measured by the U.S. Department of Education's Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate.
9th Grade on Track	By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, 80% of first-time 9th grade students will have earned 5 or more credits without failing more than 0.5 credits in the core subjects.	