**SMART Criteria**

**Getting Smart about SMART Goals**



This study guide is intended to introduce you to SMART goals – what SMART goals are, why we use them and how to recognize them.

**Objectives**

Participants will be able to:

* Identify SMART goal criteria
* Recognize whether or not a goal satisfies SMART criteria
* Understand why we use SMART goals

**What are SMART Goals?**

SMART is an acronym that provides guidance for the setting of meaningful and measurable goals. It stands for:

**S**pecific

**M**easurable

**A**mbitious & **A**ttainable

**R**elevant

**T**ime-bound

For a goal to be SMART, it needs to conform to all of these criteria.

**Why Do We Need SMART Goals?**

SMART goals provide the best chance of attaining the goal because they bring structure and measurability, creating verifiable trajectories with clear milestones and an estimation of the goal's attainability.

SMART goals clarify and make visible to all stakeholders the intent of the goal, providing a bold positive vision void of ambiguity.

SMART goals incorporate baseline data and provide a place from which to begin.

SMART goals anchor the critical actions needed to accomplish the goal and achieve the desired outcome.

**Anatomy of a SMART Goal**

Below is a goal written in a format that meets SMART criteria:

*From January 2017 to April 2017 the percentage of 8th grade students demonstrating grade level proficiency on our interim assessment in mathematics will increase by 3 percentage points, from 30% to 33%.*

Broken down into its components we see that it is **Specific**:

*From January 2017 to April 2017 the percentage of 8th grade students demonstrating grade level proficiency on our interim assessment in mathematics will increase by 3 percentage points, from 30% to 33%.*

Questions to be considered include Who, Where, How, When, with Whom and What conditions/limitations exist?

It is **Measurable**:

*From January 2017 to April 2017 the percentage of 8th grade students demonstrating grade level proficiency on our interim assessment in mathematics will increase by 3 percentage points, from 30% to 33%.*

Measurable means it identifies exactly what will be seen/heard/felt when the goal is reached and provides concrete means by which to measure progress toward the goal.

It is **Ambitious:**

*From January 2017 to April 2017 the percentage of 8th grade students demonstrating grade level proficiency on our interim assessment in mathematics will increase by 3 percentage points, from 30% to 33%.*

The goal must set a high standard, be something over which you have some control, and be able to be broken into actionable tasks.

It is **Relevant:**

*From January 2017 to April 2017 the percentage of 8th grade students demonstrating grade level proficiency on our interim assessment in mathematics will increase by 3 percentage points, from 30% to 33%.*

To be relevant the goal should represent an objective toward which you are both willing and able to work.

It is **Time-bound:**

*From January 2017 to April 2017 the percentage of 8th grade students demonstrating grade level proficiency on our interim assessment in mathematics*

*will increase by 3 percentage points, from 30% to 33%.*

To be time-bound the goal should be grounded in a time frame. Commitment to a deadline helps focus efforts on completion of the goal and helps prevent goals from being overtaken by the day-to-day crises that invariably arise.

**Changing a not SMART Goal in to a SMART Goal**

Below is a goal that is not written in a format that meets SMART criteria:

*40% of our third graders will be proficient in reading by the end of the school year.*

How would you change this goal to satisfy SMART criteria? What more would you need to know? What questions would you ask?

* **To make it Specific consider:**
  + Who are “our” third graders?
  + What does it mean to be “proficient in reading”?
  + In what school year are we measuring this and when does it “end”?
* **To make it Measurable consider:**
  + What assessment will be used?
  + What score or level is considered proficient?
* **To make it Ambitious & Attainable consider:**
  + How many third grade students are proficient or above now? How many are not proficient?
  + How likely is it we will meet this goal?
* **To make it Relevant consider:**
  + What overall percentage point gain is needed to meet this goal? How many students is that?
  + How do these students compare to other third graders in the district or state?
* **To make it Time-bound consider:**
  + When will we assess again?
  + When was this goal set? What was the baseline measurement?
  + How much instructional time does this allow?

Is this goal now written in a format that meets SMART criteria? Is there anything else you would add or change?

*The percent of 3rd grade students achieving a Level 4 or 5 in reading will increase by 10 percentage points from 30% on the 2016 PARCC to 40% on the 2017 PARCC.*

**SMART Goals Practice Worksheet**

The attached practice worksheet asks you to recognize whether or not a goal satisfies SMART criteria and, when it does not, determine which criteria are missing. You then have the opportunity to re-write two not SMART goals so they do satisfy SMART criteria.