

# Growth and Goal Setting

NWEA® provides tools to help set goals for students, especially those who have had unfinished or interrupted learning. You can use these tools to help determine realistic and appropriately challenging goals for your students.

## 1. Reflect on how much to reasonably challenge students.

In an [August 2020 article from \*The 74\*](#), NWEA Accessibility Research Manager Elizabeth Barker reflected on distance learning for students with disabilities: **“We need to think about it as a marathon and have compassion. The panic to catch up will actually put us behind.”\***

Consider these questions:

- How might “the panic to catch up” put us behind?
- What factors do you want to take into account when deciding how much to challenge your students, in both special and general education?
- How might both short- and long-term goals be used to support students who have had unfinished or interrupted learning in recent school years?

## 2. Reflect on how to write goals.

Writing meaningful goals is key to the success of a student. Goals need to be specific to the student, classroom, or school and be measurable.

Watch the following video on writing a goal that’s SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, timely): [Writing SMART Goals](#) eLearning (5- to 10-minute video with embedded questions).

Next, review the **Goal Setting: Classroom and Individual Student** worksheet on [page 2](#) and consider the following questions:

- How will you draw attention to your goal?
- What action plan steps will you use?
- What do you need to do to make time for goal setting?
- Who will you need to inform about the goals?

\*Source: Beth Hawkins, “Individualize Instruction, Remove Barriers, Track Student Progress: Some Tips for Making Distance-Learning Special Ed Work,” *The 74*, August 18, 2020, <https://www.the74million.org/article/individualize-instruction-remove-barriers-track-student-progress-some-tips-for-making-distance-learning-special-ed-work>.

# Goal Setting: Classroom and Individual Student

Long-term goals		
<b>STEP 1</b> Access your report	<b>STEP 2</b> Choose an instructional area  <i>Highest:</i>  <i>Lowest:</i>	<b>STEP 3</b> Set an appropriately challenging RIT goal  <i>RIT goal:</i>
<b>GOALS</b>		

Short-term goals	
<b>STEP 4</b> Break the goal into incremental steps	
<b>STEP 5</b> Make the goal visible <i>How will you draw attention to your goal?</i>	Create an action plan for goals <i>What action plan steps will you use?</i>
Make time <i>What do you need to do to make time for goal setting?</i>	Communicate goals to others <i>Who will you need to inform about the goals?</i>

### 3. Reflect on how to refine student goals using the MAP® Growth™ Goal Explorer tool.

The MAP Growth Goal Explorer simplifies the goal-setting process by helping students, families, and educators identify specific student goals that, if attained, would be significant accomplishments for the student. These goals may be tied to proficiency, college readiness, or other meaningful change. This tool will help you determine how realistic a goal is, with the understanding that the most useful goals are rigorous and challenging.

The MAP Growth Goal Explorer should be used to support conversations among teachers, families, and students to establish goals that strike a balance between what's meaningful and what's realistic.

As you explore the MAP Growth Goal Explorer tool, consider these questions:

- How might you use this tool within your school or district?
- Who in your school or district might benefit from using this tool?
- What resources are needed to discuss and accomplish the goal?
- How might students be involved in this goal-setting process?
- How can you make the numbers meaningful?



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