IN Focus

GOAL SETTING

For us teachers and educators, *setting goals* comes very easily, almost second nature! We are born planners – and I am sure many of us have experienced our mind whirled through goals for the day, the week, the semester and even the year.

With our students, we make sure that they understand the *goals and expectations* for completing academic assignments, projects, tests, etc. But how often do we take it a step further and *lead them through a goal setting activity* that's more future-oriented?

Students' minds are filled with dreams and ambitions. As teachers, we must motivate them further to achieve them. Merely thinking about them doesn't help; students need to push themselves forward to make it come true. It involves years of hard work, patience and determination.

Exploring goal-setting with students is a great way to instill a *growth mindset* in your classroom. When students believe that they *can* achieve a goal through persistence and hard work, they learn to be resilient. They also learn that *overcoming small failures* can lead to larger successes. There's a famous saying: *writing something down is the first step to making it happen*. There IS science to show that people who write down their goals are more likely to achieve them. Read on to explore how you can excite students by setting **S-M-A-R-T** goals!

APRIL '23 theme - *A Tale A Day Makes Learning Stay (The Importance of Storytelling)*
Send your contributions - an effective classroom strategy / class humour / vocab word / a featured article / book titles / new trends, to -> team@qedrak.com

WONDER WORD

CBL / SBE

Competency Based Learning, or **CBL**, is an approach to education that seeks student's demonstration of mastery of desired **learning goals, standards and outcomes,** as central to the learning process. It focuses on a student's progression throughout the curriculum in 4 areas (*Knowledge, Skills, Attitude and Behaviour*), at their own pace, depth, interest area and ability to complete tasks. Moving up depends on attaining mastery.

Standards Based Education or **SBE** - is the teaching, and reporting of student performance based on consistent and equitable measurements. It lies at the core of CBL. SBE helps to break down content in curriculum into *teachable, measurable, achievable* standards. Read on, to know more about **Standards Based Grading**.

"Setting Goals is the first step in turning the invisible into the visible."

— *Anthony Robbins*

QED Talk

NEP 2020's focus on
GOAL SETTING...a *growth* mindset

MS. POORNIMA MENON
Principal, Anand Vidya Vihar School, Vadodara
Recipient of National Excellence Award 2020,
Top School of the Year 2021: Quality Academics & Leading Infrastructure

■ *Goal Setting has become an integral part of learning and growth for students and teachers in the metro cities. Is that why institutions there are far ahead than the two-tier or three-tier cities?*

Goal setting is integral to the learning process but cannot be just a 'functional' task. It is also *aspirational* in nature. It is when aspirations come into play that infrastructure and tangible assets along with the willingness to realise them matter. A lot of schools in these non metro cities are also aiming at achieving this feat of goal setting and realizing them. But practically, unspoken impediments hinder them right from trained staff to essential facilities. The metro cities have an equipped community, socially compelling willingness and the wherewithal to align their ideologies with best pedagogical practices from around the world, and hence, they are already on the path that many from the other cities are yet to catch up with.

■ *Would you agree that setting goals helped you as a Principal to achieve prestigious awards and become a leader par excellence? If yes, how did it all start?*

Setting goals is as essential as running a day's errands planned from the prior evening. Everyone from any field must punctuate their career with short and long term goals in order to progress, as that is *not* just an ordinary rigor but an *essential* one. Hence, as a Principal, from the beginning of the year I need to (and I do!) plan for the next set of closer and farther milestones. Keeping myself abreast of the contemporary developments in the education sector, aligning my goals with the institutional needs; as well as - goals, setting targets, at times taking calculated risks with experimentation,... have all helped me helm the school. Also, I believe in *life-long learning* which also includes close observation of functioning styles of other leaders in this arena, as I strongly believe that there are always takeaways from everyone which might need modification, but inspiration certainly can be drawn from them.

■ *Is it realistic to set long-term goals in organisations and institutions where things are constantly changing ?*

Setting goals are not meant to just beat mundanity. Education is the most vibrant sector in which dynamics keep changing. So, apart from regular goals, the preparation for changes becomes an imperative part of goal setting. The *nature of goals* as also the *priorities* may vary depending on the time and space. But no institution survives for long without a clear vision and goal/s set to achieve it. Unfortunately most *long term goals* in our country are usually inclined towards infrastructure upgradation, but factually that is just one part of the vision. There are other pivotal areas which need long term goal setting; the absence of which has resulted and continues to glare at us in the form of eroded values and fragile conscience as a community. Also, *instilling employability skills* need a push up. Constant changes may slacken the pace of achieving goals, but NOT setting them at all is regressive and irresponsible. Especially in education, since we deal with the most vital component in nation building, the human element ->our Students.

■ *What are some shorter term goals that can help students get to the longer-term goals?*

A **SWOC** analysis, by identifying ones **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses and optimising on **O**pportunities as well as **C**hallenges early on, help any person. However, for this habit to set in, our schools must *train* students and top it up with *continued guidance*. When one is aware of his or her assets and liabilities, setting short goals is taken care of. Also, this habit sets a clear vision for them to set their long term goals too. So, by performing the analysis, students can work upon their managerial skills with respect to time, people and self.

> ""
>
> *A goal is always not meant to be reached.*
>
> *It often serves simply as something to aim at.*
>
> *— Bruce Lee*

■ *In what ways have you motivated your students and staff to maintain the habit of setting goals in their day-to-day life?*

I work hard and believe there can be nothing more satisfying than achieving goals that one has ambitiously and religiously set for oneself. But to impart it or to motivate other people, one needs to be a *role model*. As a leader, only if I value values, ethics, rules and conform to them, can I inspire others to model me. Therefore what I don't or can't, I would not and should not expect from anyone to perform or exhibit; unless they are naturally blessed with those traits.

■ *Other than the day-to-day academic lesson related planning, what other kinds of goal-setting would you advocate for teachers?*

For a teacher the first goal to set is to *identify their willingness quotient* to be in the profession. Second goal is to *convince themselves that they matter* and that they can matter to a society in the making. Equipped with these and with academic essentialities they then need to do a SWOC analysis (like students), and they must work upon their core areas of strengths and minimize their weaknesses.
Also, while grabbing opportunities and facing challenges, *self-awareness is crucial*. An inspired teacher is a happy person and hence a productive and powerful citizen.

■ *If everything stayed the same, what one 'umbrella' goal would have the greatest impact on school education?*

Since there is nothing static in this world and change is inevitable, *readiness and preparedness to acknowledge and face known or foreseen and unknown or unforeseen changes* as an opportunity to progress should be everyone's goal.

The key to achieve any goal set or unset is the *will to acknowledge it* for a start.

> "" A Goal should *scare* you a little and *excite* you a lot.

■ *When is the 'right time' for say, (a) students to set academic goals, (b) teachers to set professional goals, and (3) institutions to set goals for excellence?*

Goals ideally are the destinations to reach for which *a path has to be chosen*. Depending on the availability of resources to reach there, one has to plan to set forth onto the path. Hence for each individual, regardless of their identity as a student, teacher or an institution, time and planning could vary.

However, if I were to generalise, I would recommend the start of an academic year for students and teachers. And for a school, the start of a time period decided by the institution, like a 5 year plan is always the best. And yes, it is also better *late* than NOT setting goal at all. Hence in practical terms there is never a right time, time is subjective and one's individual need is the key.

■ *Your Final Word....*

An educator is a blessed being for being able to impress minds, mould them in the right way in order to shape the future. To shape the future I must believe in my ability to be a changemaker. And I believe in the power of self. If I want I can and if I can I should. And to reach there I MUST set goals. *******

FOR TEACHERS

STEPPING INTO STUDENT GOAL SETTING : *A Path to Growth, Motivation & Agency*

- by **Chase Nordengren**

This guide shows teachers how to integrate formative assessment, student metacognition, and motivational strategies to make *goal setting an integral instructional strategy*. Research, case studies and practical strategies demonstrate how goal setting, with clear learning intentions and plenty of scaffolded support by teachers, can lead to high learning growth and student agency. By demonstrating how to set, monitor, and evaluate goals, this guide equips teachers with the tools they need to help students take ownership of their learning journeys.

FOR STUDENTS

MILO MOSS IS OFFCIALLY UNAMAZING

- by **Lauren Allbright**

Twelve-year-old Milo Moss has been on a mission to break a Guinness World Record. When his latest attempt is unsuccessful, Milo and his family feel discouraged. Regardless of a student's resolutions, this book teaches readers there are more importsant things than winning, and that it's okay to reevaluate one's goals a start again differently.

Dear Parent,
Does your Child SET GOALS?

We all have goals, or things we want to achieve. Our child's goals may look different from ours, though. They may have a goal of learning, to ride a bike without the side-wheels, or even beat a friend at a game (physical or video-based). Regardless of what we want to accomplish, *all* goals require the same thing - *consistent focus, perseverance* and the *ability to manage time wisely*.

Children who struggle with *executive functions*, have a hard time setting goals, focussing on them or working towards their goals, without getting frustrated and distracted; especially goals that have '*undesired*' activities or tasks NOT within the child's interest area - like Schoolwork? Room-tidiness? Writing letters to relatives?

Having said that, we can't deny that Goal Setting *IS* very important. Who wouldn't want a child with strong goal setting skills. Such children :
- prioritise the things that need to be completed
- set reasonable goals
- think about the steps required to accomplish the goals
- self-assess to monitor progression and are open to feedback & advice
- stay focussed on the goal until they are accomplished
- may also add on, edit new goals as a part of the larger picture

As the loving, supportive and caring parent, you may want to help your child master '*goal setting*', a skill that will help your child through life! Here's how you can help.....Good Luck!
- Make your *own* set of goals (in simple language) to model it to your child.
- Discuss your child's goals and ensure that they are not unrealistic, too many, too tight in timeframe or too complex.
- As you work on your own goals, help your child to identify the way forward--> the steps to achieve the goal --> the resources --> the people who can help.
- Help your child to self-assess, you assess and get a sibling to assess the progression / achievement of the goals. Let her/him assess you as well!
- Make room for small failures & numerous attempts to reach the goals.
- Finally, make it a fun, easy, dinner-table topic with open sharing. *******

Dear School Leaders,
Do you know about Goal Setting Theory?

If you want to inspire higher performance in your school staff, you need to keep team members motivated and moving towards their goals. And if you want to keep team members motivated and moving forward, it's important to understand *Goal Setting Theory* also called *Goal Setting Theory of Motivation.* Goal-setting theory was developed in 1968 by American psychologist **Edwin A. Locke**, with the publication of the article *Toward a Theory of Task Motivation and Incentives.* The article explored the relationship between *goals* and *task performance*, and more specifically, that *hard, specific goals* inspire a *higher level of performance* than easy goals with a "do your best" approach. While we are all familiar with *S-M-A-R-T* goals, they are not the only determinants of performance.

Locke further defined *five key principles* (diag). When school staff have clear but *challenging* goals, they work harder and develop skills; are open to feedback and enjoy an overall sense of achievement. This, in turn, results in improved staff engagement, productivity and satisfaction in the workplace. *******

1.	Clarity
2.	Challenge
3.	Commitment
4.	Feedback
5.	Task Complexity

STANDARDS-BASED GRADING

Standards Based Grading is an innovation in education. It focuses on student learning and helps to increase achievement. *Standards* are *goals-targets-competencies)*. Instructional techniques in *standards-based* classrooms help to foster a *positive* learning environment. Rather than tracking a single overall grade, subjects are broken down into many smaller *competencies* or *standards*. For example, in elementary math :

I can multiply single-digit numbers.
I can multiply double-digit numbers.
I can divide single-digit numbers.
I can divide double-digit numbers.
I can add fractions

Fig 1

I can divide single-digit numbers
AD: Advanced→ I can divide single-digit numbers and explain the process I am using to find the answer.
PF: Proficient→ I can divide single-digit numbers on my own.
PG: Progressing→ I can divide single-digit numbers with help.
DV: Developing→ I cannot divide single-digit numbers.

Fig 2

Each competency / goal / standard (Fig 1) is a *teachable concept* that students should master through the course .
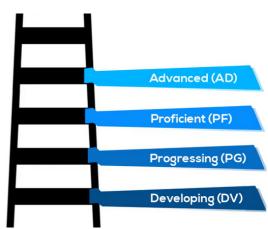
Competency descriptors (Fig 2) present in the learning progression are written in student-friendly language, so students can understand and participate in their learning; they can also self-assess their progress and see where they are.

Teachers provide *specific feedback* to help students improve. Education then becomes a conversation about the goals of knowledge-skills-attitudes to be acquired, allowing students to engage in and take ownership of the process. Traditional grading systems don't foster this kind of engagement or feedback.

Fig 2 shows that *standards based grading* can have a progression quite like a ladder (*right*), reflecting *complexity* and *independence*. A student moves upwards from **DV** (Developing - where students have limited understanding of grade level standards) to **PG** (Progressing - beginning to understand), to **PF** (Proficient - matching grade level goals/targets) and finally, to **AD** (Advanced - above grade level, with consistency). From the *DV* level, as a child climbs up the rungs of the ladder, s/he moves from basic to more complex, and as they engage in self assessment and the feedback process, they gain independence.

Standards based grading data makes *differentiated instruction* *easier* to implement. When teachers have *levels of mastery information* readily available,, they can dynamically group students and customise level-appropriate lessons, activities and assessments. While learning, students may be at varied rungs.

Students at the *DV* level receive student-centric instruction and feedback to support them in moving up to *PG;* from there, they receive similar individualised instruction and feedback to support them in moving up to *PF*, and so on. Thus, classrooms break into smaller groups with *students working independently on activities intended for their level of Knowledge and Skill*. With the relevant instructions, students are *more engaged* in their learning; they can *see their own efforts* resulting in *growth, reinforcing work ethics*, or at times even *grit*! One must bear in mind though, that some children may take *more time* or *multiple attempts to move up the ladder*. Standards based grading allows for students to *try and retry* as they work towards the critical standards, goals, competencies. The one-time, high-stake tests are thus replaced with student-friendly multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of the grade-level expectations.

Standards based grading focuses on REAL learning (as opposed to rote & superficial knowledge). Students engage themselves in their own learning and progression, with self & peer assessment around the critical well-laid out competencies. At the same time, the teacher *targets instructions* towards *individual learners* thereby increasing engagement, achievement and grit for all learners. This creates an *emotionally safe environment* where the *fear of failure* does not occupy any space - since *failure is temporary*. This encourages students to stretch themselves, make mistakes, assess themselves, get reviewed by others and finally learn - they *own* their learning. They are able to set their own goals and plan how to achieve the standards for the grade level. *If you wish to know more about standards based grading, please visit: https://research.com/education/standards-based-grading* *** *(article source : Fort Bend ISD)*

Setting S-M-A-R-T Goals

Goal Setting takes place *everywhere* in our world - across all ages, all disciplines, all aspects of life. We set goals for our careers, our health and our lives in general. The modern day and age is always encouraging (at times *pushing*) us to think about the next milestone. Who wouldn't want to say, write a best-selling book or lose weight or paint a masterpiece or win a race / marathon or earn more money? Everybody wants to achieve some goals.

However, what we **don't think about** enough is *how to accomplish our goals*. Also, once we set goals, **do we** map the progress, revisit them, tweak them, check our level of achievement? You may respond with a *"Really?"* to the reality: There *IS* a science & strategy to goal setting.

'*Googling*' will show that the approach and strategy to goal setting may differ, based on the age group of the goal-setter, interest and complexity of goals. Some of the popular *goal-setting techniques* that one can find are displayed on the right -->

However, by far, the most *preferred strategy* for goal setting, used across all realms - corporate, educational, personal, etc., is the **S - M - A - R - T** technique. The term was first coined by *George T Doran* in 1981.

Now that we know what S-M-A-R-T stands for, let us explore each term in greater detail with a suitable example. Let's begin with this generic goal statement; the kind we would normally hear being made by a student:

I will do well in my studies.

S PECIFIC
M EASURABLE
A CHIEVABLE
R EALISTIC
T IMELY

Let's check if his statement aligns to S-M-A-R-T. A checklist indicates it is NOT *specific*, NOT *measurable*, NOT *timely* and hence raises doubts about the goal being *realistic* or *achievable*. *Let's make it S-M-A-R-T!*

WRITE down the WHAT, WHY, HOW, WHO, WHEN of the goal you wish to achieve

Define quantifiable parameters to measure the progress towards goal achievement

Confirm if the goal is ACTIONABLE; definable into small tasks towards a larger picture

Keep it simple, age-appropriate, attainable - not over-ambitious or unrealistic

Set an 'end-time' for the goal; breaking it up into smaller time-frames to check small task completion against interim deadlines

To become a Data Analyst; my aim is to score 90% in Math in the Boards, with my teacher's help.

There are 3 TYPES of goals - *personal*, *academic or professional* and *other* goals. For example, a Student's *personal* goal could be to keep the room tidy and his *academic* goal may be to crack the CUET entrance test. Likewise, a teachers *professional* goal could be to move up to teach higher grades and her *other* goal could be to lose weight! Like types, there are also 3 TIMEFRAMES for goals. Goals can be *short term* goals, *long-term* goals or *lifetime* goals.

Whatever be the type or timeframe, goals **must be written down** and defined as per the SMART strategy. The journey towards goals MUST BE monitored for progress, reviewed and aligned to the larger picture, with commitment to *never* give up. Else, goals remain mere wishes / dreams / fantasies. *******

Short-term
STUDENT : "I will try and get 80% in Math in the pre-boards."
TEACHER : "I will finish the 2023-2024 Annual plan by April."

Long-term
STUDENT : "I'll prepare for CLAT across grades 10-12 & enter NLS."
TEACHER : "I will complete my MA and teach in Senior Secondary by 2025."

Lifetime
STUDENT : "I will join the IFS and represent India in many countries."
TEACHER : "When I am 50, I shall become the Principal!"

QED News

A PEEK INTO SOME COURSES

We are delighted to announce the revamping of our office spaces into a vibrant **QEDRAK Resource Centre** at Vadodara.

We hope to welcome you soon with:

- a fully equipped, **digitally enabled training hall** (with power and internet connectivity) for all participants
- a **library** of resource books and manuals for reference
- a **cozy cafe area** for the quick *cuppa* or mid-day refreshments
- intellectually stimulating **offline / hybrid teacher training**, as well as weekend parenting workshops and student sessions
- **individual** registrations / **school group** registrations

Do write in to **team@qedrak.com** with your introduction, the course/s of your interest, and whether a weekend batch or a summer course would suit you. *******

SCHOOL SUPPORT OFFERINGS

- **April / June** teacher training sessions (prior to academic year commencement)

- **Stand-alone, need based** training sessions (as per skill requirements) for Individual schools / Group of schools

- **Annual Programmes** well-planned, with leadership talks, teacher training, parenting and student workshops (topics, number of sessions and schedule to be mutually planned as per availability of school staff & QEDRAK resource persons)

- **Curriculum Designing / Revamping** as per NEP 2020 & NCF-Foundational

- **Quality Audit & Restructuring**, including formulation of SOPs, Formats & Templates, Documentation

- **Teacher Testing** and **360 degree appraisal**

- **Consultancy and Assistance** in the aspects of School Functioning

- **Access to a wide pool of resource persons** for specialised programmes

For any further inquiry contact us on :**+91 97277 78901** *******

QEDRAK courses *are available in* Online *(2-3 hr sessions),* Offline *(half day/full day),* Hybrid *(synchronous, asynchronous & offline) modes.*
Schools can opt for - Annual Training *plans /* Half yearly *plans (incl. teacher training + students & parents workshops),* School Consultancy.

POPULAR COURSES

- Understanding NEP 2020 & NCF FNDL
- Bloom's Taxonomy
- Competency Based Education
- Mastering MCQs for meaningful Assessments
- About Assessments: need, types, frequency, CBA
- Demystifying Circle Time
- Integrated Learning
- 21st Century Skills & the 6Cs
- Design Thinking
- Collaborative & Cooperative Learning
- Goal Setting, Measuring Achievement
- Netiquette for Netizens
- Building Empathy in the Classroom
- Art Integrated Education

RIB TICKLERS

When I was young, I set a life goal for myself: *I will buy a Lamborghini at the age of 40.* This year, I've finally achieved half of the goal. *I turned 40.*

Happy to announce reddit has achieved its goal in becoming one of the top 10 green companies in the world. *The front page is now made up of over 90% recycled content.*

During a business Zoom meeting, a pleasant person asked me about my background. So I told him about my family, education, career, dreams and goals. *Turns out he was asking what's behind me on our Zoom call.*

What is the greatest goal for a cow? *To become outstanding in their field.*

You have to work really hard to reach your goals. *After all, not all batboys grow up to become batmen.*

Interviewer to dog : What is the goal of chasing cyclists? *Dog : To push their limit and improve their speed.*

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