Setting Goals in STAR™ to Monitor Progress

What is the purpose of goal setting in STAR?
Goals are set in STAR for short-term progress monitoring of a student’s overall performance in reading, math, or early literacy. By setting a goal and administering STAR as often as weekly, you can compare a student’s scaled score to the goal. STAR provides moderate and ambitious goal options to help you set a reasonable, appropriate goal. For step-by-step instructions, see pages 2-3.

For which students are STAR goals set?
In STAR, goals are set for students when there is a need to closely monitor student growth toward a target. Goals are most commonly set for students who have scored below benchmark and are receiving additional instruction or intervention to help them catch up. Sometimes teachers set a goal in order to evaluate the effect of a new instructional approach on a student’s overall reading or math achievement. A teacher might also choose to set a goal to monitor a student who is not currently in an intervention but may need to be placed in one because he or she is struggling with the core curriculum.

As you select students for whom you will set goals, think about how often you will review and respond to their data. Setting goals in STAR only makes sense if you intend to assess a student multiple times during an intervention and adjust instruction based on that data. If this is not the case, evaluate progress using other STAR reports or by referring to the document titled “Benchmarks, Cut Scores, and Growth Rates,” which is in the Resources section of the software.

How do STAR goals fit within a Response to Intervention framework?
Teachers often set goals for students in intervention to determine the effectiveness of an intervention for a particular student. As shown below, goal setting is one way STAR can help you implement the RTI process.

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<td>Identify students below benchmark using the Screening Report</td>
<td>Set a goal in the STAR software for students in intervention (see page 3 for details)</td>
<td>Supplement core instruction for targeted students by providing intervention</td>
<td>Assess targeted students with STAR periodically (up to weekly)</td>
<td>Run a Student Progress Monitoring Report to review progress toward goals</td>
<td>Modify the duration of the intervention as needed</td>
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What are the benefits of STAR goal setting?
Setting goals in STAR enables you to put the power of our data behind your decisions about student performance.

- **Use growth modeling to provide a target.** Having a realistic, research-based goal against which to measure progress helps you gauge the student’s response to intervention.
- **Set intermediate goals.** Reaching benchmark can take time. By setting intermediate goals, you can see if a student is improving at a pace that will move him toward benchmark.
- **View student progress with a statistically calculated trend line.** The STAR software statistically calculates the slope and position of the trend line based upon student scaled scores and displays it on the report. This is preferable to guessing or “eyeballing” the direction scores are trending.
Where are goals set in the STAR software?

1. Click the Screening, Progress Monitoring & Intervention link under the Reading or Math Assessments tab.

2. Select the Progress Monitoring and Goals tab if needed.

3. Search for the student you want to set a goal for. Choose to search by Name, ID, Grade, or Class.

4. Click on the name of the student to see scores from recent tests. The PR rank from the most recent test is shown, along with any information from previous goals set.

5. Click Add Goal to set a goal for the student. Instructions for setting a goal continue on the next page.
How do you set goals in the STAR software?

Follow the steps below to record information about the intervention and set a goal.

1. **Name the intervention** as you want it to appear on reports. For instance, you might enter the name of the program (such as, “Accelerated Math for Intervention”), a description of the intervention (“After-school tutoring 30 minutes daily”), or the skill the student is working on (“Recall of multiplication facts”).

2. **Set the goal end date** for the intervention period. Choose a date indicating how long you anticipate the intervention will last. If you are unsure, set the date to coincide with the end of a semester or school year and edit the end date later if needed. Allow enough time for the intervention to work. Experts recommend no fewer than 8 weeks, but check state or local guidelines which often require at least 10 or 12 weeks.

3. **Choose the starting test date** (if more than one eligible test is available). Select the test date closest to when the student started the intervention.

4. **Review the reference points**, which are based on the student’s starting score. Note the rate of growth required of the student to maintain the current PR score and to reach the benchmark. The goal you set will most likely be between these two rates.

5. **Select the goal type**, which represents the rate of growth you anticipate the student can maintain during the intervention period. To see the score (PR and SS) the student would achieve by the end of the intervention period with the selected growth rate, click the Calculate Goal button at the bottom of the page. To put the goal types in perspective, compare the moderate and ambitious growth rates to the rates given as reference points.

When determining which goal option is best for this particular student in this intervention, consider these questions:

1. What do you know about the student? What does his or her educational history indicate about motivation and desire to learn? What has been his or her learning rate prior to the intervention?

2. How intensive is the intervention you are implementing? Specifically, how much time per day will the student receive additional instruction? Is the student part of a large-group, small-group, or individual intervention?

3. What is your history with this intervention? Have you implemented this intervention before? How have other students responded to this intervention? Is this a research-based, effective intervention that will be implemented with integrity?