



# How to Write SMART Goals

Identifying and writing SMART goals are essential to a successful Individual Education Program (IEP). The automation in Polaris assists teams in planning and writing SMART goals as a part of the instructional roadmap to increase student learning and outcomes.



SMART goals have five key components:

<b>S</b>	<b>Specific</b> <i>Defines what you want to achieve in a clear, concise manner</i>
<b>M</b>	<b>Measurable</b> <i>Written in an objective, measurable fashion to monitor progress</i>
<b>A</b>	<b>Attainable</b> <i>Challenges growth and learning, yet is achievable for the student</i>
<b>R</b>	<b>Relevant/Realistic</b> <i>Aligns with larger, long-term goals of the student</i>
<b>T</b>	<b>Time-Bound</b> <i>Set to length of time expected for student to accomplish</i>

## The following steps will assist your team as you write SMART goals:

### 1 Identify Present Levels of Performance

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The present level of performance is the foundation of the IEP and should guide the development of the student's goals for the year. Assessment and performance data, parent/caregiver concerns, and student needs help to outline potential targets for goals. It's also key to consider what accommodations and modifications the student needs in order to master the content of the general education curriculum.

### 2 Prioritize Goal Areas

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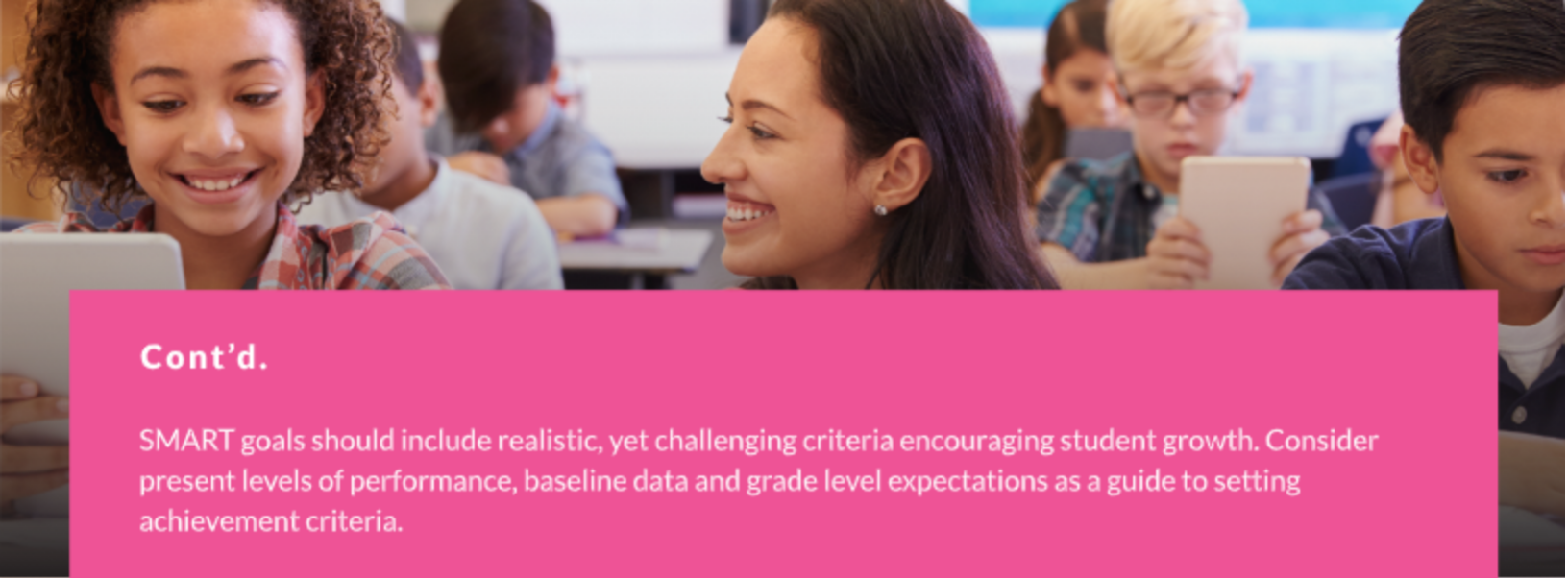
When prioritizing goals for the IEP, it's important to consider what is preventing the student from progressing in the general education curriculum or from participating in the least restrictive environment. Explore how the goals align with the student's larger, more long-term goals in addition to considering those that will build towards independence and increase self-sufficiency. In some cases, goals that build foundational skills and apply to multiple content areas and settings may be best to prioritize and build high expectations. Try to keep the total number of goals to a reasonable number.

### 3 Write Goals in a SMART Format

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Once the team has prioritized goals, it's time to generate SMART goals. Write the goal statement in a clear and concise manner to ensure that others can readily understand the skill or behavior outlined in the goal. Use objective terms that are clearly observable (e.g., "count to 100") rather than inferred (e.g., "improve counting skills"). It should be clear what the student will be able to do when the goal is met.

Specify the criteria that will be used to measure mastery of the goal. Mastery criteria identifies what degree and for what length of time the student has to demonstrate the skill or behavior to show that the goal is achieved. Criteria should be observable, measurable and include objective statements such as "at the rate of 46 words per minute over 3 consecutive weeks" instead of statements that reflect subjective opinions like "as determined by teacher observation" or "scores will improve over time."



## Cont'd.

SMART goals should include realistic, yet challenging criteria encouraging student growth. Consider present levels of performance, baseline data and grade level expectations as a guide to setting achievement criteria.

In addition to mastery criteria, establish the expected length of time for mastery of the goal. This allows teams to compare actual progress to the student's expected rate of progress in order to determine if the student is on track or if additional adjustments should be made to instruction to support learning of the goal.

## 4 Create a Progress Monitoring Plan

Create a plan for monitoring the student's progress over time to inform instruction. Clearly define what type of data will be collected, who will collect the data and where the data will be collected. Student progress on individual goals should be assessed and monitored on a regular basis (a minimum of one time per week) to establish trends of learning and make appropriate instructional decisions based on that learning. Create a visual representation of the data in graph format to assist the team in analyzing data. Review and update instruction and supports as needed.

**The following is a sample goal template to help guide goal writing:**

Context	Statement	Mastery Criteria	Time Frame
<i>Given what</i>	<i>Student will</i>	<i>How well</i>	<i>By when</i>
Given a worksheet	David will solve single digit addition problems	with 90% accuracy over three consecutive days	by 6/12/21
Given a visual schedule	Jen will independently transition to a new activity	in at least 80% of transitions on three out of four days	by 12/14/20