

## SMART Goal Guidelines

SMART is an acronym standing for **Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Results-based, and Time-bound**.

**Specific** goals are those that are well defined and free of ambiguity or generality. The consideration of “W” questions can help in developing goals that are specific:

- What? Specify exactly what the goal seeks to accomplish.
- Why? Specify the reasons for, purposes or benefits of the goal.
- Who? Specify whom this goal includes or involves.
- When? Specify the timeline for the attainment of the goal.
- Which? Specify any requirements or constraints involved in achieving the goal.

**Measurable** goals are those that have concrete criteria for measuring progress toward their achievement. They tend to be quantitative (how much? how many?) as opposed to qualitative (what’s it like?).

**Attainable** goals are those that are reasonably achievable. Goals that are too lofty or unattainable will result in failure, but at the same time, they should involve extra effort to achieve. In either extreme (too far-reaching or sub-par), goals become meaningless.

**Results-based** goals are those that are aligned with the expectations and direction provided by the district or building goals. They are goals that focus on results and are relevant to the mission of an organization such as a school, helping to move the overall effort of a school forward.

**Time-bound** goals occur within a specified and realistic timeframe. Often in schools, this timeframe may be a school year, although it could be a semester, or a multi-year goal, depending on local contexts and needs.