

Report to PARENTS

Setting Goals

The middle of the school year is a great time for families to check in with students on goals. Setting academic and personal goals helps motivate, energize, and focus students, and it is a valuable skill that will benefit learners throughout their lives. Parents can help students set and achieve these goals.

Goal-setting can be tedious, even intimidating, for some students. Parents can support students in this process by following these steps: pick it, map it, do it, own it, and celebrate it.

Pick it. Encourage your child to consider his or her dreams and passions and pick goals that are important and meaningful. Guide your child to think about, “What motivates me? What would inspire me to give my best effort? What would make me feel good while I’m doing it? What achievement would make me feel proud?”

Map it. After your child picks a goal, help map the path from where he or she is now to where the child wants to be. Offer the following analogy: If we want to drive across the country from New York to California, we don’t just get in our car and start driving—we get a map, pick a route, and follow it until we get to California.

With your child, analyze different approaches and define clear steps to reach their goal. For instance, if the goal is to get a higher test grade in a tough subject, each quiz or project is a step on the path to the higher goal: earning an A.

Do it. Once you and your child have mapped a path to their goal, encourage him or her to take action, focus on the first step and give it his or her best effort. Remind your child that no goal is ever reached without focused action.

Own it. As your child makes progress toward their goal, help him or her to take responsibility for making it happen. Teach the mantra, “If it’s to be, it’s up to me!” Reflect with your child. Ask, “How are you doing? What’s

working? What’s not working? What can you or your family change to get to this goal?” From there, analyze the map, and make changes to the plan if necessary.



Help your child keep a positive attitude and own mistakes as well as successes. Remind your child that if something comes along that holds him or her back temporarily, to look at the experience as feedback. Failures, or bumps in the road, can provide us with information we need to succeed. Reinforce the message that we can learn from our mistakes and move on with new, valuable knowledge.

Celebrate it. Acknowledgment and celebration are huge parts of achieving goals. Acknowledge every effort and celebrate your child’s mini-successes along the way to achieving a goal. This builds his or her confidence and motivation. Your child will feel good and understand that perseverance will result in another mini-success and finally goal achievement.

Try going through the goal-setting process as a family. Pick a family goal (perhaps a charitable activity) and work together to achieve it. After the family experience, have each family member pick a personal goal. Support and acknowledge one another as you move through the above steps.

Success is assured when students believe in themselves and in their ability to achieve. Parents are key to helping them believe and succeed.

This Report to Parents was written by Bobbi DePorter of Quantum Learning Network.