



Guidance for Completing the Student Growth Plan

Notes on the Goal:

- It is vital that the student embrace the achievement of the goal.
- **The goal should not be to get better grades.** This is a desirable outcome, but is not focused on growth in the habits that make for a successful student. The goal should be focused on the practices and habits that make for the successful student.
- The goal may pertain to one subject area or apply to student behavior across subjects.
- The attainment of the goal should logically result in significant growth for the student. The goal may be the establishment of a specific habit or the culmination of behaviors which result in a specific outcome.
- It may be directly observable, or specifically measurable, or not. If not, there should be some indirect means to know of its attainment.
- The goal should be reasonably attainable given the current capacities of the student. For some students the stretch goal is best. For others, an easily achievable goal is better to build confidence and momentum.
- The goal should be achievable by the end of the school year or sooner.
- We humbly ask that parents and students remain open to teacher suggestions regarding the size and scope of the goal during the conference discussion.

Notes on the plan for achieving the goal:

- It is vital that the student have a primary role in developing the plan. Any coercion, however well intentioned, will likely undermine the aim to cultivate independent, life-long learners.
- Identify the habits necessary to support this goal.
- Consider that some behavior changes may be gradual while other changes can be immediate but need to be sustained.
- Identify supports and checks that are necessary to give feedback.

Notes on outcome(s) that will indicate goal attainment:

- Generally, completing steps in the plan indicates progress. At the same time it is important that the steps make a difference so it is valuable to look for differences in performance and/or how a student feels about the work or their joy in the learning process. Since our aim is for students to *love* learning, *joy* is an experience they should have on the journey.
- In many cases the indications of progress will be clearly visible in the work produced by the student. In other cases, indications may be visible only at home in the habits related to study or homework.
- Progress on a goal like "conquering procrastination" may not be so visible to the parent or teacher of an upperclassman without the student's assistance. The student, however, may behave differently in several observable ways as well as feel differently about work as they near the due date. The following might be an example of indicators of goal attainment with respect to conquering procrastination:
 - Planner notes indicating self-imposed due dates for portions of a project
 - Completion of small portions of a project over time rather than big chunks of time near the due date
 - Meetings with the teacher early on in the project when questions arise as the student tackles various difficulties
 - A feeling of calm as the deadline approaches because the student knows he/she will be done on time and with a solid effort
 - The graded outcome may be an improved grade, but it will more likely result in a better quality or more enjoyable experience for the student