**Improve Students’ Motivation and Persistence Through S.M.A.R.T. Goal Setting**

"A dream is just a dream. A goal is a dream with a plan and a deadline." – Harvey Mackay

**Correlation between Motivation and Goals:**
“Effective Goal-Setting,” Performance Learning Systems
http://www.plsweb.com/resources/newsletters/enews_archives/

Properly set goals increase student motivation and persistence, leading to enhanced performance. However, hastily or improperly set goals can lead to frustration, depression, and failure to follow through and thus complete an LCP.

Students who routinely write down specific, measurable, challenging goals almost always outperform those who set general “do my best” goals or no goals at all. In addition, regular goal-setters often develop greater confidence and self-esteem, two key factors in achieving optimal performance. As teachers we must help students set achievable goals.

**Benefits of Goal Setting**
Colorado Department of Education, 2004
http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/download/pdf/GoalsToolkitR.pdf

Meaningful goal work, facilitated by the classroom teacher and conducted with peers, serves many purposes. Learners learn planning skills and language skills. They see a direction and focus for their studies, which can increase motivation. The goals, necessary skills, and strategies identified by learners can help the program’s curriculum and the teacher’s instruction. Finally, goal work helps to document learners’ achievements for the purpose of reporting to funding sources.

**Teachers’ Role in Goal Setting:**
“A Process for working with adult ESL students on Short Term Goals,” Donna Moss
http://www2.apsva.us/15401081182015517/lib/15401081182015517/reqcurriculum/goalsprocess.html

The teacher should guide the learners in identifying and articulating an individual realistic goal as well as developing a plan to achieve the goal. See example below:

**Realistic:** I need to improve my writing *(identified skill)* in order to write letters *(to do something)* to my daughter’s teachers.

**Unrealistic:** Learn English. *(Too broad, not specific)*

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**S.M.A.R.T. Goal Setting**
www.goal-setting-guide.com/smart-goals.html

Teachers should help students set SMART goals. Use the guidelines below for the process.

- **S: Specific**
  WHAT are you going to do? Use action words such as direct, organize, coordinate, lead, develop, plan, build etc.

- **M: Measurable**
  If you can't measure it, you can't manage it. Choose a goal with measurable progress, so you can see the change occur. How will you see when you reach your goal? Be specific!

- **A: Attainable**
  Goals you set which are too far out of your reach, you probably won't commit to doing. Although you may start with the best of intentions, the knowledge that it's too much for you means your subconscious will keep reminding you of this fact and will stop you from even giving it your best.

- **R: Realistic**
  Realistic, in this case, means "do-able." Devise a plan or a way of getting there which makes the goal realistic. The goal needs to be realistic for you and where you are at the moment.

- **T: Timely**
  Set a timeframe for the goal. Putting an end point on your goal gives you a clear target to work towards. If you don't set a time, the commitment is too vague. It tends not to happen because you feel you can start at any time. Without a time limit, there's no urgency to start taking action now.

SMART goals encourages persistence, increases state performance, and promote educational gains.
**Purposes/Goals of the 2007 District Subcommittees**

**The Resource/Materials Subcommittee’s** responsibility is to provide an assessment of the following: current policy and procedures for selection of resources and the pros and cons of the present materials being used. The subcommittee with also make recommendations for resources and materials, and determine what resources are needed for FY 2008-09. The committee members will discuss new resources such as; packets designed to help prepare students for CASAS, resources that teach how to skim and read faster, a tutorial for teaching reading skills, and best ways to demonstrate and disseminate the newest materials and how to use them. If you have any recommendations you may contact the committee chair, Karen Johnson at Johnson_Karen@dadeschools.net.

**The Teacher Qualification/District Certification Subcommittee’s** responsibility is to provide recommendations to create a process leading to a district certification or endorsement for Adult ESOL instructors. The committee will also discuss and recommend the necessary support and professional development training needed to ensure a meaningful and effective process. If you have any suggestions or recommendations you may contact the committee chair, Dr. Monica Oliva at moliva@dadeschools.net.

**The Intensive English Academy Subcommittee’s** responsibility is to provide recommendations on how to improve the academy. So far, they have determined that the academy’s current curriculum is aligned to the state standards and the current length of the program is appropriate for students. The committee will also discuss recommendations on student recruitment and instructional support and training. If you have any suggestions or recommendations you may contact the committee’s chair, lleana Masud at imasud@dadeschools.net.

**Spotlight on YOU!**

SMILE recognizes Ms. Marlene Ramirez, teacher at The English Center, for her commitment and devotion to her students. Ms. Ramirez holds a Bachelor’s degree in Learning Disability, a Master’s degree in ESOL, and a Specialist Degree in Media Specialist. In 1994 Ms. Ramirez began her adult education career at the English Center, and since then, she has taught many courses throughout the years including: GED, CDA, HRS, CPR, ESOL, and Citizenship classes. Her teaching style incorporates a hands-on approach where students are able to have a real life experience while learning the skills. Ms. Ramirez coordinates field trips to local grocery stores to teach lessons on shopping and simulate restaurants and ice cream parlors inside the classroom to teach lessons on how to order foods. **Congratulations** Ms. Ramirez for your creativity and for building an exciting learning environment for your students!

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