Overview of Goal Setting Strategies

This Overview of Goal Setting Strategies is a tool participants can use when creating IEP goals. This tool provides an overview of three strategies for goal setting. This overview has been developed to assist schools, districts, and supervisory unions in ensuring that IEP goals are aligned to grade-level standards and use data.

Option 1: Using Benchmarks

Description:

- Identify the grade level winter or end-of-year benchmark and use for goal.

Advantages:

- Easy to use when progress monitoring tools provides benchmarks.
- Tracks progress toward grade-level expectations.
- Efficient for setting goals for large number of students.

Consideration:

- Not appropriate for students significantly below or above benchmark. To determine appropriate, ensure that the expected weekly growth is also realistic (e.g., no more than twice average growth, at least average growth).

Option 2: National Norms for Rate of Improvement (ROI)

Description:

- Identify average growth per week (ROI) for grade and number of weeks left in the instructional period (when we want the goal to be reached). Use the following to calculate a realistic goal:
    - ROI x # of Weeks + Baseline Score = Goal

Advantage:

- Provide more realistic goal when using benchmarks are not appropriate.

Considerations:

- If student is behind, matching ROI norm will maintain the same level of achievement gap.
- Some progress monitoring tools provide recommendations for "ambitious" ROIs.
- When national norms are not available, consider using local norms or estimating ROI by dividing growth between benchmark periods by the number of weeks of instruction.

Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information please contact:

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Option 3: Intra-individual Framework

Descriptions:

- Use an individual growth rate based on past performance instead of national normed growth rate.
- SROI x 1.5 x # Weeks + Student's Baseline Score (mean of 3 most recent scores) = Goal

Advantage:

- Provides valid goal setting strategy in situations where students are performing far below grade level and typical growth rates are not appropriate.

Considerations:

- Use three most recent data points to calculate baseline score.
- Calculate student's ROI (SROI) based on at least eight data points.
- Why 1.5? Since the current SROI is insufficient to close the achievement gap, we want to increase current growth by at least half (x1.5).
- A more ambitious goal may be set if appropriate (e.g., if after several weeks of progress monitoring, the current SROI exceeds the goal SROI).

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