Interpretation and Guidance

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Information for reference

Star assessment results are expressed as both a scaled score and percentile rank. Both of these score types are used throughout the setup of an intervention and goal.

- **Scaled score (SS)** is calculated based on the difficulty of questions in a student’s test and the number of correct responses. Star scaled scores range from 0 to 1400 for Renaissance Star Reading and Renaissance Star Math, and 300 to 900 for Renaissance Star Early Literacy. They can be used to compare student performance over time and across grade levels.

- **Percentile rank (PR)** ranges from 1 to 99. Percentile rank indicates the percentage of other students nationally who obtained scores equal to or lower than the score of a particular student.

Additionally, Star Assessments utilize student growth percentiles (SGPs) to describe a student’s growth relative to the growth of his or her academic peers—same-grade students with similar prior achievement. Student growth percentiles can range from 1 to 99. Students with SGPs between 35 and 65 are generally considered to be experiencing typical growth.
Set up an intervention and goal.

Set an achievement goal for a student to help monitor progress throughout an intervention period.

1. Name the intervention as you want it to appear on reports. For instance, you might enter the name of the program (such as, “Accelerated Math for Intervention”), a description of the intervention (“After-school tutoring 30 minutes daily”), or the skill the student is working on (“Recall of multiplication facts”).

2. Set the goal end date for the intervention period. Choose a date close to the end of the school year, term, or length you anticipate the intervention will last. Edit the end date later if needed. Allow enough time for the intervention to work. Experts recommend no fewer than 8 weeks, but check state or local guidelines which often require at least 10 or 12 weeks.

3. Select the test date closest to when the intervention started (if more than one test is available).

4. Click Calculate Goal below.

5. Select the goal type, which represents the rate of growth you anticipate the student can maintain during the intervention period.

   - **Moderate Goal**: Based on national data for same-grade students with a similar score history, expect 50% of students to reach or exceed this rate of growth with this goal option.
   - **Moderately Ambitious Goal**: Expect 34% of students to reach or exceed this rate of growth with this goal option.
   - **Catch Up/Keep Up Goal**: For students below state proficiency, this option reflects the growth needed to reach proficiency (“catch up”). For students at or above state proficiency, this option describes the growth needed to stay within their proficiency category (“keep up”).
   - **Stay Up/Move Up Goal**: For students scoring within the state proficiency category but below the next higher category, this option shows the growth needed to move up to the higher category (“move up”). For students who are already scoring in the category above proficient, this option shows the growth needed to remain in this proficiency category (“stay up”).
   - **Custom Goal**: Define a custom goal if none of the other goal options seem appropriate. The goal may be a growth rate (SS/week) or an ending SS or PR.

6. Click Save when satisfied with your choices.

**Considerations when choosing a goal**: When determining which goal option is best for this particular student in this intervention, consider these questions:

1. What do you know about the student? What does his or her educational history indicate about motivation and desire to learn? What has been his or her learning rate prior to the intervention?
2. How intensive is the intervention you are implementing? Specifically, how much time per day will the student receive additional instruction? Is the student part of a large-group, small-group, or individual intervention?
3. What is your history with this intervention? Have you implemented this intervention before? How have other students responded to this intervention? Is this a research-based, effective intervention that will be implemented with integrity?

You may decide to edit this goal later if you determine the growth rate you originally selected was not a realistic choice.
Edit an intervention and goal.

Continue monitoring progress for a student by making changes to an existing intervention and goal or by setting up a new intervention and goal.

The Student Progress Monitoring Report graphically displays a student’s Star scores, the selected goal, a trend line, and a goal line to help inform your decisions about the effectiveness of an intervention.

Latest test score, current goal, and growth rate can serve as references as you make changes or create a new intervention and goal.

Make changes to an existing intervention. Choose to change the intervention name, goal end date, or goal type. Lengthen or shorten the intervention period by entering a new goal end date below. Change a student’s growth rate below to reflect a more realistic growth rate than originally expected.

Setting up a new intervention and goal will result in an end to the current intervention. When running the Student Progress Monitoring Report, a red line will appear separating old and new intervention data. To begin a new intervention, follow the same process you previously used when setting the original intervention and goal.

Delete Goal removes all the information related to the current intervention; however, the Star test scores will remain in the software. Keep in mind that whether or not the student responded positively to an intervention, data about the student’s performance should be used to inform future instructional decisions. An example of when you might delete an intervention is if you set up an intervention for after-school tutoring but later found out the student was unable to attend.
View benchmarks and edit cut scores for a school.

Choose a benchmark tab to view school or district benchmarks, as well as state benchmarks if available for your state. (District and state benchmark information is on the following page.)

School benchmarks can be set for each grade within a school. On some reports, school benchmarks can be selected to display student performance in relation to school expectations.

Click Edit Cut Scores to change cut scores for each grade and category.

Set the default benchmark type to be used as the when running reports if no other option is selected. Allow school administrators to set the default, or set it for the entire district. Consider which set of benchmarks will most often be the appropriate lens through which to view student performance.

Edit current benchmark structure with options to display between 2 and 5 benchmark categories, change category names, and set the minimum proficiency level.

The At/Above Benchmark score represents the minimum performance level students are expected to reach by the end of the year. For Star Math or Star Reading, setting the benchmark at the 40th percentile is most commonly recommended by education professionals. Unless your state and local guidelines contradict this, it is not recommended you lower the benchmark.

Restore defaults for Star Math and Star Reading by setting cut scores at the following levels:
- At/Above Benchmark: 40 PR
- Intervention: 25 PR
- Urgent Intervention: 10 PR

For Star Early Literacy benchmarks grade-level defaults or for more information about the default settings, see the resource document titled “Benchmarks, Cut Scores and Growth Rates.”

Intervention and Urgent Intervention cut scores help identify both the students who may need assistance to move toward the end-of-year benchmark and the intensity of the assistance they may require.

On Watch is auto-calculated because it is comprised of students who are below the benchmark but above the intervention threshold.

Please note: Studies have shown students in the Urgent Intervention category are just as likely to respond positively to an intervention as students in other categories.
View benchmarks and edit cut scores for a district or state.

District benchmarks are used for longitudinal reporting so they apply to all grades and schools within a district. Sustaining district benchmarks for multiple years will allow for consistent longitudinal data. Additionally, district benchmarks can be selected for use on other reports that display student performance in relation to benchmarks.

State benchmarks are determined by linking the Star scale with your state test’s scale to determine which Star scaled scores fall into each proficiency category at the time of the state test. State benchmark linking is not available for every grade level because sufficient data was not available for some grades to complete the linking study. When a direct link is not available, recommended cut scores are derived from the linked scores for other grades.

State benchmarks are used to determine Catch Up/Keep Up and Move Up/Stay Up goals (see page 2). Additionally, state benchmarks are used on the Growth Proficiency Chart and State Performance Report, and may be selected for use on other reports and dashboards that display student performance in relation to benchmarks.

Availability of state benchmark linking is ongoing. When state linking has been completed for your state, a state tab will be shown on this page.

Cut scores for grades that have been linked to the state assessment cannot be edited. Estimated cut scores were determined by statistical analysis. It is not recommended to edit these scores unless you have data that warrants a change.