

GREENFIELD GOAL TEAMS

Greenfield Goal Teams provide students with space to set weekly goals and receive support from peers and a caring adult to build their confidence and motivation as they work to achieve those goals.

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OVERVIEW

The Greenfield Goal Team structure aims to accelerate student success and development by bringing teams of 8–12 students together regularly—often daily—to set and reflect on academic goals or work on developing life habits. Similar to an advisory or crew, the Goal Team helps students develop a sense of purpose and build deep, meaningful relationships both with their teammates and with at least one trusted adult in the school—their Goal Coach. In addition to leading a Goal Team, the Goal Coach serves as the main connector between students and families, ensuring ongoing partnership and two-way dialogue between school and home. In the comprehensive Greenfield School Design, Goal Teams involve an added layer of support called “running partners,” where pairs of students offer one another support throughout the day

between Goal Team meetings. Ultimately, this structure provides students with a powerful set of habits that are essential to their future success.

Greenfield Goal Teams are implemented across several Achievement First schools, often in conjunction with [Greenfield Dream Teams](#). An extensive toolkit is available to support schools who wish to adopt the practice.



What Makes This Model Innovative?



Connection & Community

Greenfield Goal Teams ensure that every student has deep and trusting relationships in school, both with an adult who pushes them to be their best self and with a mini-network of peers who provide them with ongoing support. Goal Coaches also forge connections with families, often serving as their primary contact at school.



Affirmation of Self & Others

Greenfield Goal Teams support students to develop a sense of purpose through goal setting aligned both to academics and to life habits. Goal Teams also provide space for students to learn about and support one another, ensuring that everyone has a group of people celebrating and uplifting them.



Active Self-Direction

Goal Teams allow students to drive their learning through consistent opportunities to consider their personal strengths and areas for growth, to set goals, to reflect on their progress toward reaching them, and to advocate for the support they need along the way.

DESIGN

Goals

Greenfield Goal Teams are designed to provide students with the support, confidence, and motivation they need to persist through challenges, both in academics and in life. [📖 Why Goal Teams?](#)

Academic Independence

Goal Teams support students to develop academic independence by teaching them how to connect effort to achievement; how to chunk larger, more complex goals into smaller achievable parts; how to reflect on challenges and apply learnings to future obstacles; and how to advocate for themselves when they need support.

Academic Preparation

Through Goal Teams, students learn how to set and reflect on goals aligned to important academic and life habits. Students also learn to present their progress to their Goal Team, which builds their confidence and presentation skills.

Personal Why	Learning to set purposeful goals and reflect on progress toward those goals helps students self-direct and see themselves as capable of shaping their personal why.
Social-Emotional Strength	Students develop crucial life habits with the support of their Goal Team and Goal Coach. In addition, Goal Teams foster interpersonal competencies as members support one another to achieve academic and personal goals.

Experience

Goal Teams are malleable and can be adapted to meet schools' unique needs. Choice points include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Schools may choose to focus on both goal setting and habit development, or they may focus exclusively on goal setting, leaving habit development for another part of the day.
- Schools may choose to facilitate running partners as part of Goal Teams to offer students 1:1 peer support throughout the school day, or they may opt to focus exclusively on the Goal Team structure.
- Schools can pair Goal Teams with a sister structure from the comprehensive Greenfield School Design called [Greenfield Dream Teams](#) in order to link weekly goals to longer-term goals, or they might choose to execute either practice in isolation.
- Schools can facilitate Goal Teams every day, or they can intersperse meetings with Community Circles or other Life Habit Development Protocols.

Regardless of these choice points, Goal Teams always involve goal setting and reflection during Goal Team meetings as well as ongoing communication between the Goal Coach and team members' families. [📄 Goal Team Structure & Components](#)

See below for more detail about the primary student experiences of the model.

Goal Team Meetings

Goal Teams are a group of 8–12 students who meet with their coach to reflect on goals, growth, and well-being. Teams meet regularly, either daily or several times each week. To provide meaningful and predictable support, meetings often utilize standard protocols that guide student goal setting and habit development over the course of the week. Example protocols include:

- **Goal Setting:** Goal setting often occurs at the start of the week. Goal Coaches facilitate a meeting involving a combination of data celebrations, goal planning, 1:1 conferencing, and feedback. [📄 Monday Goal-Setting Fundamentals of Instruction](#) [📄 SDL Fundamentals of Instruction](#) [📄 Daily Goal Team Teacher PPT](#) Students use goal-setting templates to guide their planning. [📄 Weekly Goal-Setting & Reflection Template](#) [📄 Simple Goal-Setting Template](#)

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- **Community Circle Life Habit Development Protocols:** Some schools decide to reserve 1–2 days per week for Team Circles, which are proactive experiences intended to build relationships and community among the team. In Circle, students generally discuss life habits or personal narratives as prompted by the Goal Coach. [📄 Circle Fundamentals of Instruction](#) [📄 Student Weekly Habit Journal](#) [📄 Student Personal Narrative Protocol](#)
 - **Goal Progress Reflection:** Toward the end of the week, students engage in a protocol to check in on whether they are on track to meet their weekly goals and why. They also plan what actions to take before the following week’s goal-setting meeting, including what help to solicit. [📄 Thursday Goal-Setting Fundamentals of Instruction](#)
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Conferencing

Every day that Goal Teams meet, Goal Coaches carve out time to talk 1:1 with students, either to help them set top-quality goals or discuss their progress toward the goals they have already set. [📄 Goal Teams Conference Planner](#)



Running Partners *(optional)*

In the comprehensive Greenfield School Design, each student on the Goal Team is in dyad with another student referred to as their “running partner.” The pair can offer one another support throughout the day and can work together to set and reflect on goals during regular Goal Team meetings.



Goal Coach & Family Communication

Each Goal Coach engages in regular communication with families. While Goal Coaches aim to check in with families at least once every two weeks, they may communicate more frequently if they have fewer students on their Goal Team or if specific students require more support. Schools often rely on a specific Family Communication Routine. [📄 Goal Coach Family Phone/Text Guide](#)

Supporting Structures

Despite being one of several key elements of the Achievement First Greenfield School Design, Goal Teams can be implemented as a standalone model. Schools interested in implementing Goal Teams may wish to pilot them with 1–2 groups of students before scaling the practice to include the entire school.

Schools must develop or adapt goal-setting and reflection tools and protocols to guide student planning and growth.

Instructional Tools and Protocols: Greenfield Goal Teams focus on helping students develop goals as well as the skills to plan how to meet those goals. This relies on strong student-facing goal-setting and progress-monitoring tools. [📄 Weekly Goal-Setting & Reflection Template](#) Teachers should also plan to use consistent goal-setting and goal-reflection protocols. [📄 Monday Goal-Setting Fundamentals of Instruction](#) [📄 Thursday Goal-Setting Fundamentals of Instruction](#)



CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & ASSESSMENT

Goal Teams also support students to develop life habits, often through Circle protocols. [📄 Circle Fundamentals of Instruction](#) Schools might choose to borrow and adapt habits used by other schools, or they might select their own. Here is an example of Greenfield habits that are adapted from the Valor Collegiate Compass Framework [📄 Habits: Compass Overview](#).

Student Support: Goal Teams are naturally differentiated since goals are individualized based on student needs, and Goal Coaches provide targeted support during 1:1 conferences, which occur at nearly every meeting.

Assessment: While Goal Teams are ungraded, Goal Coaches keep anecdotal records on student progress, monitoring which students are meeting or struggling to meet goals each week and using their records to support students accordingly.



SCHOOL COMMUNITY & CULTURE

Goal Teams function best in an environment that fosters vulnerability, sharing, and peer-to-peer support.

Goal Teams are a key way to reinforce, magnify, and strengthen school culture and community. While this structure functions best within an environment that fosters vulnerability, sharing, and peer-to-peer support, when these conditions do not already exist Goal Teams can be leveraged to help develop them through proactive relationship-building, celebrations of student progress, and more.

Strong Goal Teams rely on Goal Coaches who believe that this role holds equal importance to their role as teacher or staff member.

Goal Coach: The success of any Goal Team hinges on the Goal Coach. While typically a teacher, a Goal Coach can be any staff person who has the skills and mindset needed to run a Goal Team. Those who see themselves as having a dual role—being both school staff *and* a Goal Coach—have students who reach goals at a higher rate, have families who feel more involved and connected, and have students who are happier and more successful.



**ADULT ROLES, HIRING,
& LEARNING**

Successful Goal Coaching involves planning for and facilitating frequent Goal Team meetings involving goal setting, goal reflection, 1:1 conferencing with students, relationship-building, and life habit development. It also requires Goal Coaches to forge relationships with students' families.

Goal Team Support: For Goal Teams to thrive, someone at the school needs to own their successful implementation. Goal Teams are most likely to receive the expertise and attention they deserve when this person is a member of the school leadership team, although the role might also be filled by a veteran educator with strong social-emotional knowledge who is seeking additional responsibility. If coaching Goal Teams must be decentralized, it is helpful for the support to be provided by a teacher's academic coach, as this prevents Goal Coaches from receiving feedback from multiple sources.

Time must be set aside for Goal Teams to meet, as well as regular planning time for Goal Coaches.

Scheduling: In the comprehensive Greenfield School Design, Goal Teams take place every day at a consistent time and last for approximately 45 minutes. However, schools can have Goal Teams meet 2–3 times per week instead, provided the meeting times remain consistent. Some schools elect to hold Goal Teams at the start of the day, but those with late-arrival challenges might consider a schedule buffer (e.g., breakfast or homeroom) or a midday Goal Team meeting to encourage attendance and maximize impact.



**SCHEDULE & USE OF
TIME**

Planning Time: Goal Coaches require time in their day to prepare for Goal Teams as well as time to maintain family communication.

Student Grouping: A key factor influencing scheduling is how schools wish to group students. Schools must ensure that groups remain consistent for the duration of the year to promote long-lasting, supportive relationships. Otherwise, how students are grouped can vary depending on a school's needs or philosophies. For instance, some schools create single-gender

teams and allow students to choose which they feel best aligns with their identity, while others create mixed-gender teams. Some schools group students across multiple grades to encourage peer mentorship, while others maintain single-grade groupings so that students in Goal Teams see one another more often throughout the day.

Goal Teams require clear communication protocols for Goal Coaches to connect with parents.

Goal Coaches are the bridge between families and schools. Ideally, they communicate with families weekly, but if they have larger teams, they may communicate once every two weeks instead.



FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Goal Coaches enhance regular school communication, following up with families about successes, challenges, and students' progress toward goals. They should make a concerted effort to send positive messages to parents and to ensure that the number of positive messages is higher than the number of negative messages.

Goal Coaches might choose to implement one or all of the following communication methods:

- weekly school newsletter containing school-wide updates
- weekly progress report on student academic progress
- weekly or biweekly personalized updates via phone or text.

Goal Teams require space for multiple groups to meet concurrently with enough privacy so that team members can share without disruption.

Ideally, each Goal Team will have a private space in which to meet each day to allow its members to speak openly and vulnerably with their group. If this is not possible on a daily basis, schools might consider having Goal Teams share spaces on goal-setting days and find ways to provide private spaces on team-building or reflection days.



SPACE & FACILITIES

Appropriate meeting locations will depend on the size of the Goal Teams, which in turn is based on the space available in the school and the number of skilled facilitators.

Finally, some schools choose to create Goal Team boards, where each team posts a picture, a record of their goals, and has flexible space where they can post shoutouts for other group members. This requires an equal amount of space for each group.



TECHNOLOGY & INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal Teams can operate with or without technology based on a school's preferences.

Schools should determine whether technology will enhance or detract from the Goal Team experience. Students can record and track their goals on computers or personal devices, or they can record them in a journal. Teachers can use PowerPoint slides or smart boards to guide meetings but should avoid them if they impede relationship-building and open communication.



BUDGET & OPERATIONS

Goal Teams can be run without a budget; their primary cost comes in staff capacity.

Staffing Goal Teams typically adds to the instructional and planning load carried by teachers and school staff, which should be considered when planning their schedules.

While forming students into teams, assigning Goal Coaches, and finding space for each group requires a large operational lift on the front end, there is little maintenance throughout the school year.

Goal Teams do not require any financial expenditure, but schools with flexible money might consider purchasing or printing journals or weekly planners for students to capture and reflect on their progress toward achieving their goals. Additionally, they might consider providing Goal Coaches small budgets to purchase incentives celebrating individual or team progress and important milestones.



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

School leaders should develop simple tools to assess the strength of Goal Teams and to ground ongoing coaching and development.

Ideally, Goal Team support can be integrated into regular teacher coaching and professional development so that Goal Teams feel like an equally important and integrated part of a Goal Coach's roles.

IMPLEMENTATION

Supports Offered

[Transcend](#) supported the design of Greenfield Goal Teams and created a toolkit where users can access various resources to pilot, adopt, and adapt the model.

Greenfield Resource Toolkit

Free



This toolkit contains a comprehensive set of resources to support the rollout and implementation of Greenfield Goal Teams, including: planning materials and templates, goal-setting and reflection materials, Circle/life habits planning and preparation materials, family communication guidance, and so much more.

You can also find information on other parts of the comprehensive Greenfield School Design including Greenfield Expeditions and Dream Teams.

[Access Now](#)

Reach

41

Schools

15,000

Students

75%

Free or Reduced
Lunch

97%

Black &
Latinx

Impact

Goals Teams are used across many schools in the Achievement First Network alongside a suite of other practices that together lead to dramatic impact on student achievement. Below are just a few examples of the excellence achieved by students in Achievement First schools.

- Since Connecticut began Common Core-aligned assessments in 2015, Achievement First students have improved their proficiency by 21% points in math and by 15% points in ELA.
- Achievement First high schools are among the best in the state of Connecticut. U.S. News & World Report named Achievement First Hartford High #3 and Achievement First Amistad High #12.

- Achievement First Bushwick in Brooklyn, New York, was named a 2019 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. It is a prestigious award granted to schools showing overall academic excellence or excellent progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups.
- Achievement First students in Rhode Island far outperformed their in-state peers and scored 5% higher in ELA and math than students in Massachusetts, which is widely considered to have the best schools in the United States.

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RESOURCES

WHY GOAL TEAMS | Benefits to the Student Experience

Support

- Strong Adult Relationships:** A strong, trusting relationship with a coach who "has the student's back" and pushes them to be their best self.

Purpose

- Strong Peer Relationships:** A strong mini-network of relationships, a community home-base that offers support daily.
- Goal Setting:** A place to set goals and be held accountable for reaching those goals, so as to ensure that students thrive in both academics and life.
- Life Habits:** A place for students to foster the habits and reflect on their growth.

[Why Goal Teams?](#)

This image explains the benefits of Greenfield Goal Teams.

STRUCTURE | Who is Involved & How They Work Together

Goal Team

Goal teams are a group of 6-12 students who meet consistently with their coach to reflect on goals, growth and well-being on a daily or several times weekly basis.

[Goal Team Structure & Components](#)

This image captures who is involved in Goal Teams and how they work together, as well as the key components that make up Goal Teams.

Goal Team: Fundamentals of Instruction 3.6 (Monday) (20 minutes/day)

Goal Coach Prep

- Review the Goal Coach report to examine whether students are on or off pace in each subject area and update data slides
- Ensure all materials are out and ready for students (data sheet/slide updated, student journals are out)
- Identify 2-3 students to celebrate during the data celebrations and plan the specific praise to communicate
- Identify 2-3 students to check in with during the planning protocol. Consider--
 - Students who need to build a stronger relationship with
 - Students who are not yet invested in this process
 - Students who are falling behind on goals
 - Students who are meeting goals but need a push to aim higher

Note: Be sure to say the students you are supporting so they don't view you stopping in as a sign they are struggling

Wins

- The goal team is clear on their shared progress- both the wins and areas to improve
- Students are clear on their individual progress and have developed a plan for one academic goal area
- Students set the foundation for holding themselves accountable to that plan by sharing it with their running partner (once established) and making at least one specific request for help
- GC and goal team members maximize routines and small moments to build increasingly strong relationships

[Monday Goal-Setting Fundamentals of Instruction](#)

This document outlines a protocol that Goal Coaches can use when facilitating Goal Team meetings focused on goal setting.

Goal Team Goal Setting & SDL: Fundamentals of Instruction (GR 3-6) (40 minutes/day)

Purpose

- Maximize routines and small moments to build increasingly strong relationships
- Develop the core skills and habits of effective goal setting/reflection
- Internalize Compass habits through real world application and self-directed lessons
- Prepare to share top quality Compass work in Circle

INVESTMENT: Students are clear on their overall progress weekly via goal setting and goal conferences) and feel a sense of ownership over their ability to impact progress toward goals.

RIGOR OF CONTENT / TASK: Students are on pace in Compass work and completing top quality work before bringing it to circle.

THINKING: Students are responsible for problem-solving when they struggle with content and are responsible for making sense of the content.

FEEDBACK: Goal Coach gives rapid feedback to reinforce productive habits, correct unproductive behavior, and ensure that scholars are engaging with the content at a high level.

Must Have

[SDL Fundamentals of Instruction](#)

This is another example of a goal-setting protocol involving 1:1 conferencing that Goal Coaches can use to guide their facilitating of goal-setting

Name: _____ Date: _____

Part of the week planning Check your weekly report and note how you are doing in each block (x ahead of pace, ✓ on pace, ▲ almost on pace, X off pace)

Content Block	Math STL	Non-Reasoning	Writing	Science STL	Ind. Reading	Science	Language	Science/Health	Science STL
How am I doing? (V/A/I)									

What's your goal for this week? (x = need to read 2 books in 8 this week to get back on pace)

[Weekly Goal-Setting & Reflection Template \(Simple Version\)](#)

This is a simple template that can guide students to set and reflect on goals over the course of a week.

Weekly Reflection and Goal Setting Week of 2/4/19

PART I: Reflect on Progress

Directions:

- Review your progress report for this week
- Use the progress report data to fill out "Last Week's Progress Check" below

Last Week's Progress Check: ADV = Advanced, PROF = Proficient, APR = Approaching, OFF = Off Pace

Content Block	Ind. Reading	Hum STL	Science STL	Math	Science Investigation	Compass Work	CU/ WRT
On Pace	Prof.	Me	Prof.	Me	Prof.	Me	Prof.

[Simple Goal-Setting Template](#)

This is another option for a template that can guide students to set and reflect on goals over the course of a week.

meetings.

Goal Team Daily PPT CFS

- ☐ Daily Shout Outs + Friday Celebrations model Sincere & Authentic Praise (i.e. personalized to the student, specifically name the actions/behaviors that led to the result)
- ☐ Identify a common gap that is connected to the daily focus (e.g. Goals or Compass work) using evidence from rapid feedback & conferencing.
- ☐ Provide exemplar/CFS aligned to the gap to support Scholars in strengthening their work

Daily Goal Team Teacher PPT (Version 2)

These slides can support Goal Coaches to walk through the various Goal Team meetings that occur during the week, including goal setting, reflection, life habit development, and celebrations.

Goal Teams: Fundamentals of Instruction (Circles 2-4)		(20 minutes/day)
Purpose	Goal team circles are PROACTIVE experiences, intended to build relationships and community. They are designed to create a routine where intentional connections are built as students share across a common topic and all individuals feel valued for their contributions. The physical setup of the space is a key reminder that this really is something special and different. The circle has no beginning or end... all are in; gathering in circles is common across all cultures, and these small circles offer an inclusive and important ritual for goal teams.	
Goal Coach Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Select or write a Life Habit or Discipline Habit that meets the following indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ aligned to the Life Habit of the Week ☐ aligned to the level of "risk" the group is ready for ☐ relevant to student's lives & interests ☐ uses clear and concise language ☐ is open ended (cannot be answered with a "yes" or "no") ☐ invites inquiry and dialogue (there is no "right" answer) ☐ Reflect on your own response to the prompt. What will it sound like to share a response that is vulnerable but 	

Goal Team Circle Fundamentals of Instruction

This protocol can support Goal Coaches to facilitate Circles to help students build relationships with one another or develop important life habits.

Weekly Habits Journal

Name: _____ Habit of the week: _____

Define this habit in your own words. What does it mean to you?

Student Weekly Habit Journal

This worksheet can be printed and used to guide students as they complete weekly life habit reflections.

Personal Narrative Journal

Name: _____ Date: _____

Today's Circle Prompt:

Your reflection: Circle one of the following reflections questions and respond in the space below using complete sentences.

Student Personal Narrative Protocol

This is a sample journal prompt that Goal Coaches can share with their Goal Team to support relationship-building.

Goal Team: Fundamentals of Instruction 2-6 (Thursday)		(20 minutes/day)
Goal Coach Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Identify 2-3 running partner pairs to support during the partner protocol. Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Students who need to build a stronger relationship with ☐ Running partners who need more support working effectively together ☐ Students who are falling behind on goals ☐ Students who need more support with the weekly planning process ☐ Students who are meeting goals but need a push to aim higher ☐ Ensure all materials are out and ready for students so that you can leverage the opening transition to check in personally with a few students. 	
Wins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Students feel clear on their weekly progress so far and motivated to leverage the remaining time (Friday-Monday) to make progress they can celebrate during Monday's weekly data celebrations ☐ Students or Goal Coach update Dream Team members for each student sharing both celebrations and commitments ☐ GC and goal team members maximize routines and small moments to build increasingly strong relationships 	

Thursday Goal-Setting Fundamentals of Instruction

This protocol can be used by Goal Coaches as they support their Goal Team in their weekly progress-to-goals reflection.

Goal Team Conference IPP

Key Steps:

- ☐ Review current data (goalies, phone work completion)Circle sign up sheet to map out the who and when of conferencing
- ☐ Scholars for Goal Conference (at least 4 Scholars, then rotate others from there to use rapid feedback to review goals)
- ☐ Scholars for Compass Conference (at least 8 Scholars/week to ensure you have enough work for 2 Circles)
- ☐ Review Agendas for the sign up conference and conference questions as needed (page 2)
- ☐ (For Compass Conferences) Make sure you've completed the [checklist](#) for the specific work section the scholar has prepared

Mon or Tues		Wed or Thurs		Friday	
Scholar Name	Conference Type	Scholar Name	Conference Type	Scholar Name	Conference Type
1)	☐ Goal	1)	☐ Goal	1)	☐ Goal

Goal Teams Conference Planner

This document includes both a guide for Goal Coaches to use when planning 1:1 conferences with their Goal Team and a progress tracker.

Family Communication Routines: Phone Calls and Texts

Overview

Family communication is an essential part of building strong relationships with families that will ultimately drive the awesomely powerful communities each of our schools strive toward creating. An essential component of family communication is the relationship building between families and teachers that often happens through phone calls and text messages and then is strengthened through Dream Teams and other community events. This document serves as guidance for this component- Phone Calls and Text messages.

Goal Coach Family Phone/Text Guide

This document provides guidance around the frequency and quality of family phone and text communication.

Compass Overview

What is the Compass?

The "Compass" is a visual representation and metaphor for the approach we take to social-emotional learning with scholars and adults. At its broadest level, the Compass is comprised of four basic dimensions: mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual. We believe that well-being and excellence depend on balanced and integrated mastery in each of these dimensions. The Compass consists of 5 outer disciplines (e.g. Big Heart), each with its own habits (e.g. empathy). We aspire for all Achievement First community members to have a Sharp Mind, a Big Heart, and to Align their Actions to their Noble Purpose. All of this requires being able to reliably find their True North, or inner Compass.

Greenfield Habits: Compass Overview

This document outlines example habits used in the comprehensive Greenfield School Design that schools can adapt for use with Goal Teams.