

How Parents Can Support Learning at Home



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This blog is a parallel commentary from the parent perspective on Mary Ann Burke's December 7, 2021 post "What Does an Engaged Classroom Look Like?" from her series Student Engagement Assessment: Strategies to Empower All Learners.

How to Create Learning Goals from Academic Standards

When talking with your children about creating learning goals, a good approach to take as a parent is to make sure that your children initiate the learning goals. They can choose to reflect on a class in which they excelled, or they may choose to take a closer look at a class in which they need improvement. The key here is to remember to nurture and instill the growth mindset as children move forward towards their goals.

Students' Feedback Ensures Realistic Learning Goals

A few questions will help guide children think about their next steps in their learning goals:

Are you satisfied with how you did in _____ class?

Yes – then ask “What was the most satisfying?” and use this opportunity to affirm their hard work and validate their efforts.

No – then ask “What is concerning you?” and use this opportunity to show empathy for their disappointment and reassure them that this is just one step of their learning journey.

How can I support you in the next step?

If they answered yes previously, your children may want to share what new learning goals they have, or they may want to brainstorm new areas of growth with you.

If they answered no previously, your children may want to receive some suggestions on what steps they need to take to proceed, or consider other resources to explore (including discussing options with a teacher or school guidance counselor).

Student Engagement Ensures Informative Feedback

When children are active participants in the outcome of their learning, they take ownership of their learning.

The more they are able to converse about their thought process, the more they learn how to become better decision makers. It will help foster a sense of responsibility and independence as well. This is especially important for developing self-motivation.

What is a SMART Goal?

SMART is an acronym for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Based. It provides a framework with which to put together a well thought out goal. Once you have received feedback from your child using the previously suggested conversation prompts in this blog, using the SMART Goal framework will help you and your child work out the details on how to accomplish their goals. Writing them out together will help articulate their ideas and form accountability.

Wishing you much success as you make deliberate steps to support your child's learning at home!