

## **Joint Statement on Goal Setting from Newton Public Schools and the Newton Teachers' Association**

September 11, 2014

To: Educators in the Newton Public Schools

From: Evaluation Committee

RE: Goal Setting

As people are reflecting on goals at this time of year, we thought it important to release a Joint Statement from Newton Public Schools and the Newton Teacher Association about our collective belief around educator goals. We hope this supports your professional journey.

### **Educator Goals: Why do we have them and how do we evaluate progress?**

Educator goals help focus teaching and self-reflection. Goals should be challenging and inspiring, and educators should feel safe to pursue these goals. To this end, evaluation should focus on progress, not solely outcomes, and on educators' willingness and ability to reflect fruitfully on and improve their practice. Furthermore, educators should be encouraged to adapt and modify their goals on the basis of their reflection.

### **Vision Statement**

The Newton Public Schools believes:

- effective teaching is based around reflection, guided self-assessment, embracing new challenges and curiosity; an educator's career has a trajectory that includes constant learning.
- the process of goal setting validates hard work, and acknowledges we are all on a continuum of learning and growth.
- focusing on improving a specific aspect of their work and practice is one way that educators engage in on-going professional learning.
- effective goals may be broad-based allowing for differentiation of instruction for a variety of learners in classrooms (each of the students demonstrating personal growth in the area of the goal).
- both personal and team generated goals add value.
- goals can be measured using qualitative and/or quantitative evidence. Measuring numeric percentages does not necessarily strengthen a goal. Sometimes the best goals are the hardest to measure.
- it is okay not to achieve your goal; we don't always get things right the first time.
- larger school, department or district goals will be shared so that educators have the opportunity to nest their own goals within larger initiatives.
- administrators maintain final approval of goals, however, ideally goals will be educator-generated.