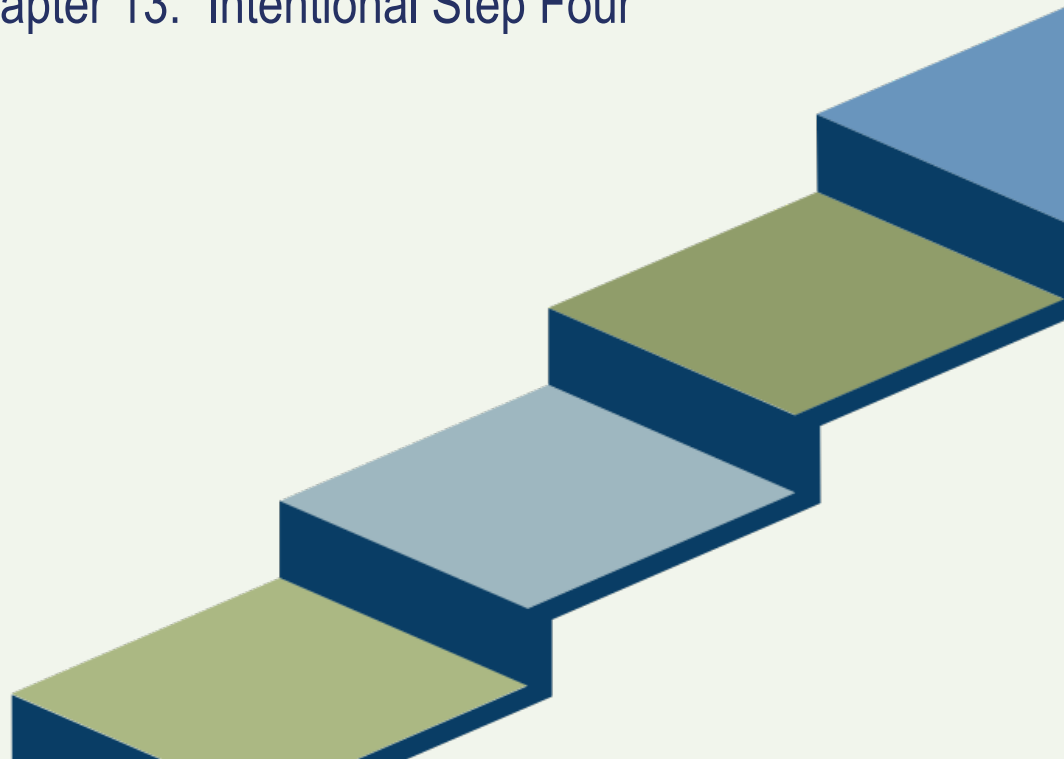


Intentional Instructional Moves

Strategic Steps to
Accelerate Student
Learning

Companion Guide

Chapter 13: Intentional Step Four



Chapter 13

Intentional Step Four: Celebrate

While accomplishing goals can be rewarding in and of itself, it's important to celebrate student wins. Often, we find ourselves moving from one goal to the next without stopping to acknowledge our accomplishments. However, it's vital to teach students how to self-reflect and reward themselves, either intrinsically or extrinsically.

When students achieve a new personal best or work hard toward a challenging task, we should recognize their efforts and model how to celebrate them. Remember: it's crucial to acknowledge when students reach their goals *and* when they demonstrate growth toward those goals. Also, we need to ensure that all students have an equal chance to progress and be recognized for their accomplishments.

As discussed earlier, the traditional classroom tends to encourage students to compete against each other. However, we know that comparing ourselves to others leads to unnecessary stress and anxiety. Too often we find ourselves trying to match a peer's accomplishments instead of focusing on our own. If we invite students to work toward their personal best, they will learn to compete against themselves instead of others—and will have greater success.

We are all uniquely made, with our own strengths and abilities that influence how we move through the world. As such, we should be working toward our personal best.

Many times our celebrations are reserved for top tier students, those who made the honor roll or had perfect attendance, for example. But this is discouraging to students who are unable to meet those requirements. We want to ensure the criteria for earning a celebration are accessible

to all students. Did the student make progress toward their goal? Did the student complete step one or another part of their action plan? One student's progress might not be the same as another's, but that student is still growing and should be part of the celebration.

Examples of Celebrations:

- **Ice Cream Party:** the class builds an ice cream sundae together on the white board or a poster board as they work toward their goals. When they reach one goal, the teacher adds the cup; as they reach another goal, the teacher adds a scoop of ice cream; for the next goal, the teacher adds sprinkles, and so on until the ice cream sundae is complete. Once students have accomplished all of the goals, the class has an ice cream party. This strategy can be done with many kinds of rewards, such as popcorn, cupcakes, fruit, or other snacks.
- **Daily Kudos / Shout-Outs / Celebrate Your Friends:** The teacher sets aside class time so students can celebrate their peers' accomplishments as they work toward their goals. During this period of praise, students will recognize their peers' efforts, acknowledge their strengths, and compliment their progress. These compliments can be offered in written or oral format. For instance, the teacher might pause at the end of the day and ask students to write a compliment on a notecard about someone in the class who had a positive impact on their goals. Then, students will hand their card to that person.
 - Celebrations don't have to take up a large portion of class time; as with the examples above, teachers and students can celebrate one another using quick check-ins. Larger celebrations, like the ice cream party, can occur once the goal is reached (or at the end of a term). Celebrating students' efforts helps them recognize the strengths of others and how hard they are working toward their

goals. This reinforces social awareness as well as the value of effort (.77) and reflection (.75).

Chapter 13 Handouts

1. Questions to Ask During Goal Setting
2. Goal Setting Books
3. My Journey Map
4. Goal Reflection