



## Using the Acadience Math Goal-Setting Utility

The Acadience Learning Online (ALO) goal-setting utility empowers educators to set goals that are meaningful, ambitious, and attainable. The goal-setting utility takes into account the research-based benchmarks for each measure, grade, and time of year as well as a normative comparison of progress using **Pathways of Progress™**.

### Benchmarks

The Acadience Math benchmarks are empirically derived target scores that represent adequate math skill for a particular grade and time of year. Benchmarks are provided for each Acadience Math measure as well as for the Math Composite Score (MCS). Benchmarks are based on research that examines the

predictive validity of a score on a measure at a particular point in time compared to later math outcomes. Acadience Math benchmarks are the same for all students in a grade, and represent the lowest score for which a student is likely to be on track to reach future math outcomes. While benchmarks provide meaningful

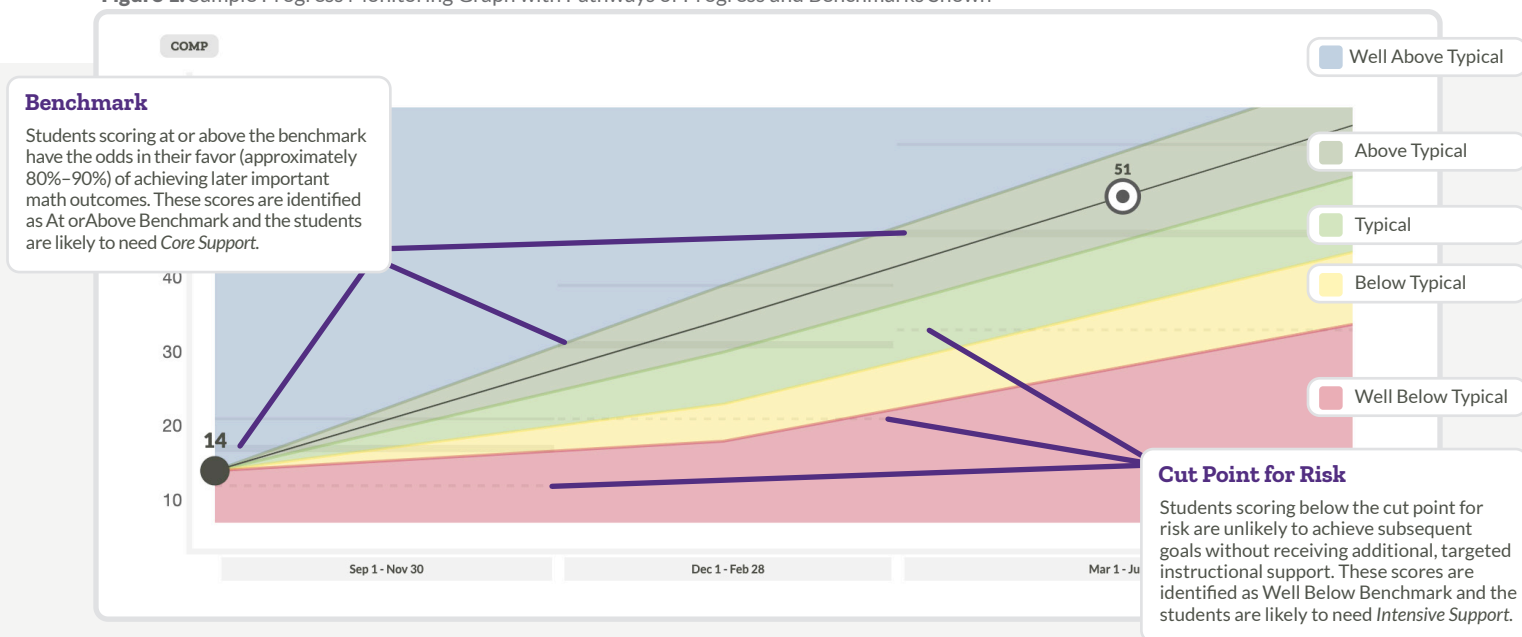
outcomes, there may be some students for whom the benchmarks would not be adequately ambitious, and other students for whom the benchmarks would be difficult to attain. For example, a benchmark may not be an adequately ambitious

goal for a student whose skills are already in the *Above Benchmark* range. Similarly, the fourth-grade level benchmark may be difficult to attain for a fourth-grade student who does not have basic addition and subtraction skills.

## Pathways of Progress

Pathways of Progress provides educators with a normative comparison of progress, in addition to the benchmarks, when setting goals for individual students. Pathways of Progress classifies rates of progress as *Typical*, *Above Typical*, or *Well Above Typical* compared to other students with the same level of skills. *Figure 1* shows how the Pathways of Progress and Acadience Math benchmarks inform goal setting for an example fourth-grade student, Miriam. As illustrated in *Figure 1*, Pathways of Progress and benchmarks are particularly helpful for determining when grade-level, end-of-year goals are meaningful, ambitious, and attainable.

**Figure 1.** Sample Progress Monitoring Graph with Pathways of Progress and Benchmarks Shown



## Setting Goals in ALO

Teachers can use the goal-setting utility available in Acadience Learning Online (ALO) to see the benchmarks for each measure and time of year as well as the target scores for each pathway. These features will assist teachers when tracking students' progress toward

their goals throughout the year. Setting goals that are meaningful, ambitious, and attainable is particularly important for students who are performing Below or Well Below Benchmark and in need of additional instructional support.

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Goal setting is a professional decision that should be made with several considerations in mind. Student goals should represent a professional judgment about a goal that is simultaneously meaningful, ambitious, and attainable.

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## 3 Tips to Consider When Setting Goals

### What is a meaningful goal?

- The big idea is to increase a student's odds of achieving important math outcomes in the future. Therefore, goals should be set with the intention of students exceeding, achieving, or coming as close as possible to their Acadience Math grade-level benchmarks.
- Moving a student from *Below Benchmark* to *At or Above Benchmark* or moving a student from *Well Below Benchmark* to either *Below Benchmark* or to *At or Above Benchmark* represents a meaningful goal.



## What is an ambitious goal?

- *Above Typical Progress* and *Well Above Typical Progress* represent ambitious goals. *Below Typical Progress* and *Well Below Typical Progress* would not be considered ambitious goals.
- *Typical Progress* may be sufficient for students whose scores are already *At or Above Benchmark*.
- *Typical Progress* may not be adequate for students who have scores *Below* or *Well Below the benchmark*.



## What is an attainable goal?

- Goals in the *Well Above Typical* range may not always be attainable, especially when far in the *Well Above Typical* range and in upper elementary grades.
- *Typical* and *Above Typical Progress* are likely attainable.
- *Well Below Typical* and *Below Typical Progress* may be attainable, but are not ambitious or meaningful. Appropriate goals are both attainable and ambitious.
- It is also important to consider what might be possible with an effective, research-based intervention, especially in early elementary grades.



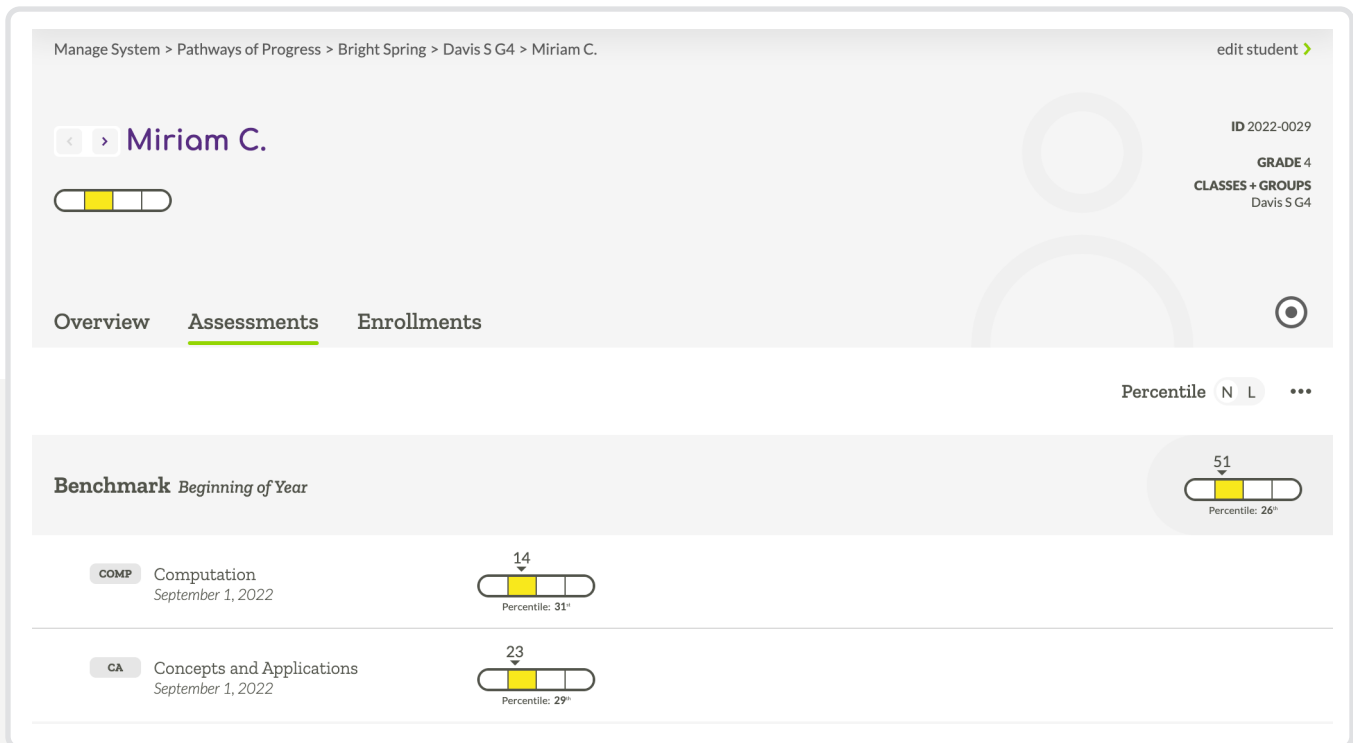
## Goal Setting Example: Miriam, Grade 4

This section illustrates how the ALO goal-setting utility could be used to set goals for a fourth-grade student, Miriam. This utility allows educators to set customized individual student goals by considering Pathways of Progress information in conjunction with the Acadience Math benchmarks.

As is shown in *Figure 2*, at the beginning of fourth grade, Miriam earned the following scores, which are below her grade-level benchmark.

- **Math Composite Score = 51**  
(Below Benchmark)
- **Computation = 14**  
(Below Benchmark)
- **Concepts and Applications = 23**  
(Below Benchmark)

**Figure 2.** Beginning of Year Acadience Math Scores for Miriam, a Fourth-Grade Student



### Legend: Benchmark Status Indicator

  
**Well Below Benchmark**  
(likely to need intensive support)

  
**Below Benchmark**  
(likely to need strategic support)

  
**At Benchmark**  
(likely to need core support)

  
**Above Benchmark**  
(likely to need core support)

## Goal Setting Example: Miriam, Grade 4 (continued)

To establish a goal for Miriam, her teacher would need to consider what end-of-year goals would be meaningful, attainable, and ambitious.

### Meaningful

A meaningful goal will result in math skills that are *At or Above Benchmark*.

### Attainable

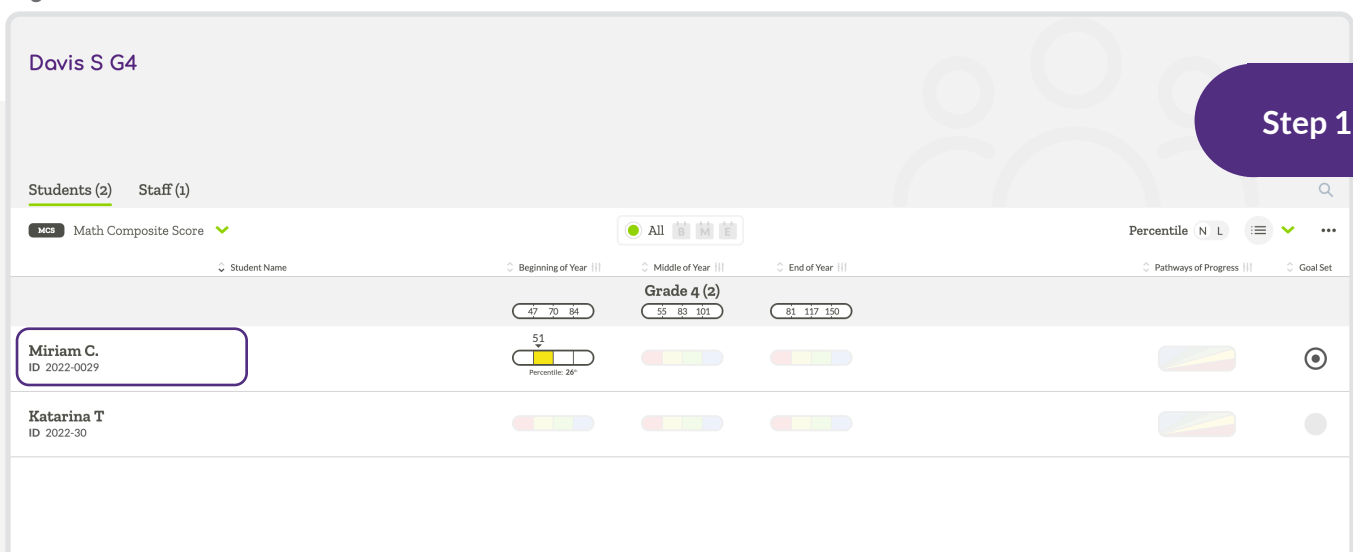
*Typical or Above Typical Progress* relative to students who began the year at a similar skill level would be attainable for Miriam.

### Ambitious

Because Miriam is scoring *Below Benchmark* at the beginning of the year, an ambitious goal of *Above Typical Progress* would be appropriate to bring her skills up to the end-of-year benchmark.

To set a goal for Miriam, her teacher can use the goal-setting utility in ALO. To get to the utility, first tap on Miriam's name in the Student List View in ALO (see *Figure 3*).

Figure 3. ALO Class List View for Miriam's Class



## Goal Setting Example: Miriam, Grade 4 (continued)

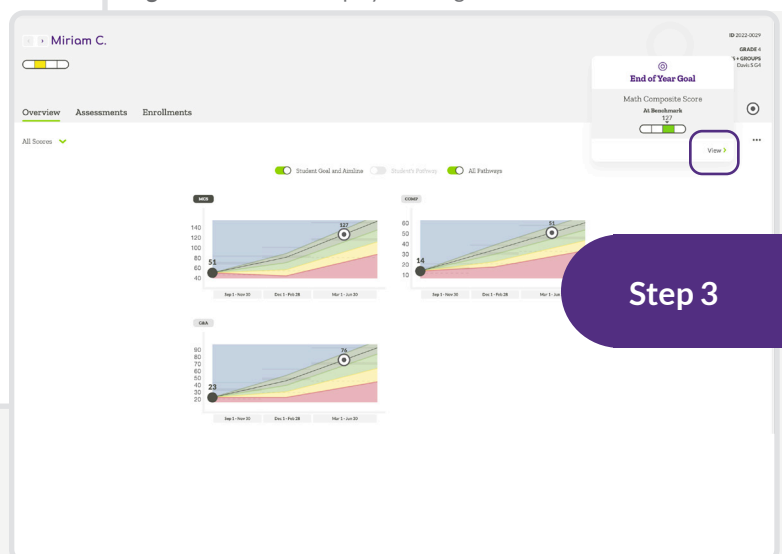
Once the teacher taps on Miriam's name, the teacher will see an overview screen that looks like the one shown in *Figure 4* displaying graphs for all measures for which it would be appropriate to set a goal given that grade and time of year. Each graph displays the student's beginning-of-year score as well as an initial goal for each measure set by the system for that student. The initial goals represent reasonable goals for many students. However, any student's goals may be modified or customized based on a teacher's

professional judgment. To customize the goals for Miriam, her teacher taps on the target on the right-hand side of the display in the gray area just above the three dots (see *Figure 4*). Once her teacher taps on the target, a box will appear showing the initial end of year goal (see *Figure 5*). Tap the word "view" at the bottom of that box to open the goal-setting utility. Anywhere a target is shown for Miriam, her teacher can tap on the target and tap on "view" to see or modify the goal.

Figure 4. Overview Display



Figure 5. Overview Display Showing End of Year Goal

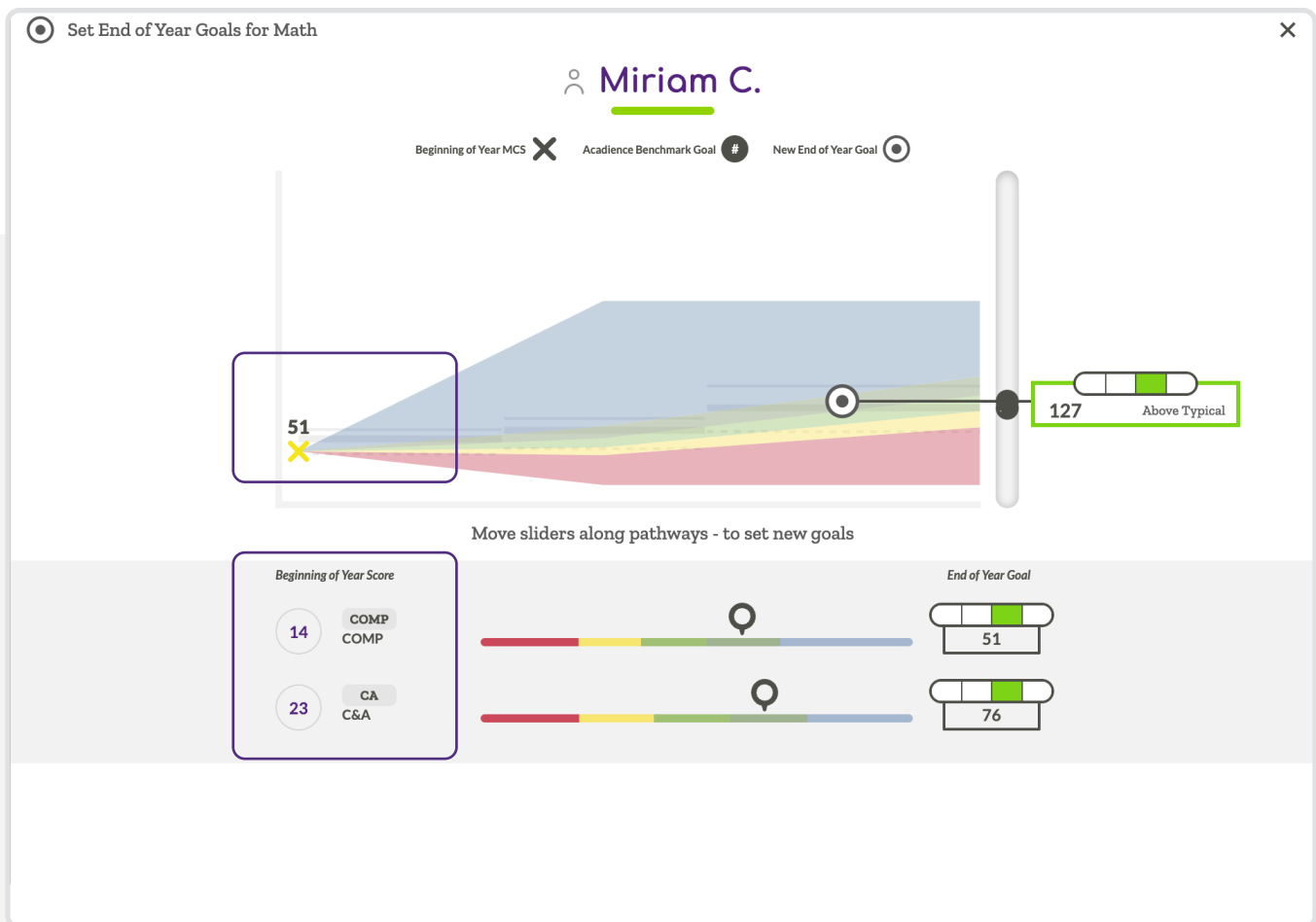


## Goal Setting Example: Miriam, Grade 4 (continued)

Figure 6 shows Miriam's beginning-of-year Acadience Math data along with her initial goals as they would appear in the ALO goal-setting utility. Miriam's beginning-of-year Acadience Math scores are listed

on the left-hand side, including her MCS on the upper half of the screen and the scores for each individual measure shown below the graph for the MCS.

Figure 6. ALO Goal-Setting Utility for Miriam, a Fourth-Grade Student



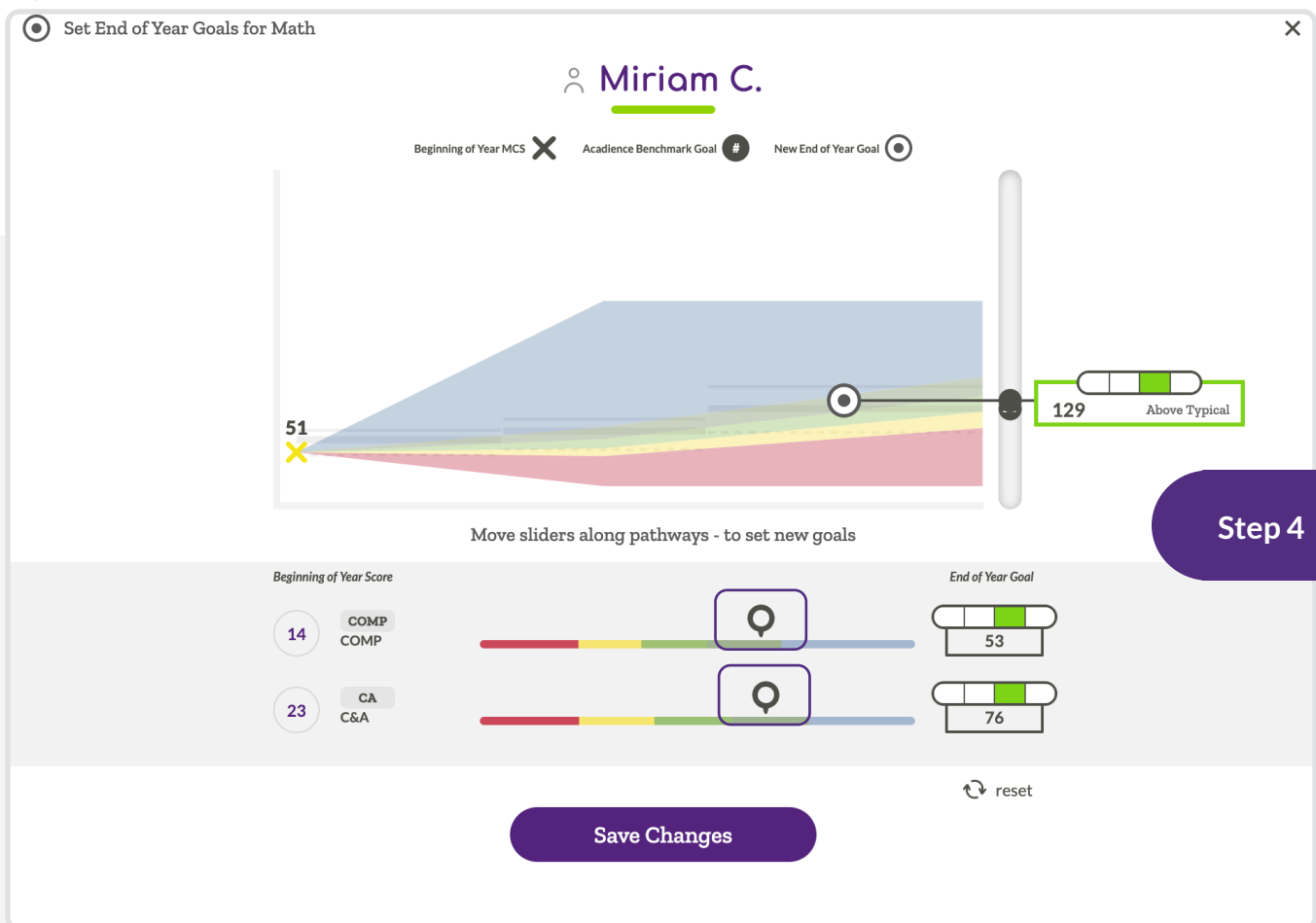


## Goal Setting Example: Miriam, Grade 4 (continued)

To set a goal for a measure, the teacher selects and moves the slider for that measure. The change in goal will show next to the slider in the benchmark status indicator and box underneath it. In *Figure 7*, the teacher believes *Above Typical Progress* is appropriate for Miriam, but would like to be slightly more

ambitious than the initial goal of 51 for Computation. As such, the teacher moves the slider to set the end-of-year goal for the Computation Score at 53 for Miriam, which is at the upper end of the *Above Typical Progress* range. Note that as changes to individual measure goals are made, changes in the MCS goal are shown.

Figure 7. Customized Goals for Miriam, a Fourth-Grade Student



## Goal Setting Example: Miriam, Grade 4 (continued)

Miriam's teacher decided to leave the goal for Concepts and Applications as it was set initially, so it remains at 76. Because the teacher believes that *Above Typical Progress* is both ambitious and attainable, all the end-of-year goals fall in the *Above Typical*

*Progress* score range and meet the end-of-year benchmarks. The resulting changes in the end-of-year composite score goal are shown in the graph at the top of *Figure 7*. To complete the process, the teacher clicks the purple "save changes" button.

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**Based upon the end-of-year goal selections made using the ALO goal-setting utility, Miriam's end-of-year goal would be written as:**

*By the end of the year, Miriam will score 53 correct digits on the fourth-grade level Acadience Math Computation measure and score 76 points on the fourth-grade level Acadience Math Concepts and Applications measure.*

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Acadience Math measures are powerful, reliable, and valid indicators of a student's math proficiency. They are also brief and efficient. The overarching goal is always to make good educational decisions that improve outcomes. Establishing end-of-year goals is a professional judgment informed by the end-of-year benchmarks and the Pathways of Progress.



For additional information on using the ALO goal-setting utility or Pathways of Progress, please see our website at [www.acadiencelearning.org/resources/pathways-of-progress](http://www.acadiencelearning.org/resources/pathways-of-progress) or contact us at [info@acadiencelearning.org](mailto:info@acadiencelearning.org).