



Using the Acadience Reading 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 Reading benchmarks are empirically derived target scores that represent adequate reading skill for a particular grade and time of year. Benchmarks are provided for each Acadience Reading measure as well as for the Reading Composite Score (RCS). 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 reading outcomes. Acadience Reading 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 reading outcomes. While benchmarks provide meaningful outcomes, there may be some students for whom the

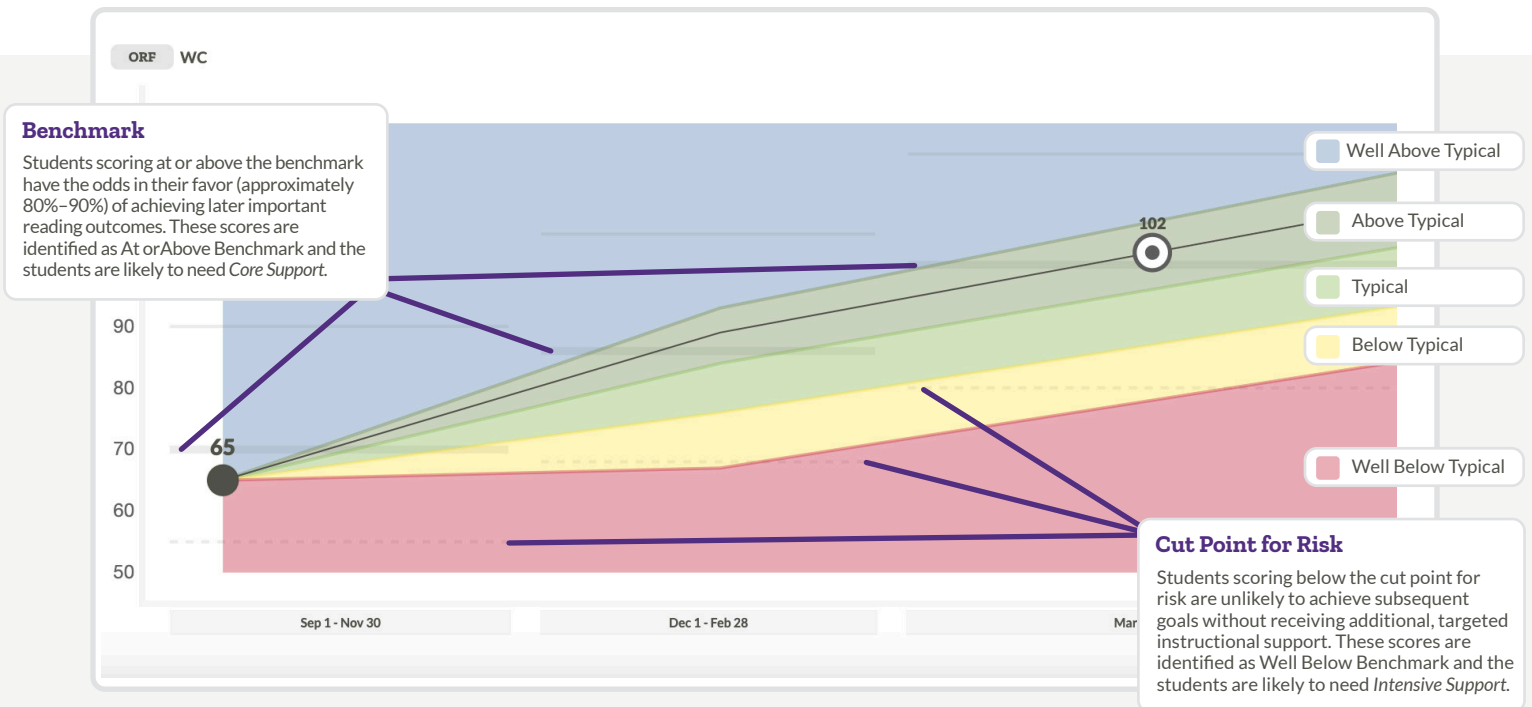
benchmarks would not be adequately ambitious goals, and other students for whom the benchmarks would be difficult to attain. For example, a benchmark may not be an adequately ambitious goal for a student whose skills are already in the *Above Benchmark* range. Similarly, the fourth-grade level benchmark may be difficult to attain for a fourth grade student who is a nonreader.

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 starting level of skills. *Figure 1* shows how the Pathways of Progress might provide additional information to the Acadience Reading benchmarks for an example third-grade student, Tabitha. As illustrated in *Figure 1*, Pathways of Progress is 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.

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.



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 literacy 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 Reading 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.



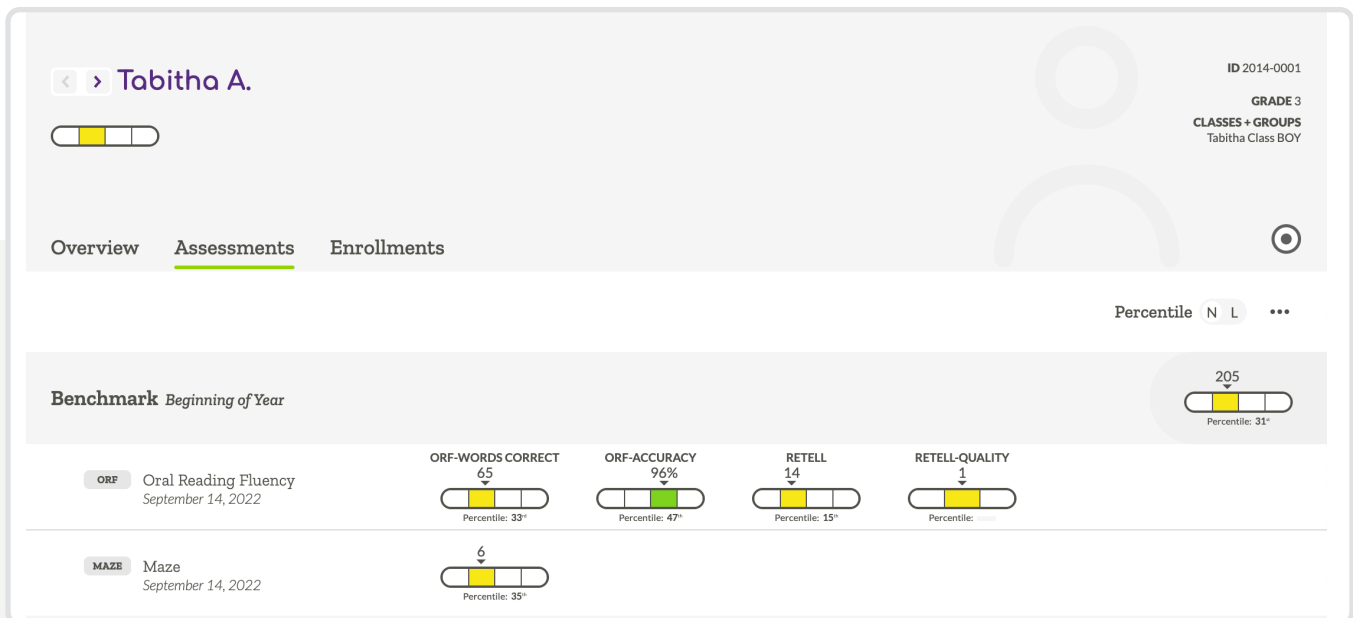
Goal Setting Example: Tabitha, Grade 3

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

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

- Reading Composite Score = **205**
(Below Benchmark)
- ORF Retell = **14**
(Below Benchmark)
- ORF Words Correct = **65**
(Below Benchmark)
- Retell Quality of Response Rating = **1**
(Below Benchmark)
- ORF Accuracy = **96%**
(At or Above Benchmark)
- Maze Adjusted Score = **6**
(Below Benchmark)

Figure 2. Beginning of Year Acadience Reading K-6 Scores for Tabitha, a Third-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: Tabitha, Grade 3 (continued)

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

Meaningful

A meaningful goal will result in proficient reading *At or Above Benchmark* (i.e., reading for meaning, at an adequate rate, and with a high degree of accuracy).

Attainable

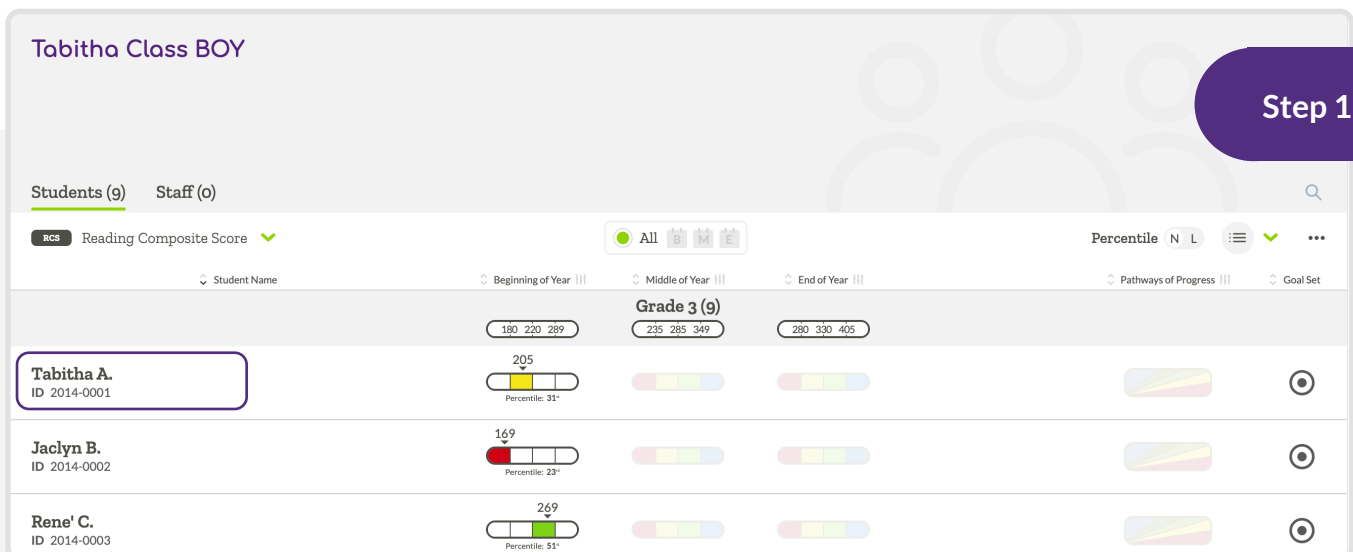
An attainable goal would be *Typical or Above Typical Progress* relative to students who began the year at a similar skill level.

Ambitious

Because Tabitha is *Below Benchmark*, an ambitious goal of *Above Typical Progress* would be appropriate to bring her skills up to, or as close as possible to, benchmark.

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

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



Step 1

Goal Setting Example: Tabitha, Grade 3 (continued)

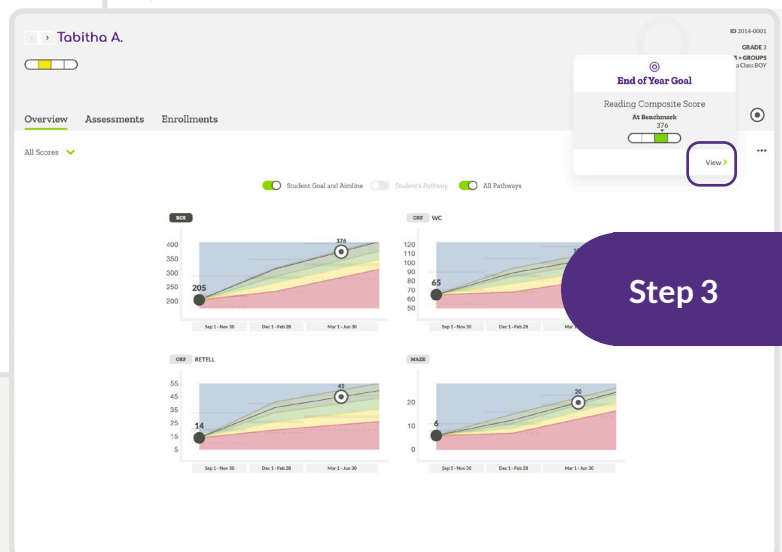
Once her teacher taps on Tabitha's name, the teacher will see an overview screen that looks like the one shown in *Figure 4* displaying graphs for all measures for which it would be appropriate to set a goal given that grade and time of year. Each graph displays the student's beginning-of-year score as well as an initial goal for each measure set by the system for

that student. To customize the goals for Tabitha, 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.

Figure 4. Overview Display



Figure 5. Overview Display Showing End of Year Goal

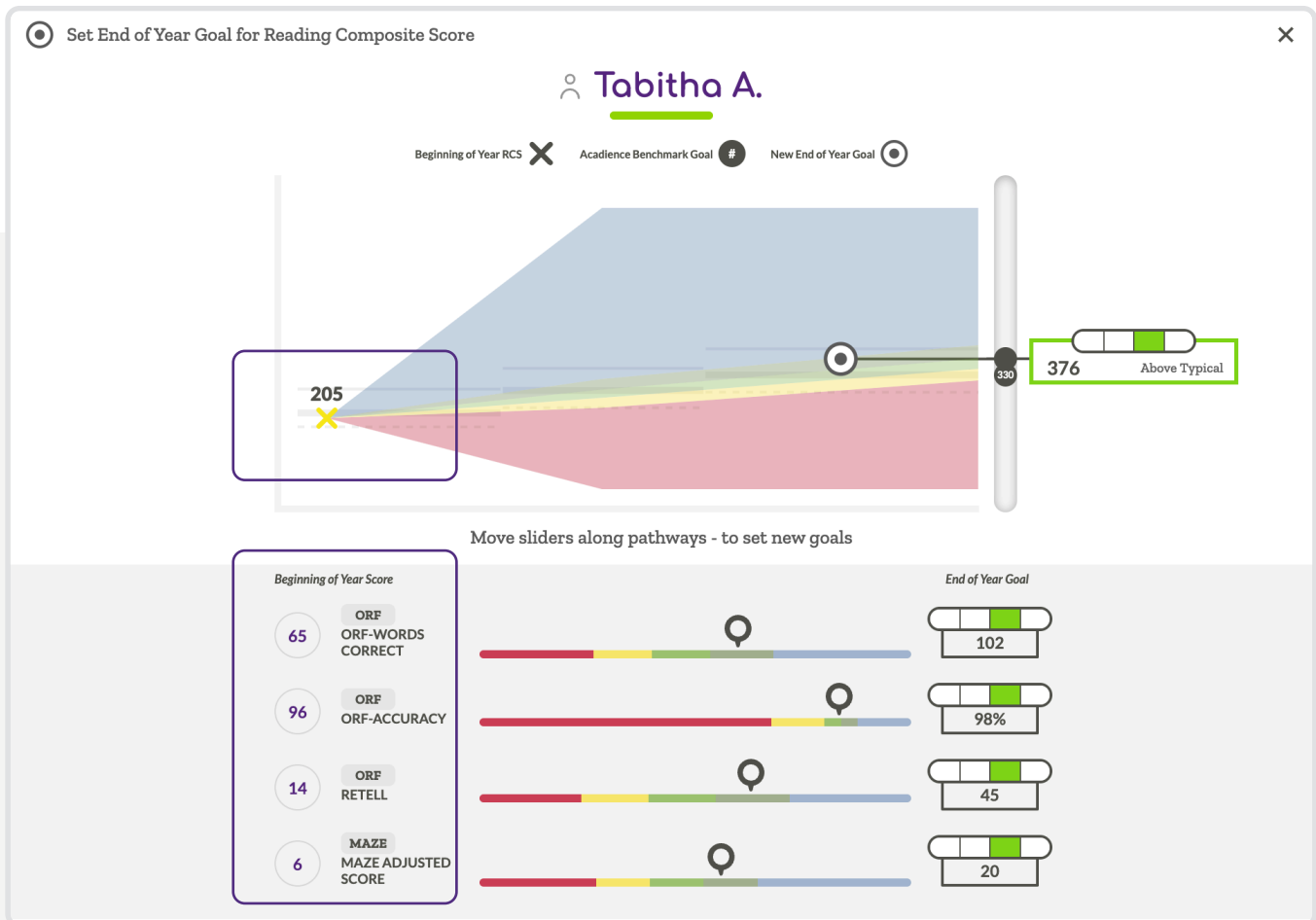


Goal Setting Example: Tabitha, Grade 3 (continued)

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

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

Figure 6. ALO Goal-Setting Utility for Tabitha, a Third-Grade Student

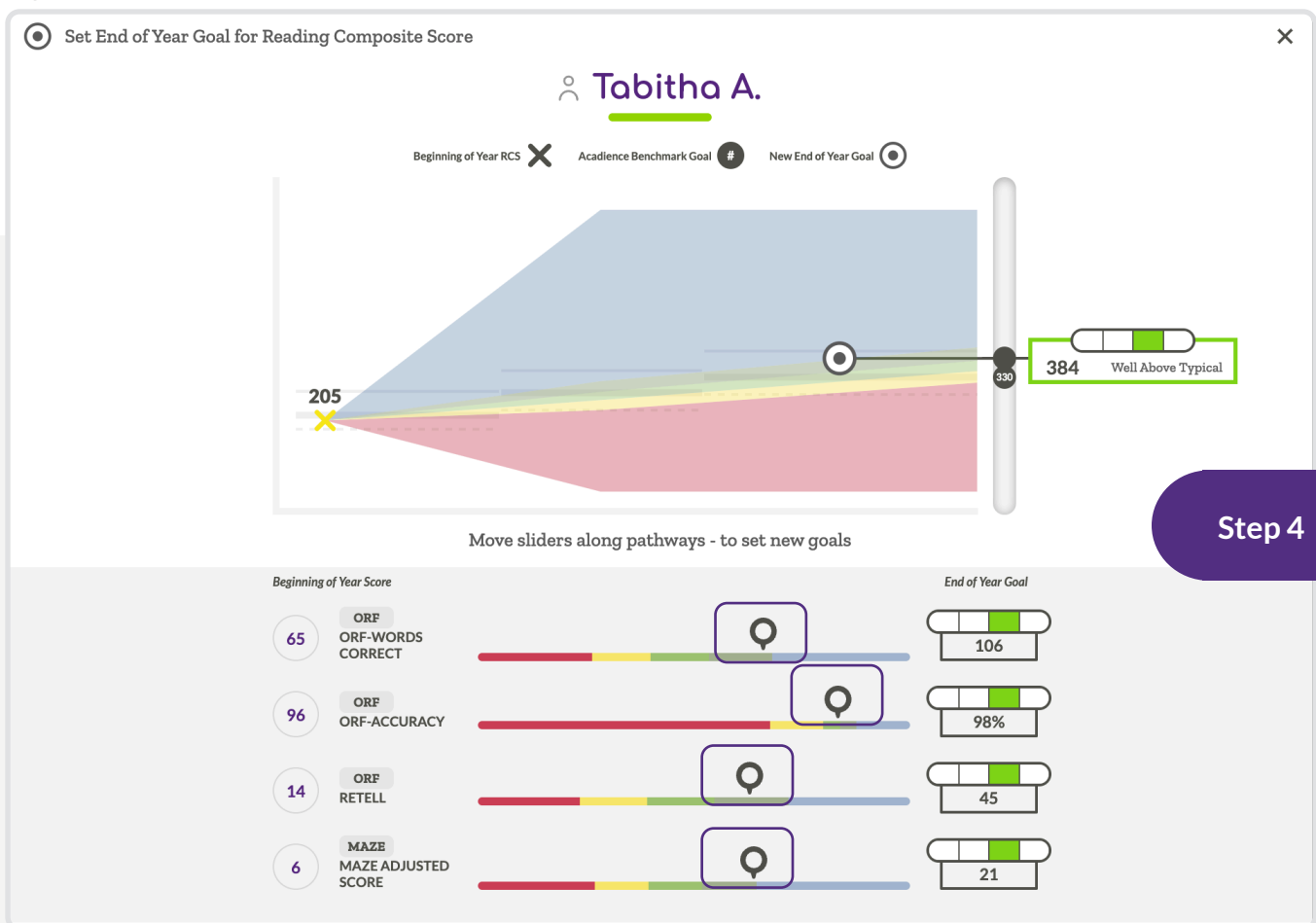


Goal Setting Example: Tabitha, Grade 3 (continued)

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 Tabitha, but would like to be slightly more ambitious than the initial goal of

102 for ORF Words Correct. As such, the teacher moves the slider to set the end-of-year goal for the ORF Words Correct score at 106 for Tabitha, 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 RCS goal are shown.

Figure 7. Customized Goals for Tabitha, a Third-Grade Student



Goal Setting Example: Tabitha, Grade 3 (continued)

Tabitha's teacher also decided to increase the goal for Maze, setting the end-of-year goal to be 21 Maze Adjusted Score. Like the ORF Words Correct goal, the Maze goal is at the upper end of the *Above Typical Progress* range. Tabitha's teacher decided to leave the goals for ORF Accuracy and Retell as they were set initially. 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.

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

By the end of the year, Tabitha will read aloud a third-grade ORF passage at a rate of 106 or more words correct per minute with at least 98% accuracy, and be able to talk about what she has read with a Retell score of at least 45 words. She will read a third-grade Maze passage silently for meaning and earn a score of at least 21.

Goal Setting Example: Tabitha, Grade 3 (continued)

Tabitha's goal reflects important characteristics of proficient readers. Proficient readers are reading for meaning, at an adequate rate, and with a high degree of accuracy. All three of these components are essential. In an acquisition phase we may build accuracy first, but the goal is relative balance across these reading components.

Acadience Reading measures, on which Pathways of Progress is based, are powerful, reliable, and valid indicators of a student's reading 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 or contact us at info@acadiencelearning.org.