



Dear Parent(s):

We are testing 6th grade – 10th grade students using a standardized, norm-referenced assessment tool. The MAP (*Measures of Academic Progress*) Test has been implemented. Classes are assigned to take this assessment using computers and iPads. Testing occurs twice a year: October and April. The tests determine your child's instructional level and measure academic growth throughout the school year, and from year to year in the areas of mathematics, reading, language usage, and general science.

What is MAP?

The Northwest Evaluation Association created a test called MAP. MAP testing is an online, interactive, adaptive assessment for mathematics, reading, language usage, and general science that will assist teachers in evaluating the progress and instructional needs of their students throughout the school year. The tests present students with engaging, age-appropriate content. The data collected from each testing session will provide valuable information about students' current level of performance, indicating areas of strength and skills needing further individualized instruction. This is vital information that will assist teachers with instruction.

MAP tests are unique in that they are adaptive to the response of the student. This is helpful because it increases and decreases the level of difficulty to pinpoint the student's independent level of content readiness. Your student took the test on a computer or iPad and that means that the test became more difficult the more questions your child answered correctly. When your child incorrectly answered a question, the test became easier. Therefore, your child took a test specifically created for his or her learning level. It is important to understand that the MAP test is one test at one point in time. It does not measure intelligence or a student's capacity for learning.

What is a RIT Score?

MAP testing results are reported in RIT scores (*short for Rasch Unit*). A RIT score is an estimation of a student's instructional level and also measures student progress or growth in school. You may have a chart in your home on which you mark your child's height at certain times, such as on his or her birthday. This is a growth chart to show how much he or she has grown from one year to the next. MAP assessments do the same sort of thing, except they measure your student's growth in mathematics, reading, language usage, and general science. The RIT scale is an equal-interval scale much like feet and inches on a yardstick. It is used to chart your child's academic growth from year to year. This type of score increases the value of the tests as a tool to improve student learning because it enables teachers to pinpoint what students have learned and what students are ready to learn.

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Sometimes RIT scores may decline from one test to the next. One low test score is not cause for immediate concern. Students have good and bad days and their test results do not always indicate what they know. Student's attitudes toward the test can also affect their score. Parents should become comfortable with the understanding that individuals will grow at different rates. Anticipated growth rates should be viewed as "typical" growth, not "expected" growth. Therefore, growth over time is a better measure of student learning.

What are the MAP advantages over our former achievement tests?

- Computer based assessment rather than paper/pencil assessment.
- Students can be tested in two testing sessions consisting of three hours each rather than the old 3-5 days of testing.
- The MAP can be given up to three times a year rather than once a year.
- Results are ready within a week rather than months.
- Adaptive assessment is shaped by the test taker rather than a one size fits all.

How does the MAP work?

- Questions appear on student's computer screen.
- Student uses the mouse or keyboard to answer.
- The test will adjust based on how the student answers thus reporting more specifically the level of skills.

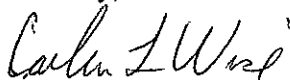
Why take MAP tests?

- We find out where each student is performing in Reading, Language Usage, Mathematics, and General Science.
- We know what each student should be working on to improve their education.
- We are able to keep track of student progress and growth in basic skills over the school year and are able to adjust teaching strategies to meet the student's needs.
- Teachers can review individual student's results and set individual goals for each student in their classroom.
- Teachers can look at class scores as a whole and set overall classroom goals.
- Teachers can use the data to enhance their parent-teacher partnership in the education process.

If you would like further information about MAP testing, you can access the information from the following website: www.nwea.org.

If you have any other questions or comments, please contact me.

Sincerely,



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