



September 1, 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Beginning this 2016-2017 school year, we are excited to provide our teachers and students with a tool to assist in identifying areas of growth based upon your student's individual needs. In an effort to improve teaching and learning, NWEA's MAP assessment allows teachers and students the opportunity to set goals and track individual student growth throughout the school year in the areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics. Starting the week of September 12th, students in K-11 will take tests called Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). As an introduction to you, we have provided several frequently asked questions and their responses. You may also find helpful information on the NWEA website at nwea.org.

- **What is MAP?**
 - MAP is a computer adaptive test for Reading, Language Usage, and Mathematics, which means every student gets a unique set of test questions based on responses to previous questions. As the student answers correctly, questions get harder. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions get easier. By the end of the test, most students will answer about half the questions correctly.
- **What is MAP for Primary Grades?**
 - MAP for Primary Grades is a set of computerized tests which include Screening (diagnostic) tests, Skills Checklist (diagnostic) tests, and Survey With Goals (adaptive) tests in Reading and Mathematics. These assessments provide information to guide instruction during the early stages of student's academic career. Early identification of achievement levels is foundational for teachers establishing an environment for early academic success.
- **What does MAP measure?**
 - MAP results are provided as a numerical RIT score. This score is used to measure a student's achievement level at different times throughout the school year and determine growth. Think of this like marking your child's height on a growth chart. You can tell how tall your child is at various points in time and how much they have grown between one time and another.
- **What is a RIT score?**
 - The RIT (Rasch Unit) scale is a stable, equal-interval scale, like feet and inches. A RIT score has the same meaning regardless of grade level or

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age of the student. Scores over time can be compared to tell how much academic growth a student has made, similar to measuring height with a ruler.

- **How do teachers use MAP scores?**
 - MAP tests are important to teachers because they keep track of progress and growth in basic skills. They let teachers know where a student's strengths are and if assistance is needed in any specific areas. Teachers use this information to guide instruction in their classroom.
- **How long is a MAP test and how often will my child take the tests?**
 - Although the tests are not timed, it usually takes students about one hour to complete each MAP test. MAP tests for primary grades are typically given in two 30-minute segments.
- **What information will I receive from my child's school?**
 - You will be provided with your child's Student Progress Report during parent/teacher conferences with the exception of kindergarten, who will have data from their initial MAP Screening. This report contains information and scores from your child's most recent and past MAP tests.
- **How can I help my child prepare for MAP tests?**
 - Your child's teacher will help with any pre-test instructions to explain the test to the students. Just like any school day, make sure your child is well-rested and fed with a well-rounded diet. Encourage them to do their best. This is not a high stakes test, but a tool used to measure what a student knows and still needs to learn.

You will be provided with additional information throughout the school year as student data is available. We are truly excited to begin a new era that focuses on every child's individual growth and achievement. By partnering to help all kids learn, parents and teachers can have a profound positive effect on the lives of our children.

Sincerely,

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