



## MAP Communication A

Dear Families of YOUR SCHOOL,

At SCHOOL, one of our goals is to ensure that all students are on track to meet the demands of high school and college, regardless of their current grade level. One way to monitor student progress towards this goal is to examine growth using a nationally normed test called the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP). This test allows us to see how our students compare academically to other students in the same grade across the country. Students take the NWEA MAP test three times a year – in the Fall, Winter and Spring – in math and reading. The test provides valuable information on each student’s strengths, areas for growth and next steps for instructional support.

Below you will find the answers to a handful of frequently asked questions regarding the MAP test. Should you have any additional questions, or need further explanation, please don’t hesitate to reach out to myself or your student’s teacher.

Sincerely,

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### **NWEA MAP: Frequently asked questions from families**

#### **1. What is the MAP test?**

MAP is a computer adaptive test. This means that as students answer correctly, questions get harder, and as students answer incorrectly, questions get easier. The adaptive nature of the test helps pinpoint students’ strengths and areas for growth where they might need additional support.

#### **2. What does MAP measure?**

The MAP test measures students’ achievement levels and academic growth in reading and mathematics in comparison to their grade level peers and national norms. MAP has scaled charts to show how each student compares to the average score per grade level. We can use these charts just as doctors determine how a child’s height and weight compare to other children the same age and how much a child has grown since their last visit. A student’s MAP score shows (1) how much academic growth the student has made since the last test, and tells us (2) how that student compares to others in the same grade. Additionally, MAP provides data that tells how each student performs on different critical academic topics. This helps ensure that teachers can support students in improving in the areas where they struggle the most.

#### **3. What exactly is a RIT score?**

The RIT (Rasch Unit) score is the score a student receives when they complete the MAP test. This score reflects the student’s academic knowledge, skills, and abilities. It can be tracked over time and compared to determine how much academic growth a student has made over the course of part of a year or even year-to-year. This score does not connect to any specific letter grade, nor does the number connect to a specific grade level equivalency.



**4. Can MAP tell me if my student is working at grade level?**

No, but it can tell you how your student compares to other students in their grade. A specific MAP score does not link directly to whether or not a student is working at, above, or below grade level.

**5. Why does my student have a goal for MAP? What does that goal score mean?**

The purpose of the MAP test is to measure a student's academic progress throughout the year (and year-to-year). Based on a student's grade level and Fall score, NWEA creates a goal for the amount of growth that student should make between the Fall MAP test and the Spring MAP test. This goal score reflects the average growth a student (1) in that grade level and (2) at the same Fall percentile ranking typically makes in one year.

**6. How often will my child take the MAP test? How long does the test take?**

The MAP test is given three times a year -- once at the beginning of the school year as a diagnostic, again in the middle of the year, and then once more in the spring. This frequency allows teachers to monitor student progress and adjust instruction to meet each student's needs. The MAP test is not timed, and students may take as much time as they need to complete it. Students in second grade and above who make adequate growth spend about an hour on the test, while primary grade students take slightly less time. Given the adaptive nature of the test, the number of questions vary, but fall within forty to fifty three questions.

**7. How often will my child take the MAP test?**

The MAP test is given three times a year -- once at the beginning of the year as a diagnostic, again in the middle of the year, and then once more in the spring. The test is given three times so that teachers can monitor student progress and adjust instruction to meet each student's needs.

**8. How is MAP different from other "high-stakes" or state tests that my child has to take?**

Unlike most state tests, the MAP test is not assessing whether or not your student is proficient with grade-level knowledge and skills. Rather, the test is trying to determine each student's "just right" level to identify what the student already knows and what the student still needs to learn. The result gives teachers a picture of students' abilities, even if they are multiple grade levels ahead of or behind their peers. Additionally, we do not have to wait for results. MAP results are available within twenty four hours, allowing teachers to use the results immediately to help personalize learning and deliver instruction that meets the needs of your student.



**MAP Communication B** – Here is a sample letter to send to families announcing the scheduled dates for MAP testing as well as a few ideas around incentives and culture you might consider adding. It also gives ideas to parents on their role and how best to help their student succeed.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ School Families,

This Fall/Winter/Spring (choose one) your student will have two test dates for MAP – one for math and one for reading. Each test takes about an hour. Please see the calendar below for your child’s testing days. Before the test date, please talk to your student about **doing their best, taking their time** and **reading (or listening to) all directions and passages twice**. Please make sure your student **gets a good night’s sleep, eats a healthy breakfast** and **arrives at school on time**. These healthy habits can make a big difference and help students show everything they know on the test! (*\*Sample calendar on next page*)

**Incentives** – At \_\_\_\_\_ School we want to encourage and celebrate all our students who demonstrate growth and achievement on this MAP test. Those students who meet or beat their MAP goal will receive \_\_\_\_\_ <<INSERT OTHER INCENTIVE DETAILS HERE. For ideas see the MAP page of the website.>> for their hard work.

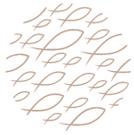
**Culture** – Is there something about your school culture around MAP growth and achievement you want to share in this section? If so, here are questions to consider:

- Why is achievement important at \_\_\_\_\_ School?
- Why is growth important at \_\_\_\_\_ School?
- How are we going to encourage meeting our goals at \_\_\_\_\_ School?
- How does the MAP Test connect to other benchmarks, themes or cultural components at \_\_\_\_\_ School?

*Example:* Here at \_\_\_\_\_ School, we celebrate growth with the same weight we celebrate achievement. As your child sets out to take the MAP test, our school community will be promoting a culture of growth so that students can see how their hard work has paid off, and how growing on the MAP test each year prepares them for high school, college, and beyond.

Thank You,

\_\_\_\_\_



**NWEA MAP TESTING SCHEDULE**

<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
<i>Date here</i>				
Grade x Subject Time				

<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
<i>Date here</i>				
Grade x Subject Time				

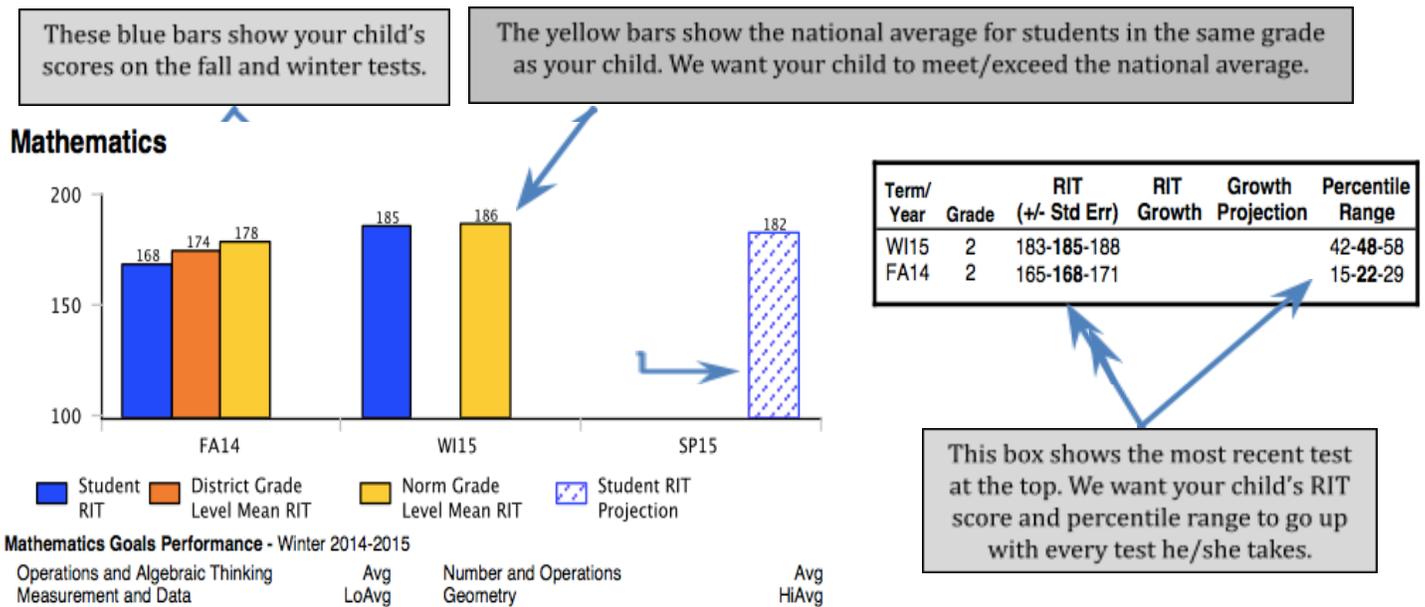


## MAP Communication C

Dear Families of \_\_\_\_\_,

Last week, your student took the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP test) from the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). Our school takes this test at the beginning, middle, and end of each year so we can monitor the results and see your scholar's growth in Math and Reading. Attached is your student's score report. It tells you your student's fall score, spring goal and how much growth your student made from fall to TEST WINDOW SEASON. Below are the answers to a few questions.

### 1. What are the most important parts of this report?



### 2. What if it looks like my student hasn't grown enough?

This is a rigorous test intended to give data to help your child. It is okay if your child's growth appears to be minimal. Each score is individualized, and for some students growing even one point is extremely difficult. Talk with your child's teacher to better understand if this is something to be concerned about.

### 3. What if my student's goal is lower than his or her score?

The computer sets the goal end of the year score based on a student's fall score. If your student's score exceeds the goal, that means your student is growing even faster than predicted.

### 4. What can I do with this information?

- a. **Talk about growth.** Intelligence is not set in stone, but can grow. You can help us teach students this by reading the report together and saying, "you worked so hard!" or "you really grew your brain!" *instead of*



“you are so smart!” You’ll help students feel proud of their *accomplishments*, rather than “natural smartness,” so they’ll continue to work hard!

- b. **Read with your students at home.** “Lexile Range” is a gray, shaded score on the bottom of the “Reading Goals Performance” section. This number matches your student with books that are “not too easy, not too hard.” The Lexile Range is either BR, which means beginning reader, or a range of numbers. There is a website that will suggest books based on your child’s lexile level and interests! The web address is [www.lexile.com/fab](http://www.lexile.com/fab). Type in your student’s lexile range and click “submit”. Pick a few categories your child might be interested in, then click “submit” again. This will give you a good list of books to check out at the library and at home! For younger students, ask questions about the book, have them make predictions, and always ask: “Why do you think that?” For older students: Encourage “engagement strategies” such as highlighting, using post-it notes, underlining, and developing questions as they read.
- c. **Play math games!** Rather than simply encouraging your student to practice math, find ways to play math games together! Whether your student is five or thirteen, you can play math games at home. The card game “War” is a great way to build understanding about numbers. For more ideas, ask your child’s teacher!
- d. **Talk to your student’s teacher:** Every student has unique needs. In addition to general reading and math practice, your student’s teacher can provide specific insights into your student’s strengths and areas of growth, and suggestions for how you can help your student at home!