



September 2010

Dear Parent(s):

Beginning the week of September 6th, your child will be participating in the administration of the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). Your child will take the tests on a computer at school. Because the tests are taken on computers, not all classes will test on the same days. For this reason, we have created a two-week testing window. During the testing window, your child will spend a total of about two hours completing mathematics and reading tests. Each subtest is approximately one hour in length.

MAP tests are unique in that they adapt to the appropriate level of learning for each student. This computer adapted test provides appropriate questions based on whether the student has correctly answered the preceding questions. As a result, each student is presented with questions that measure what the student knows. Therefore, the student maintains a positive attitude during the testing experience. The MAP results provide teachers with detailed, accurate information about your child which assists teachers in identifying your student's strengths and areas for improvement in reading and mathematics. The results also provide a measure of each student's academic growth in reading and mathematics from year to year.

Students in grades 2-8 will take the tests in the fall, winter, and spring of each year. Beginning with the fall testing session and following each subsequent testing period, you will receive a report showing your child's academic progress as measured by a RIT score. Scores are based on the number of questions answered correctly as well as the difficulty of each question. Scores are reported on a RIT scale which is an abbreviation for Rausch Unit, a standard unit to measure growth. By using a standard unit to measure growth, students, parents, and teachers can monitor student progress over time.

As we have become more experienced with MAP testing, we have discovered some tips that teachers and parents can share with the students to make for a more successful testing session:

- Please take time to discuss the importance of these tests with your child.
- Stress to your child that s/he take the time allocated to complete the test. Although each testing session is scheduled for one hour, it is not time restricted. Students may return to their tests at a later time if needed and start exactly where they left off without penalty.
- Once a student locks in an answer on the computer, s/he cannot go back and make corrections, so please reinforce the importance of reading carefully.
- The test will continue to increase in difficulty as the student correctly answers questions. Encourage your child to continue and not to give up.
- Do not ask your child to be responsible for remembering his/her RIT score at the end of testing. We have discovered that some students race through the test just so they can get the score. Careless errors due to racing through the test can deflate the RIT score and give erroneous information on the child's instructional level.

For more information on MAP testing, log onto the Northwest Education Association's website at www.nwea.org.

When parents and teachers partner to help students learn, they can have a profound, positive effect on the lives of our children. If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher or building administrator.

Sincerely,

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