

WASL Study Group Questions about MAP and NWEA

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1. What is MAP?

Masures of Academic Progress (MAP) is a formative (interim) computerized adaptive assessment that measures a student's actual level of instruction. The assessment pinpoints where a student is prepared to learn for a given subject or sub-goal of a subject. Given that all students may not be at grade level, MAP serves to identify the instructional level of each child whether at, above, or below grade level. Unlike a statewide summative assessment, MAP poses questions that are not always grade-level questions. The assessment adapts as a student is taking it and is unique to that student. Once a score is determined, teachers are given learning objectives matched to that student's score. MAP is appropriate for students in grades 3-12. MAP for Primary Grades (MPG) is appropriate for students K-2 and can be administered to students in grades 3 and 4 if those students do not have grade-level reading skills. MPG is slightly different from MAP in that MPG items are interactive and read to students through headphones. MAP can be administered up to four times a year and is aligned to the content of Washington's academic state standards.

2. What academic subjects are covered by MAP?

NWEA provides assessments in Reading, Math, Language Arts, and Science. In addition, NWEA provides End-of-Course assessments in Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Integrated Mathematics I and II, and Integrated Mathematics III. These end-of-course assessments are not meant to be pre-tests and should be administered after the course of instruction. NWEA would be happy to discuss how these end-of-course assessments would be developed to be state specific.

3. What types of questions comprise MAP?

All MAP assessments are comprised of multiple-choice questions. There are reasons we do not have open-ended or constructed response items on our test.

4. What kind of information does MAP provide to teachers and how is it helpful?

As mentioned, MAP results identify the instructional level of each student in each subject. For each sub-goal under each subject, learning statements are matched to each student's score through DesCartes: A Continuum of Learning. This Continuum of Learning states the learning objectives of each student in each subject, goal area, and

subgoal area as they relate to the student's instructional level. How is this helpful? Suppose a 5th grade teacher is teaching 3-digit multiplication as defined by grade-level standards. Scores from MAP would identify students who do not know their multiplication tables. Teaching three-digit multiplication to these students would not be an effective use of instructional time because the teacher knows he must teach multiplication tables and subsequent skills before presenting three-digit multiplication. Conversely, students may score well above grade level and be considered gifted, and DesCartes would help identify the true instructional level of these students and provide appropriate learning objectives. You can see how this information could change the way instruction is delivered in a typical classroom.

5. How long does it take to get the MAP scores back to provide feedback to teachers and students?

Individual scores appear on the computer screen after the student answers the final question. Once test data is uploaded to NWEA after testing, individual and class summary scores and reports are available on a teacher's reports website the following day.

6. NWEA completed a project to connect the scale of the tests used for Washington mathematics and reading assessments with NWEA's RIT scale. What was the outcome of that study?

"A Study of the Alignment of the NWEA RIT Scale with the Washington Assessment System," explains MAP scale alignment with the cut scores on the WASL as a predictive measure of performance on the WASL. Also, "NWEA State Standards Alignment Study Methods" explains the methodology used to match the scales in an effort to predict proficiency on the state assessment. (Please see attachments)

7. Is there sufficient alignment with the Washington academic standards and/or the WASL to help teachers improve the achievement of students on the WASL?

NWEA carefully monitors changes in standards for each state and appropriately adjusts each state's assessment. In May 2007, NWEA updated the Washington's version of MAP, aligned to the content of state standards. Once the recent state-proposed changes in math standards take effect, the MAP assessment will be adjusted to align to the content of the updated math standards.

8. How many school districts in Washington use MAP?

NWEA has 131 partners in Washington and many partners are long-time MAP users. (Please see attachment)

9. Are the students in school districts in Washington that use MAP performing better on the WASL than school districts not using MAP?

The overwhelming support NWEA's 131 partners have shown for MAP is indicative of the value they derive from MAP as they prepare students to take the WASL assessments. MAP as an interim assessment can be indicative of the preparedness of students for state summative assessments, but it is not predictive of student performance or success on state summative assessment. With the results of the alignment study, NWEA can give probability projections, but not absolute predictions. An explanation can be given as to how NWEA partner districts use this information.

10. At one time, Idaho was trying to get MAP approved by NCLB. What happened?

The initial Idaho state assessment was a completely adaptive version of MAP and was not approved by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) as part of the state's accountability plan for NCLB. The USDOE does not have a peer review process for a completely adaptive assessment and will not approve an assessment that asks out-of-grade level questions. Subsequently, Idaho submitted a new blended version of MAP that included a fixed portion with grade level-only items. That blended version was a part of the NCLB accountability plan approved for Idaho. (Please view the approval notification at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/nclbfinalassess/id3.html>)

11. Could the current computer-based adaptive MAP assessment be adapted to include a "fixed" version that could be used as a summative statewide assessment and still keep the computer-based adaptive version as interim/formative/diagnostic student assessments?

Yes. NWEA would be happy to explain how it can develop a blended version of MAP to satisfy these multiple informational needs.

12. Does NWEA also have end-of-course exams? If so, in what subjects?

Yes, as mentioned in question #2, NWEA has end-of-course exams in Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Integrated Mathematics I and II, and Integrated Mathematics III.