

New Assessment Test from NWEA

Circle Christian School will begin using a new assessment test for its students in 2009. The new test will be administered on a computer in the student's home via an internet connection. We believe this test will provide a more accurate portrayal of each student's academic progress because students will be working in the comfort of the home. All parents are invited to attend an information meeting on **Friday, March 13, 7:00pm at Summit Church**. Randy Carpenter from NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) will present information and answer questions. Below is a brief introduction to Measures of Academic Progress (MAP).

What is MAP?

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) are tests that measure students' general knowledge and academic growth in reading, language usage, mathematics and science. Your child may take MAP tests beginning as early as kindergarten through high school.

How is the MAP test experience different than other test experiences?

MAP tests are different because they are designed to assess your child individually. The test will change in difficulty in order to match your child's performance level rather than matching his or her grade level. Your child will take the test on a computer. As he or she answers questions correctly, the tests become more difficult. If your child answers incorrectly, the test becomes easier. As a result, different students will see different test questions.

Another important difference is that the MAP tests are not timed. In other words, each student has the opportunity to take as long as needed when taking the MAP tests. At the end of the test, your child will receive a score. His or her score is based on two main things: the number of questions your child answered correctly and the difficulty of each question.

Like other tests, information is available to compare your child's performance to other students who perform at the same grade level.

What do the tests measure?

They measure students' 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 birthdays. This chart measures growth—the physical growth from one year to the next. MAP tests do the same sort of thing, except that they measure your child's progress in academic skills. MAP tests measure academic growth over time; the results educators receive have practical application to teaching and learning.

What do the tests cover?

Your child may take tests in reading, mathematics, language usage, and science. Each MAP test is made up of parts called goals. In most cases these goals are based on your state academic standards. Your school can provide you with the list of goal areas in which your child is tested.

When you, your child and your child's teacher look at the test results, it may become apparent that certain subjects or goal areas need more attention than others.

How are the test results used?

These tests are important because they keep track of progress or growth in the basic skills. They let teachers know where your child's strengths are and if he or she needs help in any specific areas. The results can also provide teachers and administrators

with vital information to prepare your child for tests required by the state.

It is important to remember that MAP results provide just one look at how your child is doing. Teachers already routinely assign projects and tasks, administer other tests, discuss student work, and report grades. Together, all pieces of data provide a more complete picture of each student's progress. Several different sources of information should be used to make important decisions regarding your child's progress—never only one.

Can your child prepare for MAP tests?

The best thing your child can do to prepare for testing is to work hard in school every day. Regular attendance, good nutrition, and adequate rest are all important components for successful test performance.

MAP for Primary Grades (K-2)

Beginning learners enter school with a wide variety of educational experiences. Early identification of a student's achievement level is essential for teachers establishing an environment for early academic success.

MAP for Primary Grades assessments meet this need by adapting to each student's level. Resulting scores provide a highly accurate indication of a student's instructional level and readiness. MAP for Primary Grades computerized adaptive assessments meet the unique needs of early learners by displaying interactive elements and providing audio for beginning readers. Audio is used throughout the MAP for Primary Grades tests to help beginning readers understand the tasks presented in the assessment questions. With the interactive elements, instead of selecting from a list of answers, the student is often able to use a mouse to perform an action.

MAP for Primary Grades is available in reading and mathematics.



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More information is available at the NWEA web site at www.nwea.org. Clicking on "Member Support" and "Document Library" will take you to a parent tool kit, providing you with additional information and resources for supporting your child.

Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) is a nonprofit organization that creates MAP assessments. In addition to the MAP tests, NWEA also provides teachers with tools that translate test scores into information they can use in their classrooms. Schools throughout the country use NWEA's MAP tests to measure student growth and better understand what each student is ready to learn.