

Dear DeKalb Parent or Guardian:

Beginning this 2016-2017 school year, we are excited to provide our teachers and students with a tool which will assist in identifying areas of growth based upon your student's individual needs. In an effort to improve teaching and learning, NWEA's MAP allows teachers and students the opportunity to set goals and track individual student growth throughout the school year. 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](http://nwea.org).

- **What is MAP?**
  - MAP is a computer adaptive test, 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 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 of the school year and determine growth. Think of this like marking 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. Equal-interval means that a change of 10 RIT points indicates the same thing regardless of whether a student is at the top, bottom, or middle of the scale, and a RIT score has the same meaning regardless of grade level or 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?**
  - Teachers can see the progress of individual students and of their class as a whole. Students with similar MAP scores are generally ready for instruction in similar skills and topics. MAP also provides data around the typical growth for students who are in the same grade, subject, and have the same starting achievement level. This data is often used to help students set goals and understand what they need to learn to achieve their goals.
- **How long is a MAP test and how often will my child take the tests?**
  - Tests are not timed, and students may take as much time as they need to complete them. Most students take less than an hour to complete a MAP test. These tests given in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade typically last a shorter time. We will give MAP tests to students August, December and March.
- **What information will I receive from my child's school?**
  - You will be provided with your child's Student Progress Report. 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. Should you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact your school for more information!