



September 2009

Dear Parent(s):

Beginning the week of September 8<sup>th</sup>, your child will be participating in the administration of the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). We give the students MAP tests to assist us in determining their instructional levels. The MAP also provides a measure of each student's academic growth from year to year in the areas of mathematics and reading. Your child will take the tests on a computer at school. As 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.

MAP tests are unique in that they adapt to the appropriate level of learning for each student. As a result, each student is presented with questions that measure what the student knows. Therefore, the student maintains a positive attitude toward testing. From the MAP tests, we receive detailed, accurate information about your child's academic growth. During the testing window, your child will spend a total of about two hours completing these tests. Each subtest is approximately one hour in length.

Students in grades 2-8 will take the tests in the fall, winter, and spring. 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. It is a standard unit to measure growth.

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 he/she 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, he/she 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 our 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.

You can log onto the Northwest Education Association's website at [www.nwea.org](http://www.nwea.org) for more information on MAP testing. 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,

Jodi Wirt, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction