

MAP®
(Measures of Academic Progress®)
Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is MAP?

MAP assessments are computer adaptive achievement tests in Mathematics and Reading.

2. What are computer adaptive tests?

The computer adjusts the difficulty of the questions so that each student takes a unique test. The difficulty of each question is based on how well the student has answered previous questions.

3. What tests are available?

Students are assigned to take MAP based on grade level, MAP K-2, MAP 2-5, or MAP 6+. As a district, the decision was made to test all students in grade 2 with the MAP K-2 assessment.

4. What is the purpose of the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment?

MAP is a norm-referenced measure of student growth over time. MAP assessments, joined with other data points, provide detailed, actionable data about where each child is on his or her unique learning path. MAP assessments differ from other data sources used by Dade County to inform instruction by being nationally normed, by tracking student progress throughout a year and across school years, and the ability to assist teachers and administrators in planning instruction.

5. What are the uses of MAP?

MAP tests are based on a continuum of skills in Mathematics and Reading from low skill levels to high skill levels. MAP assessments help teachers identify the instructional level of the student and also provide context for determining where each student is performing in relation to local or state standards and national norms. MAP reports allow teachers to better target instruction based on students' strengths and needs. Assessment data directs instruction and leads to the formation of small group strategies in order to have all students showing growth throughout the year.

6. What grade levels will DCS be using MAP during the 2020-2021 school year?

During the present school year, DCS is using MAP assessment at both elementary schools and the middle school. All students in grades K-8 will be assessed three times throughout the year in order to make adjustments in instruction. Next year, it is our intent to add students in grade 9.

7. What features does MAP Growth K-2 have that make it a unique kind of assessment?

MAP K-2 assessments meet the unique needs of early learners by utilizing advanced technology to display interactive visuals and audio for beginning readers. For example, the computer automatically plays audio instructions to the student, eliminating the challenges of early learners who cannot read.

8. What is the testing window for MAP?

In order to track growth during the school year, students in grades K through 8 are assessed two or three times: namely, in the beginning (Fall), middle (Winter), and end of the school year (Spring). MAP assessments are not timed. The length of the test varies because of the adaptive nature of the test.

9. How is progress measured?

MAP assessments are used to measure a student's growth in Mathematics and Reading. The Fall assessment gathers baseline. The Winter assessment measures progress. The Spring assessment measures the students' growth to that point. The scale used to measure a student's progress is called the RIT scale, short for Rasch Unit (Rasch unIT). The RIT scale is an equal-interval scale much like inches on a yardstick. It is used to chart a student's academic growth from year to year. The RIT is not a measure of mastery or a grade, rather it provides information about what a student is ready to learn. Based upon the reading RIT score, students see a variety of texts during the assessment, which range in complexity. If students read and understand texts in these levels, a Lexile range is calculated based upon their performance. Lexile is one of many ways to measure text complexity.

10. What is a RIT Scale?

The RIT Scale is a curriculum scale that uses individual item difficulty values to estimate student achievement. An advantage of the RIT scale is that it can relate the numbers on the scale directly to the difficulty of items on the tests. In addition, the RIT scale is an equal interval scale. Equal interval means that the difference between scores is the same regardless of whether a student is at the top, bottom, or middle of the RIT scale, and it has the same meaning regardless of grade level.

11. What is a Lexile measurement?

Lexile is a unit for measuring text difficulty that is linked to the RIT score. The Lexile scale helps identify reading material that is at an appropriate difficulty level for an individual student. It is important to keep in mind that Lexile does not evaluate genre, theme, content, or interest. Even though a student might be able to read books at a certain Lexile, the content or theme of the text may not be appropriate for that particular student because of his or her age or developmental level.

12. How will teachers use this information?

Teachers use formative assessments, state and local assessments, and MAP data to monitor students' progress and screen students for interventions and enrichment. The MAP reports will provide teachers with additional knowledge of where a student's strengths are and if additional support is needed in any specific area. Teachers will use this information to help guide instruction in the classroom and create flexible groupings to better differentiate lessons based on content. A future goal is to share the information from the MAP reports with students as a way to demonstrate progress and motivate further growth. MAP data is not used to determine retention.

13. How does MAP relate to student placement in gifted and talented classes?

The MAP assessment is one of four indicators to determine gifted eligibility. Dade County uses the CogAT for assessing Mental Ability, MAP is used for Achievement purposes, the Torrance Thinking Creatively with Pictures provides our creativity piece and the GES-4 allows for motivation.

14. How are accommodations used during the MAP assessments?

The adaptive nature of the MAP assessment makes it appropriate for students with a wide range of skills and needs. All tests are untimed and additional selected accommodations are permissible.

15. How accurately does the MAP assess student performance?

Because of many factors, MAP, like all assessments, might not accurately capture a student's true performance during a single administration. To reflect the influence of variables which might impact a student's performance on a single administration (e.g., illness, lack of sleep, distractions in the test environment), MAP provides a "RIT Range." If the student took the test again reasonably soon after the administration, one would expect his or her score to fall within the RIT Range at least 68% of the time. The RIT Range therefore provides a good approximation of where a student's true performance lies, in the absence of testing inaccuracies. In addition, a linking study between MAP and Milestones was performed in 2020. This study concluded that the accuracy between the two assessments ranged between 80-88%.