



July 28, 2025

Pleasant Valley Parents & Guardians,

We're thrilled to share an exciting update regarding how we assess student progress at Pleasant Valley School District! Over the past few years, our leadership teams have thoroughly analyzed our current assessment practices and identified key areas for improvement. Our goal is to ensure we have the most effective tools to understand and support every student's learning journey.

With that in mind, we're excited to announce that starting with the **2025-2026 school year**, Pleasant Valley School District will implement the **Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP Growth) assessment**.

What is NWEA MAP Growth?

NWEA MAP Growth is a **nationally normed, standardized achievement test** that offers a personalized approach to assessing student knowledge. Unlike traditional tests, it's **computer-adaptive**, meaning it adjusts to each student's responses. If your child answers a question correctly, the next one becomes a bit more challenging; if they answer incorrectly, it gets a bit easier. This unique design allows us to accurately measure what students know and pinpoint what they're ready to learn next, without overwhelming them.

MAP Growth is considered a Universal Screener since it will be administered to all PV students in grades K-12. Universal Screeners act as an early warning system, enabling educators to provide timely and targeted support, ultimately aiming to improve educational outcomes for all students. NWEA MAP Growth assessments are **interim and formative**, designed to measure student **growth** in math, reading, and science throughout the school year. They are *not* annual summative assessments like the PSSAs or Keystone Exams.

Why Are We Making This Change?

Our primary goals for using NWEA MAP Growth are to:

- **Measure achievement and growth:** We'll track student progress in math, reading, language usage, and science.
- **Inform instruction:** Educators will receive **actionable data** to tailor teaching methods and support individual learning needs.
- **Personalize learning:** This critical data helps us gain a comprehensive understanding of each student, allowing us to personalize educational experiences and make data-driven decisions that promote academic growth for all.

In short, MAP Growth will help our teachers understand exactly where students are academically, track their progress over time, and identify their strengths and areas where they might need more support.

When Will Students Be Assessed?

All students in **grades K-12** will take the NWEA MAP Growth assessment **three times a year**: in the fall, winter, and spring. This regular assessment schedule allows us to "triangulate" student data and effectively measure growth throughout the year.

The good news is that the NWEA MAP Growth assessment will replace several of our current assessments, including Quick Phonics Screener, Acadience, Firefly, CDTs, and Star. This change will significantly **reduce the amount of time students spend on assessments** throughout the school year!

Our first assessment window is set for September:

- **September 2nd & 3rd:** English Language Arts (ELA)
- **September 4th & 5th:** Math
- **September 8th & 9th:** Science

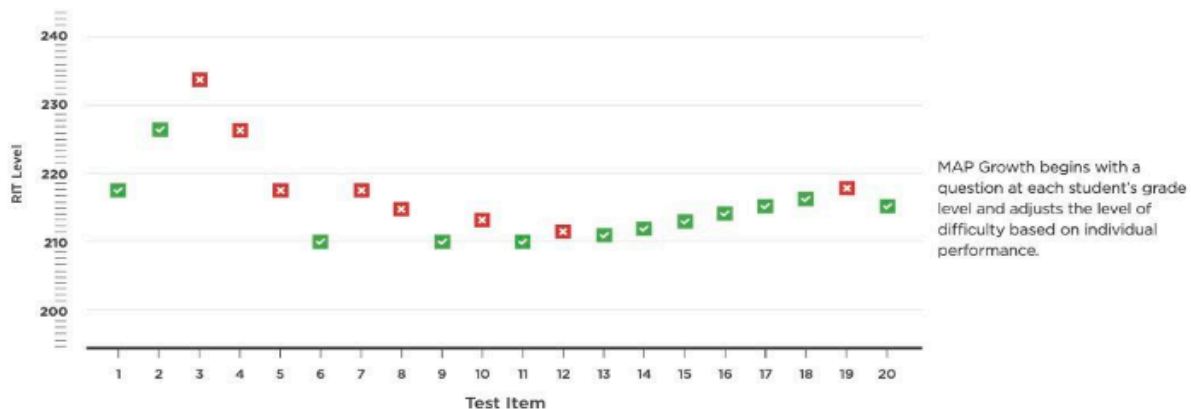
How Will Results Be Used?

Once students complete the NWEA MAP Growth assessment, teachers will immediately use the results to understand each child's individual needs and support their progress. As a growth measure, MAP data allows us to track student progress not just between testing events, but also over multiple years. This valuable student data will guide educators in determining the best next steps to support and accelerate learning and achievement for every student.

A Parent's Guide to MAP Growth

Children learn better—and faster—when teachers have a clear picture of what each student knows and is ready to learn next. That's why NWEA®, a not-for-profit organization founded by educators and researchers, created MAP Growth. More than 9 million students in the U.S. and 145 countries worldwide use MAP Growth™.

How it Works: As mentioned, MAP Growth is a computer-adaptive test. If your child answers correctly, the next question is more challenging. If they answer incorrectly, the next one is easier. This means the assessment effectively challenges top performers without overwhelming students whose skills might be below grade level.



What it Measures

The RIT Score: MAP Growth uses a **RIT scale** to accurately measure what students know, regardless of their grade level. It also measures growth over time, allowing you to track your child's progress throughout the school year and across multiple years. Once your child completes a MAP Growth test, they receive a RIT score.

RIT scores have the same meaning across all grade levels. For example, if a fourth-grade student and an eighth-grade student have the same RIT score in reading, it means they are testing at the same level in that subject. You can even use your child's RIT score with the NWEA College Explorer tool to see which colleges and universities they're on track to enter.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do schools and teachers use MAP Growth scores? Teachers use the scores to inform instruction, personalize learning, and monitor individual student growth. Principals and administrators can use the scores to see the performance and progress of a grade level, school, or the entire district.

Will I get a copy of my child's MAP scores? Yes! Parents will receive their child's MAP Student Progress Report after each assessment administration. This may be sent separately or with the next report card.

How will I know what the MAP scores tell me about my child's growth? Please refer to the NWEA MAP Growth parent letter (which will be provided) for detailed explanations. You are also always welcome to contact your child's campus administration and classroom teacher to discuss your child's progress.

Can MAP Growth tell me if my child is working at grade level? Yes, it can. However, please remember that MAP Growth scores are just one data point teachers use to determine how a student is performing. We encourage you to discuss any questions about your child's performance directly with their teacher.

How often will my child take MAP Growth tests? Most schools, including Pleasant Valley, will administer MAP Growth tests to students at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year (fall, winter, and spring).

What are norms? NWEA provides schools with norms every three years. This anonymous data comes from over 9 million students nationwide. Knowing the scores of all these students combined allows teachers to compare where your child is in relation to other students and helps them guide their growth.

Is MAP Growth a standardized test? Yes, but it differs from traditional "high-stakes" standardized tests. While MAP Growth still adheres to the core principles of standardization in its design, administration, and scoring for reliable comparisons and progress tracking, it's administered periodically during the school year. Instead of asking all students the exact same questions, it adjusts to each child's performance, giving a more accurate measure of what they know. Teachers also receive results right away, which enables them to react much more quickly and use the data to support students *now*, unlike PSSA or Keystone exam data which often takes months to finalize.

What types of questions are on MAP Growth tests? The MAP Growth tests include multiple-choice, drag-and-drop, and other interactive question types. For sample tests, you can visit [warmup.nwea.org](https://www.nwea.org/warmup).

Learn More!

For tips on getting ready for MAP Growth testing, please visit the NWEA blog: [nwea.org/blog/category/parents](https://www.nwea.org/blog/category/parents)

You can also find answers to 12 Common Questions Parents Ask About MAP Growth here: <https://www.nwea.org/blog/2024/12-common-questions-parents-ask-map-growth-assessment/>

Find more parent resources at: [nwea.org/parent-toolkit](https://www.nwea.org/parent-toolkit)

We are truly excited to partner with you as our district embarks on this strategic and intentional implementation, all aimed at supporting every one of our learners. We are confident that together, we will continue to foster your child's growth and success at PVSD, ensuring the best possible educational experience. We are committed to working hand-in-hand with you to achieve this, and we welcome your feedback and questions as we move forward.



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