

# Maine Through Year Assessment FAQ

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The Maine Department of Education is committed to our mission of promoting the best learning opportunities for all Maine students by providing information, guidance, and support to our schools, educators, and leaders and by providing adequate and equitable school funding and resources.

**New questions and answers are added as they are compiled.** The most recent version of this document can always be found at the Maine DOE’s Math & Reading Assessments webpage: [https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing\\_Accountability/MECAS/NWEA](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/NWEA)

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## Contact Information

Questions related to technology and the processes within the assessment platform (e.g., registration and user roles) should be directed to NWEA Maine Partner Support at (855) 430-1777.

Questions about assessment policy, accommodations/supports, assessment coordinator responsibilities, and assessment blueprint/design should be directed to Krista Averill, Assessment Coordinator, at [Krista.Averill@maine.gov](mailto:Krista.Averill@maine.gov) or (207) 215-6528.

## Introduction

### Why did we make the transition from MAP Growth to the Maine Through Year Assessment?

The NWEA MAP Growth assessment was adopted as an emergency measure during the pandemic to meet schools' needs for immediate, actionable data. MAP Growth was an interim assessment solution while the Department of Education worked collaboratively with NWEA to develop a state assessment that meets all federal requirements, including interpretive guidance provided as part of the federal peer review process. The Maine Through Year Assessment will provide the opportunity for Maine educators to continue utilizing an assessment tool that they find helpful and necessary in instructional decision making. By maneuvering to a through year approach, students are assessed on grade-level content with a performance level assigned and receive a RIT score which provides continuity of longitudinal data for those Maine SAUs that have used NWEA for some time. Additionally, in order for a state assessment to meet federal peer review requirements, it must include a criterion-referenced, summative portion that aligns with grade-level state standards. The Maine Through Year Assessment continues to address the need for actionable data while also meeting federal peer review requirements for a criterion-referenced statewide assessment.

### Will a through year assessment be developed for students in grades K-2, 9, or 11?

The Maine Through Year Assessment, with its grade-level specific summative portion, will only be developed for those grades required to complete the state assessment: grades 3 through 8 and 2<sup>nd</sup> year of high school.

## Through Year Assessment Model

### What is a flexible, through year assessment program?

- The Through Year Assessment provides educators with information about student growth throughout the year as well as information in the spring about student performance based on Maine's accountability standards, the Common Core State Standards. The assessment is administered 2 to 3 times a year, in the fall, winter (optional), and spring.
- Assessments are computer adaptive, providing a personalized experience for each student.
- Assessments are efficient and leverage information about how students performed in previous administrations to personalize later assessment experiences.
- Assessments provide educators with immediate data about student growth with a norm-referenced RIT score that is provided after each administration.
- The assessment model meets federal requirements with the spring assessment administration, producing a summative score based on grade-level state standards.

### To which standards will the Maine Through Year Assessment align?

The Maine Through Year Assessment in Math and Reading will align to Maine's state accountability standards, the Common Core State Standards.

### What does the transition to the Maine Through Year Assessment mean for my school?

We now have a Common Core aligned assessment that not only provides a norm-referenced RIT score at multiple points through the year but also provides a measure of student performance according to grade-level state standards. This ensures that Maine's assessment system provides educators and leaders with the timely data they need, limits the amount of assessment seat time, and values both student growth and performance.

### How will the fall and winter administrations of the Maine Through Year Assessment be different from the spring administration?

In the through-year model in the fall, a student will take an adaptive test similar to MAP Growth that will produce a RIT score. The winter session will remain optional. If taken, the winter assessment will be a personally adaptive assessment, taking into consideration the student's fall assessment results and picking up from there. The optional winter assessment will also produce a RIT score. Finally, the required spring assessment will be a personally adaptive assessment, taking into consideration the student's most recent assessment results and picking up from there. The spring assessment will continue to provide a RIT score in addition to a measure of students' on-grade performance according to state expectations.

### What is the overall assessment design for the spring Through Year Assessment?

The spring Maine Through Year Assessment is one assessment with two purposes. It will consist of both a summative portion and a diagnostic portion, and it will produce two scores: a student performance score according to state expectations and a RIT score.

Per federal peer review requirements, the summative portion of the assessment can adapt within one grade level above and below the assessed grade level. The diagnostic portion of the assessment will have the full adaptability of MAP Growth, spanning across a wide range of grade levels. The summative portion alone will determine the student performance score that is needed for federal accountability

purposes. The entire assessment, summative and diagnostic, will be used to determine the student's RIT score in the spring.

Can you share the overall test design specifications for the summative portion of the assessment?

Please review the [Maine Through Year Summative Assessment Blueprint](#).

Where are the questions coming from for the diagnostic and summative portions of the assessment? Who is developing those questions?

All diagnostic questions are from NWEA's MAP Growth item (question) bank. In addition, NWEA has a through year assessment item bank that they use in addition to the MAP Growth item bank when necessary. Below are some differences between the two item banks.

<b>MAP Growth Item (Question) Bank</b>	<b>Through Year Item (Question) Bank</b>
All questions are worth 1 point	Some questions are worth multiple points, and partial credit can be earned
Reading passages are short and linked to a single question	Reading passages may be linked to multiple questions Paired reading passages may be included in the assessment
Used for the fall, winter (optional), and spring assessments	Used only for the spring assessment
All questions are written and reviewed by NWEA	All questions are written by NWEA, and some questions are reviewed by Maine educators and curriculum leaders

It seems it is the spring test that the state is truly using for assessment. Shouldn't then the fall test be optional because the fall test will stand alone and not compare to anything?

The spring assessment is used by the Department to meet necessary federal requirements and utilized for accountability purposes. The reason the assessment is referred to as the *through-year* assessment is that the required spring assessment will be a personally adaptive assessment, taking into consideration the student's most recent assessment results (fall or winter) and picking up from there. In other words, the form of the assessment a student receives in the spring depends on their performance on the fall assessment. Additionally, an indicator within the accountability model utilizes student growth, therefore a fall and spring measure of student performance is required to calculate such growth.

## Assessment Pre-Administration & Administration

### What training resources will be available?

Training will be provided in webinar, virtual workshop, and pre-recorded on-demand formats. Additional resources such as user guides and administration manuals will also be made available.

Please visit our [website](#) for updated resources.

### For MAP Growth, NWEA recommends, at most, a three-week test window to ensure valid comparisons. What about the Through Year Assessment? Should we still plan, at most, a 3-week test window?

The DOE sets the test window and is currently set to 4 weeks for the spring Through Year Assessment, May 1 – 26. After consulting first with NWEA’s psychometrics team about validity and scoring implications, Maine DOE has also extended all assessment windows for 2023-24 to 6 weeks. In the fall, this will accommodate SAUs with different start dates as well as those that have time off for potato harvest. NWEA’s psychometricians and Maine DOE strongly recommend that schools provide students with four weeks of instruction prior to administration of the fall assessment.

### How will students be rostered for the Maine Through Year Assessment?

NWEA will receive a roster file from the Maine DOE. This will allow NWEA to import all students into the assessment platform. Class registrations (assessment groupings) will be completed at the SAU level.

Is there a reason why we shouldn't access students via the NWEA platform (MARC), go into each student, and then add an accommodation for the Through Year Assessment? If we do this, do we have to download the registration report and then upload it to Acacia? I guess I am not seeing the reason for using the Acacia platform if everything is already integrated with the NWEA platform.

Here’s some clarification of how the MAP Growth (MARC) platform and Through Year (Acacia) platform are and are not integrated:

#### Are Integrated

1. Single-sign-on to access both MAP Growth and Acacia
2. User roles for teachers, administrators, and other education professionals are all set in the MAP Growth platform and are updated into Acacia every two hours.
3. ONLY if SAUs and schools independently roster their students in MAP Growth (while the state rosters the students in Acacia) will Through Year Assessment RIT score data be integrated into MAP Growth reports.

#### Are NOT Integrated

1. MAP Growth has a separate lockdown browser than the Through Year Assessment. The Through Year Assessment lockdown browser is called the NWEA State Solutions Secure Browser.
2. Accommodations and supports for students entered into MAP Growth do not transfer between the two platforms. In fact, the accommodations and supports in the two platforms are not entirely the same. (Here’s the Through Year [Accessibility Guide](#).)
3. Not-tested codes need to be assigned (if needed) in the Acacia platform.

4. The reports that appear in the Acacia platform are different from those that appear in MAP Growth. The Acacia reports have more limited RIT score information than MAP Growth reports. In addition, Acacia reports include the Maine-specific four-digit scaled score and accompanying achievement level, which are not included in MAP Growth reports.

The clickable “breadcrumbs” links in the Acacia platform are not working.

Due to the various roles and permissions that Acacia will have, breadcrumbs throughout the system are not clickable links to return to the previous page but a visual reference of how a user navigated to certain areas. The reason for this is because not all users will see the same pages due to their role and permissions. The one place within Acacia that will have clickable breadcrumb links is the reporting section (ORS) because that section does have a tree of pages that is true for every user. The platform is functioning the way it was designed.

I have a student stuck in "registration complete" status, whereas my other students are in "ready to test" status. What should I do?

If you click "save updates" on the student's test registration, it should push it through and update. Only users with the District Assessment Coordinator role will have access to do that. If this does not work, please call NWEA Maine Partner Support at (855) 430-1777.

Can I do bulk uploads of accommodations after the initial registration process by re-generating a new registration report? Will the new report maintain the changes I had made previously?

The new report will reflect the current changes but this will not be immediate. Currently the system is set to produce a new report with updated information every 4 hours. So if a report is ran multiple times within a 4 hour period, the information will not yet be updated.

How do I change user roles in the Acacia platform?

Due to the single-sign-on system, all user roles are changed in the MAP platform. These changes automatically sync to the Through Year (Acacia) platform every two hours.

Can the Maine Through Year test be administered remotely?

We recognize the value of an assessment system that is responsive to remote learning environments. Currently, we do not have the ability to allow students to take the Maine Through Year Assessment remotely.

Can you discuss the grouping of students for administration of the assessment? Would grouping by homerooms or small groups be required? Or be best practice for proctoring?

There are two types of groups that users can create: Online Testing and Reporting groups.

Online testing groups are not required in Acacia like Classes were in MAP Growth. Groups are not needed to monitor online testing. Online Testing groups can be created based on the need of the SAU or school. If Online Testing groups are not created, then all students in one grade level for one content area (Reading or Math) will show up together under Manage Online Testing in Acacia. (See screenshot below.)



## Manage Online Testing

Search for student testing groups or individual students below. All available groups will be displayed as well as aggregate information about testing progress. Use the graphs to filter students by testing status. Use the magnifying glass to review each group.

### Search Sessions

Test Administration \*  
Maine Through Year Spring 2023

Subject \*  
- Select -  
- Select -  
Math  
Reading

Testing Grade \*  
- Select -

Organization \*  
- Select or Type Organization -

Search

Test tickets can be printed individually or by using different filters, but Online Testing groups are not needed to print test tickets.

For more information about Reporting groups, please see the *Scoring and Reporting* section of this document.

Can test tickets be automatically generated by Online Testing group, rather than for all students in a grade level?

Test tickets can be printed by group but only within the content area selected (Reading or Math).

Do I need to assign proctors to Online Testing groups?

No, and Maine DOE does **not** recommend assigning proctors to specific Online Testing groups. Here's why:

Before users can monitor testing Acacia, they first need to be given either the district proctor or school proctor role in the MARC (MAP Growth) platform. The System Administrator, Data Administrator, and District Assessment Coordinator users in the MARC platform all have the capability to update user roles for proctors in MARC.

District proctors will automatically be able to monitor *all students within the SAU*. School proctors will automatically be able to monitor *all students within the school*.

Assigning proctors to specific Online Testing groups does not change the access pre-determined by the district or school proctor role in MARC. No additional action is initiated within the platform if proctors are assigned to specific Online Testing groups.

Can multiple proctors view the whole grade at the same time?

All proctors will have access to view students based on their role assigned in the MARC platform (district proctor or school proctor) and can use the filters options to see the whole grade.

If a proctor signs out, do students continue to test?

A proctor does not need to be signed in for students to be able to take the test. As long as the student has their test ticket, the student can log in and begin the assessment. Proctors do not start, pause, or resume assessments.

Will practice assessments be made available for the Through Year Assessment?

There is an item type sampler for students, parents, and educators to experience the look and feel of the assessment and platform so that they are prepared for the testing interface. The item type sampler is available within the State Solutions Secure Browser, at [this link](#), and paper versions are available on [ME DOE's webpage](#).

What will happen if a student attempts to log back in with the same test code once they've finished? (In other words, what will appear on the student's screen if they attempt this?)

Once the student completes and submits the assessment, they will not be able to get back into the assessment with their test ticket information. They will receive a message on the login screen that tells them that the assessment you are trying to take is not available and to contact their teacher or assessment administrator.

Under what circumstances can a student's assessment be "reset"?

An assessment "reset" erases all prior progress and generates a new test ticket for that student. You can view the most up-to-date reset process flow on our website:

[https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing\\_Accountability/MECAS/NWEA](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/NWEA)

## Computer Adaptive Testing

I have heard that new Through Year Assessment will not be adaptive. Is this true?

The Maine Through Year Assessment being developed by NWEA will continue to be computer-adaptive, driven by the same constraint-based engine which adjusts the difficulty of the next questions based on student's prior performance.

The diagnostic portion of the assessment has the same adaptivity as MAP Growth, across a wide range of grade levels. The summative portion of the assessment (in spring only) is adaptive within one grade level above and below the student's actual grade; this specification is part of the federal peer review requirements for state assessments.

In spring 2023, students in grade 10 took an assessment in which the summative portion was fixed form (not adaptive) but the diagnostic portion maintained the same adaptability as the MAP Growth assessment. This will gradually be replaced by a fully adaptive assessment in future years as more items are added to the question bank.

Will the paper-based forms and braille forms also be adaptive?

Paper-based and braille forms cannot be adaptive because they are not administered using computer-adaptive software. Paper-based and braille forms will be fixed forms, unique to each grade level.

## Scoring and Reports

What kinds of scores will be generated by the summative Maine Through Year Assessment?

The spring Maine Through Year Assessment will generate two types of scores for every student, three-digit RIT scores comparable to the RIT scores produced by the MAP Growth assessment and a four-digit student performance score aligned to state standards. The four-digit student performance score will fall within one of four achievement levels: Well Below, Below, At, and Above State Expectations.

Will students be able to see scores immediately upon completion of the Through Year Assessment as they could in the past with MAP Growth?

At this time, the NWEA State Solutions Secure Browser does not have the ability to generate immediate scores on the student's screen.

What are the four Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs) that describe students' performance on the summative assessment?

Well-Below State Expectations	Below State Expectations	At State Expectations	Above State Expectations
On this assessment, students at this achievement level <b>demonstrate limited understanding of the knowledge and skills</b> necessary at this grade level, as specified in the Common Core State Standards. The students <b>need substantial academic support</b> to be prepared for the next grade level and to be on track for college and career readiness.	On this assessment, students at this achievement level <b>demonstrate partial understanding of the knowledge and skills</b> necessary at this grade level, as specified in the Common Core State Standards. The students <b>need additional academic support</b> to be prepared for the next grade level and to be on track for college and career readiness.	On this assessment, students at this achievement level <b>demonstrate the knowledge and skills</b> necessary at this grade level, as specified in the Common Core State Standards. The students <b>are prepared</b> for the next grade level and are on track for college and career readiness.	On this assessment, students at this achievement level <b>demonstrate advanced understanding of the knowledge and skills</b> necessary at this grade level, as specified in the Common Core State Standards. The students <b>are well prepared</b> for the next grade level and are well prepared for college and career readiness.

Will the Through Year Assessment results be connected to the Learning Continuum?

Educators will have access to a different but similar tool, the Achievement Level Explorer (<https://ald-explorer.nwea.org/>), that is rooted in Maine's range Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs). The new tool will help Maine educators scaffold students toward standards-based learning targets.

Will NWEA's Through Year Assessment reports still report RIT scores for specific instructional areas?

Yes, RIT scores for instructional areas will be available with final reporting after the spring 2023 administration and all administrations that are part of the 2023-24 and following school years.

The Instructional Areas for which students will receive RIT scores are shown in the tables below. These RIT Instructional Areas align with the most current version of MAP Growth.

<b>Reading RIT Score Instructional Areas (Reporting Categories)</b>	
MAP Growth: CCSS 2010 V4	
Literary Text	Students read literary texts closely to determine key ideas and details, inferences, theme, and literary elements. Students will also analyze author's purpose, text structure, points of view, and texts with similar topics/themes.
Informational Text	Students read informational texts closely to determine key ideas and details, inferences, central ideas, and to summarize main ideas. Students will also analyze and compare how texts are structured, various representation of ideas, claims and supporting evidence, and author's purpose and/or point of view.
Vocabulary	Students will focus on using context, Greek and Latin affixes, and reference materials in order to find the meaning of words, including general academic and domain-specific vocabulary. Students will interpret figurative language, understand the relationship between words, and distinguish between connotations and denotations.

<b>Math 3-5 RIT Score Instructional Areas (Reporting Categories)</b>	
MAP Growth: CCSS 2010 V2	
Operations and Algebraic Thinking	Students represent and solve problems involving the four operations and build skills related to patterns. Students also gain understanding of factors, multiples, the properties of multiplication, as well as the relationship between multiplication and division.
Numbers and Operations	Students compare the values of numbers and build place value understanding of whole numbers and decimals. Students also perform operations with whole numbers, fractions, and decimals to solve real-world and mathematical problems.
Measurement and Data	Students represent and interpret data. Students also solve problems involving measurement and conversion of measurements. Lastly, students understand concepts of area, perimeter, volume, and angles.
Geometry	Students classify shapes by their properties and graph points on the coordinate plane to solve real-world and mathematical problems.

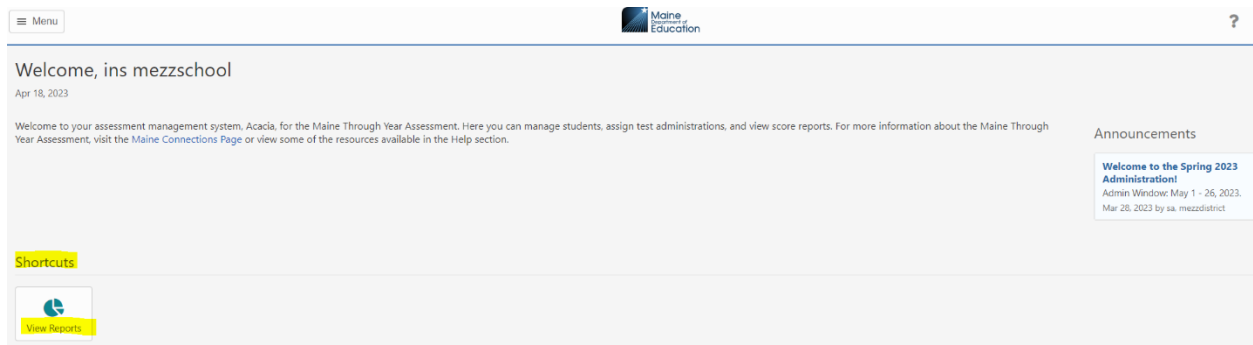
<b>Math Grades 6+ RIT Score Instructional Areas (Reporting Categories)</b>	
MAP Growth: CCSS 2010 V2	
Operations and Algebraic Thinking	Students solve real-life and mathematical problems using numerical and algebraic expressions and equations, as well as linear and quadratic functions.
The Real and Complex Number Systems	Students use ratio reasoning and units to solve problems. Students also use properties of rational and irrational numbers and reason quantitatively.
Geometry	Students solve real-world and mathematical problems involving length, angle measure, area, surface area, and volume. Students also apply and

	prove geometric theorems. Finally, students understand geometric constructions as well as congruency and similarity transformations.
Statistics and Probability	Students use statistical measures to summarize distributions. Students also understand random sampling, comparative inferences, and probability models. Lastly, students investigate patterns of association as well as represent and interpret data and linear models.

Who has access to student reports in Acacia after the administration? Do individuals in the “Instructor” role have access?

Due to FERPA, instructors do not have access students’ results without first being assigned to a Reporting Group. Creating student groups for Reporting and assigning instructors is the best way to allow them to view their classes.

When a user with the role of an Instructor in MARC clicks the “Maine Through Year” link, the user will not see any menu options in Acacia. All they see is the homepage, yet on the homepage they will have a shortcut to View Reports. When reports become available, this is where they can see the students results for the students in the Reporting Group(s) they have been assigned to.



Can NWEA MAP Growth assessment scores be compared to the Maine Through Year Assessment scores?

Yes, the Maine Through Year Assessment is designed to generate a RIT score comparable to those provided by the NWEA MAP Growth assessment. This allows for the continued use of longitudinal RIT score data to inform instruction. For more information, please read the following from NWEA’s psychometrics team:

“Like validity, comparability of scores from separate test events depends upon multiple factors and related evidence across testing events being compared. These factors include comparisons of test purpose, administration mode, blueprints, item types, measurement properties, and student characteristics (NAE, 2020). Even when all such factors are the same, as in there is the same test given at different times, there is and will always some level of measurement error. That said, we have and will continue to evaluate and collect evidence of comparability to support the use and interpretation of RIT scores derived from different assessment events.

For example, we know the administration modes are the same, where we provide item level adaptive assessments for both MAP Growth and other state assessments. Item types and measurement properties are comparable, as are student characteristics. In fact, we’ve had the rare opportunity to conduct a study with strictest comparability factor: matched students. Over 5,000 students took both MAP Growth and the Nebraska [through year] assessment in Spring of 2022. Students’ RIT scores across tests were, on average, less than 1 scale score point different. Given the standard error of measure for the RIT is reported as 3 scale score points, the results of the preliminary study provide great evidence for and our confidence in being able to provide comparable RIT scores from state assessments with similar test designs, including for Maine.”

Berman, A. I., Haertel, E. H., & Pellegrino, J. W. (Eds.). (2020). *Comparability of Large-Scale Educational Assessments: Issues and Recommendations*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Education.

### Will scores generated by the Maine Through Year Assessment be nationally normed?

The RIT scores generated by the Maine Through Year Assessment will continue to be nationally normed.

The four-digit performance score will be criterion-referenced rather than norm-referenced and specific to the state of Maine.

### What will be the timeline for receiving scores for the Maine Through Year Assessment?

For Fall 2023 and all future assessment administrations, NWEA has indicated that we can expect SAUs to receive results within 72 hours in the Acacia (Maine Through Year Assessment) platform.

If an SAU rosters their students in MARC (the MAP Growth platform), student Through Year Assessment RIT score data will become available in MAP Growth reports after the SAU, state, and NWEA data clean-up windows, which extends to about 2 weeks after the close of the administration window.

### Will the Through Year Assessment reports in the Acacia platform be the same as the MAP Growth reports that SAUs are accustomed to?

The reports generated by the Maine Through Year Assessment in the Acacia platform will not be identical to those generated by the MAP Growth reports. These reports will include both summative assessment scores and achievement levels as well as diagnostic RIT scores.

### I’ve heard that I will be able to see my Through Year Assessment RIT score results in MAP Growth reports. Can you explain more?

NWEA is integrating results from the Maine Through Year Assessment into MAP Growth reports.

Maine SAUs who wish to participate in the initiative will need to roster students in both the MAP system and Acacia before the end of each assessment window. Participation will be optional.

Please see these resources from NWEA for more information:

- [Overview](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Does the SAU need to change the test term dates in MAP Growth to match the state assessment administration dates?

The default Term and Test Window dates already encompass the Maine Through Year Administration dates, so SAUs will not need to change the default dates. If SAUs had already gone in and edited these default dates, however, they will need to ensure they are updated so the Maine Through Year administration dates fall within the Test Windows chosen in MAP Growth for each term. This change can actually be made any time, even after testing, so SAUs would be able to make this correction after the fact if they realize they need to.

How do we see previous RIT scores in NWEA from students that move into our district?

This would need to go through the MAP Growth transfer process to move students, this information can be found on the Maine Connections page: [https://connection.nwea.org/s/article/How-to-move-students-between-districts?language=en\\_US](https://connection.nwea.org/s/article/How-to-move-students-between-districts?language=en_US)

What percentage of the assessment does a student need to complete to receive a score?

State summative assessments often have different “attemptedness rules” for generating scaled scores and determining participation than other types of assessments.

To be considered a participant for the spring administration of the Maine Through Year Assessment, the student must complete 25% of the operational summative items, or 7 operational summative items. Because the spring Through Year Assessment contains a mixture of diagnostic items, operational summative items, and field test summative items, this is not equivalent to the first 25% of the entire assessment or to the first 7 questions of the assessment. Similarly, to receive a scaled performance score for the summative portion of the spring assessment, a student must complete 25% of the operational summative items.

In order for a RIT score to be valid and reliable, and in order to provide accurate scores for RIT Instructional Areas, all operational items—both summative and diagnostic—need to be answered by the student. Due to the random distribution of field items, this equates to completing the entire assessment. In order to receive a RIT score for any administration (fall, winter, or spring), the student must complete the entire assessment.

How were achievement level cut scores determined for the spring 2021 and spring 2022 MAP Growth assessment administrations?

NWEA MAP Growth is a norm-referenced assessment that allows for the comparison of a student’s achievement and growth to the expected achievement and growth of students in the same grade level across the nation. In order to create norms that define average student score as well as standard deviations from that score, NWEA collects data from between 3.6 and 5.5 million test scores from 500,000 to 700,000 students attending over 24,500 public schools in 5,800 districts spread across all 50 states. NWEA’s 2020 [MAP Growth Normative Data Overview](#) is based upon data gathered from 2015 to 2018.



## What are norms?

Norms allow us to compare a student's achievement to students in a large sample: a norm group.

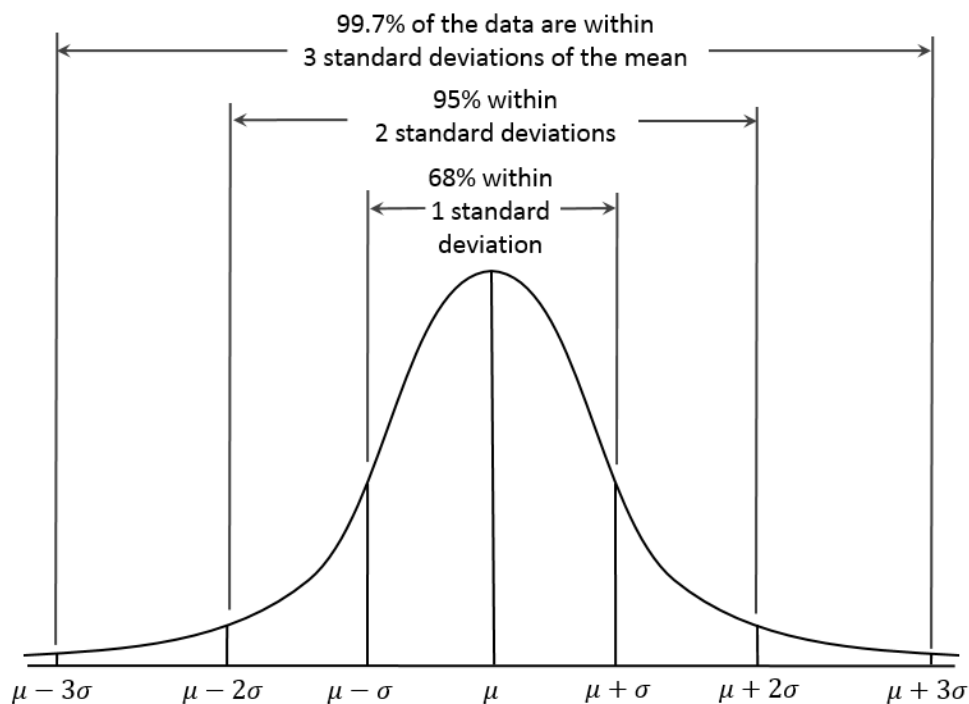
After a test is created, it is administered to a large, diverse group of children who make up the norm group. The children's scores are ranked from low to high performance. The scores are then statistically manipulated to form a statistical model called a *normal distribution*. Test scores (along with many other measurable attributes such as height, weight, etc.) form a normal distribution. This means that there are more scores in the middle than at the highest and lowest ends, and the scores are not biased to the high or low end. A normal distribution graphed visually creates the familiar "bell curve".

[Source: [What are norms?](#)]

## Understanding Standard Deviation (SD)

The columns labeled "SD" in the Cut Score Tables shown below contain the standard deviations of the means. Standard deviation is simply a measure of dispersion of scores around the mean, or average; the smaller the SD, the more compact the scores are around the mean. For example, the standard deviation for the grade 3 math MAP Growth assessment is 14.11 and the standard deviation for the grade 10 math MAP Growth assessment is 21.25. This tells us that third-grade students were more likely to have similar scores on the math assessment than tenth grade students.

For all normal distributions, approximately 68% of the observations fall within one standard deviation of the mean (average), 95% of the observations fall within two standard deviations, and 99.7% fall within three standard deviations.



[Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Empirical\\_Rule.PNG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Empirical_Rule.PNG)]

Because NWEA MAP Growth is a norm-referenced assessment, the Department created cut scores based on the national mean and standard deviation from NWEA's [MAP Growth Normative Data](#)

[Overview](#). Students whose score fell within one standard deviation of the national mean are in the “At Expectations” category.

CUT SCORE TABLES

Reading Achievement

Reading	Spring		At Expectations	Below Expectations	Above Expectations
Grade	Mean	SD	Range		
3	197.12	16.27	180.85 - 213.39	≤180.84	≥213.40
4	204.83	16.31	188.52 - 221.14	≤188.51	≥221.15
5	210.98	15.97	195.01 - 226.95	≤195	≥226.96
6	215.36	16.03	199.33 - 231.39	≤199.32	≥231.40
7	218.36	16.38	201.98 - 234.74	≤201.97	≥234.75
8	221.66	16.87	204.79 - 238.53	≤204.78	≥238.54
10	223.51	18.2	205.31 - 241.71	≤205.30	≥241.72
11	224.71	18.5	206.21 - 243.21	≤206.20	≥243.22

Math Achievement

Math	Spring		At Expectations	Below Expectations	Above Expectations
Grade	Mean	SD			
3	201.08	14.11	186.97 - 215.19	≤186.96	≥215.20
4	210.51	15.56	194.95 - 226.07	≤194.94	≥226.08
5	218.75	16.7	202.05 - 235.45	≤202.04	≥235.46
6	222.88	17.47	205.41 - 240.35	≤205.40	≥240.36
7	226.73	18.6	208.13 - 245.33	≤208.12	≥245.34
8	230.3	19.95	210.35 - 250.25	≤210.34	≥250.25
10	232.42	21.25	211.17 - 253.67	≤211.16	≥253.68
11	234.25	21.65	212.60 - 255.90	≤212.59	≥255.90

As such, if the performance of students within a school or SAU in spring 2022 fit perfectly with the performance of students at the same grade level in that subject across the nation from 2015-2018, we would expect 68% of students to be within the “At Expectations” range and 84% of students to be either “At Expectations” or “Above Expectations.”

The achievement level determinations are based on a single “snapshot” of student performance on one spring assessment administration. Student growth is not a factor in the achievement level determinations.

Will achievement level cut scores be determined in the same way for the spring 2023 administration of the Through Year Assessment?

No, achievement level cut scores will not be determined in the same way for the spring 2023 administration of the Maine Through Year Assessment.

For the Maine Through Year Assessment, student performance will be measured on the spring summative portion of the assessment according to four achievement levels: Well Below, Below, At, and Above State Expectations. This will be based on a student’s performance relative to grade-level state expectations as defined in Maine’s accountability standards for Reading and Math, the Common Core State Standards. For a better understanding of grade-level state expectations, the [Achievement Level Explorer Tool](#) provides performance expectations for each grade-level standard at each of the four achievement levels.

Each question on the summative portion of the spring Maine Through Year Assessment is aligned to one of the standards at one of the four achievement levels. Achievement level cut scores for the summative portion of the Maine Through Year Assessment will be determined by standard setting in summer 2023 once student results are available. Similar to the spring 2021 and 2022 achievement level determinations, students’ scores and achievement levels are based on a single “snapshot” of student performance on one spring administration.

What does “meets projected growth” mean when looking at a student’s RIT scores?

Just as NWEA created student achievement norms tables based on hundreds of thousands of students’ RIT scores from assessment administrations from 2015 to 2018, NWEA created growth norms based on this same data. Student growth norms can be found in NWEA’s [MAP Growth Normative Data Overview](#). Student growth norms exist for fall-to-winter, winter-to-spring, and fall-to-spring.

Growth norms developed for the 2020 MAP Growth norms study reflect the common observation that the rate of academic growth is related to the student’s starting RIT score. In the elementary grades, for example, students starting out at a lower RIT score tend to demonstrate greater raw growth compared to students in the upper grades. Growth norm tables show average growth when the average grade level RIT score (i.e., 50th percentile score) is used as the starting score. In each case, the starting score is treated as a factor when predicting growth.

A student’s **projected RIT score** is the predicted future score for a student who makes typical growth, based on NWEA national growth norms. Projections take into account the student’s initial score, grade level, and time between tests.

**Projected growth** is the change in RIT score that about half of US students will make over time, based on student growth norms. The student's initial score plus projected growth equals projected RIT score.

On the MAP Growth Achievement Status and Growth Summary report (pages 55-57 of the [NWEA MAP Growth Reports Portfolio](#)), **met projected growth** indicates Yes if the student's term-to-term growth equaled or exceeded the growth projection and No if growth was less than projected.

The **percentage of students who met growth projection** is the percentage of students whose end-term RIT scores met or exceeded their individual growth projections. Nationally, about 50% of students will meet or exceed their projected RIT.

## Accessibility Features

### What accessibility features will be available on the Maine Through Year Assessment?

Accessibility features on the Maine Through Year Assessment are grouped into three overarching categories: Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations. Within each category, there are **embedded features** which are part of the assessment platform and **non-embedded features** which are provided locally by the assessment administrator or proctor.

- **Universal Tools:** Available to all students
- **Designated Supports:** Designated supports must be consistent with the student's normal routine during instruction. Utilization and implementation of supports and features is determined by an educational team, for example *but not limited to* part of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), Individual Language Acquisition Plan, and/or Student Assistance Team.
- **Accommodations:** Require an IEP or 504 plan

Please visit our Accessibility Guide, found on the [NWEA Maine Connections page](#), for more information.

### Why are paper-based forms considered embedded accommodations if the student is not using a computer or other device?

Paper-based forms (standard print, large print, and braille) are all considered embedded accommodations because an assessment proctor enters the student's responses into an online, fixed-form version of the assessment and submits the completed assessment through the testing platform. Paper-based forms are then destroyed on-site rather than being returned to NWEA.

### One of the possible non-embedded designated support features for both the MAP Growth assessment and the Maine Through Year Assessment is the use of a bilingual word-to-word glossary for the math assessment. Is this glossary provided by NWEA or the Department of Education?

NWEA does not provide bilingual word-to-word glossaries for their assessments, and currently the Department of Education also does not provide bilingual word-to-word glossaries. The supports used during the Maine Through Year Assessment should mirror those used in regular classroom instruction and assessments.

### Are accommodations assigned to the student or to the test?

Accommodations are assigned to the test, which is associated with each student – one for Math and one for Reading. Any accommodations would need to be added to each subject, either within the registration report or manually in Management System.

### How do I update accessibility supports for individual students, for example small group?

Once supports are added/updated for the individual student by clicking the boxes, you need to click on the next tab over TESTS (manage test registrations). Once you click there you will see the supports have been added. In this screenshot below, you can see the support SG (small group) added for each

assessment.

The screenshot shows a web interface titled "Student's Test Registrations". At the top, there is a "Test Administration" dropdown menu set to "Maine Through Year Spring 2023" and a "View Registrations" button. Below this, a summary line reads "Maine Through Year Spring 2023 Registrations: 2" with an "Add Test Registration" button on the right. A table displays the registration details:

	Status	Subject	Grade	Mode	Group	Supports	Actions
▼	🔄	Math	Grade 6	Computer Based		SG	☑️
▼	🔄	Reading	Grade 6	Computer Based		SG	☑️

How does the font chosen by NWEA for its online assessment platform meet accessibility guidelines?

The style guideline (direction) is that fonts must be sans serif and not italic, oblique, script, highly decorative, or otherwise unusual. Sans serif fonts are as plain and straight as possible, increasing the ease of readability.

## Continued Use of MAP Growth

If an SAU pays for a NWEA MAP Growth subscription for the 2023-24 academic year, are we able to continue to use this assessment?

Yes, SAUs may choose to continue to use to NWEA MAP Growth as their district-level interim assessment after the implementation of the Maine Through Year Assessment.