

Dear DCS Family,

Twice a year Denver Christian School administers a standardized test called MAP (Measures of Academic Progress). MAP test results allow us to assess each student's instructional level as well as measure his/her academic growth in the areas of language usage, mathematics, and reading. The elementary and middle school students are tested each fall and spring to measure progress during the school year, and ninth grade students are tested each spring to show year to year growth.

We have just completed our fall testing for our 2nd – 8th grade students. A copy of your child's MAP results is included in your parent/teacher conference materials. This year we will be focusing on using fall MAP results to help Extend and our classroom teachers to set goals and action items for students and then measure progress on those goals with the spring MAP testing.

We currently use the MAP data to assess our academic program at the institutional, classroom, and individual student level. However, MAP scores are *only one measure* of academic progress. In fact, we intentionally chose MAP tests because we value classroom instructional time and want to devote as much time to teaching and learning as possible. The MAP tests provide us with robust data from a relatively short testing time (students spend less than three hours of testing each fall and spring). **Classroom learning, as measured by student work and grades, should still be the main indicator of student progress.**

One of the most common questions that we receive about our fall test scores deals with something called "summer slump." Often students take a summer break from learning, especially "school learning," and this is often seen in fall scores. As a school, we realize that this is often family and life learning rather than school learning, and we celebrate those important outside-of-school learning experiences. However, it does take a little bit of time after summer break to get back into the swing of standardized tests. Please don't panic with a lower than expected score (or even a score that drops a little bit from the spring). Our goal is to see long term improvement and fall-to-spring improvement, and we will be working towards that goal.

Another request that we receive from parents is, "how can we help at home to prepare students for MAPs?" Here are a few general academic suggestions: provide help with homework, establish a routine (time/place) to complete homework, ensure that your student is getting enough sleep, limit screen time, engage in extended conversations about what your student is learning, read with your student, and set aside daily reading time.

In addition to these general recommendations, we have created a MAP resources page on our MyDC website (<http://mydc.denverchristian.org/resources/>) that provides more information about MAP testing, understanding scores, a FAQ list, and suggestions to help improve scores. Take advantage of these great resources.

If you have questions about the MAP testing or these results, please contact your child's teacher, one of our Extend team members, or your principal.

Sincerely,

Lauralee Veenstra, Elementary Principal
Tyler Amidon, Middle School Principal
Steve Kortenhoeven, High School Principal

Tracey Twinam, Extend Coordinator
Dee Dyk, Extend Coordinator



**The Test:**

The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is a nationally recognized test that evaluates critical academic skills at each grade level.

MAP is intended to document growth, and it reveals how much growth has occurred between testing as well as shows projected proficiency when combined with norms.

- NWEA uses anonymous assessment data from over 10.2 million students to create national norms, placing your students and schools within a representative national sample. By drawing from an incredibly wide pool of anonymized test records (pulled from more than six million test events, 23,000 schools, and 49 states), MAP is able to accurately represent the US school-age population.

Uses:

DC uses these scores as a launching pad toward differentiation in the classroom, however, classroom learning and observation is still our primary source of gathering information as it pertains to individual student growth.

The Individualized Testing Process:

DC tests 2nd – 8th grade students in the Fall and in Spring each year. Freshman are tested in the Spring each year. MAP Growth tests begin with a question appropriate for the student's grade level, then dynamically adapt throughout the test in response to student performance. This progressive refinement allows MAP Growth to challenge top performers without overwhelming students whose skills are below grade level.

Potential Factors Impacting Test Results:

There are many factors that may impact the results of each student. Factors may include:

- time used to complete each section of the test
- attention during test
- time of day that the tests was administered
- how student felt that day
- proper nutrition
- Sleep

Report Vocabulary

RIT Score (Rasch Unit): Reflects academic knowledge, skills and abilities, regardless of whether they're performing on, above or below grade level.

Projected Growth: Compared against students across the country who are in the same grade and began the same term at a similar RIT score.

(+/-) Standard Error: Each RIT score can be affected by the standard deviation within a class. Each score can be affected either positively or negatively by 3 points.