



Catholic Schools Office Diocese of Birmingham

Boldly Catholic | Academically Excellent | Rooted in Truth

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Introducing MAP® Growth™

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Why was MAP Growth chosen for use in the Diocese of Birmingham?

The Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Birmingham is pleased to announce the implementation of NWEA's MAP Growth assessment during the 2019-2020 school year. Outlined below are the many factors that formed the basis for making the decision to adopt this assessment, beginning first with our Catholic foundation and the high standard set by being rooted in the Catholic faith.

Canon Law calls us to ensure excellence in every aspect of programming. Standard Eight of the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective

Catholic Schools states, *"An excellent Catholic school uses school-wide assessment methods and practices to document student learning and program effectiveness, to make student performances transparent, and to inform the continuous review of curriculum and the improvement of instructional practices."* (2012)

In addition, our schools are accredited through AdvancED. During our 2015 accreditation review, AdvancED made a formal recommendation for our diocese to reconsider its current assessment practices. In our newly developed diocesan strategic plan, we now have a goal dedicated to defining, measuring,

evaluating, and communicating the academic excellence and effectiveness of our curricula and programs through the standardization of our evaluation tools so that teachers and principals can use data to inform instruction and school improvement.

Comprehensive assessment incorporates both assessment *for* learning and assessment *of* learning to inform the education of the whole child. The MAP Growth assessments are unique in that they adapt to a student's level of learning, which offers teachers and principals more specific information than a typical standardized assessment.

What about the Iowa/CogAT Assessment?

For many years, students in the Diocese of Birmingham have taken the Iowa/CogAT Assessment, which is a nationally normed standardized assessment administered once a year. MAP Growth is also a nationally normed standardized assessment, but because it is administered in an interim assessment format three times a year, the information provided by MAP and by Iowa inform instruction in different ways. For this reason, as a Diocese, we will administer both assessments during the 2019-2020 school year and the 2020-2021 school year, at which time we will re-evaluate the use of both practices with input from school leaders, see whether both tests continue to be in the best interest of our students, and consider using only one assessment moving forward.

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For more information visit:

[https://
www.nwea.org
/parent-
toolkit/](https://www.nwea.org/parent-toolkit/)

Test Administration

Windows

August 19-23
MAP Growth

January 13-17
MAP Growth

May 4-8
MAP Growth

April/May
Iowa/CogAT

How will MAP Growth be implemented? What does MAP Growth provide to benefit my student's instruction?

The MAP Growth assessment will be administered three times a year in 2nd through 9th grades to measure student growth throughout the school year and from year to year. Language Arts, Reading, and Math will be tested. Each test only has an average length of under one hour. Today's teachers need to be able to match classroom teaching to the specific needs of each student and to evaluate each student's progress over time. School administrators also need to be able to evaluate

programs and make decisions about how to use resources to help students learn. The administration of standardized tests helps schools and teachers to provide the best learning experience for your child.

MAP Growth tests adapt to your student's level of learning. If your student answers a question correctly, the next question is more challenging. If he or she answers incorrectly, the next one is easier. This results in a detailed picture of what your child

knows and is ready to learn, and whether it is on, above, or below his or her current grade level. Since MAP Growth tests provide immediate and accurate information about your student's learning, teachers can plan instruction accordingly.

The interim assessment model used by MAP Growth provides a personalized assessment experience that helps students learn, teachers teach, and administrators lead.

What differences can I expect in my student's score report?

The Iowa/CogAT provides a national percentile rank, how your student compares to other students of the same grade who took the test at the same time of year, and a grade equivalent, which describes student performance in terms of a grade level and month.

The MAP Growth assessment reports a RIT score (which stands for Rasch unit). This score is an estimation of the student's instructional level and measures that student's progress and growth in each tested subject area. The report will include the student's RIT score, the diocesan grade level mean RIT, the norm level mean RIT (based on other students in that grade at that time of year), and a RIT growth projection score. In addition, the report will include an achievement percentile score and a growth percentile, both of which are based on norms.

The information received from both assessment reports provide a clear picture of your student's achievement and aid in goal setting as well as the achievement patterns for students, classes, and schools. Standardized assessments only provide one snapshot of a student's achievement though. In our Catholic schools, we educate the whole child, based on much more than a test.