

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF KOHLER

KOHLER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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September 14, 2012

Dear Parents/Guardians of Kohler First-Ninth Grade Students,

This letter is to inform you of the Kohler School District's participation in the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) 'Measures of Academic Progress' (MAP) academic testing which will take place from September 24 - October 10th, 2012 for our Kohler School District's student population grades 2 through 9th. A total of 3 one-hour tests will be given to each student at various times/dates throughout the testing window.

More than 1,600 school districts and educational partners use MAP to help all students learn. The assessment itself is unique in that it adapts to the student's ability, accurately measuring what a child knows and needs to learn. In addition, MAP will measure academic growth over time, independent of grade level or age. Most importantly, the results Kohler teachers receive have practical application to enhance future teaching and learning. MAP test results will provide Kohler teachers and administrators with timely access to information that can be used for instructional planning and school improvement.

MAP tests provide highly accurate results that can be used to: 1) Identify the skills and concepts individual students have learned; 2) Diagnose instructional needs; 3) Monitor academic growth over time; 4) Make data-driven decisions at the classroom, school, and district levels; and 5) Place new students into appropriate instructional programs.

MAP test results will be timely. Kohler teachers will have the information they need when it's needed most, not months later. Individual student scores will be available immediately following a test. A suite of classroom and school reports will be available within 24 hours after testing and the district's report will be available within 72 hours. A final report comparing your child's September test and spring testing will be sent home at the end of the school year with your child's report card. All 2-9th graders will be tested in the beginning of the school year and at the end of the year. Parents will be given a yearly report that shows growth for each academic school year and also growth over the years they attend Kohler Schools.

With the largest norm reference group in the nation, NWEA reports highly accurate norm-referenced scores. MAP results, however, go beyond simply ranking student achievement or indicating grade level performance. Kohler teachers and administrators will use MAP test scores to identify the skills and concepts a student knows and what they need to learn next in order to keep growing, irrespective of grade level. With accurate, timely information on an individual student's needs, our teachers can target instruction so that every student is learning and growing.



MAP tests are state-aligned and are often used as an indicator of preparedness for state assessments. Administering the tests twice each year allow our teachers and administrators to closely monitor the progress of students.

Student test results are maintained test after test, so teachers and parents can monitor the growth of individual students year after year. With access to aggregated student reports, administrators will use MAP data to enhance curriculum and school improvement decisions.

MAP tests will be given in three main subject areas: 1) Reading; 2) Language Usage; and 3) Mathematics. Eight Graders also add the subject of Science to their testing schedule.

What specifically is the nature of the NWEA-MAP testing procedure? When taking a MAP test, the difficulty of each question is based on how well a student answers all the previous questions. As the student answers correctly, questions become more difficult. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions become easier. In an optimal test, a student answers approximately half the items correctly and half incorrectly. The final score is an estimate of the student achievement level.

What are NWEA Assessments used for? NWEA assessments are used to measure your students' progress and growth in school. You may have a chart in your home on which you mark your child's height at certain times, such as on his or her birthday. This is another kind of growth chart. It shows how much he/she has grown academically from one year to the next. NWEA assessments measure your student's growth in reading, language usage and math skills. The scale used to measure your child's progress is called the RIT (Rasch unit). The RIT scale is an equal-interval scale much like feet and inches not a yardstick. It is used to chart your child's academic growth from year to year.

How do teachers use the test scores? NWEA tests are important to Kohler teachers because they keep track of progress and growth in basic skills. They let our teachers know where a student's strengths are and if help is needed in any specific areas. Teachers use this information to help them guide instruction in the classroom.

Does the NWEA-MAP test results affect my student's report card grades? No.

Where can I find out more about the NWEA-MAP testing? Go to their website at: www.nwea.org/assessments

We thank you in advance for your interest and support of this new initiative to further enhance the Kohler School District's quality of education. Should you have further questions or comments please feel free to contact your student's classroom teacher or me.

Sincerely,

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