



Dear Parents of Grades 3-8

December 3, 2010

St. Paul the Apostle School, in conjunction with the Diocesan School Administrators' Association, has chosen to adopt NWEA Measures of Academic Progress™ (MAP). (*Please note: NWEA MAP's will replace the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) which had been administered every Fall in the past.*)

Each year, we will give students MAP Tests to determine each child's instructional level and to measure academic growth throughout the school year (and from year to year) in the areas of Math, Reading and Language. This Fall, we have been implementing staff training and "technology readiness". We will have two testing opportunities this year - the first during the weeks of January 3-28, and the second in late Spring.

MAP Tests are unique in that they adapt to your child's level of learning. When taking the MAP Tests, the difficulty of each question is based on how well a student answers all of the previous questions. As the student answers correctly, questions become more difficult. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions become easier. Adaptive testing continually "adjusts" the difficulty of each question asked, and therefore "zeroes in" on a student's ability/achievement level. Another benefit is each student has the same opportunity to succeed and maintain a positive attitude toward testing. With MAP tests, we can administer shorter tests and use less class time while still receiving detailed, accurate information about your child/ren's academic growth.

The benefits of NWEA MAPs are:

- Tests will be administered – in Reading, Language and Math (via computer in the lab).
- Total test administration time is approximately 3 hours/test cycle (vs. 2 weeks of ITBS Testing).
- MAPs is adaptable per each student. This truly assists in diagnosing each student's achievement and ability levels.
- Detailed information regarding each student is available (for staff and parents) within 36-48 hours of testing - with scores/data, individualized plans with "target growth areas" identified. This allows for informed, instructional decisions to be made *immediately* for each student, class, grade and curricular area.
- MAPs allows for a Student, School, District (Diocesan) and "Norm Group" reporting.
- MAPs allows for a MEAP Comparison Score
- MAPs can also provide a "RIT to Reading Range Report" for each student. The Reading Range Report provides a reading range for each student tested with links to reading resources for instruction as well as lists of suggested book titles that may interest and challenge the student.
- MAPs will identify/flag students whose testing session may be questionable/invalid - whether due to "guessing", timing (too short/long of a testing session), etc...

We are truly excited to begin a new era that focuses on every child's individual growth and achievement. Partnering to help all kids learn, parents and teachers can have a profound positive effect on the lives of our children.

For more information on resources for parents, download the Parent Toolkit at www.nwea.org
>>> *Partner Support.*