



Statement from NWEA regarding remote testing

May 2020

Remote test administration requires significant planning to set educators and students up for success. NWEA has partners who have always required remote testing and, given the COVID-19 crisis, we are now working with more.

We hope educators and students can be in their buildings for the 2020-2021 academic year, but given the uncertainty, we are developing a path for those schools and districts who need to use MAP Suite products in support of distance learning plans in the fall, if remote testing is needed.

Here are key factors to consider regarding remote testing:

1. **Home Environment and Student Needs.** Students have many varying needs that require support for testing. Not all families will have equal access to the correct devices, headsets, reliable internet, or the expertise and skill to navigate technical difficulties that may arise. Some families may not have the physical space to allow students the atmosphere they need to be fully engaged in an important assessment. Other students may have accommodation or accessibility needs that will be challenging to fulfill in their homes. These concerns could not only lead to an unsatisfactory experience, but potentially questions about the reliability of assessment data.
2. **Test integrity – the role of proctors.** In a typical test administration, a proctor (usually the teacher) plays a key role in actively facilitating a test session, building and encouraging student engagement during the test and responding to needs of students in real time. In a virtual setting, a proctor or teacher will need to view all students at once and be able to navigate the technology while maintaining clear communication with the students. This experience can be overwhelming and frustrating for teachers and students. This becomes easier with experience, training, and guidance.
3. **Reliability of the data –** Because schools will have less control over remote testing environments and scenarios, they should consider the reliability of the data they will receive from this process. This is a critical factor to consider if data is tied to high-stakes decisions. Missed instructional time compounds this issue. Data from products in the MAP Suite are intended to provide teachers with relevant instructional information. If students are not receiving instruction, or if that instruction is not being delivered with the same fidelity as in the classroom, assessment data needs to be carefully considered.
4. **Availability of support –** NWEA support staff are available to support schools through the challenges that lie ahead. Due to student privacy concerns, we are extremely limited in the support we can offer to parents. In addition, many schools have varying rules of engagement when it comes to using NWEA products, and we want to honor those nuances.

These are serious considerations that each school community needs to evaluate before making any decisions when it comes to virtual testing this spring. NWEA is committed to working in partnership with schools during this unprecedented time. We ask that our partners consider all the factors about what is best for students before making decisions about remote testing. In addition, we are developing additional guidance and support for partners should schools remain closed for an extended period of time. District leaders are encouraged to have conversations and ask questions about their needs, with their NWEA Account Managers on (866) 654-3246.