

Frequently Asked Questions

NWEA MAP Testing Process

For Non-CPS students

Logistics

1. When and how will we be able to register?

Parents registered between May 1 and May 30, 2014, by submitting a form that was posted on the Office of Access and Enrollment (OAE) website. If you did not register during this time period, contact OAE at 773-553-2060 or oae@cps.edu.

2. When and where will testing take place?

Testing will take place at a variety of CPS sites across the city from September 6 - October 11, 2014. Testing will take place on Saturdays, during three possible sessions: 8:30 am-10:30 am, 11:00 am-1:00 pm, and 1:30 pm-3:30 pm.

3. My child cannot test on Saturday for religious reasons. What are my options?

The registration form will have an option "check here if you cannot test on Saturdays for religious reasons." Your child will be scheduled for alternative days that do not conflict with any religious holidays.

4. Will students take both math and reading tests on the same day?

No. Students will be assigned two separate testing dates, one for the MAP Reading test and one for the MAP Mathematics test.

5. Will I be able to choose the date and location?

Parents will be able to indicate preference of location and dates for testing on which students are NOT available. CPS will try to accommodate parent preferences, but we ask for your flexibility, as this may not be possible.

6. When will I be notified of the time and location for testing?

For students who submitted their registration by the May 30th deadline, CPS will send out notification of testing dates by June 27th. A reminder notification will be sent out two weeks prior to the official test date.

7. Will I be able to reschedule if I am assigned a date/location that my child cannot make?

If you are assigned to a date/location that your child cannot attend, we will attempt to accommodate your need for a reschedule. However, as we will be scheduling thousands of students, we ask that you show as much flexibility as possible.

8. When will I receive my child's results?

A report with your child's reading and math percentiles will be mailed to your home two weeks after the final test is taken.

Policy

9. Does my child have to take the NWEA MAP test if he/she wants to apply to IB High Schools, Magnet High Schools, Military Academies, or CTE Selective Academies?

Yes. The NWEA MAP will be the assessment used to determine eligibility for these schools, as well as Selective Enrollment Schools.

10. Does my child take the NWEA MAP test if he/she is applying to Selective Enrollment Elementary Schools for grades 5, 6, 7, or 8?

Yes. The NWEA MAP will be the assessment used to determine eligibility for Selective Enrollment Elementary Schools (i.e., Regional Gifted Centers, Classical Schools, Academic Centers, and International Gifted Programs).

11. Does my child have to take the NWEA again in the fall with CPS if my child's school already uses NWEA?

Yes. Only NWEA MAP scores from a fall CPS test administration will be allowed for use in selective applications. This ensures uniform testing environments for all students.

12. If my child has an extreme illness on the scheduled fall test date, will my child be allowed to retest?

Students who are extremely ill on the Saturday test date should not come to the testing center and should call the Office of Access and Enrollment on the following Monday at (773) 553-2060, to schedule an alternative test date. Additionally, if a student gets sick during the exam, the student will be excused from the test and allowed to reschedule.

13. Will my child test on a tablet or laptop/desktop?

Non-CPS students will test on hard wired or wireless laptops or desktops. All computers will have a mouse for easy navigation.

14. Why was the change made from ISAT (SAT-10) to NWEA?

Historically, CPS students have used the ISAT, the Illinois State Board of Education test that all Illinois public schools take, as the qualifier for Selective Enrollment tests and eligibility for other schools and programs. As of 2014, CPS students were not able to use the ISAT because the SAT-10 percentiles were no longer included in the test (you can read about the changes here: <http://isbe.net/assessment/isat.htm>). As a result of these changes, CPS needed to find an alternative measure. In 2013, CPS adopted the NWEA MAP as a rigorous, Common Core-aligned measure of student skill that results in a nationally normed percentile. This was the best option for CPS to adopt as a qualifying exam. Previously, CPS had allowed private/parochial schools to submit test scores from standardized tests comparable to the ISAT. However, because the NWEA MAP test is so different from other standardized tests, CPS sought an equitable admissions process for all Chicago students interested in applying to the District's schools with academic requirements.

Testing Accommodations

15. My child has an IEP or 504 Plan. Will his/her accommodations be honored?

Applicable test accommodations described in Section 10 (c) of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan will be made available. For example, if a child has a fine motor impairment and cannot click on the correct answer choices, and his/her IEP requires that a scribe assist with completing the test, a CPS staff member will be available during the NWEA to serve as a scribe.

Please be aware that only certain accommodations are available for the MAP test due to its specific nature. For instance, external, handheld calculators are not allowed; instead, when a calculator is permitted, it will appear on the computer screen as an embedded feature of the test.

16. My child may need extra time to test. Is this allowed?

All NWEA MAP assessments are designed to be untimed for all students.

NWEA Test and Features

17. How does the test work?

The NWEA MAP assessments are adaptive achievement tests in mathematics and reading that are taken on a computer. The difficulty of a test is adjusted to the student's performance so each student sees different test questions. The difficulty of each question is based on how well the student has answered the questions up to that point. As the student answers correctly, the questions become more difficult. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions become easier.

18. What content is covered?

Components for the MAP Reading test include vocabulary, long passage, short passage, fiction and non-fiction. Components of the MAP Mathematics test include algebra, geometry, measurement, data analysis and probability and numbers and operations.

19. How long does the test take?

The NWEA MAP Mathematics test is roughly 52 items in length. The NWEA MAP Reading test is roughly 42 items in length. Although the tests are untimed, it usually takes students about an hour to complete each subject.

20. How can my child prepare for the NWEA? Should I invest in test preparation classes/resources?

Preparing for the NWEA MAP test is achieved through strong, Common Core-based, academic instruction and by managing student expectations.

The NWEA MAP test is adaptive and builds a custom test for each student taking it. The NWEA MAP item bank aligns with the Common Core State Standards and expands the breadth of goal areas. Success on this assessment is directly impacted by high-quality classroom instruction and educational standards. *Investing in test preparation classes/resources will not prepare a student to take this type of assessment.*

Parents can help their student prepare for this assessment by sharing information about the nature of the assessment and by working with students on focus and concentration for extended reading and math activities. The [MAP Parent ToolKit](#) is an excellent resource for understanding these assessments and includes additional guidance on the types of activities students can do at home to prepare. Additionally, students can sample the test using the [MAP Test-Warm-ups](#).

21. Does CPS recommend a particular test prep company?

Chicago Public Schools does **NOT** recommend, endorse or sponsor **ANY** test preparation courses, study guides, or sample questions for the NWEA MAP or for the Selective Enrollment High Schools testing process.

The MAP test is an adaptive test with thousands of test items. As a result, students are unlikely to see the same items as other students. Most students have no problem adjusting to the computerized, adaptive format of the test. However, using the sample items and tool kit recommended above will help your child understand the difference between a traditional pencil paper test and an adaptive test to best prepare them for the test.

The admissions exam used for the Selective Enrollment High Schools is designed to assess your child's academic capabilities or reasoning and thinking skills. The Office of Access and Enrollment has not seen any direct correlation between student acceptance rates in Selective Enrollment High Schools and their participation courses offered by test preparation companies. Further, the Office of Access and Enrollment receives feedback each year from parents whose children participated in a test preparation course and were not selected for any of their school choices.

Technology

22. How can students best prepare for navigating the test: understanding where to click, understanding how to scroll through passages, and understanding how to use embedded test features?

Several resources are available to help students understand the test experience. Students can take a sample test using the [MAP Test-Warm-ups](#) as well as watch a video that explains test features. The [MAP Student Powerpoint Presentation](#) gives a good overview of the testing experience. The [MAP discussion points](#) will also help students prepare for testing.

23. Can a test be paused if a child needs to go to the bathroom or needs a break?

Yes, the proctor can pause the test at any time during the test session for breaks.

24. What will happen if there is some type of technical problem like a glitch with the internet connection or a power outage?

Occasionally, events occur during online testing that interrupt a student's workstation. The NWEA platform is designed to allow for unexpected occurrences without impacting the accuracy of test results. In cases where a proctor is unable to 'pause' or 'suspend' a student's test, such as power outages, NWEA platform glitches, and testing device malfunctions, student data will not be lost. Once the issues are resolved and the student can log back on to the test, they will begin at the point where they left off.

25. If CPS students take the test in the spring, and private/parochial school students take the test in the fall, how can you compare those scores? Is my child at a disadvantage?

Students who test in the spring will be compared against spring norms to derive a percentile. In other words, spring testers will have percentiles that are representative only of how students rank against other spring NWEA testers nationally. Students who test in the fall will only be compared to other students who tested on NWEA in the fall. This allows for fair comparison of scores. For more on NWEA's national norming sample that is used to derive the percentile scores, click here: <http://www.nwea.org/node/11788>. For general information on what percentiles represent, click here: <http://www.nwea.org/node/4925> or here: <http://www.teachersandfamilies.com/open/parent/scores2.cfm>.

For CPS Students

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2. If my child has an extreme illness on the scheduled spring or fall test date, will my child be allowed to retest?

Students who are extremely ill on the test date should not be tested and the student's school should schedule them for an alternative test date.

Testing

Accommodations

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14. Will my child test on a tablet or laptop/desktop?

Students will test on a variety of hard-wired and wireless laptops and desktops including Chromebooks and iPads. Your child's home school will provide testing devices already familiar to your student. All equipment to be used for testing will have been audited for compatibility with the assessment platform prior to the assessment window.