



# NWEA Introduces MAP Growth Capability that Detects and Addresses Lack of Student Engagement in Assessment

## **Innovative Methodologies Identify Students Who are Rapid Guessing During Assessment; Provides Teachers with Real-Time Alerts and Guidance**

**Portland, Ore. – August 16, 2017** – Breaking new ground in student assessment, [NWEA](#) has developed advanced methods that detect and address lapses in student engagement during a MAP Growth assessment session. MAP Growth’s new capability identifies students demonstrating rapid-guessing behavior, indicative of a low level of effort, and immediately alerts proctors, providing the opportunity for real-time intervention. This industry-first capability ensures that MAP Growth provides the most precise measurement of an individual student’s academic performance, and teachers receive timely information that can help them address student performance issues.

A student demonstrates rapid-guessing behavior if he or she responds to assessment items too quickly to comprehend the question. This behavior can lead to distorted assessment results that can underestimate a student’s performance. MAP Growth can now detect this activity based on comparisons of student and mean response times for each individual assessment item.

If a student is rapid guessing, the MAP adaptive engine maintains the difficulty level of the items a student sees until he or she reengages in the assessment. Proctors receive instant notification via an alert to their console, allowing them to offer immediate intervention during test taking. NWEA provides proctor guidelines for interventions, such as quietly encouraging individual students to reengage and determining if a student is incapable of completing the assessment at this time.

This new MAP Growth functionality is based on extensive research by NWEA senior research fellow Dr. Steven L. Wise into how rapid-guessing behavior is linked to a lack of student engagement on an assessment. Dr. Wise has published widely during the past three decades, with particular emphases in computer-based testing and the psychology of test taking. Two of his recent studies on the topic are currently in press with [Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice](#) and [Applied Measurement in Education](#).

“It is important to be able to trust that the student’s test score accurately reflects what that student knows and can do,” said Dr. Wise. “Our solution is unique because we know how long it takes to answer each item versus applying a generic time for all items. For example, a lengthy reading passage will take longer to read and answer than a simple arithmetic question.”

NWEA research shows that students who rapidly guess typically do so intermittently during the assessment, so the new MAP Growth capability provides specific, real-time information about when students become disengaged. This approach provides superior information for dealing with disengagement and surpasses the common industry practice of determining disengaged students by their entire test duration time, which is available only after the assessment has completed.

This research is informing a wide range of NWEA offerings. NWEA researchers Jim Soland and Nate Jensen recently won the [Social-Emotional Assessment Design Challenge](#) for assessments that measure social-emotional learning (SEL). Their study demonstrated how students' rapid guessing on an academic assessment directly correlates to the SEL constructs of self-management and self-regulation. Other research focuses on what rapid-guessing behavior informs us about racial and gender achievement gaps.

"We are exceptionally proud of our advancements in student assessment and of being the first to utilize student engagement information for this purpose," said Matt Chapman, CEO of NWEA. "Our team has introduced real insights that will have broad implications for education. At NWEA, we're using this research to refine and grow our assessment solutions to best help educators teach and all students learn."

## **About NWEA**

NWEA™ is a mission-driven, not-for-profit organization that supports students and educators worldwide by creating assessment solutions that precisely measure growth and proficiency—and provide insights to help tailor instruction. For 40 years, NWEA has developed innovative Pre-K–12 assessments, professional learning that fosters educators' ability to accelerate student learning, and research that supports assessment validity and data interpretation. Educators in 140 countries and more than half the schools in the US rely on our flagship interim assessment, MAP® Growth™; our progress monitoring and skills mastery tool, MAP® Skills™; and the OECD Test for Schools (based on PISA). Visit [NWEA.org](https://www.nwea.org) to find out how NWEA can partner with you to help all kids learn.

###