



3 features your assessment
tool must have

Your role as an administrator is all about choices. Choices that empower teachers, keep budgets on track, and ultimately support an environment that unlocks the learning potential of each and every student.

Selecting the right assessment is one of the most important decisions you can make to meet your goals on the school, district, and state levels. To succeed, you'll need a powerful system that provides trustworthy insights in a timely way. It will need to accurately identify which students are struggling, which are holding their own, and which are excelling beyond their peers. It will also need to track progress over time, give teachers the insights to personalize instruction, and encourage students to take charge of their learning.

This guide illuminates the three key traits you may have overlooked in your search for the right assessment solution.

Would you use a ruler you couldn't trust?

That may sound like a silly question, but think about it for a moment. Carpenters live by the rule “Measure twice, cut once.” What difference would it make if they didn't have confidence in their tape measures? Accurate data is just as important in the classroom as it is on a job site.

How can you know if an assessment system is trustworthy?

Feature 1:

It is driven by data, is backed by research, and has the most stable scale

Precise data should be the backbone of any assessment system. But it isn't always.

- The [MAP® Growth™](#) RIT scale is a trusted and reliable measurement tool to show what a student knows, track year-over-year progress, and compare student performance to national norms. Like inches on a ruler, it measures in equal intervals regardless of a student's grade or performance and remains stable over time.
- NWEA® uses anonymous assessment data from over 10.2 million students to create national norms. Your students and schools will be compared to a sample truly representative of the US school-age population.

Solid research fuels meaningful results.

- MAP Growth has the largest pool of adaptive test items—questions that dynamically get harder or easier depending on a student's responses—and they have been developed and vetted by NWEA researchers over several decades. There's no limit to how far above or below grade level students can go when showing what they know.
- Our assessments ask the right number of questions during a test event to minimize the standard error of measurement while protecting instructional time.
- We provide the most accurate predictions for student proficiency on year-end state summative assessments aligned to Common Core, NGSS, and state standards, as well as college readiness tests for grades 5–9 (SAT®) and grade 10 (ACT®).



What an assessment driven by data and backed by research can do for you

If you're looking to raise skill mastery to meet state standards

Data that is precise and clear can be a foundation for helping all students succeed. MAP Growth can quickly identify skills a student is missing and help teachers differentiate instruction and monitor growth. Using the RIT scale as a starting point, testing can become more efficient.

If you're focused on meeting state standards, boosting student college readiness, and improving professional learning for teachers

Putting trustworthy and actionable data in the hands of your teachers is the key to helping individual students succeed. MAP Growth reliably tracks learning growth to reveal what a student is ready to learn next.

If you consistently meet state standards and are seeking to raise the bar

Without precise data, it's difficult to identify areas high-achieving students are ready to be challenged in. Sharing MAP Growth results helps students take the reins of their own academic journey, empowering them to actively partner with teachers in goal setting.

Can educators be empowered to work smarter, not harder?

Meeting the needs of students at different stages of learning with limited instructional time is an ongoing challenge for educators. A good assessment tool should be intuitive, streamlined, and adaptable, allowing for real-time adjustments in curriculum to achieve goals on the student, classroom, and school levels.

How can an assessment system ensure that you work smarter to meet benchmarks rather than working harder?

Feature 2:

It is paired with professional learning grounded in gathering evidence of student learning

Whether you're just getting started with MAP Growth or creating goal-focused plans using your district's or school's data, NWEA can tailor a [professional learning](#) plan that's both realistic and sustainable.

- Our professional learning helps teachers understand the power of gathering evidence of learning—using both formative assessment methods and interim assessment—and offers effective methods for scaffolding instruction so they can better reach their students.
- Teachers can increase their ability to understand and use MAP Growth data in their classroom when teaching and setting goals with students.
- Leaders can learn how to use MAP Growth reports to build a data-informed culture and set long-term goals.
- Our professional learning consultants hold professional certifications in teaching and advanced degrees in education. Many have recently served as educators, either as coaches, principals, or classroom teachers. They understand the challenges and passion teachers bring to their work, and they're dedicated to helping them strengthen their practice and use data to ensure all learning is focused and relevant—to your goals, your teachers, and your students.
- To make the most of educators' limited time, we offer flexible, self-paced online learning, [small-team learning during the school day](#), and longer workshops that can be conducted on-site, regionally, or online. Ongoing support is available via phone, email, and live chat.

What professional learning grounded in gathering evidence of student learning can do for you

If you're looking to raise skill mastery to meet state standards

Professional learning is a critical resource for teachers and leaders seeking to meet the unique concerns of schools looking to improve state scores. Building proficiency and confidence in using MAP Growth data, reports, and features allows you to efficiently identify and compare learning gaps and make action plans for every student. It can help you understand why it's important to implement multiple measures and how to effectively use the data they provide to meet state goals.

If you're focused on meeting state standards, boosting student college readiness, and improving professional learning for teachers

Using assessment data to its full potential in the classroom requires ongoing professional learning. Mastery of MAP Growth data allows for the development of plans that elevate instruction and impact student growth. Teachers can also learn about formative practices to use in the classroom, along with effective tools and strategies for assessing learning that will enhance already solid performance.

If you consistently meet state standards and are seeking to raise the bar

Mastery of methods for gathering evidence of student learning serves students who are at grade level as well as those who are considered gifted. A better understanding of MAP Growth data lets teachers play an informed role in goal setting to prepare students of every stripe for college and beyond. Taking data-driven planning and instruction to the next level can be accomplished with [direct coaching](#). Choose from popular topics or request a completely customized workshop. NWEA will provide the support you need to go the extra mile for your students.

Can one size really fit all?

All students deserve the opportunity to grow and thrive in their education. That means being able to show what they know and what they are ready to learn. A good assessment tool answers the call for equity and fairness by removing barriers and providing accommodations for the widest range of learners. It should be flexible and responsive to ensure the right fit for all students.



Feature 3:

It is student focused

MAP Growth helps educators build a rigorous learning environment that serves more students.

- Accessibility features, such as text-to-speech, screen magnifiers, and item aids, ensure that every child can succeed.
- Culturally relevant tests that support Spanish-speaking English learners are available in many subjects and grade levels.
- Our item bank of 50,000 questions has been vigorously vetted—including bias analyses—so that fairness for all students is ensured.

What an assessment that is student focused can do for you

If you're looking to raise skill mastery to meet state standards

One of the most pressing needs you have is to identify students who are falling behind. Because it's an adaptive test, MAP Growth meets students at their level—without discouraging them—to reveal knowledge gaps. Reports are timely, comprehensive, and reliable. This allows for customized learning plans to be created and implemented for every student.

If you're focused on meeting state standards, boosting student college readiness, and improving professional learning for teachers

Your students are on track in many ways. MAP Growth can show where students have become stagnant. During testing, it can identify behaviors, such as [rapid guessing](#), that can be a sign of complacency or boredom. Teachers can pause tests and address the issue in real time or follow up with a one-on-one to develop a plan based on data from past assessments.

If you consistently meet state standards and are seeking to raise the bar

Keeping students who consistently perform above their peers engaged is a real concern. MAP Growth tools allow you to clearly identify them and personalize instruction to ensure they are being challenged. Goal setting based on solid data can better prepare them for college and beyond.



You can trust MAP Growth to help more students learn and grow

NWEA has been an innovator in assessment solutions for over 40 years. By choosing MAP Growth, you'll get the insights you need to achieve the best student outcomes. Educators in more than 146 countries trust it to deliver:

- The highest quality data for measuring student learning and growth based on our RIT scale
- Reports that help teachers differentiate instruction and reach more students
- Spanish-language testing for English language learners, with test items that address cultural differences and experiences instead of merely offering a translation
- Accessibility features for students with disabilities

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NWEA is a not-for-profit organization that supports students and educators worldwide by providing assessment solutions, insightful reports, professional learning offerings, and research services. Visit [NWEA.org](https://nwea.org) to find out how NWEA can partner with you to help all kids learn.

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