nwea Research

GUIDE

MAP Growth National Dashboard user guide and FAQ

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This user guide explains how to navigate the MAP® Growth™ National Dashboard, understand the key metrics and terms, make appropriate comparisons of data, and communicate findings responsibly.

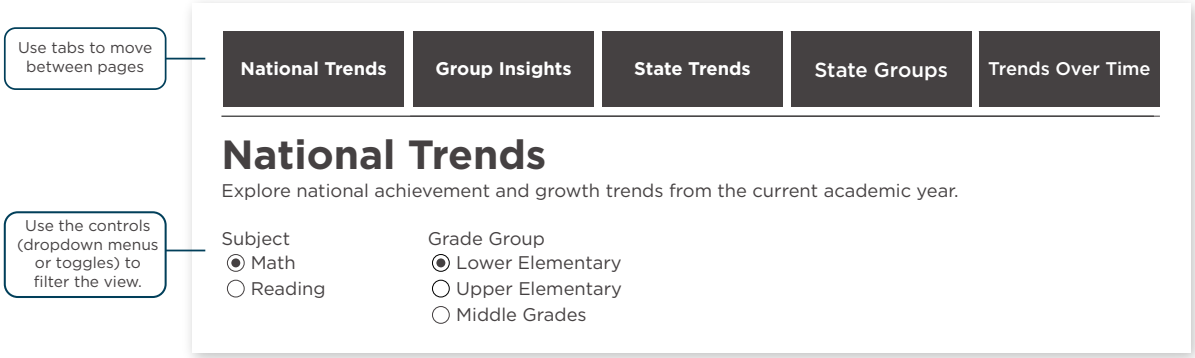
What is the MAP Growth National Dashboard?

The MAP Growth National Dashboard is a public tool that shows how K–8 students are performing in reading and math. It is based on data from over 7 million students in 20,000 schools—about one in four US public schools. So while the dashboard does not include every student, this large and representative sample offers a comprehensive snapshot of national patterns.

The dashboard is designed to help district leaders and policymakers interpret local results in context. Updated three times a year, it provides timely national and state reference points, and tracks academic recovery over time.

How is the dashboard organized?

The dashboard consists of five sections that highlight different aspects of student achievement and growth and display one comparison type at a time to keep results clear and interpretable. Tabs let you switch between these sections, and dropdown menus let you choose the specific grades, student group, or state you want to explore.



Dashboard tabs

- **National Trends** shows current-year academic achievement and growth in public schools across the country, offering a high-level snapshot updated each testing term (fall, winter, and spring).
- **Group Insights** breaks down national achievement and growth data by student groups, helping identify disparities in opportunity and outcomes.
- **State Trends** shows how individual states' achievement and growth trends compare to national averages.
- **State Groups** shows how the achievement and growth of different student groups in a state compare to national averages for those same groups.
- **Trends Over Time** shows how achievement has changed since the pandemic, with comparisons anchored to 2019 to support recovery analysis.

What do the key metrics mean?

The dashboard includes a mix of metrics and other measures. Achievement metrics capture students' performance at a single point in time, while growth metrics track their progress between two test events. Here's what each dashboard term means and how to use it.

Achievement metrics

Q: What is a RIT score?

RIT scores reflect a student's academic performance on the MAP Growth assessment. Scores range from 100 to 350, with higher RIT scores reflecting stronger academic skills in a given subject. RIT scores make it possible to track learning over time, even across grade levels.

Q: What is an achievement percentile?

Achievement percentiles show how students compare to same-grade peers in the national 2025 MAP Growth norms sample. For example, a percentile of 60 means a student performed better than 60% of same-grade peers nationally.

Growth metrics

Q: What is a conditional growth percentile (CGP)?

CGPs compare how much students grew from fall-to-winter or fall-to-spring relative to same-grade peers with the same starting fall achievement level. For example, a CGP of 70 means a student's growth was greater than that of 70% of their peers in the same grade who had the same fall RIT score.

Note: Growth metrics will appear on the dashboard only after winter testing is completed each year. They are not included in the fall dashboard update.

Other key terms

Q: What does "on track for proficiency" mean?

This metric estimates the percentage of students projected to reach proficiency on their state's summative assessment, based on their current score and typical growth patterns. This metric offers a bridge between interim and summative assessment data and helps leaders understand how current performance aligns with end-of-grade/year goals for student performance. It is important to note that MAP Growth itself does not measure grade-level proficiency; rather, it provides an estimate of how students are likely to perform on their state's test.

*Note: This metric is available only on the **State Trends** and **State Groups** pages, and only in states with a current linking study.*

Q: What are MAP Growth norms?

MAP Growth norms refer to nationally representative data used to draw comparisons on student performance on the MAP Growth assessment. Norms provide valuable context for interpreting both achievement and growth. Additional resources on the 2025 norms are available here.

Q: What is the enhanced item-selection algorithm (EISA)?

EISA is an update to how MAP Growth selects questions for students by prioritizing items that are more instructionally relevant and aligned to grade-level content. It causes shifts in math scores but was fully accounted for in the 2025 norms and this dashboard. Additional resources on EISA are available here.

Q: What are standard deviations and effect sizes?

- A standard deviation shows how spread out scores are from the average.
- An effect size uses standard deviations to represent the size of a change or difference in scores between groups or over time. On the **Trends Over Time** tab, the effect sizes show how far RIT scores have shifted from 2019 in a metric that can be compared across grades, as well as to other assessments and studies.

How can I use the dashboard?

The MAP Growth National Dashboard is intended to support district leaders, state and federal policymakers, and other education stakeholders in interpreting local data within a broader national and state context. It can help identify areas of strength, shine light on disparities, and ground policy conversations in evidence.

District leaders can use the dashboard and their local data to:

- Understand how their local achievement and growth patterns compare to national and state-level trends
- Examine whether local differences between student groups reflect broader national patterns
- Provide contextual information when reporting to school boards, families, and other stakeholders
- Track pandemic recovery by comparing changes in RIT scores over time to national trends, including differences by student group

Policymakers can use the dashboard to:

- Align policy initiatives with national and state-level achievement and growth trends
- Examine achievement and growth patterns across student groups to inform targeted supports and resource allocation
- Support transparent and timely communication with stakeholders
- Monitor national pandemic recovery progress over time

What kinds of questions can the dashboard help me answer?

The table below outlines comparisons and example questions that district leaders and policymakers can answer from referencing the dashboard and their local data:

Dashboard tab	Comparisons	Example questions
National Trends	Compare national achievement and growth metrics across grades within the same year	• How do national third-grade achievement levels compare to those of fourth-graders in 2024–25? • My fifth-graders are showing below-average reading growth this year. How does this compare to national trends?
Group Insights	Compare student groups in the same grade, term, and subject to each other and to national averages	• How does the national reading achievement and growth of Hispanic fourth-graders compare to that of White fourth-graders this year? • Third-grade boys in my district grew at the 55th percentile this year. How does their growth compare to that of third-grade boys nationally?
State Trends	Compare state-level average results to national averages for the same grade, term, and subject	• How does the math achievement and growth of seventh-grade students in my state compare to that of seventh-grade students nationally? • What percentage of eighth-grade students in my state are projected to reach proficiency on the state test this spring?
State Groups	Compare state-level average results for different student groups to national averages for the same group, grade, term, and subject	• Fifth-grade students in high-poverty schools in my district are in the second quintile for achievement and growth. How do their results compare to that of fifth-grade students in high-poverty schools in my state? • What percentage of sixth-grade students in rural schools in my state are projected to reach proficiency on the state test this spring?
Trends Over Time	Compare changes in achievement over time relative to 2019 baselines	• How have average RIT scores for third-graders changed over time? • How do changes in first-grade math achievement over the last few years compare for students in high- vs. low-poverty schools? • The gap between current and 2019 RIT scores in reading has widened for our district's eighth-grade students in 2024–25. How does this gap compare to national trends?

What cautions should I consider in using the dashboard?

While the dashboard is designed to support carefully structured comparisons that help users interpret local patterns in context, it is critical that users avoid misleading conclusions and communicate findings responsibly.

Look at more than one metric

Avoid drawing conclusions from a single metric or term. Instead, look at patterns over time and consider both achievement and growth. Highlighting growth in addition to achievement can provide a more complete and nuanced picture of student progress.

Use group data with care

Interpreting differences in achievement and growth between student groups requires care. Examining outcomes by race and ethnicity is essential for exposing long-standing inequities in our education system, but these differences reflect systemic barriers and uneven access to resources. Thus, these data should be framed as opportunity gaps, not shortcomings of students themselves, with the intent to highlight where additional support and investment are needed.

Check state-level representativeness

MAP Growth participation varies across states, so dashboard results may not reflect the full statewide student population. The **State Trends** tab shows:

- the percentage of the state's students enrolled in the selected grade who are included in the MAP Growth sample for the selected subject at the top of the page, and
- a graphic showing how each state's MAP Growth sample aligns with its broader student population at the bottom of the page.

Data are reported only when at least 20% of students were tested across most grades and the sample contains at least 10 students. Users should consider sample size limitations and potential differences between the tested population and the broader state demographic when interpreting trends.

Recognize the limits of comparison

The dashboard does not currently support state-to-state or district-to-district comparisons. This is because MAP Growth participation varies across states and districts, and the tested population may not fully represent the overall population. Directly comparing one state or district to another could therefore lead to inaccurate conclusions. Instead, use the national reference lines provided to put your local or state results in context.

Frequently asked questions

Referencing the dashboard

Q: How should I cite the dashboard?

When referencing the MAP Growth National Dashboard in reports, presentations, or articles, please use the following citation format:

> NWEA. (2025). MAP Growth National Dashboard. Portland, OR: NWEA. Retrieved from https://www.nwea.org/map-growth-national-dashboard.

If citing a specific figure, also include the page name and data season. For example:

> NWEA. (2025). MAP Growth National Dashboard—National Trends (Winter 2025). Portland, OR: NWEA. Retrieved from https://www.nwea.org/map-growth-national-dashboard.

Data inclusion and exclusion rules

Q: Does the dashboard include information about achievement and growth in subjects other than reading and math or grades other than K–8?

No. The dashboard currently includes information about achievement and growth only for reading and math in grades K–8.

Q. Why are certain states not included in the data dashboard? Why are student group data not available for some states?

Data are included only when samples are large enough to be plausibly reliable:

- **State Trends:** at least 20% of students in the subject/grade/term tested.
- **State Groups:** at least 20% of students in the subject/grade/term tested *and* a minimum of 10 students were in the group.

Each **State Trends** page shows the percent of students included and a graphic comparing the MAP Growth sample to the state's overall population. Always consider representativeness when interpreting state or subgroup results.

Q. Why don't I see growth metrics in the fall update?

Growth measures (conditional growth percentiles) require at least two test scores (fall-winter or fall-spring) to calculate. Because only fall scores are available at the start of the year, growth metrics appear beginning with the winter update.

MAP Growth norms

Q. Why does the dashboard use 2025 MAP Growth Norms for years of data prior to 2025? Are these norms different from the norms used in MAP Growth reports?

The dashboard uses 2025 norms for all years of data included in the dashboard to ensure consistency over time. Since July 2025, all MAP Growth reports have been updated to reflect the 2025 norms, including reports from previous school years. Reports downloaded prior to July 2025 reflect the 2020 norms.

Achievement percentiles, CGPs, and proficiency projections are not comparable between the dashboard and reports that reflect the 2020 norms.

Q. What years of data were used to create the 2025 MAP Growth Norms?

The 2025 MAP Growth Norms are based on the national sample of MAP Growth tests taken in 2022–23 and 2023–24.

Q. If the norms are based on a national sample, why aren't the national median percentiles and CGPs all around 50?

We generally interpret shifts in national percentiles and CGPs above or below 50 as reflecting changes in national performance relative to the norms sample. For example, a median achievement percentile of 55 in winter 2025 could be interpreted as an increase in national performance compared to the 2025 norms sample. However, it's important to note that small shifts could also be explained by differences in the schools and districts tested that term compared to those included in the norms sample.

Comparing local data to the dashboard

Q. Why do the state student demographics on the State Trends page not reflect the student demographics of my state as a whole? How should I interpret state-level achievement trends in the dashboard in light of these differences?

Not all districts in a state use MAP Growth, and participation rates vary. This means MAP Growth test takers may not perfectly represent the statewide population. The **State Trends** page shows how the MAP sample compares to the state's population to help you interpret results.

Q. Can I compare my results from 2024–25 reports to those in the dashboard?

Yes—if your reports use the 2025 MAP Growth Norms (i.e., it was pulled after July 11, 2025) *and* your district administered tests with EISA in 2024–25. If your district did not administer tests with EISA until the 2025–26 school year, your math data from 2024–25 need to be concorded to the EISA scale to make valid comparisons between your math data and the math data presented in the dashboard.

Q. How do the metrics available in the MAP Growth Class, School, and District Profile reports match those on the National Trends and State Trends pages of the dashboard?

See the crosswalk table below for where to find comparable metrics across NWEA® reports and dashboard pages.

MAP Growth report	Dashboard metric	Report tab	Report section	Comparable report measure (for the selected subject, grade, and term)
Student Profile report	Average RIT score by term	Mathematics or reading	Comparisons—Growth & achievement measures	The number in white text below "norms percentile achievement"
	Median achievement percentile	Mathematics or reading	Comparisons—Growth & achievement measures	The number in white text below "norms percentile growth"
	On track for proficiency	Mathematics or reading	Projections—MAP Growth reading & mathematics	"Advanced" / "proficient" / "below proficient"
Class Profile report	Average RIT score by term	Test details	National comparisons	"Class average RIT"
	Median achievement percentile	Test details	National comparisons	"Median percentile"
	On track for proficiency	Projected proficiency	Projected proficiency overview	% on track = # of students projected to be "advanced" or "proficient" / total # of students in class * 100%
School Profile report	Median achievement percentile	Single-term achievement	Achievement by grade	Bolded percentiles under "achievement median and distribution"
	Median fall-to-winter or spring CGP	Growth and achievement	Growth and achievement by grade (Start term: Fall; End term: Winter or spring)	Bolded percentiles under "growth median and distribution"
District Profile report	Average RIT score by term	Single-term achievement	Achievement by grade	"Average RIT"
	Median achievement percentile	Single-term achievement	Achievement by grade	Bolded percentiles under "achievement [term] median and distribution"
	Median fall-to-winter or spring CGP	Growth and achievement	Growth and achievement by grade (Start term: Fall; End term: Winter or spring)	Bolded percentiles under "growth median and distribution"
Achievement Status and Growth (ASG) Projection report	Average RIT score by term	N/A	Achievement status	The bolded number in the "RIT score range"
	Median achievement percentile	N/A	Growth—comparative	"Conditional growth percentile"

Note: To compare local data to other metrics or pages of the dashboard, partners can calculate the metrics using the data in their Comrehensive Data File (CDF). Instructions for ordering a CDF are here. For assistance with this process, please contact your NWEA account manager.

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