

# Assessment Office Hours



Friday April 9, 2021

Please post questions you may have in the chat –  
we will work to answer them during the session  
and add them to a Q & A document.

We will begin shortly.



## Welcome

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### Agenda

#### Accessibility – Tools, Supports, Accommodations

- Alternate Assessments accessibility statement
- NWEA
- New Meridian Science



## Accessibility Levels

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### Universal Tools

- Features available to all students

### Designated Supports

- Determined on an individual basis by an education team
- Does not alter construct of test items
- Must be consistent with student's normal routine during instruction

### Accommodations

- Changes in procedures or materials that do not alter was the assessment measures, but used to increase equitable access
- Must be documented in an IEP or 504 Plan
- Must be consistent with student's normal routine during instruction

The three levels of accessibility for general Maine Educational Assessments for Math & ELA/Literacy (NWEA) and Science remain, however you will see variations presented here from past practices as these two assessment are new to us.

### Universal Tools

- Features available to all students

### Designated Supports

- Determined on an individual basis by an education team
- Do not alter construct of test items
- Must be consistent with student's normal routine during instruction

### Accommodations

- Changes in procedures or materials that do not alter was the assessment measures, but used to increase equitable access
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- Must be consistent with student's normal routine during instruction

NWEA uses the CCSSO Accessibility Manual to help define their current tools, support features and accommodations, with the caveat that states should tailor this to meet their individual state policies, which is what is being presented today.

If you have searched the NWEA website for Accessibility and Accommodations for MAP Growth, you may find that certain features fall into different levels as outlined on this slide. For example NWEA lists:

- Breaks as a Universal Tool. Maine DOE sets this as a Designated Support
- Extended Time as an accommodation. NWEA is not a timed test so this is not applicable
- Text To Speech as a Designated Support. Maine DOE sets this as a Universal Tool for Math, and not allowed for Reading.



## Terminology

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Embedded = device delivered features that are a constructed part of the assessment platform

Non-embedded = Provisions outside of the online platform. This may include provision of an outside person, item, or change in timing and/or setting

Embedded means device delivered features that are a constructed part of the assessment platform

Non-embedded means provisions outside of the online platform. This may include provision of an outside person, item, or change in timing and/or setting.

Universal, or platform-based tools will vary between NWEA and New Meridian Science as they are two different vendors and platforms. Designated Support features and Accommodations are consistent across both assessments.

**Embedded**

## NWEA Universal Tools

**Using Universal Testing Tools**  
All students can take advantage of the following universal accessibility features. Some tools appear only when they are relevant to the subject and test question.

- Zoom**  
Useful for enlarging the question display
- Highlighter and Eraser**  
Useful for marking key parts of a question
- Line Reader**  
Useful for focusing attention on one line at a time, such as with reading passages
- Notepad**  
Useful for making notes about the question
- Answer Eliminator**  
Useful for marking wrong answers so they appear dimmer
- Calculator**  
Either standard or scientific. Appears for applicable questions, based on grade level. For details about using the scientific calculator, see <https://learn.desmos.com/scientific>
- Ruler and Protractor**  
Appears for applicable questions and enables students to measure lengths and angles, and to move and rotate the tools

**Keyboard Navigation**  
For students unable to use a mouse, it is possible to use keyboard controls. See [Keyboard Navigation for Testing](#)

Tool	Description
<b>Text-to-Speech (TTS)</b> <b>MATH ONLY</b>	Text is read aloud to the student via (embedded) TTS technology. TTS should be consistent with the student's normal routine during instruction and assessment. Headphones/earbuds are necessary unless assessed individually in a separate setting. TTS is available as a Universal Tool for MATH ONLY and is not permitted for the reading session.

Embedded Universal Tools for NWEA include:

- Zoom – enlarging text
- Highlighter and Eraser – marking key parts of an item/question
- Line Reader - focusing attention on one line at a time
- Notepad – making notes on the side regarding items
- Answer Eliminator – marking wrong answers so they appear dimmer
- Calculator – appears for applicable questions based on grade level
- Ruler and Protractor - appears for applicable questions and enables students to measure lengths and angles, and to move/rotate the tools
- Text to Speech (TTS) – available to all students in MATH SESSION ONLY. TTS is not available for the reading session.

TTS is categorized by NWEA as a designated feature or support. In the same manner that accessibility policy applied to the past 5 years of our one (online assessment eMPowerME), TTS will not be allowed for the reading session of NWEA. In consultation with both the Special Services and the ELA Content Team at DOE, we maintain the philosophy that permitting TTS for a student during the reading portion of an assessment would alter the construct of the item within the reading

assessment. For example, it may assist in the students comprehension of the reading passage and then subsequent response to the question. The reading session is assessing reading comprehension, not auditory or listening comprehension. TTS is however available for all students on the MATH SESSION ONLY.

For the fall 2021 and spring 2022, a more defined assessment window will be determined. The TTS accommodation will be available within the assessment platform outside of this assessment window if a district would like to administer the assessment locally to a student using the accommodation for reading.

Non-embedded Universal Tools

Scrap/Scratch Paper can be made available to all, and must be collected and securely destroyed at the end of each session



## NWEA Designated Supports

- Breaks
- Preferential seating
- Individually
- Small group
- Movement
- Alternate Aids/Supports
- Distraction Reduction
- Directions Clarification
- Bilingual Word Dictionary

[https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing\\_Accountability/MECAS/NWEA](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/NWEA)

Remember Designated Supports:

- Are determined on an individual basis by an education team
- Do not alter construct of test items
- Must be consistent with student's normal routine during instruction

This includes:

- Breaks
- Preferential seating
- Individually
- Small group
- Movement
- Alternate Aids/Supports
- Distraction Reduction
- Directions Clarification
- Bilingual Word Dictionary

NOTE: There is no customary “Extended Time” listed here as the NWEA is not a timed assessment. Students must complete their reading and math sessions prior to the

end of the assessment window or June 15<sup>th</sup>.

A narrative definition of each term is included in the NWEA Accessibility Guide when finalized and posted to the NWEA

Webpage

[https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing\\_Accountability/MECAS/NWEA](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/NWEA)



## NWEA Accommodations Non-embedded

Tool	Description
Read Aloud/Human Reader <b>MATH ONLY</b> OR American Sign Language	Text is read aloud or translated via sign language interpreter to a student by an Assessment Administrator human reader as documented in the IEP/504 plan. Read aloud is allowed for MATH SESSION ONLY, and not permitted for the reading session.
Refreshable Braille and/or Screen Reader	Both contracted and un-contracted braille (English Braille, American Edition or Unified English Braille) are available. Screen reader software may be applicable that reads aloud what is being displayed on the screen. Please note, screen readers are not a typical accommodation for students who are sighted, please see text-to-speech.
Scribe	The student may dictate answers to scribe in an individual setting. Human scribe records verbatim what a student dictates and must give the student an opportunity to review scribed text. Scribed text must be entered into the online assessment platform—no paper submissions accepted.

**\*\* Text-to-Speech & Read Aloud/Human Reader is NOT permitted for the reading session.**

Three non-embedded NWEA accommodations include:

- Read Aloud/Human Reader or Sign Language
- Braille
- Scribe

Read Aloud/Human Reader differs from TTS as the voice, inflection, and tone are not uniform or equitable to the TTS function which is consistently presented to the student via the online voice output. As we have discussed that TTS is available for MATH SESSION ONLY, Read Aloud/Human Reader also can be provided for the MATH ONLY, and not for the reading session. Remember this accommodation must be consistent with student's normal routine during instruction.

If a student has an accommodation for a Scribe, please note that any responses, in particular constructed responses, must be entered into the student's device logged in online platform by the Scribe.



# Demonstration

Alex Luisi, NWEA

Andrew Wallace, South Portland Schools



## Science Universal Tools

Embedded

Tool	Tool Icon	Description
Review		Review page shows flagged items for review and items not attempted
Accessibility		Accessibility options of Color Scheme / Font Size / Zoom enlargement
Flag or Bookmark		Ability to flag or bookmark an item to return to
Response Masking		Ability to hide/cover an answer choice – available on Multiple Choice items only
Text-to-Speech (TTS)		Text is read aloud to the student via (embedded) TTS technology. TTS should be consistent with the student's normal routine during instruction and assessment. Headphones/earbuds are necessary unless tested individually in a separate setting.

Non-embedded

Scrap/Scratch Paper can be made available to all, and must be collected and securely destroyed at the end of each session

For the first time our general science assessment is online, therefore the Science Accessibility Guide is different from the past as it now contains some platform Universal Tools. These include:

- Review – this brings you to the last review page which will show flagged items students may have marked for review, and items not yet attempted. All students will see this review page at the end of sessions prior to submitting/finishing.
- Accessibility – this icon shows options for screen color scheme choices, font size and Zoom enlargement.
- Flag or Bookmark – allows a student to flag or bookmark an item they may want to return to for review
- Response Masking - ability to hide or cover an answer choice. This is available on multiple choice items only.
- Text to Speech (TTS) – Can be individually assigned in the student profile within the platform.

The Science Assessment is not evaluating reading comprehension, therefore, the TTS feature in the New Meridian ADAM platform will be available to all students as a Universal Tool. This should only be used if students regularly use a TTS or similar read aloud during science classroom instruction.

Non-embedded Universal Tools

Scrap/Scratch Paper can be made available to all, and must be collected and securely destroyed at the end of each session



## Science Designated Supports

- Breaks
- \*\*Extended Time
- Preferential seating
- Individually
- Small group
- Movement
- Alternate Aids/Supports
- Distraction Reduction
- Directions Clarification
- Bilingual Word Dictionary

Science Sessions and Time Allowances All Grades 5, 8, High School	
Material Distribution / Instructions	10 – 15 minutes
Science Session 1	60 minutes
Science Session 2	60 minutes
Science Session 3	60 minutes
Student Questionnaire / Session 4	15 – 20 minutes
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>205 – 215 minutes</b>

Extended Time beyond 60 min/per session and any started session must be completed same day

[https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing\\_Accountability/MECAS/Generalscience](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/Generalscience)

Remember Designated Supports:

- Are determined on an individual basis by an education team
- Do not alter construct of test items
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These include:

- Breaks
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\*\*NOTE: The Science assessment does have time parameters with the average

amount of time per each of the 3 sessions for all grade levels 5/8/HS listed in the chart. If a student has “Extended Time” documented as a school, team-based decision, each of the individual 3 sessions must be completed within the same day started – with the time extension beyond the 60 minutes until the end of that specific school day when the session was opened and started.

A narrative definition of each term is included in the NWEA Accessibility Guide when finalized and posted to the NWEA

Webpage

[https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing\\_Accountability/MECAS/Generalscience](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/Generalscience)



## Science Accommodations Non-embedded

Non-Embedded Accommodations Provisions outside of the online assessment platform based on IEP or 504 Plan	
Tool	Description
Read Aloud/Human Reader OR American Sign Language	Text is read aloud or translated via sign language interpreter to student by Test Administrator human reader as documented in the IEP/504 plan.
Braille	Both contracted and un-contracted braille (English Braille, American Edition or Unified English Braille) are available. Students who require a Braille assessment will be send a transcribed paper-based assessment
Scribe	The student may dictate answers to scribe in an individual setting. Human scribe records verbatim what a student dictates and must give the student an opportunity to review scribed text. Scribed text must be <u>entered into</u> the online testing platform—no paper submissions accepted.

Three non-embedded Science accommodations include:

- Read Aloud/Human Reader or Sign Language
- Braille
- Scribe

Read Aloud/Human Reader differs from TTS as the voice, inflection, and tone are not uniform or equitable to the TTS function which is consistently presented to the student via the online voice output. As we have discussed that TTS is available as a Universal Tool for the science assessment, Read Aloud/Human Reader should be reserved for those students who have this accommodation documented in an IEP or 504 Plan, and remember the use of a human reader must be consistent with student's normal routine during instruction.

If a student has an accommodation for a Scribe, please note that any responses, in particular constructed responses, must be entered into the student's device logged in online platform by the Scribe.



## Questions & Answers

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[@maine.gov](https://www.maine.gov)

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Please don't hesitate to reach out to the team with any questions or concerns.