



Assessment Team Office Hours Q&A

November 13, 2024

Resources

- [Slides](#)
- [Recording](#)
- Maine DOE professional learning calendar: [Event Calendar | Department of Education \(maine.gov\)](#)

General Updates

- Maine DOE Data Warehouse Coordinator Brett Molin attended this month's session to provide an update on the assessment data visualization work taking place. For more information about this work as well as related questions, please reference the recording.

Maine Through Year

Resources

- [Maine DOE Through Year Assessment Page](#)
- [NWEA Maine Connection Page](#)
- [NWEA Professional Learning Opportunities](#)
- [RIT Reference Chart](#)

Questions:

Compared to other states using this type of state-wide assessment, how accurate are Spring results compared to NWEA MAP growth goals set from the Fall? Should we be tracking Fall to Fall to best accommodate growth goals for our students?

Previous response (abridged from September Office Hours): NWEA's Psychometrics and Content Teams are working to craft a response to this question.

Updated response: District partners seeking more information about other states utilizing NWEA state-wide assessments are encouraged to review publicly available documentation from NWEA's other state partners:

- [Technical Reports – Nebraska Department of Education](#)
- Alaska does not post their Technical Report publicly. Here is a link to the state results that are readily available on the internet: [2024 Assessment Results - Education and Early Development \(alaska.gov\)](#)

Understanding that grade-level alignment and difficulty are not the same, are there some standards that are consistently found to be more difficult than others?

Response from NWEA: Across Math and Reading some standards will likely be consistently more difficult. This will be true both in assessments and in instruction. The same judgments about difficulty that a teacher may

bring to the classroom - which standards tend to require more time, instruction, and practice for students to grasp - will likely hold true to the difficulty of the standard and associated items in the assessment as well.

However, it's not feasible to create a straight progression of difficulty from standard to standard. For example, items assessing figurative language (e.g., *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.5.a - Explain the meaning of simple similes and metaphors in context*) are likely to be harder than items that are just using context clues (e.g., *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.4.a - Use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase*). While this is generally true of a set of items, there will be individual items that do not follow this pattern.

Other measures, like DOK, will also track this. Standards that are DOK 2 or 3 will generally be more difficult (and the questions will have a higher RIT) than DOK 1. But again, there may still be individual item differences that don't align with the general pattern. For example, DOK 1 items are often about material that a student either knows or doesn't know and this can make the items more difficult than expected if students haven't learned the topic.

We've invited NWEA presenters to our district in the past few years, and they've commented to the optional winter assessment window where the representative indicated that the RIT bands for students during the winter assessment window were not whole as compared to fall because it indeed is optional and fewer students test during that season. Are you seeing at the state level for those that participate in the Maine Through Year Assessment, are there any inflated RIT bands that you see statewide based on the winter assessment window or the number of students or the number of students across the state that actually take part in that? ... The representative indicated that the norming was off due to the number of students that participate in the optional window.

First, the number of students that take part in the winter assessment administration of the Maine Through Year Assessment is considerably fewer than those that participate in the fall and spring assessments. However, the normative data and bands are based on nationwide data, not statewide data, and so we do not compare individual student RIT score performance to statewide data. In that way, the NWEA representative would have been referring to their nationwide RIT score norms.

NWEA has provided the following information:

The norms are stable for all terms. The norms are based on data from millions of test events collected over many years. This extensive dataset provides a robust foundation for deriving stable norms across seasons.

Will we be using the new norms when the NWEA releases them (Summer 2025)?

The Maine DOE is currently in discussions regarding, if NWEA were to continue to be our state assessment vendor for reading and mathematics in 2025-26, whether we would utilize the enhanced item selection algorithm for the diagnostic portions of the Through Year Assessment and apply the new norms or if we would maintain the current computer-adaptive engine and the 2020 norms.

[Maine Science](#)

Resource

- [Maine Science Support](#)

Question/Comment

I am worried about the % of students who are designated at or above in both my district and at the State level. When speaking about the 20-25% of students at or above on the Science assessment as a State, how does the MDOE plan to communicate with stakeholders about those %'s?

Previous response (from October Office Hours Q&A): Spring 2024 assessment results will be reported publicly via the ESSA Data Dashboard, per federal regulations. In reference to Maine DOE's method of communication around the availability of assessment data, the Assessment Team will need to consult with the Department's Communication Team. The Team will share information around this as it becomes available.

Updated response: There are many variables that may impact a student's performance on the assessment. Maine DOE encourages SAUs to examine their local data in combination with their comprehensive needs assessment and data analysis structures to review longitudinal trends for their student population(s) and complete any root cause analyses to determine how to communicate SAU/school/student performance when reporting to the local school board and the community.

When is the science contract up? Will there be an RFP?

The Maine DOE renewed the Maine Science Assessment contract with New Meridian this academic year, as part of the optional renewals included in the original contract. Because this renewal is part of the original contract, there was no need for an RFP.

Will we have input as to moving up the release of data?

The Assessment Team, New Meridian, and KU have begun discussions regarding the timeline for release of Spring 2025 Maine Science Assessment data. Because our reporting vendor is separate from our assessment vendor, there is a slight delay inherent in the process, but we expect to get data to the field much earlier this upcoming year.

[NAEP & International](#)

Resource

- [NAEP Assessment Schedule](#)

Questions

No questions at this time.

[ACCESS & Alternate ACCESS \(English language proficiency\)](#)

Resource

- Information related to the annual English Language Proficiency Assessment, can be found on the Maine DOE/ACCESS webpage: [English Language Proficiency Assessments | Department of Education \(maine.gov\)](#)

Questions

No questions at this time.

MSAA (Math/ELA and Science)

Resource

- Information related to the Multi-State Alternate Assessment can be found on the Maine DOE/MSAA webpage: [MSAA | Department of Education \(maine.gov\)](#) Current year information will be updated as it becomes available.
- As a District Assessment Coordinator, will you need access to the MSAA Platform to view students, create TA accounts, monitor test status and download reports? If so, complete the survey: [MSAA Test Coordinator Survey](#)

Questions

No questions at this time.