# ASSESSMENT OFFICE HOURS / LUNCH and LEARN

# Q &A November 10, 2021

# NWEA

**Q: What will be considered proficient?**

A: The Department has not determined student proficiency for some time but has, with the collaboration and involvement of Maine stakeholders, identified grade-specific achievement levels indicating if a student is or is not meeting state expectations with regard to performance on the applicable assessment.

For NWEA, MAP Growth the RIT scores provided place students into the five performance levels. These performance bands are norm-referenced and take into consideration the performance of a sample of students across the United States in each grade level.

Maine Science was a field test administration in Spring 2021. Standard setting/ benchmarking and performance levels will be established during Summer 2022. Students will receive results for the Spring 2022 assessment in Fall 2022 following standard setting/benchmarking. Interested in participating in standard-setting and benchmarking? Please reach out to Jodi Bossio-Smith (MSAA – Science) or Nancy Godfrey/Shari Templeton (Maine Science).

**Q: Any thoughts on the growth model yet? The MCLA discussed this topic this morning. People are wondering about the accountability model versus the growth model?**

A: Conversations regarding the utilization of the NWEA assessment are transpiring in the assessment redesign meetings implemented on a bi-weekly schedule. The student growth or other academic indicator subgroup within the accountability evaluation and review session is examining how growth may factor into the revised accountability model. Currently, a growth transition table is utilized, however, with the utilization of the fall and spring NWEA assessment, growth data may be more readily available. Interested in participating in these conversations? Reach out to Janette Kirk.

**Q: Can you talk about participation- how will that be captured? What counts for participation?**

A: This is still being discussed and determined internally by DOE. Considerations include the multiple administrations. DOE will be reporting participation to the US Department of Education in the Spring, but it is yet to be determined how the multiple administrations will contribute to overall participation. The Department will be examining participation in both the fall 2021 and spring 2022 administrations.

**Q: There are a number of students who were unable to finish the assessments due to unexpected quarantining and other reasons. Will those students count? How will that connect to end of year scores.**

A: Unfortunately, at this time, NWEA has been able to provide information related only to students who have completed the assessment sessions in full and have received a RIT score. Recognizing the ongoing challenges COVID-19 presents the Department continues to work with NWEA team members to obtain a data point or information regarding students who have partially completed the assessment due to the COVID-19 associated reasons.

**Q: Can you explain how the participation percentage is calculated if a student takes 2 of the 3 but exits to homeschool?**

A: The team received data for each component of MAP Growth – Reading, Language and Math. For participation data in MAARS from the spring 2021 administration, reading and math participation is separate. The language session was not required in the spring and therefore does not factor into participation. If the student completed the reading and math sessions and received a RIT score, the student would be a participant in both assessments in included in the percentage.

As language was added to the fall 2021 administration, the Department is working to determine if reading and language sessions will be combined for ELA participation. Further information will be forthcoming.

**Q: Can a student who is currently quarantined for ten days complete the NWEA when they return?**

A: Yes. The larger NWEA window for Fall 2021 remains open through November 30th, so for purposes of local data to inform instruction, the student still can participate. If the assessment was not completed during the October 4 – November 12, 2021, state window, the student will not be included in the data file and will not be a participant in the assessment.

**Q: Can the larger windows be shared with the field?**

A: The broader 3-month overall NWEA window available for local administration and data collection will be added again in the [Maine Assessment Calendar](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/calendar) webpage. These windows are as follows:

NWEA Fall Window for Local Data Collection August 15 – November 30, 2021

NWEA Winter Window for Local Data Collection December 1, 2021 – February 28, 2022

NWEA Spring Window for Local Data Collection March 1 – June 15, 2022

**Q: Does the winter administration matter if it’s optional? Why is there a state window in the winter if it’s optional?**

This state recommended window is related to the recommended number of instructional weeks between administrations.

**Q: Will sub-reports become available/open up? Mine for data other than the headings? Why would we eliminate targeted scores?** Several other participants expressed the desire for this functionality as well as helps to target RTI support as well as track longitudinal data.

The revisions to the Maine Learning Results in the areas of Math and ELA were adopted into law July 18th, 2020. As standards change and morph, assessment blueprints adapt to reflect such changes. These changes to the blueprint of the applicable assessments ensure an alignment between Maine’s revised Learning Results to the NWEA assessment blueprint as communicated by NWEA in July 2021.

The intentionality of the revisions to the Maine content standards extends beyond simply “checking a federal box” to have an assessment aligned with state standards, but rather, honors the voice and expertise of Maine educators and education stakeholders who utilize and implement content standards in their classroom daily to inform instruction. Classroom practitioners and SAU staff alike can continue supporting student development and achievement and transference of learning.

With respect to ELA, there are no areas that have been omitted from content or reporting. The differences between the former ELA MLR and the revised ELA MLR lie in the fact that the 2020 reading standards focus on text in a broader sense and are not broken into literary and informational text. One of the essential changes in thinking for the writers of the revised ELA/Literacy MLRs was that the standards be about instruction of reading texts and that the ***“goal of all reading instruction is to help students become competent consumers of a wide variety of texts in diverse forms so that they can achieve independence, find meaning, and use literacy for lifelong learning, empowerment, and enjoyment”*** This is then reflected below with the condensed categories for instruction and reporting. Recognizing the increase and utilization of digital texts and their critical importance to literacy development, a good number of sources blend writing modes. To support this shift, the revised standards no longer break apart performance indicators specific to Literary and Instructional Text. Similarly, they no longer identify writing performance indicators specific to narrative, informational and persuasive text. The standards reference “Various Text Types” rather than emphasizing any one particular genre. Educators are encouraged to use a variety of text types, including literature and informational texts in multiple formats. The skills outlined by the standards are designed so that students can receive literacy instruction with each text they encounter across all disciplines.

With respect to Math, changes related to terminology including conceptual and grade-level categories to grade-spans, domains to strands and cluster titles to standards and standards to performance expectations. The reporting categories have been revised to align with the 4 strands in mathematics within the Maine Learning Results and encompass the continuum from kindergarten to diploma. Information related to the revisions to the math standards is available through this [10-minute overview](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FbWyXEjcNA,) conducted by Department math specialists, Michele Mailhot and Jennifer Robitaille.

To support the field in the utilization of assessment data to directly impact student learning, several NWEA professional learning sessions have been offered throughout Fall 2021. During the most recent NWEA professional learning sessions for administrators and educators that focused on the utilization of reports, the [class breakdown report](https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov.doe/files/inline-files/NWEA%20Reports%2012.21%20-%20Details%20%282%29.pdf) provides information for instructional decision making. From there, educators can select a strand or RIT band to provide the Learning Continuum which provides the descriptions of the skills at each RIT band.

**Debunking misconceptions currently circulating:**

**Reporting elements were eliminated as the State did not include this in the contract**

This is inaccurate. The reports available to Maine SAUs are standard reports that are available within the NWEA MARC platform. These reports, as mentioned above, reflect and report out on standards within the Maine Learning Results (MLR). As the MLR were revised during the statutorily required five-year review cycle [(20-A Section 6209, Section 4)](https://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/20-a/title20-Asec6209.html), the NWEA reports have adapted to reflect the revisions to Maine ELA standards.

**The Maine DOE conducted an RFP to eliminate elements of the Common Core State Standards from the Maine Learning Results.**

This is inaccurate. As mentioned above, the Maine DOE, in collaboration with education stakeholders with representation from across the state, grade level, and role, engages in [13-step](https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/content/standardsreview/steps) [standards review](https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/content/standardsreview) process on a five-year cycle. The writing committees, comprised of Maine educators, review and examine content standards and recommend revisions to the steering committee. These recommendations are present via public hearing and comment with any comments, suggestions and further recommendations reviewed and addressed. Final standards are presented to the legislature for adoption.