## **Office Hours Q & A**

March 5, 2021

## **NWEA**

**Has NWEA created a new assessment for Maine, or will we be using the assessments we have been using? Also, if we have students who are only remote this year, are we able to submit Special Consideration requests for them?**

The NWEA assessment will be the same assessment, the MAP growth assessment will be administered. With the remote administration availability, the hope would be that those fully remote students can participate in the assessment remotely.

**What criteria are there for “remote administration” of the NWEA assessment?**

NWEA has a series of best practice guides. Schools have different concerns about security and proctoring. Many schools have already had remote administration, and Maine DOE has connected with those schools in the hope of sharing those experiences with SAUs which are new to the administration of this assessment. We will also be reviewing these best practices in future office hour sessions.

**What accommodations [for NWEA] will be allowed and how do we document those for our students?**

The accessibility/accommodations document is currently available on the NWEA website. However, there will also be Maine specific policies related to using accommodations. These will be shared in upcoming office hours and via Assessment Team Communications.

**What will the criteria be for “meeting” [achievement expectations] on the NWEA Math / ELA?**

Maine DOE is not conducting benchmarking and standard setting this year.

**How can we assure that a remote administration is “secure?"**

When you use a secure browser, it turns off the camera and remote proctors lose the ability to see who is participating in the assessment. Schools will have to weigh what is most important while deciding whether to use an application- based versus a secure browser approach.

**Might there be a situation (medical) where a student is unable to take the NWEA remotely or onsite?**

We are hoping the ability to administer remotely will result in more students able to participate. We advise you to reach out to your assessment coordinator, [Nancy Godfrey](mailto:nancy.godfrey@maine.gov), and she can work with you regarding next steps to see if a special consideration may apply.

**Do teachers and other proctors need to participate in any kind of training program (video, webinar, etc.) to administer the [NWEA} assessment?**

The training materials are posted to the [NWEA](https://www.nwea.org/) website. For new users, we advise you to wait until the onboarding materials are shared.

**Can the email [for the NWEA SAU User Agreement template] to Superintendents be cc’d to the DACs?**

This request will be shared with NWEA.

**Will the NWEA assessment used for all grade levels be the MAP?**

The required grade levels are 3-8 and third year of high school administering NWEA MAP Growth. Honoring the request from district leaders, second year of high school students will have the option to participate if the district so chooses.

**Will we be administering the Language Usage assessment and the Reading assessment (as well as math) or just reading?**

Current NWEA users may continue to administer the language usage assessment during the spring of 2021. New NWEA users are not required to administer the language usage assessment during the spring 2021 administration but may do so if they choose. The language usage assessment will be administered for all NWEA users during the fall 2021 and spring 2022 assessment administration windows.

**Is the state covering the cost of 2nd year high school?**

SAUs will be reimbursed for the grade levels which are required. If the SAU is currently administering to second year high school students as part of their current contract, they will be reimbursed.

**Would we need to commit to the 10th grade optional when we sign [the NWEA User Agreement]?**

This is a data-sharing agreement, which does not include opting into different grade levels. After the SAU signs, NWEA will provide licenses for participating students, and Maine DOE will receive the invoice.

**Will the NWEA be the adaptive MAP format?**

Yes.

**What is the time burden for the various assessment tutorials? This is important for scheduling.**

This question will be shared with NWEA and New Meridian and the information will be shared with DACs as soon as possible.

**With regard to next year: will districts be required to take the NWEA three times?**

Maine DOE asks that the assessment be administered in the fall and spring. If the SAU chooses to administer in the winter, this is optional.

**What about charter schools that the Charter Commission provides accounts for and covers our fees?**

Yes, Maine DOE will be working with the charter school commission to reimburse those costs.

**Which NWEA assessment for third year high school on Math… 6+? Which for Reading?**

The 6+ will be administered.

**What are the NWEA technology requirements and are they the same for the lock-down vs. web-based browsers**

Yes, the requirements and supported devices are nearly the same, there are some web browsers not supported on some devices. Page 1 and 2 of the System Requirements guide provide the requirements for Secure Browser and standard Web Browser testing.

Technology requirements for the platform are included on the NWEA website: <https://teach.mapnwea.org/impl/QRM2_System_Requirements_QuickRef.pdf>

**If students are at home remote for NWEA, would they would use a web-based browser?**

Yes, students can access the assessment through a standard web browser, and this would allow them to still access communication software with the teacher/proctor on the same device. They can use the secure browser if they have a second device to communicate with the teacher/proctor.

**If students are attending in-person is the lock-down browser required/recommended for administration of the NWEA assessment?**

Yes, the secure browser is recommended whenever possible.

**Is there a link to NWEA that we can review?**

NWEA has a plethora of information on their website as an introductory starting place. Some aspects displayed on this site may or may not be applicable to Maine’s administration of NWEA.

**Can students can take the assessment outside of a secure browser?**

Details of this process are forthcoming as meetings with NWEA have started and continue however, yes, administration is possible outside of a secure browser. SAUs will have the option to utilize the lock-down or web-based browser.

## NAEP

**Is NAEP for only selected schools? Or do all schools have to do this?**

This is only for the sample schools and the schools have already been notified. Questions about participation should be directed to [Dr. Regina Lewis,](mailto:Regina.Lewis@maine.gov) Coordinator of NAEP & International Assessments.

## Participation

**If families opt out (we will try to limit this) of the ELA/Math assessment will they count against us?**

If the student’s family refuses assessment for reasons other than medical emergency or COVID-19 considerations, this is counted as nonparticipation. Students are exempted only if a Special Consideration is approved.

**If our testing window starts in mid-April and a student moves away between now and then, and they do not take the assessment, will that count against us?**

The assessment team will review this question and clarify the information in the upcoming office hour session.

**What about SAUs which are currently using the NWEA assessments but not in all grade levels?**

You would be counted as a current user. NWEA will reach out to the SAU to confirm that the TAs implementing the assessment in the second and third years of high school have access to resources and training to adequately administer the assessment. This approach is currently being confirmed with NWEA.

**If our district’s county is green but we have students whose parents chose “supported learning at home” for the school year - may the MEA Science be offered at school in a separate session with few staff/students present but that’s considered OPTIONAL to attend?**

If the student is not receiving remote instruction due to a medical emergency or COVID-19 consideration and is able to be present for in-person instruction, the expectation is that the student would be able to participate in assessments. The assessment may be offered at the school in a separate session with smaller groups of staff/students present however, participation in the science assessment is a requirement within ESEA as amended by ESSA. A student who is ineligible for a special consideration and elects to not complete the assessment is a non-participant.

## Special Considerations

**For students in Special Purpose Private Schools, do responsible school districts make the special consideration requests for remote students or does that fall to the individual SPPS?**

The process for requesting Special Considerations for students attending Special Purpose Private Schools (SPPS) is slightly different from students who are enrolled in one school entity. All students attending SPPS’s have a primary/sending district who is fiscally responsible for the student’s education, in addition to the secondary/concurrent SPPS enrollment. As in the past both the primary/sending district OR the SPPS are able to submit a special consideration request. The bulk Special Consideration request process does not include any mechanism for a primary/sending district to inform the secondary/concurrent SPPS of a submitted special considerations request, nor does it include any mechanism for an SPPS initiated special considerations request to obtain authorization from the primary/sending district to make such request as required in the NEO/MEA Module. Therefore, we request that ***all Special Consideration exemption requests for students attending secondary/concurrent Special Purpose Private Schools be submitted individually through the*** [***NEO/MEA Module***](https://neo.maine.gov/DOE/NEO/Accounts/Account/Login) ***by either school entity.***

**What if we’ve already requested the bulk spreadsheet is there anything else required?**

If you’ve already connected with the applicable assessment coordinator and **are in receipt** of the template, there is no further action required on your behalf at this time. If you still require a copy of the template, please reach out to the applicable assessment coordinator. The template and request(s) cannot be submitted until the applicable assessment window opens. The SAU has until the end of the applicable assessment window to submit the special consideration request(s). Please refer to the [Special Considerations Large Group Guidance](https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov.doe/files/inline-files/Guidance%20for%20Special%20Considerations%202021%20Bulk%20Groups_0_0.docx) for additional information.

**Is there a due date for requests for Special Considerations? I am wondering, just in case, if remote students are somehow back in school before the end of the window?**

Assessment windows have been extended this year in the hopes of providing flexibility and opportunity for students to participate in assessments when safely feasible to do so. Special considerations requests should not be submitted until closer to the end of the assessment window, if the student has been and will continue to be fully remote and therefore unable to participate in onsite assessments.