



# NEWS

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Pittsburgh Public Schools Unveils New Student Assessment System** *Map Growth Tool to Alleviate Testing Burden on Teachers, Students While Providing More Precise Data for Instructional Decisions*

PITTSBURGH August 23, 2019 – Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) Superintendent Dr. Anthony Hamlet today announced that the District has adopted a new student assessment system that reduces the testing burden for teachers and students while offering better, more precise data on student performance — addressing an issue that has long been a point of frustration for educators.

Beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year, PPS will use the Northwest Evaluation Association’s Measures of Academic Progress system. Nicknamed MAP Growth, the system offers more data from fewer assessments, evaluating student progress with pinpoint precision and providing the data and supports that teachers need to make instructional decisions.

“As Superintendent, I strive to make listening and learning a priority,” Hamlet says. “And what I’m hearing is clear: teachers want more time to spend on teaching. For years, the burden of testing has been accumulating, forcing teachers to focus their instruction on what is in the test, rather than on what students need to learn. At the same time, we do need objective, quantifiable measurements to augment the insights that teachers have and guide the pathways we create for student success. The MAP Growth system helps us achieve this balance.”

MAP Growth provides data on Pennsylvania state standards, eligible content, Lexiles, and K-2 foundational skills. It also includes college and career readiness information for both the ACT and SAT, according to Dr. Ted Dwyer, Chief of Data, Research, Evaluation, and Assessment.

MAP Growth will replace quarterly and predictive assessments for English Language Arts and mathematics as well as science in grades 3-8 and the in-program assessment for Edmentum, an online learning program for teachers.

The predicted time savings in a school year include approximately:

- 2 hours for K-2
- 3 hours for grades 3-5
- 2 to 5 hours for grades 6-7
- 5 to 6 hours in grade 8
- 4 to 7 hours in grades 9-12

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Data from MAP Growth will be used to place students into a learning path, says Minika Jenkins, Chief Academic Officer of PPS. Additionally, MAP Growth will help identify students who might require additional diagnostic assessment and intervention, instead of testing all students multiple times.

“We know that data alone will not help us realize our vision and mission,” Jenkins says. However, “MAP Growth will provide information on where students are in the learning process and assist in creating a continuum for learning that can be used to set goals for students.”

Teachers will be trained on administering and proctoring MAP Growth assessment and provided professional development on accessing, analyzing, and using the reports.

“This year, we are removing barriers to advancing teaching and learning, which begins with decreasing the number of assessments so that we can spend more time doing what we love most: teaching,” Hamlet says.

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