Recommendations for using MAP Accelerator in a remote environment

Introduction

MAP® Accelerator™ is a personalized learning tool for grades 3–8, and the newest product in the MAP Suite. MAP Accelerator automatically integrates class rosters via Clever, MAP® Growth™ scores, and Common Core-aligned Khan Academy content to reduce the manual work of differentiating math instruction. This powerful tool will allow teachers to reach each student where they are, even as our research predicts a broader array of achievement gaps this year due to COVID-19 school closures.

This overview offers recommendations to assist district and school administrators planning to have students use MAP Accelerator in remote environments during the 2020–21 school year.

Key information

• The student usage experience for MAP Accelerator is the same when comparing in-school versus remote environments. The only differences are that the student is not in a school environment and that they are using a personal device.
• After initial device setup, proctoring and/or teacher guidance are not required in order for students to use MAP Accelerator
• The entire MAP Accelerator student experience, including videos and text, is available in English and Spanish
• The Khan Academy site (which MAP Accelerator is a part of) has been tested for accessibility with some popular screen reader/browser combinations, including JAWS for Windows with Chrome browser and VoiceOver for Mac with Safari browser

District recommendations

The district should establish policy and communication to address, at minimum, the following areas:
• What is the reason students are using MAP Accelerator?
• What is the role of the teacher, student, and parent/caregiver?
• What are the expectations of the data use?
• How often should students use MAP Accelerator?

Technical support

NWEA® is prepared to receive support calls from school staff related to MAP Accelerator. The district should create a support plan for staff, students, and families to address concerns including, but not limited to, the following:
• Technology requirements
• Connectivity issues
• Device management
• Software support
• Firewall and web filter adjustments
School recommendations
To ensure that schools and students get the most out of MAP Accelerator, we recommend the following actions:

For best results, obtain the necessary MAP Growth 2-5/6+ assessment data
MAP Accelerator generates personalized learning pathways for each student based on their instructional area RIT scores from the MAP Growth 2-5/6+ math assessment (English and Spanish version). The MAP Growth screening assessment does not create the necessary data for MAP Accelerator, as it provides only an overall RIT score, not instructional area RIT scores. Here is guidance on how to administer MAP Growth in a remote environment.

If you have purchased MAP Accelerator, once you have administered the MAP Growth 2-5/6+ assessment data will be automatically added to MAP Accelerator to generate personalized learning pathways in math. Teachers can approve or adjust these default placements into learning pathways at any time.

While we recommend all students using MAP Accelerator have MAP Growth 2-5/6+ assessment data, we recognize that this might not always be the case. To address this, we have enabled MAP Accelerator to be used with or without MAP Growth 2-5/6+ assessment data. Students without MAP Growth data will be placed in their grade-level associated content for all learning pathways based on instructional areas.

Make sure you roster with Clever
Clever rostering is required for MAP Accelerator and can help connect your classroom tools, like MAP Accelerator, into one dashboard. How to best use Clever and MAP Accelerator together will be covered in your MAP Accelerator implementation.

Plan for students to use MAP Accelerator weekly
We recommend that students use MAP Accelerator for 30-45 minutes of learning and aim to “level up” on two skills a week. This recommendation is based on Khan Academy’s study showing students who completed 60 percent or more of their grade-level math practice on Khan Academy experienced 1.8 times their expected growth on their MAP Growth math assessment.

Ensure teachers and students have the necessary technology
MAP Accelerator supports the following operating systems, web browsers, and devices:

Operating systems:
• MacOS
• Microsoft

Web browsers:
• Mozilla Firefox
• Google Chrome
• Safari
• Microsoft Edge

Devices:
• Computers (PC / Laptop / Macs / Chromebooks)
• Tablets
• iOS devices like iPhones and iPads
• Android

IMPORTANT NOTE: As long as a teacher/student has completed the appropriate hardware and software checks for MAP Growth (which is highly suggested before using MAP Accelerator), there is not a specific hardware and software check that is needed for MAP Accelerator. If the student has not yet taken MAP Growth, you can have students run a self-check on their devices at NWEA Workstation Diagnostic to verify their device adheres to minimum requirements. If devices do not adhere, schools need to establish a support system to address technical issues identified by students/parents/caregivers.

Train teachers on how to use and support MAP Accelerator
• To ensure teachers understand the value of MAP Accelerator, we recommend you dedicate time and space for teachers to participate in professional learning, including the complimentary introductory course (available starting on July 24th, 2020), and review resources like the MAP Accelerator Welcome Guide.
• Teachers (or other school staff) need to be the first tier of support for students/parents/caregivers, as NWEA is unable to support their questions or inquiries. Because of this, we recommend that your school ensures that teachers are provided with training on how to troubleshoot the most common login issues.
Communicate with parents/caregivers
We suggest that schools develop a communication strategy that seeks to provide parents/caregivers the following information:
• What MAP Accelerator is and why their child/student is using it
• Guidance on how to help their child/student get the most value from MAP Accelerator
• Instruction on how to set up new Khan Academy accounts or link existing ones
• Who parents/caregivers should talk to if they have any questions

In order to aid in the communication with parents/caregivers, we will provide the following resources on our Remote Testing and School Closure Support community page:
• An overview sheet that explains what MAP Accelerator is and how to use it
• A step-by-step guide on how parents/caregivers can create their own dashboard on the Khan Academy site

Track progress and celebrate success with district reports
When getting started with MAP Accelerator, the activation of teacher and student accounts is critical, which is why your MAP Accelerator district dashboard will include a report called Activation by School. Once you are up and running with MAP Accelerator, you will want to transition from looking at activation to looking at skill progress in the MAP Accelerator Progress report from the district dashboard. Both of these reports can be used to identify opportunities and celebrate successes with your schools and teachers.

As you get started with MAP Accelerator, we recommend you check the district reports at least monthly.

Questions?
Our Partner Support Team is here to help you. You can also find more information at our Remote Testing and School Closure Support community page.