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CUSD220
Academics | Activities | Service | Leadership

From: Adam Larsen, Assistant Superintendent

To: Board of Education

Cc: Thomas Mahoney, Superintendent

Re: February 2021 Board Report

Schoology Implementation

The implementation of our new learning management system (LMS) is in full swing. The three pilot groups are wrapping up their run-throughs of the independent training and will be providing feedback in the next week. Our plan is still to launch training to the remaining teachers during the week of February 17. If there are many changes to make in the training prior to its release, we may delay that a week.

So far, everything is going well. We have completed the integration with Google Drive and with Google Classroom. Teachers are now able to use both of theses tools in conjunction with Schoology to keep some things the same while enhancing the offerings for students. This will also go a long way in helping teachers who have been heavy users of Google Classroom to adjust to the new system in a way that is comfortable.

As a reminder, here is the visual layout of our training plan. We have made no changes in this plan in the last month.

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	January				Febrary				March					April				May		
	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	5	12	19
Pilot Group	KICKOFF	Complete self-directed training / Try Schoology			Meet / Tweak Self-Directed Training		Finalize Performance Task		Prepare for Live Training				Spring Break	Lead Live Training						
Self-Directed Learners							Complete self-directed training / Try Schoology					Performance Task	Spring Break	Participate in Live Training						
Late Adopters													Spring Break	Participate in Live Training						

Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test has been used in the school district since the Spring 2008 testing season. This assessment is a form of computer-adaptive testing, where the test taker is presented a series of questions that is tailored to that particular student's academic level. If a student answers a question correctly, the computer will give the student a more difficult question. If the next question is answered incorrectly, the following question will be easier. The number of questions in the test bank is vast, and no two students take the same exact test. This approach offers a number of advantages over traditional testing, including reduced standard error of measurement, less time spent testing, and fewer questions required for each student. Because the assessment is taken on the computer, results are available immediately after a student completes the test. Reports on student progress are available the next day, and growth is tracked over time (season to season and year to year).

In Oregon, the introduction of the MAP assessment has been along the following schedule:

School Year	Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
2007-2008						S	S						
2008-2009						F, S	F, S						
2009-2010				F, W, S	F, S	F, S	F, S	F, S	F, S				
2010-2011			S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, S	F, S	F, S	F, S	F, S	F, S		
2011-2012			F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S (SpEd)	F, W, S (SpEd)		
2012-2013			F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S (SpEd/ELL)	F, W, S (SpEd/ELL)	F, W, S (SpEd/ELL)	F, W, S (SpEd/ELL)
2013-2014			F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S (ELL)	F, W, S (ELL)	F, W, S (ELL)	F, W, S (ELL)
2014-2015			F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S				
2015-2016			F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S				
2016-2017			F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S				
2017-2018			F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S				
2018-2019	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S				
2019-2020	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S	F, W, S				
2020-2021	F, W	F, W	F, W	F, W	F, W	F, W	F, W	F, W	F, W	F	F		

F=Fall, W=Winter, S=Spring

We added MAP assessments in grades 9 and 10 in the fall but did not administer the tests again this winter. Now that we have SAT assessment data and a semester of student assignment data, we have enough to plan instruction and intervention for the rest of the year.

The Winter 2021 testing window was recently completed, and 1865 individual test events were recorded. Many personnel are involved in the testing window, including principals, teachers, aides, and tech staff, and all deserve recognition for their efforts.

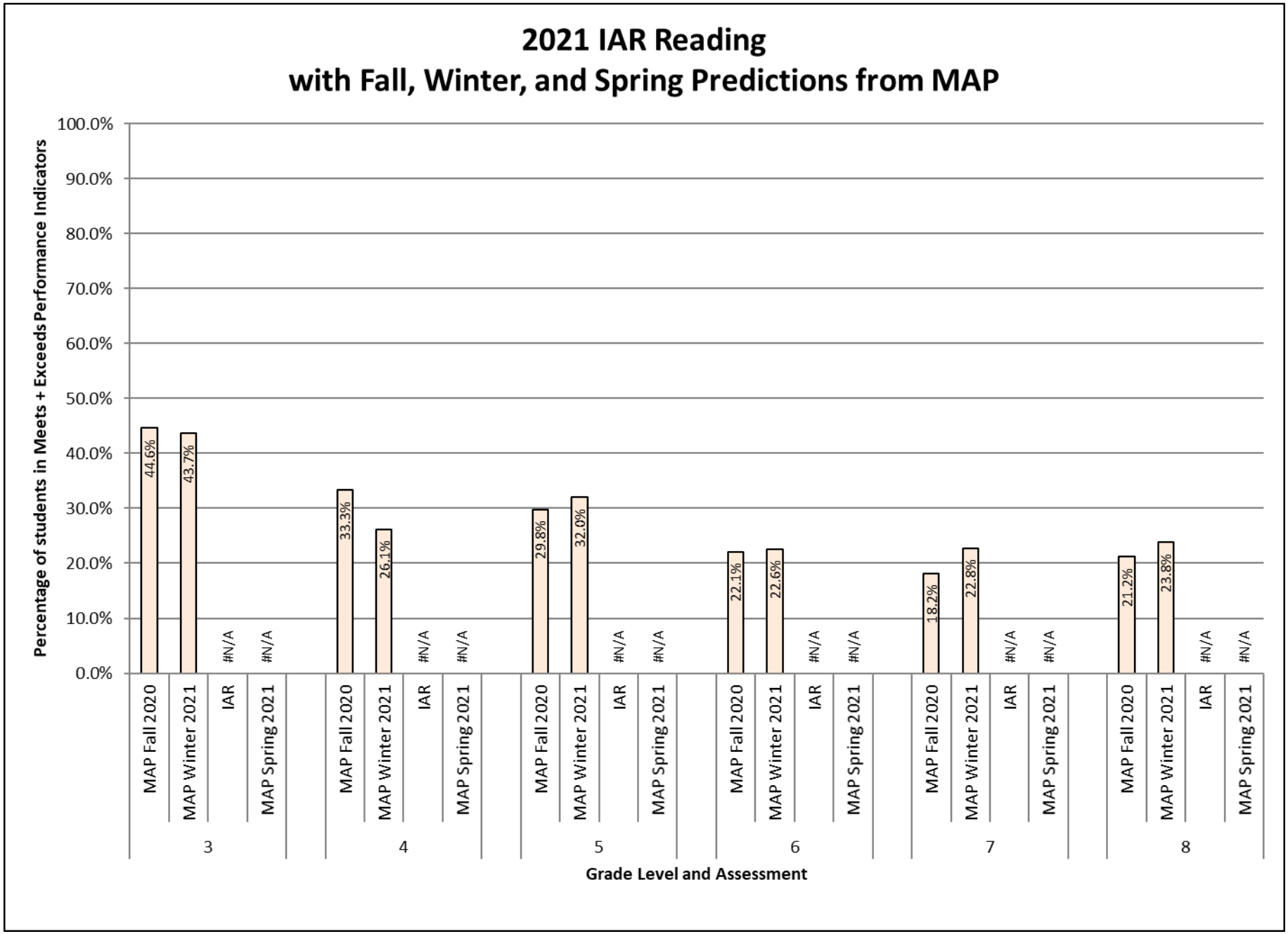
Predicting the 2021 Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR)

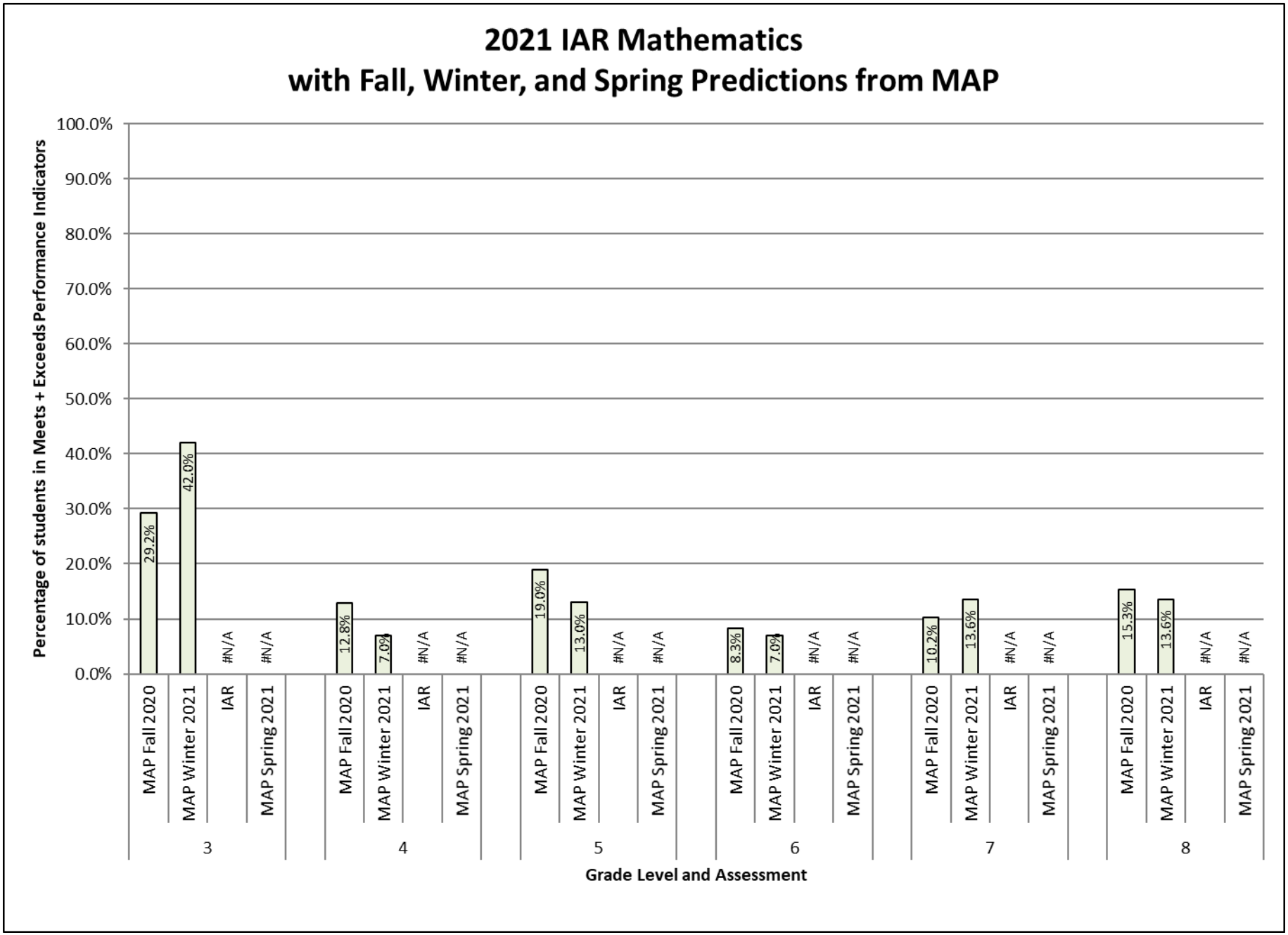
NWEA regularly releases updated cutscores that correspond to the state outcome measure that students take in the spring. That assessment is currently known as the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR). While they have not performed a new analysis that correlates MAP scores with the actual IAR assessment, our understanding is that the test is similar enough to the previous assessment (PARCC) that we should use the same cutscores as before. NWEA has updated the linking study to insert IAR language in it, so we will continue to use these cuts until an update is issued.

These cutscores allow school districts to make predictions about which students are expected to meet and not meet expectations when they take the IAR each spring. This analysis is useful both for 1) program evaluation,

determining how well the overall curriculum is working to prepare students, and 2) resource allocation, identifying which students need additional support to make the gains they need to close the achievement gap with their peers.

A summary of expected performance in Reading and Mathematics follows. These graphs are used each year to track cohort progress toward the expected goal. By plotting the achievement tests on a consistent scale each term, it allows for easy comparisons to be made after every testing season. On these charts, which will be updated periodically throughout the 2020-2021 school year, predictions of IAR performance based on MAP scores will be plotted alongside actual IAR performance from the same school year.


2021 IAR Reading
with Fall, Winter, and Spring Predictions from MAP
Percentage of students in Meets + Exceeds Performance Indicators
100.0%
90.0%
80.0%
70.0%
60.0%
50.0%
40.0%
30.0%
20.0%
10.0%
0.0%
44.6%
43.7%
#N/A
#N/A
33.3%
26.1%
#N/A
#N/A
29.8%
32.0%
#N/A
#N/A
22.1%
22.6%
#N/A
#N/A
18.2%
22.8%
#N/A
#N/A
21.2%
23.8%
#N/A
#N/A
MAP Fall 2020
MAP Winter 2021
IAR
MAP Spring 2021
3
4
5
6
7
8
Grade Level and Assessment


2021 IAR Mathematics
with Fall, Winter, and Spring Predictions from MAP
Percentage of students in Meets + Exceeds Performance Indicators
100.0%
90.0%
80.0%
70.0%
60.0%
50.0%
40.0%
30.0%
20.0%
10.0%
0.0%
29.2%
42.0%
#N/A
#N/A
12.8%
7.0%
#N/A
#N/A
19.0%
13.0%
#N/A
#N/A
8.3%
7.0%
#N/A
#N/A
10.2%
13.6%
#N/A
#N/A
15.3%
13.6%
#N/A
#N/A
MAP Fall 2020
MAP Winter 2021
IAR
MAP Spring 2021
3
4
5
6
7
8
Grade Level and Assessment

Measures of Academic Progress and COVID

Some of the most persistent questions about COVID have related to an expected "learning loss." Given that students received no instruction, then remote instruction, then hybrid instruction during the past 12 months, it is a reasonable question. We have studied the problem a couple of different ways since starting to gather data when in-person instruction began this fall.

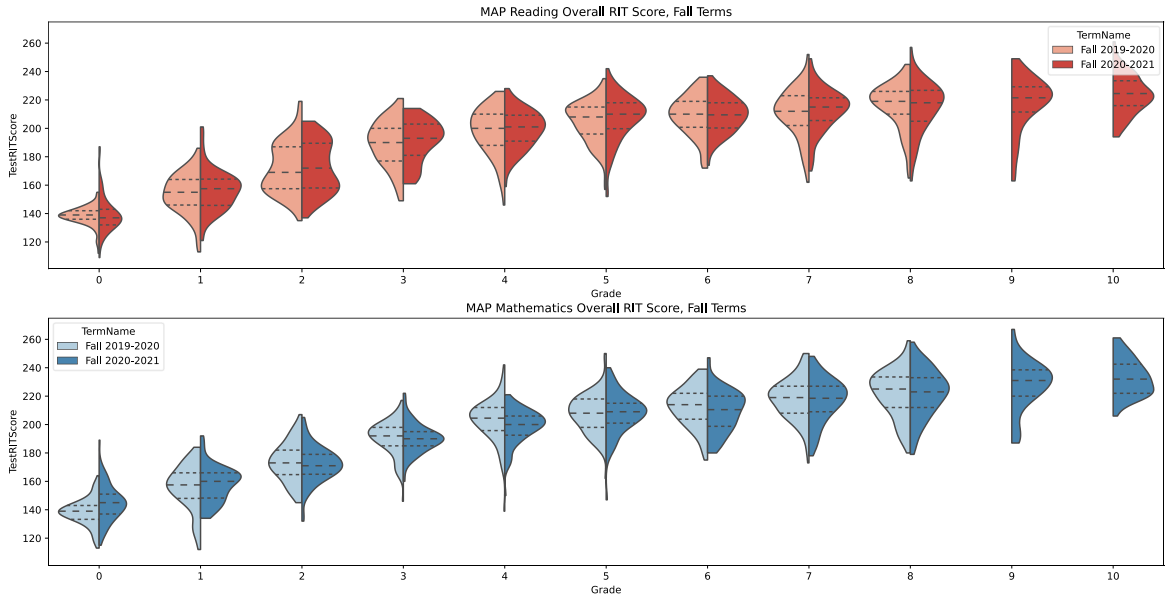
While there are some pockets of exceptions, there does not appear to be a widespread trend of lower attainment, slower growth, or students being left behind. Rather, based on nationally normed data, our students seem to be mostly holding steady with learning.

Comparing attainment across terms

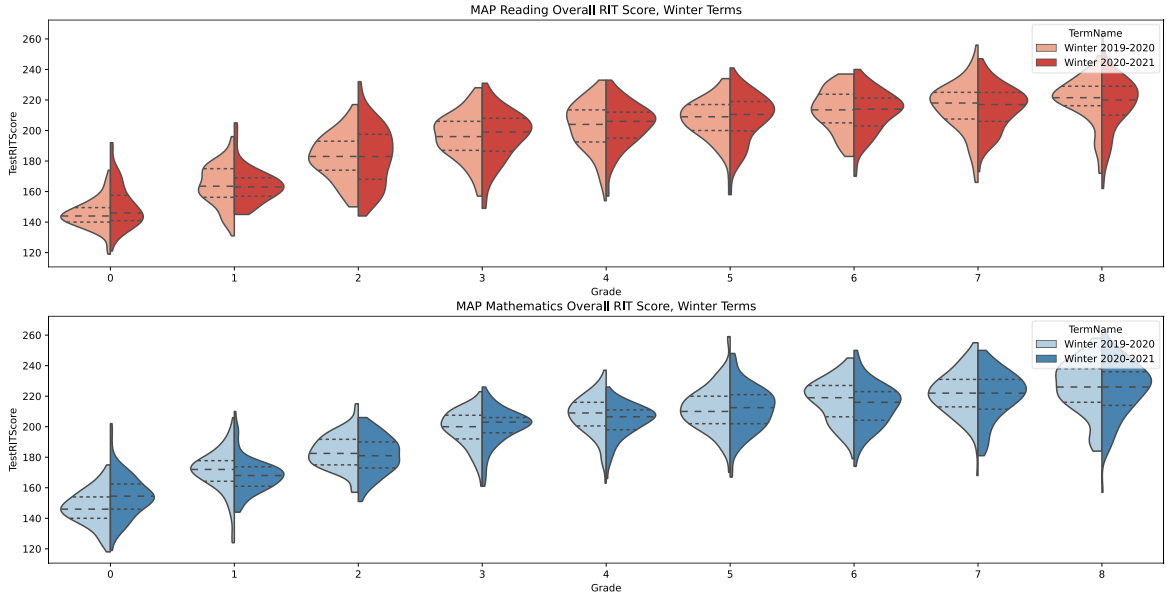
One way to study the change in learning is to examine the shapes of the distributions from last year to this year. Since COVID did not hit the region until March of 2020, our fall and winter scores are a good pre-post comparison. The following split violin plots illustrate the comparisons of RIT (scaled) scores across years.

The first graph represents Reading, with the left, lighter side of each graph containing scores from fall of last year. The darker red side is the current school year. The horizontal axis on the bottom represents each grade level, from 0 (Kindergarten) to 12. The second graph contains the fall scores for Mathematics.

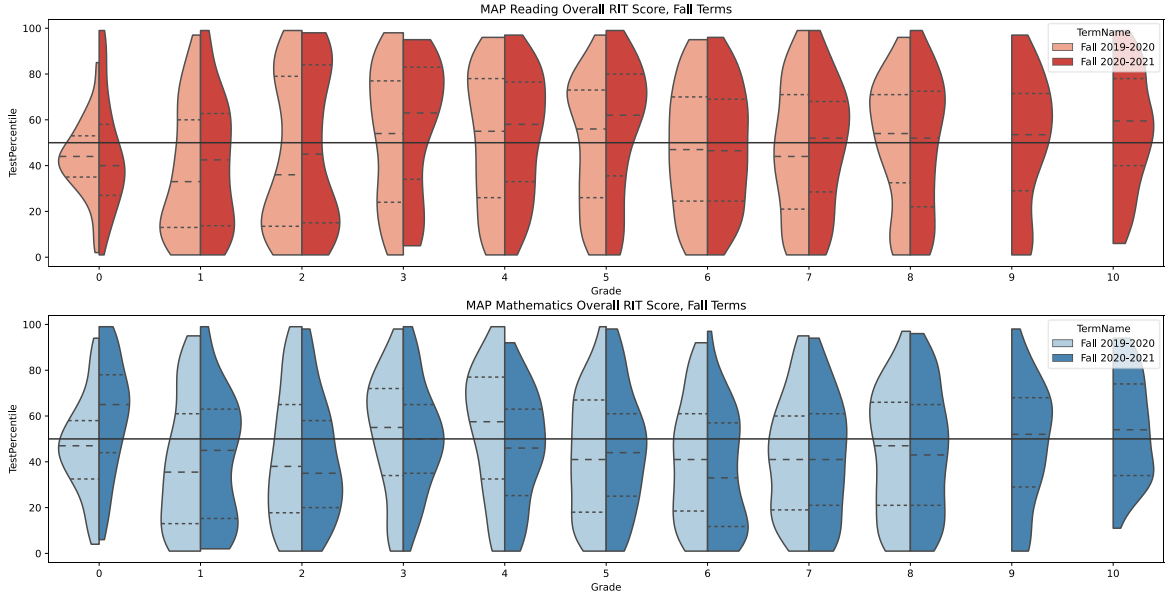
Largely, the shapes of the graphs are similar on the two sides. Some notable exceptions include Kindergarten math (a little higher) and math in grades 3 and 4 (a little lower)

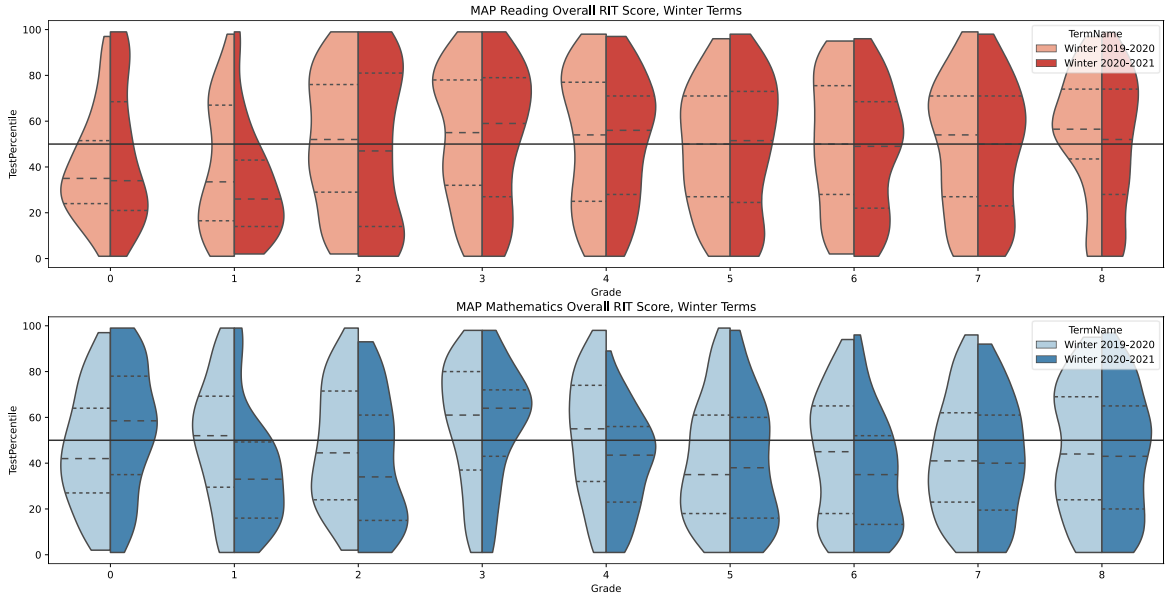


The same comparison is now made comparing winter terms. By this term, the differences that were present in the fall have mostly evened out. There are few differences that remain, and only a possible slips in grades 1 and 2 Mathematics have emerged.



The overall positions of the violin plots climb as the students grow older, as a natural function of maturity and mastery of content. By looking at national percentile rankings, we can remove the effect of age and compare grade levels to each other on a consistent scale. Fall and winter split violins using percentile follow.

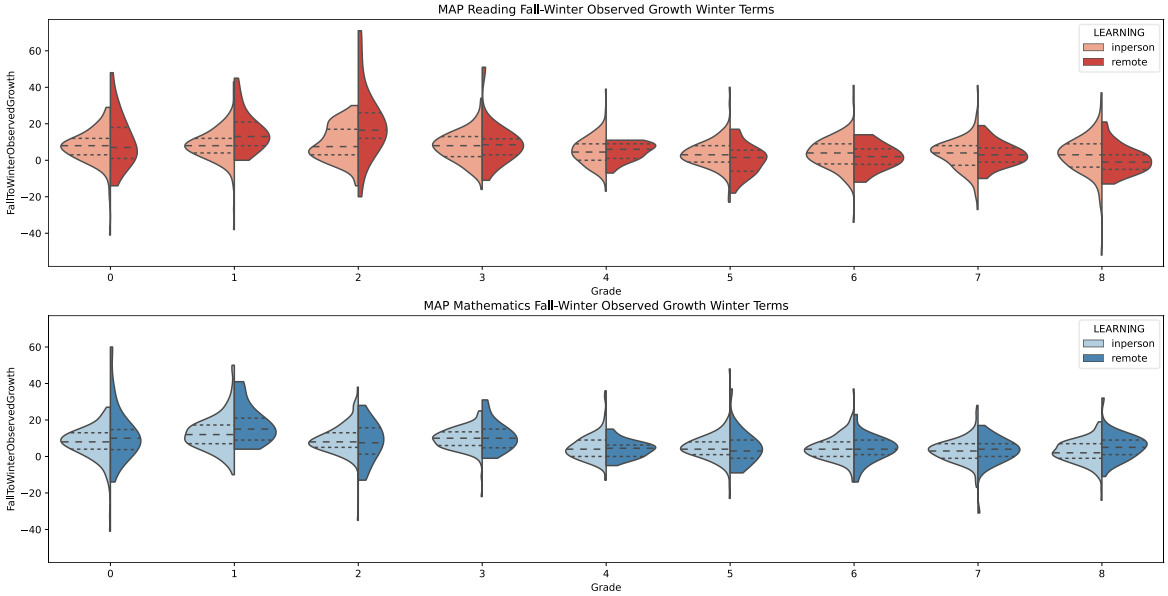




As the graphs of RIT scores suggested, most of the gaps that existed in the fall have closed by the winter. Grades 1 and 2 have seen a bit of a slide comparing last winter to this winter. Grades 4 and 6 also start to show a downward trend once we switch to percentile from RIT.

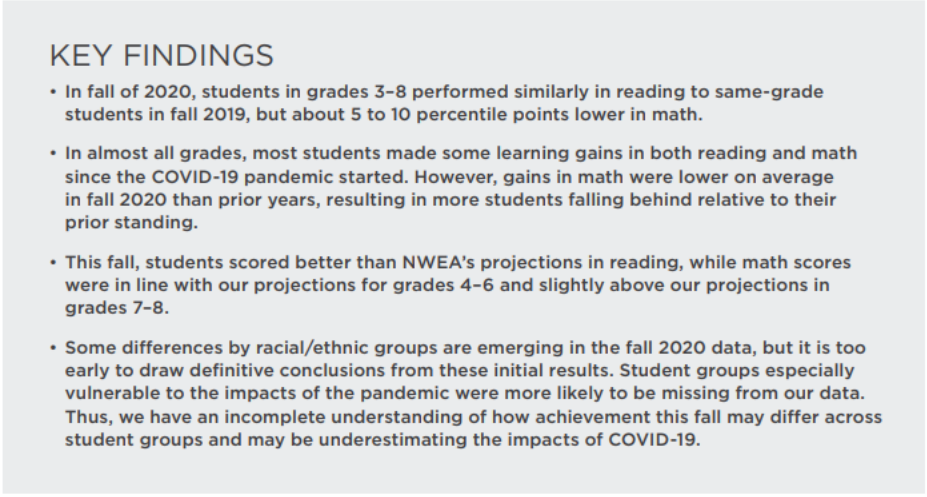
Finally, given that students have the option of being in-person or remote, it is useful to compare growth for the two groups of students. Bear in mind that the ratio of in-person to remote students is about 80/20 and that some students have changed location either due to a change in preference or due to quarantine. The student location indicated in the following graphs were extracted on February 10 and represent the students' status at that time.

In the below graphs, red again represents the Reading assessment, while blue is Mathematics. The lighter, left side of each split violin represents the in-person learners, while the right, darker side is the remote learners. The shapes appear slightly different in a few cases, but the averages are very close to each other in all grade levels across both subjects. Grade 2 Reading is probably the largest difference. The remote learners represent far fewer students in every graph element (again, about 20% of students), so the right side is a little more volatile and subject to skew from a few outliers. However, the averages and the shapes of each distribution appear to be fairly close to each other.



Taken together, we do not see compelling evidence that suggests our students have experienced significant losses in learning, nor are the students who are remote demonstrating slower growth. While there are other considerations, including social-emotional wellbeing and soft skills, our most objective measure of learning suggests that our students are performing in a manner that is consistent with other years.

This finding appears to be consistent with research from NWEA, the developers of the MAP assessment, right down to the differences between Reading and Mathematics:



KEY FINDINGS

- In fall of 2020, students in grades 3–8 performed similarly in reading to same-grade students in fall 2019, but about 5 to 10 percentile points lower in math.
- In almost all grades, most students made some learning gains in both reading and math since the COVID-19 pandemic started. However, gains in math were lower on average in fall 2020 than prior years, resulting in more students falling behind relative to their prior standing.
- This fall, students scored better than NWEA's projections in reading, while math scores were in line with our projections for grades 4–6 and slightly above our projections in grades 7–8.
- Some differences by racial/ethnic groups are emerging in the fall 2020 data, but it is too early to draw definitive conclusions from these initial results. Student groups especially vulnerable to the impacts of the pandemic were more likely to be missing from our data. Thus, we have an incomplete understanding of how achievement this fall may differ across student groups and may be underestimating the impacts of COVID-19.

Source: https://www.nwea.org/research/publication/learning-during-covid-19-initial-findings-on-students-reading-and-math-achievement-and-growth/

Respectfully Submitted,

Adam P. Larsen
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