



GRAND TRAVERSE AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Assessment Program 18/19

This information is intended to provide an overview of the educational assessment program employed in our schools. More specific information on the individual elements of the program will be provided as each testing event approaches.

Why do we test?

For the student, carefully selected assessment tools can...

- Serve as diagnostic tools to identify instruction levels and to measure student growth over time.
- Help students take greater ownership of their own learning as learning targets become increasingly clear to them and to help them observe their own progress towards learning goals.

For educators, good external assessments serve...

- As tools to assist us in evaluating and fine-tuning our curriculum.
- To increase our instructional effectiveness.
- To help us improve the quality of the classroom level assessments that we use.

The fundamental purpose of assessment at any level is to provide information to guide teaching and learning. It is essential to note that important decisions about students are never made on the basis of a single assessment. Information gained from testing contributes to a balanced view of student growth that also includes each student's daily work, performance on a variety of classroom assessments, and the observations and insights of their teachers.

As each testing event approaches we will provide you with tips and advice on how to appropriately help your child prepare for success. Following each test event, results will be shared with your student and you. What follows is a brief description of each of the key elements of our standardized assessment program.

	FALL			WINTER			SPRING		
	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May
NWEA	NWEA - MAP 2 nd – 5 th Grade, <i>Reading and Math</i>						NWEA - MAP 2 nd – 5 th Grade, <i>Reading and Math</i>		
ACT	ACT ASPIRE PERIODIC Grade 6 th , All Subjects						ACT ASPIRE SUMMATIVE Grades 7 th , 8 th Pre-ACT 9 th and 10 th ACT Grades 11 th + 12 th		
NCEA ACRE							ACRE Grades 5 th , 8 th , 11 th , 12 th		
AIMS WEB	Aims Web Reading K – 6 th (All Students) 7 th + 8 th (Students below grade level)			Aims Web Reading K – 6 th (All Students) 7 th + 8 th (Students below grade level)			Aims Web Reading K – 6 th (All Students) 7 th + 8 th (Students below grade level)		
	Aims Web Math K-3 rd (All Students)			Aims Web Math K-3 rd (All Students)			Aims Web Math K-3 rd (All Students)		

Measure of Academic Progress

The MAP test is a computerized, adaptive testing instrument used with students in grades 2 to 7 in the areas of reading and mathematics and in grade 5 to 7 in science. It is designed to provide two key measures to students and their educators: It identifies student instructional levels relative to a defined Learning Continuum, and it measures student academic growth over time. As such, it has great potential to directly affect instruction and student achievement.

Because the tests are adaptive and individualized, each student has the same opportunity to succeed and maintain a positive attitude toward testing. MAP tests give us detailed, accurate information about your child's growth. We are then able to focus on every child's individual growth and achievement. Partnering to help all children learn, parents and teachers can have a profound positive effect on the academic achievement. For more information on resources for parents you can access the NWEA website.

AIMSWeb

As our children grow many doctors weigh our children and measure how tall they are. This information is often put on a chart. This chart shows where our child stands compared to other children and how fast they are growing. These charts help doctors to understand if our children are growing properly or if something may be wrong, enabling them to do something to help as soon as possible. Doctors use children's height and weight as "Well Checks", or vital signs of development. We all know how important it is for our children to "grow" in reading as well. In fact, successfully learning to read at an early age is probably one of the most important factors in a child's learning, both inside and outside of school.

Because reading and reading growth are so important, our school administers "Well Checks" for reading on a regular basis. We do this with a screening and progress-monitoring tool called AIMSWeb through the 8th grade. This literacy-testing tool is designed to provide information about where students are in comprehension and fluency relative to national grade level norms. All students are benchmarked three times a year (fall, winter, and spring).

The reading probes are simple and accurate. We have your child read three stories from passages comparable to their grade level, and we count the words they read correctly, as well as how well they read the stories. Additionally, comprehension is also assessed through a MAZE Comprehension tool. We like to think of it as taking your child's reading temperature. Your child's data is tracked and recorded in web-based software from AIMSWeb. From there we can produce many reports that give us a clear picture of your child's progress. As you can imagine, AIMSWeb is quite a powerful and informative tool that allows us to focus on individual student growth.

NCEA: ACRE

The National Catholic Education Association's Assessment of Catechesis and Religious Education (ACRE) is given to students in grades 5, 8, 11 and 12. This test helps schools assess the faith knowledge and attitudes of students in an effort to improve curriculum and instruction.

ACT: Aspire

ASPIRE assessments are vertically aligned tests that monitor progress in the context of ACT college readiness. Just like ACT, students take the English, Reading, Writing, Math, and Science. Online reporting allows teachers to view readiness benchmarks and national norms for all students. Because the ASPIRE tests are reliable predictors of success on the ACT, the results will be used to help students, parents and counselors set goals and to establish their high school program of study.

ACT

Based on a set of College Readiness Standards, the ACT is the most widely accepted college entrance test. It is taken by 11th and 12th graders to measure academic readiness to make a successful transition to college. Students may take the test multiple times in an effort to improve their score, broaden their college options and qualify for scholarships and grants.