Talking about MAP Data with Parents and Students: Educate and Encourage

Considering the scenarios and talking points below can help educators prepare to discuss MAP data with parents and students.

Scenario 1: RIT Score Increases, Percentile Decreases

Thomas is a bright, outgoing 3rd grade student. This fall, his Mathematics RIT score was 204, which put him in the 87th percentile for his grade level. His winter score was a 209, which means he moved from the 87th percentile to the 79th percentile. His growth projection from Fall to Winter was 8 RIT points, and his observed RIT growth was 5. Thomas' parents are concerned that his percentile decreased and that he is now performing below the 80th percentile. You have seen Thomas work very hard in Math class all year. You are not concerned that Thomas did not meet his growth projection, because you have seen him grow as a Math student each day. What will you say to Thomas' parents to help ease their concerns?

Consider: Growth projection vs. actual growth, testing conditions, other assessment data.

Scenario 2: Parent Concerns about Performance Below the 50th Percentile

Hailey is a 7th grade student who scored a 212 RIT in the Fall Reading assessment (45th percentile) and a 216 RIT in the Winter Reading assessment (48th percentile). Her projected growth was 3 RIT points, and her observed growth was 4 RIT points. Hailey's parents are concerned that Hailey is performing significantly below grade level, and are worried that she will not be ready for high school. Are her parents' concerns valid? What would you tell Hailey's parents about her high school readiness?

Consider: Hailey's performance in relation to the normative RIT data, what realistic growth for Hailey is between now and the end of 8th grade, what Hailey can do so that she can continue to experience growth.

Scenario 3: Home Life Affecting MAP Student Performance

Olivia is a hard-working 4th grade student. In the Fall, she achieved a 213 RIT score (81st percentile). This winter, she scored a 205 RIT (40th percentile), experiencing negative growth. You know that Olivia has been experiencing instability at home. Her parents have recently separated, and she does not have a set schedule. She never knows which parent will be taking her to school, or where she will sleep each night. The morning of the test, you noticed that she seemed a bit off. The time she spent taking the test is well below the average test-taking time in the class. Olivia's father is angry. He claims his daughter is learning nothing in your class. How do you respond to her father?

Consider: Olivia's classroom performance, Olivia's social-emotional wellness, test-taking time

Scenario 4: Student Puts Unnecessary Stress on Herself about Her Performance

Audrey is an extremely conscientious 5th grade student. She scored a 238 RIT (97th percentile) on the Fall test, and a 247 RIT (97th percentile) on the Winter test. She is heartbroken that her percentile did not increase, even though she exceeded her projected growth by 3 RIT points. How do you counsel Audrey?

Consider: Projected vs. observed growth, classroom performance, social-emotional wellness

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Scenario 5: Student Rushes through the Test

Samuel is a highly social 5th grade student. He typically performs slightly better than average in class, but he is often more concerned with his social agenda than with what is going on in the classroom. On the day of MAP testing, he told you the test was "boring" and he rushed through the test, even though you had spent a lot of time discussing the importance of focus while taking the test. His fall RIT Reading score was 213 (70th percentile), and his winter score was 205 (37th percentile). When you spent time reviewing scores in class, Samuel laughs and starts telling his friends that he decreased by 8 points, treating his score as a joke. What do you say to Samuel during your 1:1 student MAP conference?

Consider: Samuel's test time compared to the average test time in his class, other assessment data, retesting opportunities

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Scenario 6: Decrease in RIT Score from Summer to Fall

David scored a 220 RIT on his Spring 2017 Reading assessment. In Fall 2017, he scored a 218 RIT on the Reading assessment, which means that his RIT score decreased by 2 points. Though his RIT was lower in the Fall than in the Spring, his Fall 2017 RIT score is 5 RIT points higher than his Fall 2016 RIT score, which means that he experienced overall growth in the course of one year. David's parents can't believe that his 6th grade RIT score is lower than his 5th grade RIT score. What do you say to David's parents?

Consider: Overall growth from fall to fall, effect of summer vacation on learning, change scores within the error of measurement

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Cheat Sheet: MAP Talking Points
1. Only 50% of all students who test will meet their **projected growth**. The projected growth is the average growth of similar students who tested under similar conditions.
2. Many **factors can impact a student's RIT score**: the amount of time a student spent on the test, when/ if the student ate breakfast that morning, how well the student slept the night before, a student's emotional state.
3. Research suggests that a lack of learning over the summer can sometimes result in **decreased performance from summer to fall**. Summer loss can be equivalent to up to one month of classroom learning, and students are more likely to regress in math skills compared to reading skills. Parents can help diminish the "summer" effect by making sure their children read and practice math regularly. Similar, yet less pronounced dips in learning can also occur over extended vacations when students do not follow a learning routine.
4. The **2015 Normative Data** is based on a sample size of hundreds of thousands of students nationwide.
5. The MAP assessment is **one data point.** As teachers, we collect data about students daily. We hope that the MAP data affirms what we see happening in the classroom, but sometimes it does not.
6. Examining **percentile** helps us have a gauge of where students are relative to their peers, but looking at **change in RIT over time** is a clearer indicator of student progress.