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**GUIDACE MEMORANDUM #17-24**

**TO:** School District Superintendents

**FROM:** Steve Canavero Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT:** Guidance for NWEA MAP Administration for Students with IEPs

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The Nevada Department of Education's Read by Grade 3 Program (also known as Nevada K.I.D.S. Read) originated with the Nevada Read by Grade 3 Act (Senate Bill 391) which became effective on July 1, 2015. The purpose of Nevada K.I.D.S. Read is to dramatically improve student achievement by ensuring all Nevada students are able to read proficiently by the end of third grade. This statute requires the board of trustees of each school district and the governing bodies of charter schools to develop locally based literacy plans aimed at improving the literacy skills of all Kindergarten, first, second, and third grade students. Nevada K.I.D.S. Read also requires the principal of every K-3 elementary school to designate a learning strategist to oversee all literacy-based professional learning activities for the site's K-4 educators. A primary intent of Nevada K.I.D.S. Read is to provide effective, early interventions for all K-3 students struggling in the area of reading.

Last summer, following the recommendations of Nevada school districts and the Nevada Department of Education, the State Board adopted the NWEA MAP assessment as the statewide assessment to be used to identify struggling readers.

A small percentage of Nevada students with disabilities take the Nevada Alternative Assessment (NAA) starting in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. For those students, the MAP assessment may not be appropriate and the NAA would stand in for the MAP assessment. At the present time, no alternate assessment is available in grades K-2. This being the case, IEP teams may consider and act to remove the MAP assessment as a requirement for those students with significant cognitive disabilities.

A decision to not administer the MAP assessment to a student with significant cognitive disabilities can only be made after careful consideration of the student's present levels of performance, and other factors. Only students with significant cognitive disabilities should be considered appropriate for excusal from the MAP assessment. For the vast majority of students with disabilities, the MAP assessment is a viable and useful tool, and should be administered in accordance with the requirements of Nevada K.I.D.S. Read. Students for whom the MAP assessment may be inappropriate are those students who are likely being assessed using the Nevada Alternate Assessment upon entering 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

IEP Teams considering the appropriateness of the MAP assessment for students with disabilities should work through the following considerations:

1. The nature and severity of the student's disability.
2. The current present levels of performance of the student.
3. Whether or not it is reasonably assumed that the student will access the Nevada Alternate assessment upon entry into 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

This guidance does not preclude IEP teams from determining that the MAP assessment is appropriate for some students with significant cognitive disabilities. Each determination must be made on an individual basis at a formal IEP meeting with all required team members providing input.