Purpose of the MCAS-Alt ELA–Writing Strand

★ Convey students’ thoughts and ideas, demonstrate skills and knowledge

★ Develop students’ expressive communication skills to create permanent products for the portfolio

★ ELA–Writing does not assess:
  • the physical act of writing; e.g., physically grasping a pen/pencil, making a mark on paper
  • keyboarding skills
  • tracing or copying letters or words
Writing to communicate

★ Students at a pre-symbolic communication level will most likely create written products that reflect the use of access skills (e.g., “Choose from an array of errorless choices related to the creation of a written product”)

★ Students with emerging or established communication systems may create written products that reflect lower-complexity entry points (e.g., “Express an opinion without deviating from a specific topic or text.”)
Use the appropriate state rubric to score the selected text type

**Opinion** (grades 3–5)/**Argument** (grades 6–8 and 10): stating a claim, opinion, **preference**, or analysis based on a text or topic, citing reasons and evidence (from a text, where possible).

**Informative/Explanatory text:** conveying or explaining **facts**, information, or ideas on a topic, including descriptions from a text.

**Narrative:** telling a story based on real or imagined events from a text or **personal experience**. Can be fiction, drama (script), personal reflection, or an event sequence.

**Poetry:** using figurative language (e.g., similes, metaphors), **imagery**, sounds of words (e.g., **rhyme**), meter, and/or repetition to express emotion or tell a story.
ELA–Writing Requirements

★ Use entry points and access skills in “Text Types and Purposes” cluster

★ Students should use their primary mode of communication to produce work samples.

★ Required: One baseline writing sample and three final writing samples

★ Teachers will pre-score the 3 final samples only, using the state-provided rubrics.

★ No data charts are required.
Opinion: Work Description Label

WORK SAMPLE DESCRIPTION
OPINION/ARGUMENT (FINAL)

Name: Carlton Student
Date (m/d/y): 12/14/17

INDEPENDENCE: 25%
Self-Evaluation
(Must be completed by, or scribed at the direction of, the student; evidence of student choice must be shown)

Asked if she wanted to preview "Glee" or "Lion King" video she eye-gazed to "Glee"

Briefly describe what the student was asked to do and how he/she did it:
After watching a video clip, phrases to complete a music review were presented two at a time, in an auditory/scanning format which the student activated to make a choice.

Subject: English Language Arts
Strand: English Language Arts - Writing (Opinion/Argument)

Learning Standard: W.4.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

Measurable Outcome:
Carlton will choose from an array of errorless choices within 30 seconds related to the creation of a written product with 80% accuracy and 80% independence.
# Opinion: Final Work Sample

**Name:** Carlton  
**Date:** 12/14/17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trial</th>
<th>Choice 1</th>
<th>Choice 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Trial 1| Rachel’s song is great!  
30 sec | Rachel’s song stinks.                  |
| Trial 2| The dancing was exciting!  
15 sec | The dancing was boring.               |
| Trial 3| The costumes are fierce!                | The costumes are lame.              |
| Trial 4| I want to watch this again!             | Shut this off!                       |

1st 25%
### Scoring Rubric for MCAS-Alt Writing (Opinion/Argument)

**Student:** Carlton Student  
**Date (m/d/y):** 12/14/17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Complexity</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Opinion/argument not submitted, or was unmatched to requirement.</td>
<td>Student addressed Writing through &quot;access skills.&quot;</td>
<td>Student addressed Writing through &quot;entry points.&quot;</td>
<td>Student addressed Writing at &quot;grade-level.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Expression of Ideas and Content |   | Opinion/argument was not submitted; contained insufficient information to determine a score; was written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood. | No clear opinion/claim, preference, or point of view; or was off-topic; or student used only pictures, symbols, or single words to express ideas; or all text provided by teacher. | Piece related to assignment minimally; or student used pictures or picture sequence to express ideas; included little or no evidence or information to support opinion/claim. | Piece expressed an opinion/claim, preference, or point of view; evidence and information in support of opinion/claim were limited, sometimes repetitive, or irrelevant. | Meaning was clear; three or more accurate and relevant details and/or reasons were included to support opinion/claim. |

| Knowledge of Conventions |   | Little or no original text; or used pictures or isolated words; or could not be understood due to errors in grammar and/or usage. | General meaning could be determined; grammar was limited and/or contained errors or run-on sentences. | Meaning was mostly clear; use of grammar was effective, with occasional errors. | Meaning was clear, with rare or no errors in grammar and overall usage. |

| Text Structure |   | Used single words, pictures, symbols without text; or all text provided by the teacher. | Sentence fragments (phrases) with occasional complete sentence used to express ideas. | At least two complete sentences were used to express ideas. | A paragraph of at least three related, well-constructed sentences was used to express ideas. |

| Use of Vocabulary |   | Vocabulary was largely unrelated to assignment; or vocabulary was provided by the teacher. | Vocabulary was related to assignment, but word choice was limited and/or sometimes inappropriate. | Vocabulary was functional and relevant; used basic common words with some descriptive language. | Vocabulary was clear and precise, using descriptive language, modifiers, connecting words, and/or phrases. |

| Independence 25% |   | Opinion/argument was not submitted; contained insufficient information to determine a score; was written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood. | Student required extensive, almost continuous prompts to complete writing assignment: (0-25% independent) | Student required frequent prompts to complete writing assignment: (25-50% independent) | Student required some prompts to complete writing assignment: (51-75% independent) | Student required no, or very few, prompts to complete writing assignment: (76-100% independent) |

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Students working on *access skills* score 1 in each *Demonstration of Skills and Concepts* rubric area.
Informative/Explanatory: Work Description Label

WORK SAMPLE DESCRIPTION
INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY TEXT (FINAL)

Name: Dylan Student
Date (m/d/y): 1/4/18

INDEPENDENCE: 20%
Self-Evaluation
(Must be completed by, or scribed at the direction of, the student; evidence of student choice must be shown)

Student chose "finished" from the AAC device, when asked if he wanted to continue.
Briefly describe what the student was asked to do and how he/she did it:

Student was asked to provide 3 facts about "Pizza" and a "Computer". Teacher read several books that demonstrated excellent, detailed descriptions.

Subject: English Language Arts
Strand: English Language Arts - Writing (Informative/Explanatory Text)

Learning Standard: W.7.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

Measurable Outcome:
Dylan will convey related information on a given topic with 80% accuracy and 80% independence.
**Student Response:** Student provided at least 3 details about the object using features and purposes on his high tech AAC device.

**Data Collection:**
- + = accurate and independent
- - = inaccurate but independent
+ p = accurate with prompt
- p = inaccurate with prompt

**Example:** On the first trial, the teacher presented a picture of a pizza and stated, “Tell me about it.” The student selected icons on his AAC device, “it’s cheesy, round, it’s a food, I eat pizza” correctly and with a prompt as indicated by the +p.

**DATE:** 1/14/15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trial #</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Expected Response</th>
<th>Actual Student Response</th>
<th>Data for Student’s Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pizza</td>
<td>It’s cheesy, it’s round, it’s a food, eat it</td>
<td>It’s cheesy, round It’s a food I eat pizza (l)</td>
<td>+ p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>It’s black, it has a mouse/keyboard, you use it for work, it’s electronic</td>
<td>It has keyboard, it’s electronic, I play computer</td>
<td>+ p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pizza</td>
<td>It’s cheesy, it’s round, it’s a food, eat it</td>
<td>cheesy, delicious, food, eat</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>It’s black, it has a mouse/keyboard, you use it for work, it’s electronic</td>
<td>It has keyboard, it’s electronic, it’s black, play</td>
<td>+ p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pizza</td>
<td>It’s cheesy, it’s round, it’s a food, eat it</td>
<td>It’s cheesy, delicious It’s food Eat it</td>
<td>+ p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% Independence = 20
Supporting documentation provides important information so scorers can understand which vocabulary the student has available.
### Scoring Rubric for MCAS-Alt Writing (Informative/Explanatory Text)

**Student:** Dylan Student  
**Date (m/d/y):** 1/4/18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Complexity</th>
<th>M</th>
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<tr>
<td>Informative/explanatory text not submitted, or unmatched to requirement.</td>
<td>Student addressed Writing through &quot;access skills.&quot;</td>
<td>Student addressed Writing through &quot;entry points.&quot;</td>
<td>Student addressed Writing at &quot;grade-level.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<th>Expression of Ideas and Content</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informative/explanatory text was not submitted; contained insufficient information to determine a score; was written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood.</td>
<td>Little or no original text; or used pictures or isolated words; or could not be understood due to errors in grammar and/or usage.</td>
<td>General meaning could be determined; grammar was limited and/or contained errors or run-on sentences.</td>
<td>Meaning was mostly clear; use of grammar was effective, including complete sentences, with occasional errors.</td>
<td>Meaning was clear, with rare or no errors in grammar and overall usage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrated of Skills and Concepts</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Conventions</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Structure</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Vocabulary</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence 20%</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informative/explanatory text was not submitted; contained insufficient information to determine a score; was written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood.</td>
<td>Student required extensive, almost continuous prompts to complete writing assignment. (0-25% independent)</td>
<td>Student required frequent prompts to complete writing assignment. (25-50% independent)</td>
<td>Student required some prompts to complete writing assignment. (51-75% independent)</td>
<td>Student required no, or very few, prompts to complete writing assignment. (75-100% independent)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Narrative:

Work Description Label

WORK SAMPLE DESCRIPTION
NARRATIVE TEXT (FINAL)

Name: Dylan Student
Date (m/d/y): 3/7/18

INDEPENDENCE: 100%
Self-Evaluation
(Must be completed by, or scribed at the direction of, the student; evidence of student choice must be shown)

Learning Standard: W.7.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Measurable Outcome:
Dylan will retell events using pictures, words, or phrases with 80% accuracy and 80% independence.

Subject: English Language Arts
Strand: English Language Arts - Writing
(Narrative Text)
Narrative: Final Work Sample

Before bed mom read me a

story from a

book

Rock

Accuracy/Independence:

+/- = Accurate/Independent
### 2018 MCAS-Alt

**Scoring Rubric for MCAS-Alt Writing (Narrative Text)**

Student: Dylan Student  
Date (m/d/y): 3/7/18

<table>
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<td>Student addressed Writing through &quot;access skills.&quot;</td>
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<td>Student addressed Writing at &quot;grade-level.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstration of Ideas and Content</strong></td>
<td>Narrative lacked event sequence or was unclear or off-topic, or student used only pictures, symbols, or single words to express ideas; or all text provided by teacher.</td>
<td>Narrative related to assignment minimally; or student used picture sequence to express ideas; included no or few details or descriptions.</td>
<td>Narrative included limited use of details and descriptions that were limited, and sometimes repetitive or irrelevant.</td>
<td>Narrative was clear; three or more relevant facts, details, and/or descriptions were included.</td>
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<td><strong>Knowledge of Conventions</strong></td>
<td>Narrative was not submitted; contained insufficient information to determine a score; was written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood.</td>
<td>Little or no original text; or used pictures or isolated words; or could not be understood due to errors in grammar and/or usage.</td>
<td>General meaning could be determined; grammar was limited and/or contained errors or run-on sentences.</td>
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<td><strong>Text Structure</strong></td>
<td>Used single words, pictures, symbols without text; or all text provided by the teacher.</td>
<td>Sentence fragments (phrases) with occasional complete sentence used to express ideas.</td>
<td>At least two complete sentences used to express ideas.</td>
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<td>Vocabulary was clear and precise, using descriptive language, modifiers, connecting words and/or phrases.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Independence 100%</strong></td>
<td>Narrative was not submitted; contained insufficient information to determine a score; was written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood.</td>
<td>Student required extensive, almost continuous prompts to complete writing assignment. (0-25% independent)</td>
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<td>Student required no, or very few, prompts to complete writing assignment. (76-100% independent)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
## WORK SAMPLE DESCRIPTION
### NARRATIVE TEXT (FINAL)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: Ralph Student</th>
<th>Subject: English Language Arts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date (m/d/y): 3/1/18</td>
<td>Strand: English Language Arts - Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDEPENDENCE: 100%</td>
<td>(Narrative Text)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Self-Evaluation**

(Must be completed by, or scribed at the direction of, the student; evidence of student choice must be shown)

Student was asked if he wanted to illustrate a story about the field trip or his day at school. Student chose picture of field trip.

Briefly describe what the student was asked to do and how he/she did it:

Student was given Mayer-Johnson pictures related to the field trip to the shelter. He oriented the MJ pictures to illustrate the story.

**Learning Standard:** W.5.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

**Measurable Outcome:** Ralph will orient or manipulate material related to the creation of a written product with 80% accuracy and 100% independence.
Narrative: Final Work Sample
“We are Going to the Shelter”

We will take our van to the shelter

We will see
cats
dogs

The animals may be loud,

We made treats for them
# 2018 MCAS-Alt

## Scoring Rubric for MCAS-Alt Writing (Narrative Text)

**Student:** Ralph Student  
**Date (m/d/y):** 3/1/18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Student addressed Writing through &quot;access skills.&quot;</td>
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<td><strong>Expression of Ideas and Content</strong></td>
<td>Narrative lacked event sequence or was unclear or off-topic; or student used only pictures, symbols, or single words to express ideas; or all text provided by teacher.</td>
<td>Narrative related to assignment minimally; or student used picture sequence to express ideas; included no or few details or descriptions.</td>
<td>Narrative included limited use of details and descriptions that were limited, and sometimes repetitive or irrelevant.</td>
<td>Narrative was clear; three or more relevant facts, details, and/or descriptions were included.</td>
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<td><strong>Knowledge of Conventions</strong></td>
<td>Narrative was not submitted; contained insufficient information to determine a score; was written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood.</td>
<td>Little or no original text; or used pictures or isolated words; or could not be understood due to errors in grammar and/or usage.</td>
<td>General meaning could be determined; grammar was limited and/or contained errors or run-on sentences.</td>
<td>Meaning was mostly clear; use of grammar was effective, including complete sentences, with occasional errors.</td>
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<td><strong>Text Structure</strong></td>
<td>Used single words, pictures, symbols without text; or all text provided by the teacher.</td>
<td>Sentence fragments (phrases) with occasional complete sentence used to express ideas.</td>
<td>At least two complete sentences used to express ideas.</td>
<td>A paragraph of at least three well-constructed sentences used to express ideas.</td>
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<td>Vocabulary was related to assignment, but word choice was limited and/or sometimes inappropriate.</td>
<td>Vocabulary was functional and relevant; used basic common words, with some descriptive language.</td>
<td>Vocabulary was clear and precise, using descriptive language, modifiers, connecting words and/or phrases.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Independence 100%</strong></td>
<td>Narrative was not submitted; contained insufficient information to determine a score; was written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood.</td>
<td>Student required extensive, almost continuous prompts to complete writing assignment. (0-25% independent)</td>
<td>Student required frequent prompts to complete writing assignment. (25-50% independent)</td>
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</table>
Teacher-Scribed Work Sample

- Includes a description of what the student was asked to do and how the student participated and contributed to the final product.
- Describes the materials/context of the activity.
- Indicates the student’s responses (percent of accuracy and independence) to each item/trial using his/her mode of communication.
- Includes name, date, accuracy, independence, and other required information.
Poetry: Work Description

WORK SAMPLE DESCRIPTION
POETRY (FINAL)

Name: Jorge Student

Date (m/d/y): 9/15/17

INDEPENDENCE: 80%

Self-Evaluation
(Must be completed by, or scribed at the direction of, the student; evidence of student choice must be shown)

Briefly describe what the student was asked to do and how he/she did it:
Objects representing Fall were gathered on the playground to be used in the creation of a class poem on fall.
Classmates created each line which was written on poster board. Student released the tactile object representing the line into the finished bin as the line was read within 15 seconds.

Subject: English Language Arts
Strand: English Language Arts - Writing (Poetry)

Learning Standard: W.9-10. Demonstrate understanding of the concept of point of view by writing short narratives, poems, essays, speeches, or reflections from one’s own or a particular character’s point of view (e.g., the hero, anti-hero, a minor character).

Measurable Outcome:
Jorge will release materials related to the creation of a written product within 15 seconds with 80% accuracy and 100% independence.
SEPTEMBER
Written by Room 190

LINE 1: LEAVES FALL SOFTLY ON THE GROUND
Material: Leaves – Does not release even with prompting

LINE 2: SQUIRREL RUN AND PLAY
Material: Fur Swatch – Releases 11 seconds independently

LINE 3: ACORNS FALL
Material: Acorns – Releases 10 seconds independently

LINE 4: ACORNS ROLL
Material: Acorns – Releases 14 seconds independently

LINE 5: THE SQUIRREL RUNS AWAY
Material: Fur Swatch – Releases 11 seconds independently

Accuracy: 80%
Independence: 80%
# 2018 MCAS-Alt

## Scoring Rubric for MCAS-Alt Writing (Poetry)

### Student: Jorge Student

| Date (m/d/y): | 9/15/17 |

<table>
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<th><strong>Level of Complexity</strong></th>
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<td>Student addressed Writing at &quot;grade-level.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expression of Ideas and Content** | Poem lacked a clear focus; or used single words, pictures, or symbol(s) to express ideas and/or emotions; or all text provided by teacher. | Poem related to assignment minimally; included no poetry form, figurative language, imagery, rhyme, or meter in student’s text; or used picture sequence with no text. | Poem included limited or repetitive use of rhyme, meter, imagery, and/or figurative language appropriate to the poetry form in student’s text. | Poem was clear and cohesive; included use of rhyme, repetition, meter, vivid imagery, and/or figurative language appropriate to the poetry form. |

| **Knowledge of Conventions** | Poem was not submitted; contained insufficient information to determine a score; was written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood. | Little or no conventions evident; used pictures or isolated words; or could not be understood due to errors in grammar and/or usage. | General meaning could be determined in student’s text; no use of poetry form or conventions. | Meaning was mostly clear; some use of poetry form and conventions, with occasional errors. |

| **Text Structure** | Student responded using single words, symbols, pictures, or single line of text; or all text provided by teacher. | Two related lines (sentences or phrases) used to express ideas, images, and/or emotions appropriate to the poetry form. | Three or four related lines (sentences or phrases) used to express ideas, images, and/or emotions appropriate to the poetry form. | More than four related lines (sentences or phrases) used to express ideas, images, and/or emotions appropriate to the poetry form. |

| **Use of Vocabulary** | Vocabulary was largely unrelated to assignment; or all text was provided by the teacher. | Vocabulary was related to assignment, but word choice was limited and/or sometimes inappropriate. | Vocabulary was functional and appropriate; used basic common words, with some figurative language. | Vocabulary clearly expressed ideas and emotions using imagery and figurative language. |

| **Independence 80%** | Poem was not submitted; contained insufficient information to determine a score; was written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood. | Student required extensive, almost continuous, prompts to complete writing assignment. (0-25% independent) | Student required frequent prompts to complete writing assignment. (25-50% independent) | Student required some prompts to complete writing assignment. (51-75% independent) | Student required no, or very few, prompts to complete writing assignment. (76-100% independent) |
Required Elements for Writing

1 Baseline writing sample + 1 Work Description for each Final Writing Sample

3 Final Writing Samples + 3 Pre-Scored Rubrics
Thinking about *Self-Evaluation*

Student choice-making and evaluation of one’s own work are essential components of the concept of self-determination, which is an important predictor of successful post school outcomes (Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2003; Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1998).

Self Evaluation: Students Making Choices

★ Choices of materials, response format, order of events
★ Choice of partner
★ Choice of continuing or terminating the activity
★ Do you see evidence of the “student’s voice” in the self-evaluation? Is it authentic?
Contact Information

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Student Assessment Office (781-338-3625)

- Debra Hand (MCAS-Alt) – dhand@doe.mass.edu
- Robert Pelychaty (Accommodations) – rpelychaty@doe.mass.edu
- General Inquiries – mcas@doe.mass.edu

Measured Progress

- MCAS Service Center – 800-737-5103
- Kevin Froton – froton.kevin@measuredprogress.org