**What's New and Notable for Spring 2019 MCAS?**

- Virtually all students in grades 3–8 and 10 are expected to take **computer-based tests**, in accordance with timeline proposed by Commissioner to test all students on computers by Spring 2019.
- In spring 2019, next-generation computer-based MCAS tests will be administered to students in **grade 10**, for the first time, in **English language arts (ELA) and Mathematics**.
  - These tests measure the **2017 curriculum frameworks**.
  - Results will be somewhat delayed in fall 2019 due to **standard setting**.
  - **Paper tests** are available as an accommodation for students unable to test on a computer due to a disability, if listed in an IEP or 504 plan.
  - This year, **high school STE** and Nov./March **retests** offered only on paper.
Provide these to all students during testing...

- Provide the following to all students during testing:
  - Untimed test sessions
  - Blank scratch paper (including blank, lined, or graph paper)
  - Assistance, as needed, from a test administrator in using (navigating) the computer-based testing platform
  - ...And the opportunity to take Practice Tests and view the Tutorial

- Additional information available in the Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2018–2019 MCAS Tests
  - On flash drive, or
  - At www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/accessibility/g3-8-manual.docx

Accessibility Features and Accommodations

- **Universal Accessibility Features** (UF): Available to all students, either on computer-based tests or as paper-based equivalent. (see Accessibility and Accommodations Manual, pp. 3–4).

- **Designated Accessibility Features** (DF): Flexible test administration procedures available to any student, at the discretion of principal.
  - Includes changes in test setting, group size, seating, scheduling (p. 4)

- **Accommodations** (A): Specific supports available only to students with disabilities and English learners

- **Special Access Accommodations** (SAs): Formerly called nonstandard accommodations, these may be provided to students who meet certain guidelines and criteria (see pp. 20–24).

- Narrated Training Module now available.

Accommodated Test Forms

- Accommodated test forms will be offered for computer-based MCAS tests, including
  - text-to-speech
  - screen reader, and
  - compatible assistive technology editions.

- Accommodated test forms will be offered for students taking paper-based tests, including
  - Large-print
  - Braille
  - ASL video (grade 10 mathematics only), and
  - Kurzweil (retests and high school STE tests).

New and Notable (Continued...)

- DESE no longer permits use of individualized graphic organizers and customized supplemental reference sheets for next-generation ELA and mathematics tests (including high school).
  - Students with this accommodation may only use the Department’s pre-approved supplemental mathematics reference sheets or ELA graphic organizers, available at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/accessibility/organizers/

- Transition to **Unified English Braille (UEB)** from English Braille American Edition (EBAE) and Nemeth Code will continue for Spring 2019: all MCAS tests in grades 3–8 will be given in UEB.
  - High school tests will continue to be administered in EBAE with Nemeth Code until spring 2020 when they will transition to UEB.
Universal Accessibility Features (UF) for all students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer</th>
<th>Paper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highlighter</td>
<td>Colored overlays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screen magnification/Zoom tool</td>
<td>Magnification device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line reader tool</td>
<td>Tracking device/straight edge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answer eliminator</td>
<td>Masking using blank card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item flag/bookmark</td>
<td>Place marker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Audio aids
- Human read-aloud (or sign) selected words on Math or STE, as requested by student
- Repeat/clarify test directions
- Test admin redirects student’s attention to test

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Designated Accessibility Features (DF) for any student, at principal’s discretion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer or Paper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small group test administration (up to 10 students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual (one-to-one) test administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent supervised breaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test in separate location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seating in a specified area of room, including study carrel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive or specialized furniture or lighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise buffer/noise-cancelling earmuffs/headphones (no music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiar test administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student reads test aloud to self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific time of day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Stop Testing” policy: If student is not responding to test questions after 15–20 minutes, test administrator may ask if student is finished. If so, collect the student’s test materials. Student may sit quietly or be excused.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Presentation Accommodations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Computer-Based</th>
<th>Paper-Based</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper test, if unable to use computer</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Large print test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screen reader for student who is blind</td>
<td>Braille test (NEW: UEB in grades 3-5; EBAE all other grades)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text-to-speech/Human read-aloud for Math, STE</td>
<td>Human read-aloud for Math, STE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human signer for Math, STE, and test questions only for ELA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Test administrator helps student track test items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response Accommodations (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Computer-Based</th>
<th>Paper-Based</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELA graphic organizer or Math/STE reference sheet for grades 3–8 (only those created by ESE)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human scribe or external speech-to-text device for Math/STE (Note: 504 plan needed for fractured writing arm)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Answers recorded in test booklet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Typed responses (No transcription necessary)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses recorded (audio or video), then transcribed by student during playback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor placement of test responses</td>
<td>Braille writer, note-taker, or refreshable Braille display</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
**Special Access Accommodations for Students with Disabilities** (formerly called Nonstandard Accommodations)

### Computer and Paper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text-to-speech/Human reader for ELA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signing the ELA reading passages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scribe responses (or speech-to-text device)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for ELA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculator or other mathematics tool, device, or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manipulatives on non-calculator session of Math</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Spell-checker for ELA**
(Note: Also available to all students for STE, but not Math)

**Word prediction for ELA**

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**Team Decisions Needed Before Spring 2019 Testing**

- Team members should review all next-gen accessibility and accommodations policies, particularly for high school students.
- Important decisions needed soon for each student with a disability:
  1. Can the student take a test on a computer? If not, in which subjects?
     - Students who previously needed accommodations for typed response, large print, answers written in test booklet, or monitor placement of responses may be well-suited to take computer-based tests.
  2. If taking a computer-based test (CBT), which features and accommodations are needed?
  3. If taking paper-based test (PBT), are previous MCAS accommodations needed and available (see Appendix A in Accessibility and Accommodations Manual)?
  4. For read-aloud, can student use text-to-speech (TTS) with headphones, or needs a human reader?

---

**Accommodations Available for All English Learners (ELs)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approved Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionary or Glossary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text-to-speech/human reader for Math and STE (in English)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scribe for Math and STE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10 English/Spanish Mathematics Test or Retest, if enrolled fewer than 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read aloud/repeat/clarify test directions in student’s native language, if native language speaker is available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Stop testing” policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Spell-checker**

[Image of Spell-checker interface showing red line under misspelled word]

---

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Student Registration/
Personal Needs Profile (SR/PNP)

In January:
- ESE will upload student demographic information to school and district DropBoxes, including selected accommodations from previous year’s tests.
- Schools will verify/update this information, and:
  - Add students enrolled after October SIMS
  - Add selected accommodations for grade 3 students.
  - Update selected accommodations, if needed.
  - Import file to Pearson Access Next (PAN)
- Register for spring tests: Schools will select paper- or computer-based tests for each student, and request accommodated forms (large-print, text-to-speech, Braille, etc.)
- ESE training will be offered in fall and winter (webinars, concalls, and face-to-face)

Reporting MCAS Results Using a New Test Scale and Achievement Levels

Next-Generation MCAS Test Scale: 440 to 560

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Meeting Expectations (NM)</th>
<th>440-469</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partially Meeting Expectations (PM)</td>
<td>470-499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Expectations (M)</td>
<td>500-529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceeding Expectations (E)</td>
<td>530-560</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- New “cut scores” based on Spring 2019 grade 10 ELA and Mathematics tests results will be used to set achievement levels for the new tests.
- An interim passing standard will be defined in Summer 2019 as a “similar level of achievement to the required standard on the legacy tests:”
  - 240 (Proficient) or 220 (Needs Improvement) and the fulfillment of an EPP
  - Future graduation standard probable for class of 2023 and beyond
Timeline and Considerations for Class of 2023 (proposed first year of new graduation standard)

2018-2019 School Year
• First administration of next-generation grade 10 MCAS tests

Summer 2019
• Standard setting for new achievement levels and establishment of interim standard by the Commissioner
• Convening committee to consider new CD standards
• Review of results by Board and committee

2019-2020 School Year
• Class of 2023 enters 9th grade
• Board and stakeholders review 2019 results
• Notice of new graduation standard is given (target is Jan/Feb 2020)

2020-2021 School Year
• Class of 2023 enters 10th grade
• First administration of grade 10 tests with new graduation standard

Purposes of Alternate Assessment

• To include students with significant cognitive disabilities in the assessment and accountability systems (It's the law!)
• To ensure that standards-based skills and content are taught to all students at levels that are meaningful and challenging.
• To determine which knowledge and skills in the current versions of the Curriculum Frameworks students have learned.
• To provide information to schools and parents on the achievement of students with significant disabilities.

Determining Student Outcomes for the MCAS-Alt: Geometry

“Essence” of standard:
Solve mathematical problems involving geometric shapes.

High School Standard H.G-GMD.3
Use volume formulas for cylinders, pyramids, cones, and spheres to solve problems.

Access Skills
Match similar shapes by attribute (e.g., number of sides).

Entry Points
Sort two-dimensional shapes of different sizes.

Standard
Calculate the surface area of a cube.
Calculate the diameter of a circle given its radius.

Visually track geometric shapes.
A complete Portfolio Strand includes at least the following...

**Data Chart**

- Documenting performance of the measurable outcome on at least 8 different dates, with brief descriptions of each activity.

**First piece of primary evidence** showing performance of the measurable outcome.

**Second piece of primary evidence** showing performance of the measurable outcome.

* PRIMARY EVIDENCE:
  - Can be a work sample, video, or photograph (or series of photos) clearly showing a final product.
  - Primary evidence must assess the measurable outcome, and be labeled with name, date, percent accuracy, and percent independence.

---

**ELA–Writing: Expressive Communication is assessed in each MCAS grade**

- ELA–Writing portfolio assesses expressive communication by the student
  - Sharing experiences, opinions, ideas, and/or facts
  - Discussing books, articles, stories, poetry, video
- Encourages students with significant disabilities to have and use a primary method of communication
  - Handwriting
  - Word processor or similar device
  - Dictating to a scribe
  - Using symbol-based communication system
- Portfolio includes three work samples in any text type (no data charts).
  - Argument/opinion
  - Informative/explanatory text
  - Narrative
  - Poetry

---

**Sample Data Chart**

- Student will determine the meaning of common suffixes with 85% accuracy and 85% independence.

- At least 8 different dates are included on graph.

- Brief descriptions of each activity address what student did and how they did it.

---

**“Zero-Prompt Instruction:”**

- Always Independent, Working on Accuracy

- Data method 2: Bar graph showing measurable outcomes of expressive communication with accuracy and independence.

- Percent accuracy and percent independence are indicated.
“Errorless Teaching:”
Always Accurate, Working on Independence

What Does This Data Chart Tell You About the Student’s Achievement?

- Student mastered the skill after 2-3 attempts: probably too easy.
- Better to spend time teaching student more challenging skills.

A score of 100% accuracy and 100% independence isn’t required to earn a score of Progressing!

The table shows that any scores above 51% accuracy and 51% independence earn a score of Progressing.

The Take-Away:
- Students can attempt more complex entry points without fear of lowering their score.
- Push students to learn more challenging skills.
- Have students attempt new and different skills each year.
**Progressing is not “Passing”**

- A score of **Progressing** means student is making progress, but is still achieving below grade-level expectations.
  - steadily learning new knowledge, skills, and concepts
  - requires minimal prompting and assistance
  - performance is basically accurate
- **Progressing** does not mean a student has achieved **Needs Improvement (legacy)** or **Partially Meeting Expectations (next-gen)**
  - Still included in **Warning/Failing or Not Meeting Expectations** level in school/district results
- For **school accountability**, schools receive disproportionate credit for MCAS-Alt scores.

---

**MCAS-Alt Scores for School Accountability**

- Accountability determinations for schools that administer next-generation MCAS tests will be based on a combination of indicators, including:
  - MCAS growth, absenteeism, EL progress to English proficiency, 4-year graduation rate, and **average scaled MCAS scores**
- Use of “average scaled scores” for accountability means assigning scaled scores to MCAS-Alt results in ELA and Math.
- Accountability reporting for STE remains unchanged.
  - Assign CPI points from previous scale

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**MCAS-Alt Participation and Training Summary**

- **7,951** MCAS-Alt portfolios were submitted in 2018
  - A decrease of 590 students from 2017
  - A decrease from 1.7% of all students in 2017 to 1.6% in 2018
- **4,673** educators participated in 16 face-to-face training sessions last year.
- **322** MCAS-Alt score appeals were submitted last June.
  - 69 were granted (21.4%); 253 were denied (78.6%)
**2015-2018 MCAS-Alt: Statewide Results (All Content Areas - All Grades)**

**Which Students Should Take MCAS-Alt?**

A student with a *significant cognitive disability* who is....

- Working on *learning standards* that have been *substantially modified* due to the severity of the disability, and is

- Receiving *intensive, individualized instruction* in order to acquire, generalize, and demonstrate knowledge and skills, and is

- Unable to demonstrate knowledge and skills on a *standardized paper or online test*, even with accommodations, ...should take the **MCAS-Alt** in that subject.

*(Teams decide annually in each content area)*

**Criteria that should not be used to designate a student for the MCAS-Alt**

A student should **not** take MCAS-Alt based solely on whether he/she:

- has previously failed the MCAS test;
- has taken an alternate assessment previously (since this is an annual decision);
- has not been provided instruction in the general curriculum;
- was absent from school excessively;
- has a specific disability (e.g., all students with intellectual disabilities should not automatically take the MCAS-Alt);
- attends a program where it is expected that students will take the MCAS-Alt;
- is an English learner (EL);
- is from a low-income family or is a child in foster care;
- requires use of an alternative augmentative communication system
- attends a school in which the IEP team was unduly influenced to designate the student for MCAS-Alt in order to receive more credit for school accountability.
Can other students with disabilities be considered for MCAS-Alt?

Yes. A student with a significant disability can submit a grade-level or competency portfolio, if he/she:

- performs classroom work at or near grade-level;
- cannot demonstrate knowledge and skills on the MCAS test in that grade and subject; and
- is attempting to earn a score of Needs Improvement/Partially Meeting Expectations or higher on MCAS.

See Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt for portfolio requirements.

What About the ESSA “1% Cap” on MCAS-Alt Participation?

- Beginning in 2016-2017, ESSA placed a statewide cap of 1 percent of all students in MCAS-required grades who can take the MCAS-Alt.
  - MA has a one-year waiver of the cap, but we must show progress lowering the number taking MCAS-Alt and maintain at least 95% rate of SWDs taking MCAS.
  - 1% does not include students who take Grade-level or Competency portfolios.
- This is an opportunity to revisit and refine our decision-making on who takes the MCAS-Alt.
  - Could the student take standard MCAS assessments, especially new online tests, with accessibility features and accommodations?
  - Could the student submit a “grade-level” or “competency” portfolio instead?
- Important information now available on Department’s web page.

Available Resources to Help Meet the ESSA One Percent Cap

Available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/essa/:

- Guidance on which students should take the MCAS-Alt
- Decision-making tool
- Sample Parent Notification Letter, if student will take MCAS-Alt
  - Written notification of parents is now required!
- Data on percent taking MCAS-Alt in each district at elementary, middle, and secondary levels
- Training presentation for IEP teams on meeting ESSA provisions.
  - Annual district training for teams is required!
Supporting Teachers Who Conduct the MCAS-Alt

**Principals can:**
- Encourage starting portfolios early in school year.
- Encourage teachers to attend training and portfolio review sessions in October, January, and February/March.
- Consider encouraging educators with MCAS-Alt experience to apply to become an MCAS-Alt Training Specialist.
- Strategize with teachers to find time to work on portfolios
  - Flexible scheduling and planning time
  - Designating other staff to assist
  - Offering occasional sub coverage
- Retrieve results (DropBox) in mid-June and share with teachers.

Monitoring Progress of Teachers Who Conduct MCAS-Alt

- Check-in periodically with teachers. Spot-check portfolios.
- Identify who needs support and who can provide it.
- To ensure that portfolios are complete and authentic, principal (or designee) may want to:
  - Look at the brief descriptions on the data chart.
    - Do they address the measurable outcome?
    - Teachers should verify that no classroom activities are dated on holidays, weekends, and vacations.
  - Ask teachers to review the Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt and Checking for Completeness.
  - Ask teachers (if more than one) to review each other’s portfolios.
Where Can I Get Current MCAS and MCAS-Alt Information?

- **Student Assessment Services (SAS) Update** (emailed bi-weekly to principals, SPED admins, others)
- **MCAS-Alt email newsletter** (bi-monthly), featuring “Administrator’s Corner”
- **2019 Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt** (on flash drive)
- **Principal’s Manual for MCAS-Alt** (In “Administrators” folder on flash drive)
- **MCAS Web Page**

Important MCAS-Alt Dates

**“Portfolios-in-Progress”** (half-day review sessions):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Educators</th>
<th>8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. January 8 (Danvers), 9 (Marlboro), 17 (Taunton), 18 (Springfield)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Feb. 27 (Taunton), 28 (Danvers), March 5 (Marlboro), 6 (Springfield),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Portfolio Submission**

♦ Schedule UPS pick-up by 3:00 p.m., Thursday, March 28, 2019
♦ Portfolios must be submitted by 5:00 p.m., Friday, March 29

**Other Important Dates**

♦ Order MCAS-Alt submission materials (binders, etc.): Jan. 7–18, 2019
♦ Submission materials received in schools: last week in February
♦ Preliminary results posted mid-June: Share with teachers
♦ MCAS-Alt Score Appeals deadline: 5:00 p.m., June 22, 2019

Contact Information

**MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – Student Assessment** (781-338-3625)
- Dan Wiener, Administrator of Inclusive Assessment
- Debra Hand – dhand@doe.mass.edu
- General Inquiries – mcas@doe.mass.edu

**Measured Progress**

**MCAS:**
- MCAS Service Center – 800-737-5103

**MCAS-Alt:**
- Kevin Froton – froton.kevin@measuredprogress.org
- Mark Peters - Peters.mark@measuredprogress.org
Questions?

Thank you for coming!