Principal’s Manual for 2019 MCAS-Alt

August 2018
Purpose of This Manual

The Principal’s Manual for MCAS-Alt is intended to support administrators who oversee the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) process and the submission of student portfolios in their school or program. The MCAS-Alt is a component of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) that assesses the academic achievement of a relatively small number of students with significant disabilities who are unable to take the standard MCAS tests, even with test accommodations, but who are nevertheless required by law to participate in statewide assessments. The process of compiling an MCAS-Alt portfolio is an important opportunity for educators to identify educational goals for students who are designated by their IEP teams and in their 504 plans to participate in alternate assessments, and to share information about students’ progress in meeting those challenging goals.

This manual highlights the critical dates, activities, and oversight procedures that must be accomplished each year, and the steps needed to ensure that complete and accurate portfolios are submitted each spring. It identifies areas in which resources and attention will be needed to support the instruction and assessment of students with significant disabilities.

The cooperation of administrators will be essential in assisting the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to report effectively on the progress and performance of all students to parents, schools, and the public; and to assist schools in developing challenging programs of instruction for students with significant disabilities.

Thank you for participating in this vital component of the statewide assessment system.
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### Summary of Important Dates Regarding the 2019 MCAS-Alt

(see [Timeline](#) on next page for details)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before Submission</th>
<th>Order MCAS-Alt submission materials</th>
<th>January 7-18, 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receive submission materials (binders, etc.)</td>
<td>Week of February 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Order additional submission materials, as needed</td>
<td>March 4 through March 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission</td>
<td>Schedule UPS pickup at <a href="http://www.mcasservicecenter.com">www.mcasservicecenter.com</a></td>
<td>March 18 through 3 p.m., March 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deadline for UPS pickup</td>
<td>5:00 p.m., March 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results Reported</td>
<td>Results posted electronically in Dropbox Central</td>
<td>Week of June 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score Appeals</td>
<td>File an appeal, if a scoring discrepancy is noted (Note: school must have retained a photocopy of portfolio)</td>
<td>5:00 p.m., June 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Contact Information

**MCAS Service Center**

- **Hours:** 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday–Friday
- **Phone:** 800-737-5103
- **Email:** [mcas@measuredprogress.org](mailto:mcas@measuredprogress.org)
- **Web:** [www.measuredprogress.org](http://www.measuredprogress.org) [www.mcasservicecenter.com](http://www.mcasservicecenter.com)

**Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**

- **Hours:** 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday–Friday
- **Phone:** 781-338-3625
- **Fax:** 781-338-3630
- **Email:** [mcas@doe.mass.edu](mailto:mcas@doe.mass.edu)
- **Web:** [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/)
Suggested Timeline for Principals

2018

September/October

- Schools receive Parent/Guardian Reports for 2018 MCAS-Alt; send copy of report to students’ homes.
- Securely store returned portfolios (see Storage and Destruction of Returned MCAS-Alt Portfolios).
- Encourage teachers compiling MCAS-Alt portfolios to attend a DESE-sponsored fall Educator Training session (flyers emailed to administrators).
- Register to attend a DESE-sponsored fall Administrator’s Overview of MCAS and MCAS-Alt for Students with Disabilities awareness session.

November/December

- Ensure that teachers have begun compiling student portfolios.

2019

January

- Order MCAS-Alt binders and submission materials.
- Encourage teachers to attend a DESE-sponsored portfolio review session.

February

- After receiving shipment of binders and submission materials, complete online Principal’s Certification of Proper MCAS-Alt Certification (PCPA)–Part 1.
- Encourage teachers to attend final DESE-sponsored portfolio review session (late February).
- Monitor teachers’ progress on their students’ portfolios (see Supporting Teachers Who Conduct the MCAS-Alt).

March

- Ensure that the school received a sufficient number of binders and submission materials, especially for newly enrolled students taking MCAS-Alt.
- Verify that teachers are completing their students’ portfolios.
- Order additional submission materials, if needed.
- Schedule UPS pickup through MCAS Service Center by 3:00 p.m., Thurs., March 28.
- Deadline for portfolio pick-up from schools: 5:00 p.m., Friday, March 29.

June

- Retrieve preliminary results from the school’s DropBox in the Department’s Gateway Portal.
- Download Portfolio Feedback Forms (PFFs) from your school’s DropBox.
- Share PFFs with teachers who created the portfolio(s).
- Review the MCAS-Alt score appeals process (see MCAS-Alt Score Appeals).
- If needed, submit score appeal(s) by 5:00 p.m., Friday, June 21.
MCAS Participation Guidelines

As you are aware, students must participate in grade-level assessments that correspond with the grade in which they are reported in the Department’s Student Information Management System (SIMS). The decision regarding how a student will participate in MCAS and whether he or she will require an alternate assessment is made annually in each subject scheduled for assessment by the student’s IEP team, or by the educators responsible for developing 504 plans, using the guidelines provided below.

The student’s IEP team or 504 plan coordinator should answer the following questions and consider the decision-making flowchart on the next page.

- Can the student demonstrate knowledge and skills on the computer- or paper-based MCAS test under routine conditions?
- Does the student require accommodations or accessibility features to demonstrate knowledge and skills on the test? If so, which ones are necessary?
- If no to both questions above, does the student need an alternate assessment? A student should be designated for the MCAS-Alt if he or she is
  - working on learning standards that have been substantially modified below grade-level expectations due to the severity of the disability, and are
  - receiving intensive, individualized instruction in order to acquire, generalize, and demonstrate knowledge and skills, and are
  - unable to demonstrate knowledge and skills on an on-demand computer- or paper-based test, even with accommodations and accessibility features.

A student may take the computer- or paper-based MCAS test in one subject and the MCAS-Alt in another. These assessment decisions should be reviewed, and may be revised, each time the team meets. The student’s IEP or 504 plan must include a separate determination in each subject scheduled for assessment.

Teams should not assume that a student requires an alternate assessment based solely on whether he or she:

- has not been provided instruction in the general curriculum;
- is absent an excessive number of days;
- has a specific disability (e.g., all students with intellectual disabilities should not automatically be designated for the MCAS-Alt);
- is placed in a program or classroom where it is expected that all students will take the MCAS-Alt;
- has taken an alternate assessment previously (since this is an annual decision);
- has previously failed the MCAS test;
- is an English language learner;
- is from a low-income family or is a child in foster care;
- requires the use of assistive technology or an alternative augmentative communication system; or
• attends a school in which the IEP team may have been influenced to designate the student for an alternate assessment in order for the school to receive disproportionate credit toward the school’s accountability rating.

A student with a severe or complex disability who is working at or close to grade level may be designated either for the MCAS-Alt “grade-level” (grades 3–8) or “competency” (high school) portfolio, if they are unable to take the computer- or paper-based MCAS tests.

New Competency Portfolio Requirements

All ELA and mathematics high school competency portfolios submitted for the first time in spring 2019 must be based on the new requirements outlined here and in the 2019 Educator’s Manual. Previously submitted competency portfolios resubmitted in spring 2019 or later may continue to use the previous “legacy” requirements based on earlier versions of the ELA and mathematics curriculum frameworks.

High school students who have earned a score of Partially Meeting Expectations in English language arts (ELA) or mathematics, or Needs Improvement in Science and Technology/Engineering (STE), on the high school competency portfolio in those subjects will be awarded a Competency Determination (CD) in that subject, pending completion of the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP).

MCAS-Alt and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) places a statewide cap of 1 percent of students who may take alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards. This refers to the basic MCAS-Alt, but not to “grade-level” and “competency” portfolios. A memo from the Commissioner was posted to assist in understanding the new requirements. Guidelines and resources are provided for use by districts in meeting ESSA requirements, and to share data regarding the percentage of students who took the MCAS-Alt in each district and grade-span.

The Commissioner has requested that districts review this information, including guidance and criteria for IEP teams to consider in determining which students should take an alternate assessment. Materials for annual training of IEP teams were also made available, as well as a sample parent notification letter, which ESSA now requires districts to send or give to parents and guardians of students taking the MCAS-Alt. Finally, districts were asked to provide written assurances to the Department that IEP teams would be trained annually, parents would be notified, and whether the district was likely to exceed one percent of eligible students taking the MCAS-Alt.

It is reasonable to assume that some students who were designated for the MCAS-Alt in the past may be more suited in 2018–2019 to take either computer- or paper-based MCAS tests with accommodations; or submit a “grade-level” or “competency” portfolio instead. It is the Department's goal to provide as many students as possible with an opportunity to learn (and be assessed on) grade-level curriculum; and to ensure that students with disabilities in high school are not deprived of the opportunity to earn a diploma. However, the Department is not asking IEP teams to "get students off the alternate assessment" in order to meet the one percent statewide requirement. Last year, the Department was granted a waiver of this provision by the U.S. Department of Education with the understanding that it would continue to train districts on
this requirement. The one-percent ESSA cap represents an important opportunity for districts and IEP teams to revisit decisions to designate students for the MCAS-Alt who may be able to access assessments based on grade-level achievement standards.

**Decision-Making Tool for MCAS Participation by Students with Disabilities**

The chart below may be used by IEP teams and 504 plan coordinators to make annual decisions for each student regarding appropriate student participation in MCAS in each content area.

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1 An explanation and examples of “complex and significant disabilities” can be found on page 10 of the Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt.

2 See pages 51–76 in the Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt for details on the submission requirements for “grade-level” and “competency” portfolios.
Principal’s Responsibilities for the MCAS-Alt

Principals are responsible for conducting the following activities:

- Ensuring that all students with disabilities participate in MCAS as listed in their IEP or 504 plan;
- Monitoring the alternate assessment process to ensure that student work is neither duplicated, altered, nor fabricated in a way that provides information that is false or portrays the student’s performance inaccurately;
- Identifying qualified school personnel to administer the MCAS-Alt and ensure that all staff responsible for compiling and submitting receives training prior to each administration, regardless of past experience conducting similar assessments.
- Ensuring adequate school resources are allocated and staff coordinated, to guarantee appropriate participation in, and timely submission of, MCAS-Alt portfolios. Resources should include the allocation of sufficient time to compile evidence and enter data by the submission deadline;
- Ordering MCAS-Alt materials (in January), and reviewing the Materials Summary and the contents of shipments (in February), which include
  - three-ring binders (one for each student’s portfolio)
  - plastic envelopes (one for each portfolio)
  - one envelope addressed to the principal containing shipping labels, individual Student Information Booklets, Materials Summary form, and score appeal information;
- Scheduling a UPS pick-up through the MCAS Service Center by 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 28, for pick-up no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 29, 2019.
- Completing the online PCPA–Part 1 after reviewing the Materials Summary;
- Submitting MCAS-Alt portfolios, and completing Part 2 of the PCPA which provides assurances that all information is accurate and complete for each student.
- Ensuring that each student’s MCAS-Alt forms are accurately completed, including the MCAS-Alt Student Identification Booklets.
- Reporting MCAS-Alt irregularities, in cases where it is alleged that an MCAS-Alt administration was compromised, by contacting the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education at 781-338-3625.
  - When this occurs, the Department will request a local fact-finding investigation into the alleged irregularity and a written report based on the results of the investigation within an established timeline.
Supporting Teachers Who Conduct the MCAS-Alt

Principals can support teachers who are conducting the MCAS-Alt by

- encouraging an early start to the portfolio process (i.e., identifying students taking the MCAS-Alt, setting up student folders, and identifying instructional goals and activities);
- encouraging collaboration among general education, special education, and related services staff, including paraprofessionals, to collect data and evidence for the portfolios;
- encouraging teachers to attend a fall training session and winter portfolio review session(s) in January and February;
- providing flexible scheduling and planning time to work on portfolios;
- appointing an MCAS-Alt lead educator to find answers, give advice, and be available to assist as needed; and
- reviewing portfolios periodically to ensure that portfolios are on schedule to be completed.

Principals should be aware that teachers compiling MCAS-Alt portfolios are responsible for the following:

- identifying challenging instructional goals, and documenting the outcomes of activities related to each goal;
- collecting evidence in the form of work samples for the portfolio that reflect each instructional goal;
- calculating the percentages of accuracy and independence for each activity and recording this information on a data chart provided in their Online Forms and Graphs program and in the Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt;
- repeating these steps for each “portfolio strand” required for the content area being assessed; and
- completing all required forms, including the Portfolio Cover Sheet, Strand Cover Sheets, Student Identification Booklet, Parent Verification Form, student introduction, consent form to photograph the student, work sample description forms, and data charts.
Scoring MCAS-Alt Portfolios

After portfolios are submitted to the Department each spring, they are reviewed and scored at a scoring center sponsored by the Department and its test contractor. The Department’s publication, entitled *Guidelines for Scoring MCAS-Alt Portfolios*, provides detailed information on the scoring process used by scorers to review and rate each student’s portfolio. Scoring occurs each April and early May under the Department’s direct supervision, using hired and trained scorers from Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Scorers are monitored continually for their accuracy and consistency.

Instructions for Viewing and Downloading MCAS-Alt Preliminary Results

In order to view the MCAS-Alt Portfolio Feedback Forms (PFFs) once they are available, principals must log in to the Department’s [Gateway Portal](https://gateway.ema.state.ma.us) and click on Application List, then choose DropBox Central, and look under the school name. For assistance logging in, see your district or organization [Directory Administrator](https://directory.ema.state.ma.us).

**Final results** are posted in mid-September and reflect changes based upon discrepancies reported to the Department, and the findings of MCAS-Alt score appeals (see section below on score appeals). Student portfolios are returned to schools in September and must be stored securely.

**Please note:** Students in grade 9 who submitted an MCAS-Alt portfolio in Science and Technology/Engineering that did not achieve a score of at least *Needs Improvement* will be reported as “Previously Failed” on their PFF in grade 10.

**MCAS-Alt Score Appeals**

Once preliminary results are reported on the Department’s Gateway Portal in mid-June, a teacher or principal may submit an MCAS-Alt score appeal if there is evidence that a portfolio was scored incorrectly. The deadline for score appeals submission is 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 21, 2019. Score appeals may not be submitted after this date.

The following materials must be reviewed by the school before submitting a score appeal:

- the *Portfolio Feedback Form* (PFF) from the scored portfolio (available in schools’ Drop Boxes the week of June 10, 2019);
- the photocopy of the portfolio kept by the school to demonstrate that the score on the PFF does not represent the portfolio accurately;
- the MCAS-Alt score appeal [application](https://application.ema.state.ma.us) (available in mid-June); and
- frequently-asked questions about MCAS-Alt score appeals.
Including MCAS-Alt Results in Reporting and Accountability

Reporting an Achievement Level in Each Content Area

For each student who takes the MCAS-Alt, one of the following achievement levels and descriptors will be reported in each content area of the portfolio:

Grades 3–High School (Alternate Achievement Standards)

- **Incomplete**—Insufficient evidence and information was included in the portfolio to allow an achievement level to be determined in the content area.

- **Awareness**—Students demonstrate very little understanding of standards and core knowledge topics contained in the Massachusetts curriculum framework for the content area. Students require extensive prompting and assistance, and their performance is mostly inaccurate.

- **Emerging**—Students demonstrate a simple understanding that is below grade-level expectations of a limited number of standards and core knowledge topics contained in the Massachusetts curriculum framework for the content area. Students require frequent prompting and assistance, and their performance is limited and inconsistent.

- **Progressing**—Students demonstrate a partial understanding that is below grade-level expectations of selected standards and core knowledge topics contained in the Massachusetts curriculum framework for the content area. Students are steadily learning new knowledge, skills, and concepts. Students require minimal prompting and assistance, and their performance is basically accurate.

Grades 3–10 (Grade-Level Achievement Standards for “next-generation” MCAS):

- **Partially Meets Expectations**—Students performing at this level on this test partially meet grade-level expectations for knowledge, skills, and understanding. These students may need coordinated assistance and/or additional instruction to succeed at the next grade level.

- **Meeting Expectations**—Students performing at this level on this test meet grade-level expectations for knowledge, skills, and understanding, and are academically prepared to succeed at the next grade level.

- **Exceeding Expectations**—Students performing at this level on this test exceed grade-level expectations for knowledge, skills, and understanding, and are academically well prepared to succeed at the next grade level.

High School Science and Technology/Engineering ONLY (Grade-Level Achievement Standards for “legacy” MCAS):

- **Needs Improvement**—Students demonstrate a partial understanding of grade-level subject matter and solve some simple problems.

- **Proficient**—Students demonstrate a solid understanding of challenging grade-level subject matter and solve a wide variety of problems.

- **Advanced**—Students demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of challenging grade-level subject matter and provide sophisticated solutions to complex problems.
School and District Results

District level results include achievement-level results for students attending each school in a district, as well as for those students who reside in the district and attend publicly funded out-of-district placements, such as educational collaboratives or approved and unapproved private special education schools.

To meet federal requirements for reporting disaggregated and aggregated results of statewide assessments for all students, the results of MCAS-Alt are included in school, district, and statewide reports of MCAS results as achievement levels only. The alternate achievement levels of Incomplete, Awareness, Emerging, and Progressing will be included in the lowest achievement level for the purpose of school and district reporting.

Redesigned Parent/Guardian Reports

The contents and design of the MCAS-Alt Parent/Guardian Report have been updated to conform to the new Parent/Guardian Reports for the “next-generation” MCAS. In September, districts will receive shipments of MCAS-Alt Parent/Guardian Reports, which provide a detailed description of a child’s score in each area of the scoring rubric and an overall achievement level in each subject in a new, easy-to-read format.

Districts are responsible for sending a parent/guardian report to the home of each student who took the MCAS-Alt. If the student is also reported as an English learner, a copy in the student’s home language must also be sent. Print copies of the translations of the report “shell” in the state’s ten most frequently spoken languages are provided in the shipment of MCAS-Alt Parent/Guardian Reports. Translated report “shells” are also available online in ten languages.

School and District Accountability

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education recently approved the state’s updated accountability system, in accordance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). MCAS-Alt results will be included in the accountability system, together with the results of students who took the standard MCAS tests. Details on the state’s accountability system are available here.

Changes to Accountability Reporting for 2019

Accountability determinations for schools that administer “next-generation” MCAS tests in grades 3–8 and 10 will be based on a combination of indicators, including:

- average scaled MCAS scores in ELA and mathematics, and grades 5 and 8 science and technology/engineering;
- average student growth percentile (SGP) in ELA and mathematics;
- progress toward attaining English language proficiency for students reported as English learners; and
- percentage of chronically absent students.

The use of average scaled MCAS scores as an accountability indicator necessitates assigning an average scaled score to the results of students who took the MCAS-Alt in ELA and mathematics (grades 3–10) and STE (grades 5 and 8 only), as shown in Table 2 below.
### Table 1
**“Next-Generation” MCAS Tests**
**Scaled Score Ranges**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard MCAS Achievement level</th>
<th>Scaled Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Meeting Expectations (NM)</td>
<td>440-469</td>
</tr>
<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>

### Table 2
**“Next-Generation” MCAS Scaled Score Equivalents for MCAS-Alt**
(ELA and mathematics (grades 3–10) and STE (grades 5 and 8 only))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MCAS-Alt Achievement Level, based on alternate achievement standards</th>
<th>Assigned MCAS Scaled Score Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete (INP)</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness (AWR)</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerging (EMG)</td>
<td>485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressing (PRG)</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3
**“Grade-level” and “Competency” Portfolio**
**Scaled Score Equivalents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MCAS-Alt achievement level, based on grade-level achievement standards</th>
<th>Scaled Score Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partially Meeting Expectations (PM)</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Expectations (M)</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceeding Expectations (E)</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accountability reporting in high school science and technology/engineering (STE) remains unchanged, with MCAS-Alt results reported using the Composite Performance Index (CPI) shown in Table 4.
# Table 4
## Composite Performance Index (High School STE only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Legacy” MCAS Scaled Score</th>
<th>MCAS Achievement level</th>
<th>MCAS-Alt Achievement Level</th>
<th>CPI Points Awarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>240–280</td>
<td>Proficient and Advanced</td>
<td>Progressing (for certain disability types)¹</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>230–238</td>
<td>Needs Improvement – High</td>
<td>Progressing (for certain disability types)² and Emerging</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220–228</td>
<td>Needs Improvement – Low</td>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210–218</td>
<td>Warning/Failing – High</td>
<td>Portfolio Incomplete</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200–208</td>
<td>Warning/Failing – Low</td>
<td>Portfolio Not Submitted</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Intellectual, Sensory/Deaf and Blind, Multiple Disabilities, Autism, and Developmental Delay  
² Sensory/Hard of Hearing or Deaf, Communication, Sensory/Vision Impairment or Blind, Emotional, Physical, Health, Specific Learning Disabilities, Neurological
Storage and Destruction of Returned MCAS-Alt Portfolios

In September of each year, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) returns scored MCAS-Alt portfolios to the school that submitted them in the spring.

Once returned, an MCAS-Alt portfolio becomes part of a student’s temporary record, and must be kept by the school in a secure location. Under the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, a temporary record contains everything that is not in the transcript and that is “clearly of importance to the educational process.”

Principals or their designees are required to periodically review temporary student records, and to destroy portions that are “misleading, dated, or irrelevant.” Prior to destroying these records, schools must give parents and eligible students written notice of the intent to destroy records, and of the parents’ right to receive copies of these records before they are destroyed. (603 CMR 23.06(2)).

Regardless of the obligation to review and periodically purge temporary records of “misleading, dated, or irrelevant” documents, schools must destroy students’ temporary records no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from public school (i.e., a student’s temporary records must be destroyed within seven years after the student exits). However, schools may destroy “misleading, dated, or irrelevant” documents prior to this time by providing written notice to the student and his/her parent of the approximate date of destruction of the record and of their right to receive these materials in whole or in part prior to their destruction.

The Department recommends the following time periods for schools to retain MCAS-Alt portfolios after the Department has returned them to the schools, based on the general view that, over time, the importance of the portfolios to the educational process diminishes and ultimately they become dated and irrelevant.

- grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics portfolios: retain two years after return of portfolios to school
- grades 5 and 8 Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) portfolios:
  - retain three years after grade 5 STE portfolios are returned to school
  - retain two years after grade 8 STE portfolios are returned to school
- high school ELA, Mathematics, and STE portfolios: retain two years after the student exits public education

Despite these recommendations, schools and districts should be aware of circumstances in which it may be prudent to retain MCAS-Alt portfolios longer than the above recommended time periods and treat the destruction of MCAS-Alt portfolios for specific students on a case-by-case basis. However, in all cases, records must be destroyed within the seven-year period described above.
Preparing Portfolios for Submission

MCAS-Alt Materials Shipment to Schools
In February, materials and instructions for the submission of MCAS-Alt portfolios will be delivered to schools. Principals should check the shipment immediately upon receipt and verify that the number of students that was entered on the MCAS-Alt Enrollment Verification Form in January has not changed.

The shipment will include the following MCAS-Alt materials:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity Provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Materials Summary</td>
<td>1 per school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-ring portfolio binder</td>
<td>1 per student for whom MCAS-Alt materials were ordered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Identification Booklet (SIB)</td>
<td>1 per student for whom MCAS-Alt materials were ordered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIB Instruction Sheet</td>
<td>1 per school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labeled MCAS-Alt student portfolio envelope</td>
<td>1 per student for whom MCAS-Alt materials were ordered; the information on the label must be completed before submitting the portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPS Shipping Instructions and pre-printed UPS Shipping Label(s)</td>
<td>1 label per 10 portfolios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-printed Student ID Label</td>
<td>1 per student in grades 4–8 who participated in MCAS-Alt in your school the previous year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCAS-Alt Score Appeal FAQ</td>
<td>1 per school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Completing the Materials Summary
Upon receipt of your shipment, immediately inventory the materials and complete the Materials Summary to indicate the quantity of materials received. If there are discrepancies between the totals listed on the Materials Summary and the count from your inventory of materials, the discrepancies must be reported to the MCAS Service Center within two business days of receipt of the order.

Principals Certification of Proper Administration (PCPA)
You will receive instructions to go online and certify that the quantity of materials received is accurate. You will be asked to complete Section 2 ONLY. You will be asked to complete sections 3, 4, and 5 when you are ready to ship your materials.

Ordering Additional Materials (if necessary)
To order additional MCAS-Alt materials, locate your MP Ship Code on the Materials Summary and go to www.mcasservicecenter.com. Click on “MCAS Alternate Assessment,” then click on “Additional Materials” and place your order. The deadline to order additional materials is Thursday, March 22 2019.
Before submitting portfolios from your school...

1. **Prepare the three-ring portfolio binders**
   Attach all required portfolio forms and evidence for each student’s portfolio in a single three-ring binder. Label all audio/visual and other unattached materials with the student’s name and SASID. The completed 2019 Portfolio Cover Sheet must be included as page 1 in each portfolio.

2. **Complete one MCAS-Alt Student Identification Booklet (SIB) for each portfolio**
   The SIB will be used to document a student’s participation in the MCAS-Alt. Submit one SIB for each student who participates in the MCAS-Alt. Do not submit a standard MCAS answer booklet for a student participating in the MCAS-Alt.
   a. For each student scheduled to participate in the MCAS-Alt, complete pages 1 and 2 of the SIB according to the instructions enclosed in the materials shipment.
   b. Insert each completed SIB in the front inside cover flap of the student’s portfolio.

3. **Complete the Materials Summary**
   Complete the Materials Summary according to the “After Testing” directions on the form. Make a copy of the completed form for your records.

4. **Pack materials for return (Do NOT seal the large plastic envelope.)**

5. **Schedule your school’s pick-up of MCAS-Alt materials**
   Schedule a UPS pick-up of materials no later than 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 28. UPS must pick up all MCAS-Alt materials no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 29. If your materials are ready to be submitted earlier than the deadline, you are encouraged to schedule a UPS pickup any time after March 18.

6. **Retain copies of documents (i.e., packing slips, material summary, printout of PCPA, UPS tracking numbers and confirmations.)**
Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What if a student who was designated for the MCAS-Alt moves into my school late in the school year?**
   A. If a student has moved from another Massachusetts district and will take the MCAS-Alt, the receiving school is responsible for completing and submitting the portfolio. The Department encourages the receiving school to contact the sending school and arrange for the student’s portfolio to be sent to the receiving school.

   If a student has moved to a Massachusetts school from another state, the teacher should attempt to collect evidence in the time remaining before the submission deadline and submit what has been collected.

2. **Is there a date after which a transfer student would be exempt from participating in the MCAS-Alt?**
   A. No, there is no cut-off date beyond which a student is exempt from the assessment, unless it is past the date of portfolio submission (i.e., March 29, 2019).

3. **How does a transfer student’s score affect my school’s results?**
   A. The transfer student will be counted either as a participant or non-participant in the new school. The results will be reported to the new school, but if the student has not attended the school for an entire academic year, the student’s results are included only at the district level.

4. **How should the school report a medically absent student?**
   A. The Student Identification Booklet includes a box entitled “Not Tested Status” that must be completed if a student will not participate in the assessment for a medical reason. Documentation must be kept at the school for students who did not participate for medical reasons. The absent student will be reported as a non-participant in the assessment.

5. **Must the district provide a copy of the portfolio to the parent, if requested?**
   A. Yes, a copy of their son or daughter’s MCAS-Alt portfolio must be furnished by the district to the parent/guardian, if requested.

6. **May a parent prohibit their child’s school from submitting an MCAS-Alt portfolio for the student?**
   A. It is the Department’s expectation that schools will submit an MCAS-Alt portfolio for each student designated for an alternate assessment in the IEP. Parents may not impose a restriction on their child’s participation in the MCAS-Alt, nor restrict the school from submitting the student’s portfolio.