



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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MCAS RESULTS AND STUDENTS SERVED BY EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVES¹

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provides this report, along with the educational collaborative data published in School/District Profiles, as required by *Chapter 43 of the Acts of 2012: An Act Relative to Improving Accountability and Oversight of Education Collaboratives*, which amended the law authorizing educational collaboratives, M.G.L. c. 40, § 4E. This report accompanies statewide performance results for students served in educational collaboratives beginning with the spring 2012 administration of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) in the subject areas of English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science and Technology/Engineering (STE). Beginning in 2012, assessment data published on the Department's website include the number and percentage of students who took the MCAS and MCAS-Alt in individual educational collaboratives (herein, "collaboratives") and collaboratives in the aggregate. Demographic data, including enrollment by race/ethnicity, gender, grade, and special education and disability status, were first reported in 2013.

History of Collaboratives

Collaboratives have operated as public entities in Massachusetts for over forty years. The primary mechanisms under which these collaboratives have operated are M.G.L. c. 40, § 4E and M.G.L. c. 71B, the current state special education law. Collaboratives were initially formed by school districts under these statutes in order to operate joint special education programs in which students from member districts (and some non-member districts) could be served. While collaboratives still provide special education programming, they have evolved since that time in order to meet other needs of public entities in a cooperative manner. Many collaboratives currently provide additional programs for students and services to member and non-member districts, the state, and other public entities, including (but not limited to) alternative school programs, professional development, transportation, related services, Medicaid reimbursement billing, and cooperative purchasing.

Who Collaboratives Serve

The educational programming offered by an individual collaborative is determined by the collaborative board. Most collaborative programs are offered in classrooms in public schools within the collaborative's member districts. Collaboratives also run public day school programs which are subject to approval by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. All collaboratives currently in existence in the Commonwealth serve students with disabilities; some serve students without disabilities, as well. The vast majority of students served by collaboratives, however, are students with disabilities. Data for the years now available show, in the aggregate, over 97% of students enrolled in collaboratives are identified as students with disabilities. By way of comparison, less than 20% of public school students statewide are identified as students with disabilities.

¹ Assessment results for educational collaboratives are available beginning with the spring 2012 MCAS administration; student enrollment and demographic data are available beginning with the June 2013 SIMS collection.

Participation Requirements

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System is designed to meet the requirements of the Massachusetts Education Reform Law of 1993. (For more information about this law, see [Building on 20 Years of Massachusetts Education Reform, prepared for the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education](#).) This law specified that the state-wide testing program must:

- Test all public school students in Massachusetts, including students with disabilities and English Language Learner students;
- Measure performance based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework learning standards; and
- Report on the performance of individual students, schools, and districts.

Students with significant disabilities who are unable to take the standard MCAS tests, even with accommodations, must take the MCAS-Alt. Across all collaboratives, data for 2015 shows that 33% of all collaborative students participated in the MCAS-Alt in English Language Arts (ELA) and 32% participated in the MCAS-Alt in Mathematics, while slightly less than 25% took the MCAS-Alt in Science and Technology/Engineering (STE). By comparison, the [2015 MCAS Alternate Assessment \(MCAS-Alt\): State Summary of Participation and Achievement](#) indicates that among all students with disabilities in the state, between 7% and 9.7% of students with disabilities took the MCAS-Alt in each content area. Decisions as to how each student with a disability will participate in MCAS must be made by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 team, and must be documented in the student's IEP or Section 504 plan.

Across all collaboratives, data for the years now available show that over 97% of students with disabilities have either moderate or high levels of need, as determined by their IEP teams. For details on the criteria used to determine level of need, please see the *Primary Disability / Level of Need* form on the Special Education IEP Forms and Notices page at http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/eng_toc.html.

Data Reporting and Accountability

The MCAS participation and performance results of students served by collaboratives have been and continue to be reported to their sending districts for accountability purposes. As a result of the amendment to M.G.L. c. 40, § 4E, the Department is now required to report on the MCAS results of students served by each collaborative.

State MCAS results, as well as school and district results, including collaboratives, can be found on the School/District Profiles pages at: <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/>. The Department also provides a state summary of MCAS-Alt results, which can be found at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/results.html.

MCAS results for collaboratives are posted on the School/District Profiles pages under the **Directories** tab. On each collaborative's profile page, MCAS and MCAS-Alt participation and achievement level data are reported on the **Assessment** tab in the following categories: all students; students with disabilities; students with moderate or high level of need; gender. To facilitate comparison of student participation and performance in individual collaboratives with students in collaboratives across the state, data for "All Collaboratives" are reported alongside individual collaborative results. In addition to participation and achievement level data, Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) for ELA and Mathematics, and Composite Performance Index (CPI) for ELA, Mathematics, and STE, are provided. For further information on SGP,

see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/growth/>. For further information on CPI, see the [*School Leader's Guide to the 2015 Accountability Determinations*](#). As is the case with all schools and school districts, achievement data are not reported for groups with fewer than 10 students (for student privacy purposes), and SGP is not reported for groups with fewer than 20 students.

The Department will continue to report MCAS data for collaboratives on the School/District Profiles pages at profiles.doe.mass.edu. It is our hope that the data will be useful in serving collaborative students. Additional information and assistance concerning these reports can be obtained by contacting Student Assessment Services by email at mcas@doe.mass.edu or by phone at 781-338-3625. For additional program or policy information and assistance regarding educational collaboratives, please visit the Office of Regional Governance web page at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/collaboratives/> or contact the School Finance Office by phone at 781-338-6585.