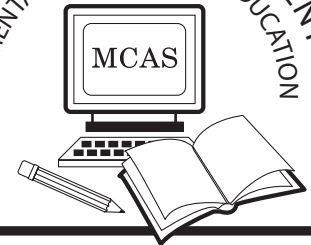

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF
ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION



**MASSACHUSETTS
COMPREHENSIVE
ASSESSMENT
SYSTEM**

*Release of
Spring 2009
MCAS Test Items*

**June 2009
Massachusetts Department of
Elementary and Secondary Education**



This document was prepared by the
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Commissioner's Foreword

Dear Colleagues:

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is committed to work in partnership with schools to support a system that will prepare all students to succeed as productive and contributing members of our democratic society and the global economy. To assist in achieving this goal, the Department regularly releases MCAS test items to provide information about the kinds of knowledge and skills that students are expected to demonstrate.

As it has in the past, this publication contains all MCAS test items on which student scores are based for grade 10 English Language Arts and Mathematics tests and for high school Biology and Introductory Physics tests. In response to feedback requesting that the amount of time that students spend taking MCAS tests be reduced, the Department is decreasing by 50% the number of released test items from spring 2009 MCAS tests in grades 3–8. By recycling some items each year and thus reducing the number of field-test items on each form, we will be able to shorten the length of each test and the amount of time devoted to MCAS testing. Despite this decrease, the items released in this document still represent all topics and reporting categories.

After 10 years of releasing all common test items, the Department has banked over 3,800 MCAS items that are currently posted on the Department website. These items, which are available at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testitems.html>, will continue to be a rich resource for schools.

This publication is available only on the Department website. The released test items for individual subjects at each grade level can be printed from this site. I encourage educators to use the relevant sections of this document together with their *Test Item Analysis Report Summaries* and *Test Item Analysis Rosters* as guides for planning changes in curriculum and instruction that may be needed to support schools and districts in their efforts to improve student performance.

Thank you for your support as we work together to strengthen education for our students in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

I. Document Purpose and Structure

Document Purpose and Structure

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to share with educators and the public all of the spring 2009 test items on which grade 10 and high school student results are based, as well as selected test items for grades 3–8. Local educators will be able to use this information to identify strengths and weaknesses in their curriculum and instruction, and to guide the changes necessary to more effectively meet their students' needs.

This document is also intended to be used by school and district personnel as a companion document to the test item analysis reports. Each school can access electronically a 2009 *School Test Item Analysis Report Summary* and a *Test Item Analysis Roster* for each content area at each grade level tested (e.g., grade 10 Mathematics). These reports provide data generated from student responses. Each report lists, for the school accessing the report, the names of all enrolled students in the grade covered by the report as well as information about how each student answered each common item contained in this *Released Item Document*. Each report also labels each item as multiple-choice, open-response, short-answer, or writing prompt and identifies the item's MCAS reporting category. Item numbers in this document correlate directly to the "Item Numbers" in the test item analysis report and roster. This year, as a result of the decrease in the number of released 2009 MCAS test items for grades 3–8, reports will indicate whether students responded correctly or incorrectly to common items that are not included in this document; reports will not indicate the correct responses to unreleased items.

Structure

Each subsequent chapter of this document contains information and materials for one MCAS test (one grade level and one content area). For example, chapter II contains information for the grade 3 ELA Reading Comprehension test; chapter XV contains information for the grade 10 Mathematics test. Note that chapters III, VI, and VIII contain information for both the ELA Composition (Part A) and the ELA Reading Comprehension (Part B) tests for the relevant grade.

Beginning with chapter II, each chapter has three main sections. The **first section** introduces the chapter by listing the Massachusetts *Curriculum Framework* content strands assessed by MCAS in that chapter's content area, as well as the MCAS reporting categories under which test results are reported to schools and districts. The first section also provides the Web address for the relevant *Framework* and the page numbers on which the learning standards assessed by the test items in the chapter can be found. In addition, there is a brief overview of the test (number of test sessions, types of items, reference materials allowed, and cross-referencing information).

For grades 3–8, the **second section** of each chapter contains approximately half of each content area's common test items used to generate spring 2009 MCAS student results. The second section of each chapter for grade 10 and high school MCAS tests contains all of the common items on which spring 2009 MCAS student results are based. With the exception of the ELA Composition writing prompt, the test questions in this document are shown in the same order and basic format in which they were presented in the test booklets. The Mathematics Tool Kit pieces used by students to answer released items in grades 3 and 4, as well as the Mathematics Reference Sheets used by students in grades 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10 MCAS

Mathematics test sessions, are inserted immediately following the last question in the second section of each Mathematics chapter. Students in all the tested grades were also provided with plastic rulers. Images of these rulers are not presented in this document. The formula sheet used by students during the high school Introductory Physics test is inserted immediately following the last question in the second section of the Introductory Physics chapter.

Due to copyright restrictions, certain English Language Arts reading passages are not available on the Department's website. Copyright information for all released common reading passages is provided in the document. Note that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has obtained permission to post all English Language Arts reading passages that appear on its website. While the Department grants permission to use the posted test items for educational purposes, it cannot grant or transfer permission to use the passages that accompany the items. Such permission must be obtained directly from the holder of the copyright. For further information, contact Student Assessment Services at 781-338-3625.

The **final section** of each chapter is a table that cross-references each released common item with its MCAS reporting category and with the *Framework* standard it assesses. Correct answers to released multiple-choice questions and, for the Mathematics tests, released short-answer questions are also listed in the table.

Responses to open-response items and compositions written in response to writing prompts are scored individually. An overview of procedures for scoring these responses and compositions is presented in the MCAS Frequently Asked Questions, which are available on the Department's website at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/overview.html. Scoring procedures will also be explained further in the MCAS document, *Guide to Interpreting the Spring 2009 MCAS Reports for Schools and Districts*, due for release in September 2009. Similar guides are currently available on the Department's website for previous years' MCAS *School Reports* and *District Reports*. Sample student responses and compositions from previous MCAS administrations may also be viewed on the Department's website.

Materials presented in this document are **not** formatted **exactly** as they appeared in student test booklets. For example, in order to present items most efficiently in this document, the following modifications have been made:

- Some fonts and/or font sizes may have been changed and/or reduced.
- Some graphics may have been reduced in size from their appearance in student test booklets; however, they maintain the same proportions in each case.
- For grades 7 and 10, the English Language Arts Composition writing prompt is presented on the same page as the make-up writing prompt, and the four lined pages provided for students' initial drafts are omitted.
- All references to page numbers in answer booklets have been deleted from the directions that accompany test items.

In order to support the future development of MCAS tests in high school Chemistry and Technology/Engineering, items from the spring 2009 tests in these subjects are not included in this publication. The omission of these items will have no impact on the reporting of results.

In February 2009, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approved a two-year suspension of MCAS History and Social Science testing and waived the Competency Determination requirement for the graduating classes of 2012 and 2013. As a result of this decision, no MCAS History and Social Science tests were administered in spring 2009.