

Spring 2014 MCAS Multiple-Choice Results Interpretive Guide

June 2014

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Each year, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provides school and district personnel with an early look at full English Language Arts (ELA) results, multiple-choice results for the MCAS Mathematics tests, and multiple-choice results for grades 5 and 8 Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) tests. The purpose of providing these preliminary results is to give instructional staff immediate feedback on student, school, and district performance for educational and curriculum planning and review purposes before the end of the school year and over the summer months.

What Data Are Available?

On June 23, student rosters and a student-level .csv data file were posted to school and district dropboxes in DropBox Central in the Department's Security Portal at <u>gateway.edu.state.ma.us</u>. The records in the data file contain, in addition to full preliminary ELA results, multiple-choice results for each student in grades 3–8 and 10 Mathematics and grades 5 and 8 STE.

The .csv data file contains the student name, SASID, date of birth, and Mathematics and STE multiple-choice results and raw scores for each student. The file can be loaded into virtually any data analysis software package, including Excel, for analysis by users capable of manipulating data files. The *MCAS 2014 File Layout*, posted in school and district dropboxes, contains a description of all variables in the data file.

On June 26, twelve different reports will be available through Edwin Analytics. These can be used to conduct curriculum and item analyses at the district, school, and student level. Item analysis reports provide the percent correct on individual items and groups of items, within content area standards, at the school, district, and state levels. Reports for curriculum framework standards analysis at the school and district levels will also be available.

The 2014 released item documents are posted on the Department's website at <u>http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testitems.html</u>. As in previous years, approximately half of the test items administered in grades 3–8 have been released, while

How Should These Results be Used? What is Not Allowed?

all high school test items have been released.

Released items can be used, in conjunction with this guide, to identify trends in how students responded to individual questions and to questions in content area strands and topics. Released items can also be used to identify high-percentage distracter questions.

All data released prior to the official release of

school and district results in mid-September are embargoed, which means the data cannot be released to the public or discussed in public meetings. These data are subject to change based on discrepancies identified by schools, districts, and Department staff. In addition, some data will change based on the June SIMS submission your district is providing to the Department in July. The data file does not include students who were not tested. Students not tested will be added based on the June SIMS. Preliminary MCAS data, including the Mathematics and STE multiple-choice results, can and should be used for educational planning purposes. Whenever preliminary results are printed for planning purposes, they should be clearly dated and labeled "preliminary," with the understanding that some results may change with the official release in September.

Using the File

Please keep in mind the following when using the data file:

- These are preliminary data and are subject to change; users should *not* draw any firm conclusions about student performance in Mathematics and STE since only multiple-choice results are included.
- Reports can be sorted by different fields to present different views of the data.
- Results should be shared with instructional leaders, curriculum specialists, and teachers as they plan for summer programs to reflect on the past year's efforts and to prepare for September and the incoming cohort of students.
- Sorting by *district score* arranges items from most difficult (i.e., lowest percentage of correct answers) to least difficult (i.e., highest percentage of correct answers). This view helps quickly identify the lowest and highest achievement areas in the district for further analysis and inquiry.
- Sorting by *state score* arranges items from most to least difficult, based on statewide results. This view provides an overall picture of MCAS *test item difficulty*. *Item difficulty* allows you to see how well your students, school, and district performed in comparison to state students and can help prioritize resources for areas of critical need. For example, instructional leaders may want to direct resources according to how well students (or groups of students) performed on the *least difficult items* compared to the *most difficult items*.
- Sorting by curriculum framework *standard* groups items for curriculum framework review.

Users may review the .csv data file posted on June 23, or wait until reports are available in Edwin Analytics on June 26. The data file contains one row of test information for each student, listed alphabetically for each grade. The table below shows the score codes for multiple-choice items.

Question Type	Score Codes	
Multiple-choice	+ A, B, C, or D	Correct answer (1 point earned) Incorrect answer on a released question (0 points earned)
	- *	Incorrect answer on an unreleased question (0 points earned) More than one answer (0 points earned)

Blank cells indicate that the student did not respond to the question (short-answer and openresponse items are also blank for the preliminary release). A blank row indicates that the student did not take the standard MCAS test in that subject (e.g., the student may have participated in the MCAS Alternate Assessment). The total raw score points columns (mrawsc and srawsc) contain the total number of points the student earned on the multiple-choice portion of the test; the multiple-choice raw score is equal to the number of "+" symbols in the row.

Please Note

The grade 7 Mathematics test normally contains 42 items. During the 2014 test administration, however, it was discovered that one multiple-choice item had an incorrect graphic. This item was not scored and has not been included in the tables at the end of the chapter. As a result of removing this item, each student who took the grade 7 Mathematics test received a raw score and a scaled score based on his or her performance on the 41 remaining items only.

Item Analysis

Reports showing the percentage of students answering each item correctly are provided for school, district, and state analysis in Edwin Analytics beginning on June 26. The reports default to all students and provide a filter for eight student subgroups for further analysis. To access the reports, logon to Edwin Analytics in the Department's Security Portal at <u>gateway.edu.state.ma.us</u>.

Analysis of Results by Standards

Edwin Analytics report CU306, **MCAS District Results by Standards**, within the district tab, allows users to identify areas of strength and weakness by question type and by content area strand/topic or domain/cluster at the district level. (Note that CU406, School Results by Standards, provides similar data at the school level.) The report provides the percent correct data for district and state students and calculates the difference in the *District/State Diff* column.

The sample report on the next page shows that the district's grade 8 STE students performed as well overall as state students (62% correct); however, in the *Life Sciences* strand, on average, 54% of district students provided the correct answer, compared to 60% of state students. Gaps at the topic level within the *Life Sciences* strand, such as the 13% gap in *Evolution and Biodiversity*, or the 21% gap in *Reproduction and Heredity*, suggest a need for further analysis and inquiry to identify potential cause(s). *Please note that the number of questions associated with a topic will determine the degree of impact a topic area has on overall results*.

Focusing on *performance* gaps associated with lessdifficult groups of questions can help reveal whether knowledge most students are expected to possess has been *demonstrated*: focusing on more difficult groups of questions can help reveal to what extent students have mastered or not yet mastered *more challenging parts* of the curriculum.

In using this report to guide such inquiry, school and district staff should review student performance on easier items (those with higher percent correct) as well as on more difficult items (those with lower percent correct), and then note the size of the gap in the *District/State Diff* column to prioritize efforts and next steps. (*Please note that this sample report includes constructed-response results that will not be available for 2014 until the release of full preliminary results in August.*)

	Possible Points	District % Correct	State % Correct	District/State Diff				
Science and Technology/Engineering	ng							
All items	54	62%	62%	0				
Question Type								
Multiple Choice	38	72%	70%	2				
Open Response	16	41%	44%	-3				
Strand / Topic								
Earth and Space Science (preK-8)	13	65%	61%	4				
Earth's History	3	76%	70%	6				
Earth's Structure	1	55%	53%	2				
Heat Transfer in the Earth System	2	76%	76%	0				
Mapping the Earth	4	40%	38%	2				
The Earth in the Solar System	3	82%	75%	7				
Life Science (preK-8)	13	54%	60%	-6				
Changes in Ecosystems Over Time	1	40%	47%	-7				
Classification of Organisms	1	87%	76%	11				
Energy and Living Things	2	68%	68%	-1				
Evolution and Biodiversity	2	54%	66%	-13				
Living Things and Their Environment	1	81%	73%	8				
Reproduction and Heredity	4	22%	43%	-21				
Structure and Function of Cells	1	83%	73%	10				
Systems in Living Things	1	79%	67%	12				
Physical Sciences (preK-8)	14	60%	60%	1				
Elements, Compounds, and Mixtures	8	58%	60%	-1				
Forms of Energy	1	77%	66%	11				
Heat Energy	2	60%	55%	6				
Properties of Matter	3	60%	62%	-2				
Technology/Engineering (preK-8)	14	70%	66%	4				
Communication Technologies	2	84%	79%	5				
Construction Technologies	1	50%	52%	-2				
Engineering Design	4	82%	77%	5				
Manufacturing Technologies	1	92%	86%	6				
Materials, Tools, and Machines	1	65%	64%	1				
Transportation Technologies	5	56%	52%	4				

Sample District Results by Standards Report (Grade 8 STE)

CU306 MCAS District Results by Standards

Test Item Analysis Summary

School and district staff who want to review individual items to identify and/or confirm trends observed at the school level (and that may have been observed at the district level), or who want to review questions associated with released items, should use Edwin Analytics report IT401, **MCAS School Test Item Analysis Summary**. (Note that IT301, District Test Item Analysis Summary, provides similar data at the district level.) Columns list the item number; item type; tested standard (with a drop down selector for MA 2011 or MA 2000/01/04 standards); average item score (percent correct) for school, district, and state; and the difference between school/state percent correct. For each released item, the report also includes the percentage of responses for each answer choice. On the far left is a hyperlink to the released item (if applicable).

The Sample School Test Item Analysis Summary Report on the following page allows users to drill down to the individual item and content standard to check for high and low performance across domains and within the same domain/cluster combination. The report below, sorted by standard, shows that in the *"Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface area, and volume"* cluster, which is within the *Geometry* domain, students at the school scored higher than the state average on multiple-choice items 8 and 14, which assessed standard 6.G.A.3, and lower than the state average on multiple-choice items 5 and 28, which assessed standard 6.G.A.4. While overall on this domain/cluster combination students scored only two percentage points lower than the state (available by running CU406, School Results by Standards), the difference in performance on individual content standards can help guide further inquiry, for example, into the alignment between assessed standards, school and/or district curriculum, local assessment data, and the scope and/or sequence of instruction.

Instructional leaders will also note that item 5 was released, which facilitates further inquiry into the correct and the incorrect distracter answers selected by students. When high percentages of students select the same incorrect answer, further inquiry can help reveal whether students may have misread the question, misunderstood particular concepts, and/or applied concepts incorrectly. While only 36% of students selected the correct response ("C") to item 5, almost one-third (30%) selected incorrect answer "B." Assessment coordinators and others focused on improving student achievement may want to look for patterns in incorrect answers on released items and conduct an inquiry into causes.

(Please note that this sample report includes constructed-response results that will not be available for 2014 until the release of full preliminary results in August.)

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Spring 2	2013		-	[* ==		ŀ				•	• *	06		 Sort by Standard
Mathem	atics		•	*			6			•	• •	All Students	5	MA 2011 Standards Select MA 2000/01/04
All Stu	dents (83)	Standards:	MA 201	1 Standa	rds								1	
			Av	verage iter	m Score	,	Percentage of Student Responses MC			Correct MC				
ltem No.	ltem Type	MA 2011 Standard	School	District	State	Diff.	Blank/0	A/1	B/2	C/3	D/4	Answer	Domain	
1	MC	6.EE.A.1	69%	48%	49%	20	0	7	6	18	69	D	Expressions and Equations	Apply and extend previous
<u>30</u>	MC	6.EE.A.1	95%	90%	92%	3							Expressions and Equations	Apply and extend previous
<u>33</u>	MC	6.EE.A.1	82%	70%	72%	10							Expressions and Equations	Apply and extend previous
<u>3</u>	MC	6.EE.A.2	71%	62%	74%	-3	0	5	19	5	71	D	Expressions and Equations	Apply and extend previous
<u>19</u>	MC	6.EE.A.2	87%	79%	89%	-2	0	5	87	6	2	В	Expressions and Equations	Apply and extend previous
<u>23</u>	MC	6.EE.A.2	64%	60%	76%	-12							Expressions and Equations	Apply and extend previous
<u>39</u>	MC	6.EE.B.6	63%	63%	70%	-7						1	Expressions and Equations	Reason about and solve or
<u>25</u>	SA	6.EE.B.7	0.73	0.6	0.73	0.00	27	73					Expressions and Equations	Reason about and solve or
<u>34</u>	MC	6.EE.B.7	71%	71%	78%	-7							Expressions and Equations	Reason about and solve or
<u>16</u>	MC	6.EE.C.9	87%	84%	91%	-4	0	1	10	87	2	С	Expressions and Equations	Represent and analyze qua
<u>18</u>	OR	6.EE.C.9	3.41	2.88	3.14	0.27	0	7	2	33	58		Expressions and Equations	Represent and analyze qua
<u>31</u>	MC	6.EE.C.9	90%	85%	89%	1							Expressions and Equations	Represent and analyze qua
<u>41</u>	MC	6.EE.C.9	48%	51%	62%	-14							Expressions and Equations	Represent and analyze qua
<u>10</u>	MC	6.G.A.1	49%	40%	54%	-5	0	18	19	49	13	С	Geometry	Solve real-world and mathe
<u>17</u>	SA	6.G.A.1	0.43	0.22	0.34	0.09	57	43					Geometry	Solve real-world and mathe
<u>26</u>	OR	6.G.A.1	2.61	2.44	2.81	-0.20	6	13	2	70	8		Geometry	Solve real-world and mathe
<u>37</u>	SA	6.G.A.2	0.45	0.35	0.4	0.05	55	45					Geometry	Solve real-world and mathe
<u>8</u>	MC	6.G.A.3	72%	62%	69%	3	1	72	12	4	11	A	Geometry	Solve real-world and mathe
<u>14</u>	MC	6.G.A.3	63%	48%	55%	8	0	5	17	16	63	D	Geometry	Solve real-world and mathe
<u>5</u>	MC	6.G.A.4	36%	40%	58%	-22	0	13	30	36	20	С	Geometry	Solve real-world and mathe
28	MC	6.G.A.4	86%	86%	88%	-2							Geometry	Solve real-world and mathe

Sample School Test Item Analysis Summary Report (Grade 6 Mathematics)

IT401 MCAS School Test Item Analysis Summary

Test Item Analysis Graph

The **School Test Item Analysis Graph** (IT402) is another useful tool for item analysis. When sorted by state score (i.e., item difficulty), the graph shows how well students at the school and district performed across the difficulty spectrum from most- to least-difficult items. (Note that IT302, District Item Analysis Graph, provides similar data at the district level.)

The graph below depicts a school in a district with multiple schools at the tested grade. The line of connected points for the school, when compared to the district's line, can help guide an inquiry into the potential cause(s) of performance gaps. For example, parts of the graph in which the school's line approximates that of the district, such as items on the far left (35, 41, 4, 40, 32, and 36), indicate potential district-wide weaknesses in curriculum, instruction, or other curriculum-related supports *on the most difficult items*. On the other hand, parts of the graph on the far right, where the school and district lines diverge (items 9, 26, 31, 22, 25 and 1), indicate weaknesses *on the least difficult items* that are unique to the school. In both cases, curriculum specialists

Lines connecting data points on the graph can help reveal areas in which groups of items at the school or district level departed significantly from the state line, and whether low- or highperforming items were localized at the individual school level or district level.

are encouraged to have discussions with teachers and instructional leaders at the appropriate level (school and/or district) to conduct further inquiry.



Sample School Test Item Analysis Graph Report (Grade 7 Mathematics)

IT402 MCAS Test Item Analysis Graph

Comparing Student Groups to the State Average

The two tables that follow show the percentage of students at the state level who answered each multiple-choice item correctly. Schools and districts may wish to use this information to compare

the percentage of their students (or students in one or more subgroups) answering an item correctly with the percentage of students statewide. Experienced Excel users will be able to calculate school percent-correct values using the "countif" function. Please note that on June 26, comparative data in the tables below will be available in Edwin Analytics.

Item number	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
Item1	92%	78%	65%	93%	80%	82%	82%
Item2	93%	67%	92%	79%	81%	93%	76%
Item3		86%	82%	87%	73%	69%	72%
Item4	81%		79%	73%	68%	54%	57%
Item5				75%		73%	59%
Item6	77%	85%	72%				66%
Item7	75%	90%	47%		83%	81%	67%
Item8	84%	81%	63%	82%	63%		78%
Item9	79%	79%	52%	71%	55%	71%	63%
Item10	51%	71%		57%		68%	62%
Item11			87%	64%	77%		60%
Item12	81%	74%	74%	53%	69%	70%	78%
Item13	80%	84%	63%		61%	43%	75%
Item14	73%	69%	47%	82%	65%	75%	61%
Item15	95%	54%	76%	32%	73%	77%	
Item16		89%		76%	56%	84%	
Item17	86%	76%		62%		63%	
Item18			67%			87%	
Item19	75%		63%		37%		
Item20	83%	93%	60%	53%	62%		
Item21	56%	48%		57%	85%	71%	
Item22		93%	96%	67%	86%	73%	89%
Item23	61%	92%	93%	85%	64%	80%	78%
Item24		61%	82%	70%	71%	69%	58%
Item25	78%	91%	76%		71%	71%	49%
Item26	96%	68%			67%	42%	79%
Item27	90%			85%	88%	72%	90%
Item28				58%	55%		61%
Item29		86%	83%	69%	53%		81%
Item30	88%	75%	85%	71%		85%	76%
Item31	79%	76%	85%	76%		63%	44%
Item32		97%	64%	63%	56%	80%	77%
Item33	71%	82%	79%	60%	72%	47%	76%
Item34	68%	69%	86%	93%	83%	79%	85%
Item35	68%	84%	65%	72%	49%	58%	53%
Item36	84%		89%				

Spring 2014 MCAS Mathematics Tests: Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Multiple-Choice Items Correctly, by Grade Level

Item number	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
Item37			37%		56%	84%	59%
Item38		68%		64%	64%		64%
Item39		84%		81%		81%	56%
Item40		43%	58%	83%	83%	62%	88%
Item41		64%	66%	76%		83%	
Item42			87%				
Number of students tested	67,119	68,315	68,570	68,633	69,797	70,197	69,344

Spring 2014 MCAS Science and Technology/Engineering Tests: Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Multiple-Choice Items Correctly, by Grade Level

Item number	Grade 5	Grade 8
Item1	83%	63%
Item2	88%	68%
Item3	52%	93%
Item4	66%	39%
Item5	90%	80%
Item6	72%	75%
Item7	54%	88%
Item8	92%	79%
Item9		
Item10		
Item11	76%	68%
Item12	72%	61%
Item13	62%	73%
Item14	85%	69%
Item15	31%	70%
Item16	57%	63%
Item17	73%	50%
Item18	81%	82%
Item19	75%	49%
Item20	73%	67%
Item21	82%	51%
Item22	87%	86%
Item23	78%	75%
Item24	93%	54%
Item25	72%	72%
Item26	81%	49%
Item27	79%	83%
Item28	71%	71%
Item29	77%	66%
Item30	70%	67%

Item number	Grade 5	Grade 8
Item31	76%	80%
Item32	63%	78%
Item33	85%	87%
Item34	91%	46%
Item35	70%	57%
Item36	87%	73%
Item37	89%	55%
Item38	67%	47%
Item39	56%	69%
Item40	81%	53%
Item41		
Item42		
Number of students tested	69,826	70,889

When comparing the performance of groups or subgroups of students to statewide students, you may also want to review item-level past performance data. Item-level data for previous MCAS administrations can be accessed by visiting the School and District Profiles on the Department's website. Select your school or district, click the Assessment tab, and click the link to Item by Item Results (for each Grade/Subject).

Estimating Student Performance on the Entire Test Using Multiple-Choice Results

The multiple-choice test items represent 65 percent of the total points available on the grade 3 Mathematics test, 59 percent on the grades 4–8 Mathematics tests, 53 percent on the grade 10 Mathematics test, and 70 percent on the grades 5 and 8 STE tests. Performance on the multiple-choice portion is strongly correlated with performance on the constructed-response portion (short-answer and/or open-response items); however, there are exceptions, including students who do not respond to constructed-response questions and students who perform their best on questions where they are expected to show their work.

The tables on the following pages can help schools and districts interpret the multiple-choice results of each student. When using the tables, be careful to consider the information in its full context. For example, the following language could be used: "Jane's multiple-choice performance on the grade 5 math test was similar to the performance of students in the upper level of the *Proficient* category whose scaled scores range from 250 to 258"; or "the multiple-choice scores of half of our grade 5 students in 2014 were similar to those of students in the state who are *Proficient* or higher." By framing the information with words like "similar" and specifying that only multiple-choice results are being evaluated, users can avoid over-interpreting the results. Precise threshold scores for each achievement level will be established in August when the constructed-response results are available.

Individual results will vary depending on the results from the short-answer and open-response sections of the tests. In all but the most extreme cases, a student's final achievement The following tables should be used only to approximate student achievement levels. level will be in the corresponding category listed below or in one of the adjacent categories. Students at the upper or lower end of the raw score range are more likely to fall into an adjacent category than those in the middle of the range.

Total Score on Multiple-Choice Items	Likely Achievement Level, Based on Multiple-Choice Items
	Grade 3
0–13 14–18 19–23 24–26	Warning (200–218) Needs Improvement (220–238) Proficient (240–258) Advanced (260–280)
	Grade 4
$\begin{array}{r} 0-7\\ 8-15\\ 16-20\\ 21-24\\ 25-27\\ 28-29\\ 30-31\\ 32\end{array}$	Low Warning (200–208) High Warning (210–218) Low Needs Improvement (220–228) High Needs Improvement (230–238) Low Proficient (240–248) High Proficient (250–258) Low Advanced (260–268) High Advanced (270–280)
	Grade 5
$\begin{array}{r} 0-6\\ 7-13\\ 14-17\\ 18-21\\ 22-24\\ 25-27\\ 28-30\\ 31-32\end{array}$	Low Warning (200–208) High Warning (210–218) Low Needs Improvement (220–228) High Needs Improvement (230–238) Low Proficient (240–248) High Proficient (250–258) Low Advanced (260–268) High Advanced (270–280)
$\begin{array}{r} 0-6\\ 7-13\\ 14-17\\ 18-21\\ 22-24\\ 25-27\\ 28-30\\ 31-32\end{array}$	Low Warning (200–208) High Warning (210–218) Low Needs Improvement (220–228) High Needs Improvement (230–238) Low Proficient (240–248) High Proficient (250–258) Low Advanced (260–268) High Advanced (270–280)
	Grade 7
0–6 7–13 14–17 18–21	Low Warning (200–208) High Warning (210–218) Low Needs Improvement (220–228) High Needs Improvement (230–238)

Spring 2014 MCAS Mathematics Tests: Multiple-Choice Score and Likely Achievement Level

Total Score on Multiple-Choice Items	Likely Achievement Level, Based on Multiple-Choice Items
22–24	Low Proficient (240–248)
25–27	High Proficient (250–258)
28–29	Low <i>Advanced</i> (260–268)
30–31	High <i>Advanced</i> (270–280)
	Grade 8
0–7	Low Warning (200–208)
8-14	High Warning (210–218)
15–19	Low Needs Improvement (220–228)
20–22	High Needs Improvement (230–238)
23–25	Low Proficient (240–248)
26–28	High Proficient (250–258)
29–30	Low <i>Advanced</i> (260–268)
31–32	High <i>Advanced</i> (270–280)
	Grade 10
0–5	Low <i>Failing</i> (200–208)
6–11	High <i>Failing</i> (210–218)
12–13	Low Needs Improvement (220–228)
14–16	High Needs Improvement (230–238)
17–19	Low Proficient (240–248)
20–22	High Proficient (250–258)
23–29	Low <i>Advanced</i> (260–268)
30–32	High Advanced (270–280)

Total Score on Multiple-Choice Items	Likely Achievement Level, Based on Multiple-Choice Items				
Grade 5					
0–8	Low <i>Warning</i> (200–208)				
9–18	High <i>Warning</i> (210–218)				
19–23	Low Needs Improvement (220–228)				
24–27	High Needs Improvement (230–238)				
28–31	Low Proficient (240–248)				
32–33	High Proficient (250–258)				
34–36	Low Advanced (260–268)				
37–38	High <i>Advanced</i> (270–280)				
	Grade 8				
0–8	Low <i>Warning</i> (200–208)				
9–17	High <i>Warning</i> (210–218)				
18–23	Low Needs Improvement (220–228)				
24–27	High Needs Improvement (230–238)				
28–32	Low Proficient (240–248)				
33–35	High Proficient (250–258)				
36	Low <i>Advanced</i> (260–268)				
37–38	High Advanced (270–280)				

Spring 2014 MCAS Science and Technology/Engineering Tests: Multiple-Choice Score and Likely Achievement Level