Purpose of This Manual

The 2015 Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt provides guidelines and instructions for preparing MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) portfolios for students who have been designated by their IEP teams and 504 plans to participate in alternate assessments. As is true of standard MCAS tests, the purpose of the MCAS-Alt is to assess the achievement of students in relation to knowledge and skills specified in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. This school year (2014–2015), the MCAS-Alt will use the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (incorporating the Common Core State Standards) as the basis for assessing English language arts (ELA) and mathematics for students in all grades. Since the high school Competency Determination requirement will remain the same through the class of 2019, high school competency portfolios in ELA and mathematics will continue to assess only the content in the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks that matches content in the 2000/2001 frameworks.

In school year 2014–2015, districts may choose to administer either MCAS or PARCC (the new consortium-based assessment system). MCAS-Alt will continue to measure the educational performance of the small number of students who are unable to take either MCAS or PARCC general assessments due to the complexity and severity of their disabilities. Each of these students will produce a portfolio of their work that is compiled and submitted in the same subjects and grades in which MCAS and PARCC tests are administered. Resource materials and information included in this manual have been developed to assist teachers in conducting these required assessments.

The process of compiling MCAS-Alt portfolios is also an opportunity to identify challenging educational goals for students, to meet important MCAS assessment requirements, and to share information about students’ progress in meeting their goals. Preliminary results will be posted electronically in June, which will enable educators to make important instructional decisions for students. The Department recognizes the hard work involved in creating these portfolios and acknowledges that this effort is important and worthwhile.

Thank you for participating in this vital component of the statewide assessment system and providing challenging academic instruction for your students.
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PART I

Introduction, Overview, and Security Requirements
Introduction to the 2015 Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt

The 2015 Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt is intended to guide educators in preparing portfolios for students with significant disabilities who have been designated by their IEP team or in their 504 plan to participate in MCAS-Alt. These students must be assessed in the same academic subjects as their peers who are taking standard MCAS tests. This manual contains all the necessary information, guidance, and forms needed to conduct the 2015 MCAS-Alt and is intended for use in conjunction with the Resource Guide to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities in Mathematics and English language arts/literacy (grades 3–10); and the Resource Guide to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities in Science and Technology/Engineering (grades 5, 8, and 9/10). All publications are available on the Department’s website at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html.

Contact Information

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New and Notable for the 2015 MCAS-Alt

Please be aware of the following important changes and other relevant information for the 2014–2015 school year.

2015 MCAS-Alt Portfolio Submission
Portfolios must be prepared for submission and picked up for delivery from schools no later than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 2, 2015. All portfolio submissions are final and may not be amended or supplemented after the deadline. Materials and instructions for the completion and submission of MCAS-Alt portfolios, including three-ring portfolio binders, MCAS-Alt Student Identification Booklets (SIB), and prepaid shipping materials, will be sent to each school in February 2015, based on the number of requests received from each school in January in the online MCAS Enrollment Verification.

Alternate assessments in districts administering PARCC tests in spring 2015
Students designated for alternate assessments, either by their IEP team or in their 504 plan, will continue to participate in the MCAS-Alt, regardless of whether students in their district will take PARCC or MCAS.

High school Mathematics portfolio requirements are aligned with Common Core State Standards
A high school mathematics section has been added to the Fall 2014 Resource Guide to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities.

Fall 2014 Resource Guide
The Resource Guide to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities has been revised as follows. Content in the Fall 2014 Resource Guide must be used as the basis for all 2015 MCAS-Alt portfolios, and is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html.

- English Language Arts: entry points have been added to the Language (“Vocabulary Acquisition and Use”) and Writing strands.

- Mathematics: a high School section has been added, as well as new entry points in the domains of Ratios and Proportions, and Expressions and Equations. The Resource Guide in Mathematics is now fully aligned with the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (incorporating the Common Core State Standards).

- Science and Technology/Engineering: the Resource Guide in Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) has been revised and continues its basis on the 2001/2006 STE standards. All STE entry points in the Fall 2014 Resource Guide are acceptable for use “as is” (i.e., without isolating a single skill) for the creation of a measurable outcome. Since STE evidence may be collected over a period of two school years, evidence collected last year (2013-2014) for submission in spring 2015 may be submitted, even though it may be based on entry points in the 2006 Resource Guide in STE.

Ensuring That Portfolios Are Complete
Educators should review the section entitled Ensuring That Portfolios Are Complete, which has been substantially revised, and describes the steps needed to ensure that portfolios do not receive strand scores of “M” (missing or insufficient evidence), or a content area score of Incomplete (see pages 40–41).

Clarification of selected portfolio requirements described in the 2015 Educator’s Manual

- Acceptable Entry Points: Educators are reminded to select an entry point from the Fall 2014 Resource Guide in the subject being assessed on which to base the student’s measurable outcome. The Resource Guide is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html and in the Online Forms and Graphs application.

- Minor modifications to entry points are permitted, provided the essential meaning is retained; for example, if the entry point says “Solve word problems involving the addition of fractions using manipulatives,” the words “using manipulatives” may be removed.
• For entry points with **two acceptable skills** connected by “and” (e.g., “Group objects into tens and ones”), educators may choose to assess either or both skills. However, if both skills are listed in the measurable outcome, then both skills must be assessed on the date of each activity.

• For entry points with **two acceptable skills** connected by “or” (e.g., “Identify the meaning of words, phrases, or sentences”) educators may assess any or all of the skills on each date.

**Important reminders about the ELA–Reading Portfolio Strand**

- Students should demonstrate knowledge and skills in ELA using their primary mode of communication (e.g., in writing, through the use of symbols, through actions or gestures, orally, or through the use of technology)
- Evidence and brief descriptions in the ELA–Reading strand must refer by name to the text from which words, phrases, or excerpts were selected for assessment, and must include either:
  - the title of the published text, or
  - the actual text (e.g., sentence, passage, narrative, etc.), if text is teacher-created or includes selections from a print or digital source
- Text used for the ELA–Reading strand must either be informational or literary, but a single portfolio strand may not include both.
- ELA–Reading includes the understanding of words, phrases, and sentences in the context of a text, rather than in isolation. For example, a list of idiomatic expressions matched to their meanings should not be included in the portfolio as evidence of text comprehension. Instead, students must identify the meaning of idiomatic expressions as they are used in a specific text.

**NEW Competency and Grade-Level Portfolio Checklist** (see page 63) must be included with all portfolios submitted for students working “at grade level.”

- **MCAS-Alt High School “Competency Portfolios”**
  The requirements for ELA, mathematics, and STE competency portfolios will remain as they were in 2014 and will remain in effect through the graduating class of 2019 (see pages 23–30)

- **“Grade-Level” Portfolios**
  “Grade-level” portfolios are intended for students in grades 3–8 who are working at grade-level, but require an alternate assessment to demonstrate their knowledge and skills, and who are attempting to earn a score of Needs Improvement or higher on the MCAS-Alt. The requirements for “grade-level” portfolios include the submission of work samples only—no data charts are required—based on nine specific standards in each grade and subject (see pages 21–22).

**MCAS-Alt Required Forms, Graphs, and Work Description Labels**

Teachers are encouraged to use the online Forms and Graphs application to complete all required forms, graphs, and work description labels for their students’ portfolios, which is available at [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html). The digital format allows educators to complete these forms on their personal computers and to print them and include them, as appropriate, in each portfolio. The online Forms and Graphs program is available on a password-protected web page that can be accessed from any computer with Internet capability. The current school-year version (2014–2015) must be used. Forms and graphs may also be completed manually, using photocopies of the paper versions found in this manual (see pages 78–89).

**MCAS-Alt Score Appeals**

A request for an MCAS-Alt Score Appeal may be submitted if a teacher or administrator believes a discrepancy exists between the actual evidence in the portfolio and the reported score. In order to file a score appeal, the school must have retained a photocopy of the portfolio in question. Score appeals may be submitted anytime after preliminary MCAS scores are posted in mid-June and before 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 26, 2015. Information on submitting MCAS-Alt score appeals is available at [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/results.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/results.html).
Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

A. Overview
MCAS is the state’s student testing program which is implemented in response to the Education Reform Law of 1993. In spring 2015, districts will administer either MCAS or PARCC (Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessments. Statewide assessments, along with other components of education reform, are designed to strengthen public education in Massachusetts and ensure that all students receive challenging instruction based on the standards in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. The curriculum for all students, including students with disabilities, must be aligned with these standards. MCAS and PARCC are designed to improve teaching and learning; serve as the basis, with other indicators, for school and district accountability; and certify that students have met the Competency Determination standard in order to graduate from high school.

B. Participation in MCAS and PARCC by Students with Disabilities

Definition of a Student with a Disability
For the purposes of MCAS and PARCC, a student with a disability is defined as having an Individualized Education Program (IEP) provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71B, or a plan provided under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Legal Requirements
The Massachusetts Education Reform Law of 1993, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, and the No Child Left Behind law (2001) require full participation by students with disabilities in state and district assessments and require that all Massachusetts students whose education is publicly funded, even those with significant disabilities, receive instruction that is aligned with the skills, concepts, and knowledge supported by the standards in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. Lawmakers recognize that students with disabilities are more likely to be provided equal access to resources and learning opportunities if their academic assessments are based on the same standards as those of non-disabled students and if the assessment results of these students are included in school and district accountability.

All students in publicly funded programs, including students with disabilities, must participate in either MCAS or PARCC, including students who are enrolled in the following educational programs:

- public schools, including charter schools
- educational collaboratives
- approved and unapproved special education private schools, both in and outside the state
- institutional programs
- programs operated by the Department of Youth Services and the Department of Children and Families
- home and hospital tutoring programs funded by a district

Students with disabilities must participate in one of the following assessments, as determined by their IEP Team or their 504 plan:
• standard MCAS or PARCC tests, without accommodations
• standard MCAS or PARCC tests, with appropriate and necessary accommodations
• MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt)

MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt)

A. Overview

The MCAS-Alt consists of a portfolio of evidence collected during the school year that documents the student’s performance of the skills, knowledge, and concepts outlined in currently-approved versions of the state’s curriculum frameworks. Alternate assessments allow the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to report results to parents, schools, and the public on the academic performance of all students with disabilities, and to assist schools in developing challenging programs of instruction for students with significant disabilities.

The Department’s publication entitled Resource Guide to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities describes strategies for adapting and using the state’s standards to instruct and assess students who are taking the MCAS-Alt.

The purposes of MCAS-Alt are:

• to determine whether students with significant disabilities are receiving a program of instruction based on the state’s academic standards
• to determine how much of the academic curriculum a student has learned
• to use assessment results to provide challenging academic instruction
• to include difficult-to-assess students in statewide assessment and accountability systems
• to provide an alternative pathway for some students with disabilities to earn a Competency Determination and to become eligible to receive a diploma

B. Requirements for 2015 MCAS-Alt Portfolios

MCAS-Alt assessments are required in all grades and subjects for which standard MCAS tests are required to be administered. MCAS-Alt portfolios must be based on the grade in which the student is reported in the Student Information Management System (SIMS). Specific MCAS-Alt requirements for students in each grade are listed beginning on page 13.

Most Massachusetts schools have already transitioned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (based on the Common Core State Standards). For MCAS-Alt portfolios submitted in the 2014–2015 school year, students in grades 3-10 will submit evidence based on the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Framework in Mathematics and English language arts/literacy. Evidence in science and technology/engineering portfolios (for students in grade 5, 8, and 9 or 10) must be based on the standards outlined in the 2014 Resource Guide to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities in Science and Technology/Engineering.

C. Submission Deadline and Return of Portfolios to Schools

The classroom teacher of the student designated for participation in the MCAS-Alt has the primary responsibility for completing the portfolio in the subject(s) scheduled for statewide assessment. Portfolios must be submitted to the Department in a three-ring binder using prepaid shipping and handling materials provided to each school for this purpose, postmarked no later than Thursday, April 2, 2015. Portfolios postmarked after this date will not be scored. Materials for the submission of portfolios are sent to schools in late February based on information provided by each school in the online MCAS Enrollment Verification in January. Parents must be notified in March of the opportunity to view their child’s portfolio and sign the Verification Form. Scored portfolios will be returned to schools in
September and must be stored in a secure location, according to the guidelines provided in the Policy on Storage and Destruction of Returned MCAS-Alt Portfolios in this manual.

Suggested TIMELINE for MCAS-Alt Activities in 2014–2015

**Fall 2014**

**September**
- IEP or 504 plans identify students who will participate in MCAS-Alt in each subject.
- teachers organize folders by subject/strand in which to store work samples and data charts

**October**
- attend a Department-sponsored MCAS-Alt training session for teachers and administrators
- review materials and information from training session
- review each student’s educational goals, identify measurable outcomes, and plan instruction based on the Resource Guides
- register online for web-based MCAS-Alt Forms and Graphs application at [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html)
- prepare data charts for the collection of data on student performance
- begin collecting work samples and recording baseline data for each measurable outcome in content areas being assessed

**Nov./Dec.**
- obtain signed Consent Form(s) to Photograph or Videotape Student, if needed
- collect work samples, data, and other evidence of student performance
- make instructional decisions based on data collection

**Principals:**
- identify other adults in the school or district to assist the lead teacher in developing the portfolio
- identify a training specialist or expert teacher in the school/district to answer questions
- monitor ongoing portfolio compilation
- assess need for additional training of teachers; contact the Department, if necessary

**Winter/Spring 2015**

**Jan./Feb.**
- attend a Department-sponsored regional portfolio review session
- order MCAS-Alt binders and submission materials for the school through the MCAS Online Enrollment Survey (ensure number of binders/SIBs sent to school is adequate for the number of students submitting portfolios)

**March**
- finish collecting, selecting (with the student), labeling, and organizing portfolio evidence; complete all required forms
- attend a Department-sponsored regional portfolio review session
- edit videos, as needed, and copy onto CD, DVD, or flash drive and label all materials
- invite parents to view portfolio(s) by end of month and sign Verification Form
- review portfolios for completeness; complete Student Information Booklet (SIB)

**Principals**
- check with educators for any new enrollments for MCAS-Alt submission
- complete online Principal’s Certification of Proper MCAS-Alt Administration
- schedule pickup of completed portfolios through MCAS Service Center by Wednesday, April 1, 3:00 p.m.

**April**
- ship all MCAS-Alt portfolios from school no later than 5:00 p.m., Thursday, April 2

**June**
- preliminary results reported electronically to schools and districts in mid-June
- MCAS-Alt Score Appeals due by 5:00 p.m., June 26

**September**
- MCAS-Alt Parent/Guardian Reports and scored portfolios sent to districts
MCAS-Alt Security Requirements

Principals are responsible for ensuring that all educators administering the MCAS-Alt comply with the requirements and instructions contained in the 2015 Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt. In addition, other administrators, educators, and staff within the school are responsible for complying with the same requirements. School staff members that violate the test security requirements are subject to the sanctions and penalties outlined in this section. The purpose of the MCAS-Alt Security Requirements is to protect the validity of Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) results.

The MCAS-Alt, if done correctly, provides educators, parents, and the state with information on the academic performance and progress of each student, and can be used by the IEP team to identify challenging academic goals for each student. Therefore, it is essential that accurate and authentic portfolio evidence be compiled and submitted that truly reflects the student’s performance.

A. Educator’s Responsibilities for Conducting the MCAS-Alt

Educators who conduct the MCAS-Alt are responsible for ensuring that information is complete and accurate for each student participating in MCAS-Alt and is properly recorded on all MCAS-Alt forms and materials, including the Student Information Booklet (SIB) and student portfolios. Educators are also responsible for ensuring that student work and other evidence are neither duplicated, altered, nor fabricated in a way that provides information that is false or portrays the student’s performance inaccurately. Evidence for each student, regardless of the similarity of classroom instruction or participation in similar classroom activities, must reflect the student’s authentic abilities and performance. Finally, educators are responsible for the timely submission of student portfolios with all required forms and information to their principal for review and sign-off on the Principal’s Certification of Proper MCAS-Alt Administration (PCPA) prior to shipment of portfolios to the Department.

Intentional disregard for MCAS testing and security protocols may constitute gross misconduct or other good cause for which an educator may face license discipline under Department regulations. If misconduct by a licensed educator is suspected or found, the Commissioner, as the Massachusetts educator licensing authority, may open a further investigation into possible license consequences. Penalties for testing irregularities and/or misconduct may include the following:

- delay in reporting of district, school, and/or student results
- invalidation of district, school, and/or student results
- removal of school personnel from any future role in MCAS and/or MCAS-Alt administrations
- possible employment and/or license consequences for licensed educators

B. Principals’ Responsibilities for Proper Administration of MCAS-Alt

Principals’ responsibilities include the following:

- Ensure that all students with disabilities participate in MCAS in the manner prescribed by their IEP team or in their 504 plan and in accordance with participation requirements;
- Monitor the alternate assessment process to ensure the student work is neither duplicated, altered, nor fabricated in a way that provides information that is false or portrays the student’s performance inaccurately;
- Ensure that adequate school resources are allocated, and staff coordinated, to guarantee appropriate participation in, and timely submission of MCAS-Alt portfolios for students with disabilities designated for alternate assessment;
- Provide assurances through the PCPA that all information is complete and accurate for each student participating in MCAS-Alt and is properly identified on all MCAS and MCAS-Alt
forms and materials, including MCAS-Alt Student Identification Booklets (SIB) and student portfolios

- **Schedule a UPS pick-up** through the MCAS Service Center by **3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 1** for pick-up no later than **Thursday, April 2, 2015, at 5:00 p.m.**
- Identify qualified school personnel to administer the MCAS-Alt and ensure that all MCAS-Alt administrators, regardless of any past experience conducting similar assessments, receive training prior to each administration.

**C. Reporting MCAS-Alt Irregularities**

To report irregularities in the administration of the MCAS-Alt, principals or superintendents must contact the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education at 781-338-3625. In cases where it is alleged that an MCAS-Alt administration was compromised, the Commissioner will write to the superintendent requesting a local fact-finding investigation into the alleged irregularity and a written report based on the results of the investigation within an established timeline.

After receiving the superintendent’s written investigative report, the Commissioner may request that the superintendent provide additional information or documentation prior to making a final determination on the matter and notifying the superintendent of this determination. All such correspondence is subject to disclosure under Massachusetts public records law.
Guidelines for IEP Team Decision-Making: Which Students Should Take the MCAS-Alt?

A. MCAS Participation Guidelines

The decision as to whether a student will participate in an alternate assessment is made annually, and in each subject scheduled for assessment, by the student’s IEP team or in their 504 plan using the following guidelines to determine how each student with a disability will participate in MCAS.

The student’s IEP team or 504 plan coordinator should begin by asking the following questions and considering options 1, 2, and 3 in the chart that follows:

- Can the student take the standard MCAS test under routine conditions?
- Can the student take the standard MCAS test with accommodations? If so, which accommodations are necessary in order for the student to participate?
- Does the student require an alternate assessment? (Alternate assessments are intended for a very small number of students with significant disabilities who are unable to take standard MCAS tests, even with accommodations.)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Student's Instructional Program and Local Assessment</th>
<th>Recommended Participation in MCAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>OPTION 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the student is

a) generally able to demonstrate knowledge and skills on a paper-and-pencil test, either with or without test accommodations; **and** is

b) working on standards **at or near grade-level expectations**; **or** is

c) working on standards that have been modified and are **somewhat below grade-level expectations** due to the nature of the student’s disability,

Then

The student should take the **standard MCAS test**, either under routine conditions or with accommodations that are consistent with the instructional accommodation(s) used in the student’s educational program (according to the Department’s accommodations policy available at [http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation/sped.docx](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation/sped.docx) and that are documented in an approved IEP or 504 plan prior to testing.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Student’s Instructional Program and Local Assessment</th>
<th>Recommended Participation in MCAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>OPTION 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If the student is*
  
a) generally unable to demonstrate knowledge and skills on a paper-and-pencil test, even with accommodations;  
   and is  
b) working on standards that have been substantially modified due to the nature and severity of his or her disability;  
   and is  
c) receiving intensive, individualized instruction in order to acquire, generalize, and demonstrate knowledge and skills,

*Then*  
The student should take the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) in this subject.

| **OPTION 3** |  |

*If the student is*
  
a) working on standards at or near grade-level expectations;  
   and is  
b) sometimes able to take a paper-and-pencil test, either without accommodations, or with one or more test accommodation(s);  
   but  
c) has a complex and significant disability that does not allow the student to fully demonstrate knowledge and skills on a test of this format and duration,

(Examples of complex and significant disabilities for which the student may require an alternate assessment are provided on the following page.)

*Then*  
The student should take the standard MCAS test, if possible, with necessary accommodations that are generally consistent with the instructional accommodation(s) used in the student’s instructional program (according to the Department’s accommodations policy) and that are documented in an approved IEP or 504 plan prior to testing.

*However*  
The team may recommend the MCAS-Alt when the severity and complexity of the disability prevent the student from fully demonstrating knowledge and skills on the standard test, even with the use of accommodations.

In these cases, the MCAS-Alt “grade-level” or “competency” portfolio should be compiled and submitted, depending on the grade of the student.
B. Students with Complex and Significant Disabilities for Whom an Alternate Assessment May Be Required (Option 3)

While the majority of students who take alternate assessments have significant cognitive disabilities, participation in the MCAS-Alt is not limited to these students. When the nature and complexity of a student’s disability present significant barriers or challenges to standardized testing, even with the use of accommodations, and even when the student may be working at or near grade-level expectations, the student’s IEP team or 504 plan may determine that the student should take the MCAS-Alt in that subject.

In addition to the criteria outlined in Options 2 and 3 on the previous page for students who should be considered for the MCAS-Alt, the following examples of unique circumstances are provided to expand the team’s understanding of the appropriate use of alternate assessments. An alternate assessment may be advisable, for example, in each of the following circumstances:

- A student with a severe emotional, behavioral, or other documented disability is unable to maintain sufficient concentration to participate in standard testing, even with test accommodations.
- A student with a severe health-related disability, neurological disorder, or other disability is unable to meet the demands of a prolonged test administration.
- A student with a severe motor, communication, or other disability requires more time than is reasonable or available for testing, even with the allowance of extended time (i.e., the student cannot complete one full test session in a school day).

Students in grades 3-8 may submit a “grade-level” portfolio to document that they are addressing standards at grade-level expectations (see pages 21–22).

High school students taking the MCAS-Alt may use this assessment to satisfy the CD requirement, if they can demonstrate in their portfolio a level of achievement comparable to that of a student who has met the CD requirements by taking the standard high school test or retest in that subject. Students who meet these requirements on the MCAS-Alt by submitting a “competency” portfolio will be eligible to earn the CD.

Details on “grade-level” and “competency” portfolios are provided on pages 21–30.
PART II

Required Assessments in Each Grade
Required Assessments for Each Grade

The 2015 MCAS-Alt will assess the 2011 Massachusetts curriculum frameworks standards in English language arts and mathematics (incorporating the Common Core State Standards) for students in grades 3–8 and 10; and the 2001/2006 Science and Technology/Engineering standards for students in grades 5, 8, and 9 or 10.

The 2014 Resource Guide for Students with Disabilities must be used as the basis for developing measurable outcomes that will be assessed on the 2015 MCAS-Alt. The Resource Guide is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html.

The information in Table 1 below and on the following pages outlines the minimum assessment requirements in each grade for students participating in the 2015 MCAS-Alt. Submitting additional evidence beyond the minimum is strongly encouraged.

**Table 1**

**Requirements by Grade for the 2015 MCAS Alternate Assessment**

**Grade 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Language Standards (Use only standards from the “Vocabulary Acquisition and Use” Cluster; i.e., L.3.4, L.3.5, L.3.6) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Vocabulary Acquisition and Use cluster  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| Reading Standards in:  
• Literature, or  
• Informational Text | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one Reading Strand  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Operations and Algebraic Thinking (OA) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Operations and Algebraic Thinking  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| Measurement and Data (MD) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Measurement and Data  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |

---

1 The title or a photocopy of the text used for assessment must be included in all brief descriptions for ELA—Reading; a copy of any teacher-created text must be submitted.
Grade 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Language Standards  
(Use only standards from the “Vocabulary Acquisition and Use” Cluster; i.e., L.4.4, L.4.5, L.4.6) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Vocabulary Acquisition and Use cluster  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| Reading Standards in:  
- Literature, or  
- Informational Text | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one Reading standard.  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| Writing | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one Writing standard  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart  

Note: Use of a scoring rubric is encouraged for writing, which should be submitted with the portfolio. |
| Mathematics | Required Portfolio Evidence |
| Operations and Algebraic Thinking (OA) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Operations and Algebraic Thinking  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| Number and Operations–Fractions (NF) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Number and Operations–Fractions  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |

2 The title or a photocopy of the text used for assessment must be included in all brief descriptions for ELA–Reading; a copy of any teacher-created text must be submitted.
## Grade 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Language Standards**  
(Use *only* standards from the “Vocabulary Acquisition and Use” Cluster; i.e., L.5.4, L.5.5, L.5.6) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in *Vocabulary Acquisition and Use* cluster  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| **Reading Standards in:**  
- Literature, or  
- Informational Text | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one Reading standard³  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| **Mathematics** | **Required Portfolio Evidence** |
| **Number and Operations in Base Ten (NBT)** | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Number and Operations in Base Ten  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| **Number and Operations–Fractions (NF)** | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Number and Operations–Fractions  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| **Science and Technology/Engineering** | **Required Portfolio Evidence**  
Evidence may be compiled over two consecutive school years in this subject (7/1/13–4/2/15)  
| **Any three of the four Science and Technology/Engineering strands** | In each of the three selected strands:  
• One data chart measuring the student’s performance based on the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in the selected Science and Technology/Engineering strand  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |

³ The *title* or a *photocopy* of the text used for assessment must be included in all brief descriptions for ELA–Reading; a copy of any teacher-created text *must* be submitted.
## Grade 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Language Standards (Use only the standards from the “Vocabulary Acquisition and Use” Cluster (i.e., L.6.4, L.6.5, L.6.6) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in *Vocabulary Acquisition and Use* cluster  
   • Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| Reading Standards in:                    |                                                                                             |
| • Literature,                            |                                                                                             |
| • Informational Text,                    |                                                                                             |
| • Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects, or |                                                                                             |
| • Literacy in History/Social Studies     |                                                                                             |
| • One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one Reading standard  
   • Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Ratios and Proportional Relationships (RP) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Ratios and Proportional Relationships  
   • Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| The Number System (NS)                    | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in The Number System  
   • Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |

---

4 The *title* or a *photocopy* of the text used for assessment must be included in all brief descriptions for ELA–Reading; a copy of any teacher-created text *must* be submitted.
Similarly, for the Mathematics section:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Ratios and Proportional Relationships (RP) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Ratios and Proportional Relationships  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| Geometry (G) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Geometry  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |

**Note:** Use of a scoring rubric is encouraged for writing, which should be submitted with the portfolio.

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5 The title or a photocopy of the text used for assessment must be included in all brief descriptions for ELA—Reading; a copy of any teacher-created text must be submitted.
### Grade 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Language Standards (Use only standards from the “Vocabulary Acquisition and Use” Cluster; i.e., L.8.4, L.8.5, L.8.6) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Vocabulary Acquisition and Use cluster  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |

**Reading Standards in:**  
• Literature,  
• Informational Text,  
• Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects, or  
• Literacy in History/Social Studies  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Standards in:</th>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one Reading standard  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |

**Mathematics**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Expressions and Equations (EE) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Expressions and Equations  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| Geometry (G) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Geometry  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |

**Science and Technology/Engineering**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Science and Technology/Engineering</th>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Any three of the four Science and Technology/Engineering strands | Evidence may be compiled over two consecutive school years in this subject (7/1/13–4/2/15)  
In each of the three selected strands:  
• One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in the selected Science and Technology/Engineering strand  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |

---

6 The title or a photocopy of the text used for assessment must be included in all brief descriptions for ELA–Reading; a copy of any teacher-created text must be submitted.
**High School: Grade 10**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Language Standards (Use only standards from the “Vocabulary Acquisition and Use” Cluster; i.e., L.9-10.4, L.9-10.5, L.9-10.6) | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in Vocabulary Acquisition and Use cluster  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| Reading Standards in:  
• Literature,  
• Informational Text,  
• Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects, or  
• Literacy in History/Social Studies | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance of the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one Reading standard  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |
| Writing | • One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one Writing standard  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |

**Mathematics**  
Any three of five Conceptual Categories in High School Mathematics (see 2014 Resource Guide)  
• Number and Quantity  
• Algebra  
• Functions  
• Geometry  
• Statistics and Probability  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| For each of the three selected conceptual categories:  
• One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in the selected Mathematics conceptual category  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |

**High School: Grade 9/10**  
(The Science and Technology/Engineering portfolio may be submitted either in grade 9 or 10.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Science and Technology/Engineering</th>
<th>Required Portfolio Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Evidence may be compiled over two consecutive school years in this subject (7/1/13–4/2/15) | For each of the three selected standards:  
• One data chart measuring the student’s performance in the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates, based on one standard in the discipline  
• Two additional pieces of primary evidence showing the student’s performance of the same targeted skill identified on the data chart |

Any three standards in one of the following disciplines:  
• Biology  
• Chemistry  
• Introductory Physics  
• Technology/Engineering

7 The title or a photocopy of the text used for assessment must be included in all brief descriptions for ELA–Reading; a copy of any teacher-created text must be submitted.
PART III

Portfolios for Students Who Are Achieving At Grade-Level
MCAS-Alt Grade-Level Portfolios for Students in Grades 3–8

A. Background

Grade-level portfolios should be submitted for the relatively small number of students who are achieving at grade-level expectations, but are unable to participate in standard MCAS tests even with the use of accommodations, due to the nature and severity of their disabilities. See the section on MCAS Participation Guidelines (pages 7–8) for a description of the students who should be considered for the grade-level MCAS-Alt, under “Option 3.” The Department strongly encourages collaboration between general and special educators in the creation of grade-level portfolios.

B. Requirements to Score Needs Improvement or Higher

Students who submit grade-level portfolios are eligible to earn a score of Needs Improvement, Proficient, or Advanced when they have independently demonstrated the grade-level knowledge and skills described in each assessed standard in their grade.

For the “grade-level” portfolio:

- Only work samples should be submitted; data charts are not required.
- Multiple work samples must be included for each standard that together are sufficient to document that the student has learned all aspects of each selected standard.
- All sections of the selected standards (i.e., .a, .b, .c, etc.) must be addressed in the work samples.
- Submission is encouraged of work samples that shows evidence of the student’s thinking and independent problem-solving.
- The portfolio should include, as appropriate, all outlines, drafts, graphic organizers, scoring rubrics, or tools used by the student. (Note: Self-evaluation is not scored on grade-level portfolios.)
- A completed Work Description for “Grade-Level” Portfolio must be attached to each work sample (see page 80)
- A completed Competency and Grade-Level Portfolio Checklist (see page 63) must be placed in front of the Portfolio Cover Sheet in the binder.

The requirements for “grade-level” portfolios in each grade and subject are described in Table 3 below.

Table 3
“Grade-Level” Portfolio Requirements in Each Grade and Content Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s Grade</th>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>Science and Technology/Engineering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The following standards, as indicated:</td>
<td>The following standards, as indicated:</td>
<td>The following standards, as indicated:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>• All three Language standards in Vocabulary Acquisition and Use • Any three Reading standards for Literature • Any three Reading standards in Informational Text</td>
<td>• Any three standards in Operations and Algebraic Thinking (OA) • All three standards in Number and Operations–Fractions (NF) • Any three standards in Measurement and Data (MD)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>• All three Language standards in Vocabulary Acquisition and Use</td>
<td>• Any three standards in Operations and Algebraic Thinking</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>Thinking (OA)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • Any three Reading standards in either Literature or Informational Text | • Any three standards in Number and Operations in Base Ten (NBT) | • Any three standards in three different STE strands selected by the teacher:  
  o Earth and Space Science  
  o Life Science  
  o Physical Science  
  o Technology/Engineering |
| • All three Writing standards (include rubric, if used) | • Any three standards in Number and Operations—Fractions (NF) | |
| **5** | | |
| • All three Language standards in Vocabulary Acquisition and Use | • All three standards in Ratios and Proportional Relationships (RP) | N/A |
| • Any three Reading standards in Literature | • Any three standards in The Number System (NS) | |
| • Any three Reading standards in either:  
  o Informational Text  
  o Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects  
  o Literacy in History/Social Studies | • Any three standards in Geometry (G) | |
| **6** | | |
| • All three Language standards in Vocabulary Acquisition and Use | • All three standards in Ratios and Proportional Relationships (RP) | N/A |
| • Any three Reading standards in Literature | • Any three standards in Expressions and Equations (EE) | |
| • Any three Reading standards in either:  
  o Literature  
  o Informational Text  
  o Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects  
  o Literacy in History/Social Studies Literature, or  
  o Informational Text  
  o Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects  
  o Literacy in History/Social Studies | • Any three standards in Geometry (G) | |
| • Any three Writing standards (include rubric, if used) | **7** | |
| **8** | | |
| • All three Language standards in Vocabulary Acquisition and Use | • Any three standards in Expressions and Equations (EE) | N/A |
| • Any three Reading standards in Literature | • Any three standards in Functions (F) | |
| • Any three Reading standards in either:  
  o Informational Text  
  o Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects  
  o Literacy in History/Social Studies | • Any three standards in Geometry (G) | |
| **9** | | |
Competency Portfolios to Meet the High School CD Requirement

A. General Requirements to Earn a Competency Determination in Each Subject

When the IEP team or the 504 plan determines that a high school student taking an alternate assessment may be able to earn a Competency Determination (CD) in a subject, a competency portfolio must be submitted. If the student is able to demonstrate in the portfolio a level of performance comparable to or higher than that of a student who has scored Needs Improvement on the high school MCAS tests in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and/or Science and Technology/ Engineering (STE), the student will be awarded a CD in that subject. The requirements for compiling and submitting the competency portfolio are described below. The Department strongly encourages collaboration between general and special educators on the development of these portfolios.

In order to earn a CD in a content area, a student portfolio must be submitted that

1. reflects a performance that is equivalent to or higher than a student who has received a score of Needs Improvement in the high school ELA, Mathematics, and/or STE MCAS test;
2. demonstrates that the student has independently addressed all required standards and strands in the subject being assessed, as described in the portfolio requirements for ELA, Mathematics, and/or STE;
3. includes work samples compiled under the direct supervision of staff in the district, collaborative, or approved private special education school submitting the appeal. Data charts like those required in other MCAS-Alt portfolios are **not** required in competency portfolios.

Content experts will review each competency portfolio and make individual determinations in each subject. Each work sample must be accompanied by a 2015 High School Competency Portfolio Work Description found in the Product Description Labels/Blank Data Charts section of this manual (see pages 81-86).

A completed Competency and Grade-Level Portfolio Checklist form (see page 63) must be placed in front of the Portfolio Cover Sheet in the binder.

Students who earn a score of Needs Improvement in ELA and Mathematics must also fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP) in order to be eligible for a diploma. Additional information on EPPs is available on the Department’s website at [www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/epp/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/epp/).

B. Resubmitting Competency Portfolios beyond Grade 10 for the Competency Determination

There is no requirement to resubmit an alternate assessment portfolio beyond grade 10 unless the IEP team or 504 plan has determined that the student is working at or close to a grade 10 level of achievement and may be able to earn a CD in one or more subjects.

Students who have already submitted alternate assessments for competency, but scored below Needs Improvement in grade 10 ELA, Mathematics, and high school STE are encouraged to resubmit their portfolios in the spring of each successive school year by providing additional clearly-labeled work samples in each subject. Portfolios may include evidence produced and accumulated over multiple years of high school, and may be resubmitted annually until such time as the student has earned an achievement level of Needs Improvement or higher.
Students who are submitting portfolios with the intention of earning a CD must submit a competency portfolio by **Thursday, April 2, 2015**, the deadline for submitting all other alternate assessment portfolios. Rosters of results for students in grade 12 will be provided to schools and districts before the end of May. Students in grade 12 will have an additional opportunity to submit an MCAS-Alt competency portfolio by **Friday, June 26, 2015**, for which notification of results will be given in early August. The decision to resubmit a student’s portfolio must be documented in the student’s IEP or 504 plan.

### C. Requirements to Earn a Competency Determination

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)** high school portfolios must include the following components at minimum, to be considered for a Competency Determination:

- **FIVE essays with all drafts and revisions.**
- **Multiple drafts** of each essay must be submitted that indicate a progression of the student's thinking in each successive draft. Each draft must:
  - be clearly identified on the first page with a title, the student's name, and the date on which it was completed
  - include a completed ELA High School Competency Portfolio Work Description attached to each draft
  - show independent edits by the student, with meaningful revisions incorporated into subsequent drafts; drafts must be written in the words of the student, not rewritten by the teacher
  - include a clear indication of the type(s) and frequency of assistance provided to the student by the teacher, either written directly on each draft or described on the ELA High School Competency Portfolio Work Description
  - include original student work, not photocopies
  - do not include multiple-choice worksheets, short-answer tests, quizzes, or plot summaries.

An ELA portfolio may include evidence produced over a period of **more than one school year**, beginning as early as grade 9. Evidence may be added to an existing portfolio and resubmitted annually beyond grade 10.

**Note:** The Department’s transition to the 2011 Curriculum Frameworks for English language arts and literacy will result in changes to the Competency Determination requirements in the future. In the meantime, the **2015 ELA competency portfolios will maintain the same content requirements as before**, but reflect the cluster headings and terminology used in the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for ELA and Literacy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS</strong></th>
<th>ELA high school portfolios must include the following:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Evidence that the student understands and is independently able to analyze and appropriately apply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Conventions of Standard English</strong> grammar and usage, including punctuation, capitalization, and spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Knowledge of Language</strong>, including making effective choices for meaning or style, and appropriate application in different contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Vocabulary Acquisition and Use</strong>, including the use of grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words; and literal/figurative language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence in the Language strand may be provided either in separate work samples or</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
incorporated into the **five required writing samples** described below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Reading</strong></th>
<th>Three essays, including all drafts, based on grade 10 texts in which the student analyzes, interprets, compares and contrasts, and/or discusses the meaning of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. an informational text (including literary nonfiction), and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. a work of fiction, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. a work of either poetry or drama</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Writing</strong></th>
<th>Two essays, including all drafts, based on grade 10 texts that demonstrate original thinking and independent editing through several drafts, in which the student produces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. an analysis of a theme in literature appropriate to a student in grade 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. either a narrative based on real or imagined events or experiences (creative); an argument to support a claim (persuasive); or an informational/expository text that conveys ideas and information on a topic of the student’s own choosing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MATHEMATICS** high school portfolios must include the following, at minimum, to be considered for the Competency Determination:

- at least **four examples** or problems solved correctly by the student that demonstrate all aspects of each required learning standard. Additional examples of work in each standard are strongly encouraged.
- a completed Mathematics High School Competency Portfolio Work Description attached to each work sample
- a **score** (percent accuracy) given by the teacher for each work sample, with incorrect answers clearly marked
- work samples produced as independently as possible by the student; corrections made by the teacher may not be submitted as the student's own work
- written evidence of the student’s thinking and problem-solving, indicating the process and all steps used to solve each problem
- a clear indication of the type(s) and frequency of assistance provided to the student by the teacher (i.e., percent independence and any accommodations used by the student), provided on the Mathematics High School Competency Portfolio Work Description
- original student work, not photocopies
- submission of multiple-choice, matching, and fill-in-the-blank worksheets is **strongly discouraged**

Mathematics portfolios may include evidence produced over a period of **more than one school year**, beginning as early as grade 9. Evidence may be added to an existing portfolio and resubmitted annually beyond grade 10.

**Note:** The Department’s transition to the 2011 Curriculum Frameworks for Mathematics will result in changes to the Competency Determination requirements in the future. However, for the spring 2015 grade 10 mathematics MCAS tests, students will only be responsible for content in the standards from the 2011 mathematics framework that matches content in the grade 9-10 standards from the 2000 mathematics framework. Therefore, the **content required in the student work samples continues to reflect the descriptions from the 2000 frameworks**, and as before, must be at a comparable level to a student who has scored at least Needs Improvement on the grade 10 MCAS Mathematics test or retest.

In the tables below, the content requirements from the 2000 frameworks are cross-referenced with the 2011 mathematics standards. The degree to which standards match between the 2000 and 2011 frameworks can vary and is not always exact. For example, in some cases the content found in a single standard from the 2000 framework is found in multiple standards in the 2011 framework. In other cases, the content found in a grade 10 standard from the 2000 framework is found only in a standard...
in an earlier grade in the 2011 framework. This occurs because some of the 2000 grade 10 standards contain content that is introduced at earlier grades in the 2011 framework, and is not repeated in the 2011 high school standards. As a result, the tables below do not show a one-to-one correlation between the 2000 and 2011 standards, and contain some grade 5-8 standards from the 2011 mathematics framework.

**Number Sense and Operations** (2011 Conceptual Category: Number and Quantity)
At least four examples solved correctly by the student must be submitted that show each aspect of the 2000 standards identified below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2011 Standards</th>
<th>2000 Standards</th>
<th>Competency Portfolio Requirements (from the 2000 Curriculum Frameworks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.NS.A.3</td>
<td>10.N.1</td>
<td>Identify and use the properties of operations on real numbers, including the associative, commutative, and distributive properties [do not simply define these properties; show how they are applied and demonstrate that students can identify each property; e.g., use the distributive property to multiply 7(23)=7(20+3)=7(20)+7(3)=140+21=161]; the existence of the identity and inverse elements for addition and multiplication; the existence of nth roots of positive real numbers for any positive integer n; and the inverse relationship between taking the nth root of and the nth power of a positive real number.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.EE.B.3</td>
<td>6.EE.A.2</td>
<td>Simplify numerical expressions, including those involving positive integer exponents or the absolute value [e.g., 3(2^4 - 1) = 45; 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Patterns, Relations, and Algebra** (2011 Conceptual Categories: Algebra and Functions)
At least four examples solved correctly by the student must be submitted that show each aspect of the 2000 standards identified below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2011 Standards</th>
<th>2000 Standards</th>
<th>Competency Portfolio Requirements (from the 2000 Curriculum Frameworks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.F.B.4</td>
<td>10.P.2</td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between various representations of a line. Determine a line’s slope and x- and y-intercepts from its graph or from a linear equation that represents the line. Find a linear equation describing a line from a graph or a geometric description of the line (e.g., by using the “point-slope” or “slope y-intercept” formulas). Explain the significance of a positive, negative, zero, or undefined slope.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA-CED.A.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSF-IF.B.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSF-IF.C.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.EE.A.1</td>
<td>10.P.4</td>
<td>Demonstrate facility in symbolic manipulation of polynomial and rational expressions by rearranging and collecting terms; factoring [e.g., a^2 - b^2 = (a + b)(a - b); x^2 + 10x + 21 = (x + 3)(x + 7); 5x^4 + 10x^3 - 5x^2 = 5x^2 (x^2 + 2x - 1)]; identifying and canceling common factors in rational expressions; and applying the properties of positive integer exponents. [This standard does not include simple addition, subtraction, and multiplication of polynomials, as covered in 10.P.3.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA-APR.A.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA-SSE.A.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA-REI.B.4</td>
<td>10.P.5</td>
<td>Find solutions to quadratic equations (with real roots) by factoring, completing the square, or using the quadratic formula. Demonstrate an understanding of the equivalence of the methods. [Note: In order to demonstrate an understanding of equivalence of the methods, at least two methods must be shown for the same equation.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA-CED.A.1</td>
<td>10.P.7</td>
<td>Solve everyday problems that can be modeled using linear, reciprocal, quadratic, or exponential functions. Apply appropriate tabular, graphical, or symbolic methods to the solution. Include compound interest [i.e., exponential], and direct [i.e., linear] and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HSF-LE.A.2  
HSF-IF.B.4  
inverse [i.e., reciprocal] variation problems. Use technology when appropriate.

Geometry (2011 Conceptual Category: Geometry)
At least four examples solved correctly by the student must be submitted that show each aspect of any three 2000 standards identified below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2011 Standards</th>
<th>2000 Standards</th>
<th>Competency Portfolio Requirements (from the 2000 Curriculum Frameworks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.G.B.4 8.G.A.2</td>
<td>10.G.1</td>
<td>Identify figures using properties of sides, angles, and diagonals. Identify the figures’ type(s) of symmetry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSG-CO.D.12</td>
<td>10.G.2</td>
<td>Draw congruent and similar figures using a compass, straightedge, protractor, and other tools such as computer software. Make conjectures about methods of construction. Justify the conjectures by logical arguments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.G.A.5 HSG-C.A.2</td>
<td>10.G.3</td>
<td>Recognize and solve problems involving angles formed by transversals of coplanar lines. Identify and determine the measure of central and inscribed angles and their associated minor and major arcs. Recognize and solve problems associated with radii, chords, and arcs within or on the same circle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSG-SRT.A.2 HSG-SRT.B.5</td>
<td>10.G.4</td>
<td>Apply congruence and similarity correspondences (e.g., ΔABC ≅ ΔXYZ) and properties of the figures to find missing parts of geometric figures, and provide logical justification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.G.A.5 HSG-SRT.C.8</td>
<td>10.G.5</td>
<td>Solve simple triangle problems using the triangle angle sum property and/or the Pythagorean theorem. [Note: both must be shown.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSG-SRT.B.5 HSG-SRT.C.6</td>
<td>10.G.6</td>
<td>Use the properties of special triangles (e.g., isosceles, equilateral, 30°-60°-90°, 45°-45°-90°) to solve problems. [Note: must show at least 30°-60°-90° and 45°-45°-90°.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSG-GPE.5</td>
<td>10.G.8</td>
<td>Find linear equations that represent lines either perpendicular or parallel to a given line and through a point, e.g., by using the “point-slope” form of the equation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSG-CO.2 HSG-CO.3 HSG-CO.5 HSG-CO.6 HSG-SRT.1</td>
<td>10.G.9</td>
<td>Draw the results, and interpret transformations on figures in the coordinate plane, e.g., translations, reflections, rotations, scale factors, and the results of successive transformations. Apply transformations to the solutions of problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.G.3</td>
<td>10.G.10</td>
<td>Demonstrate the ability to visualize solid objects and recognize their projections and cross sections.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measurement (2011 Conceptual Category: Geometry)
At least four examples solved correctly by the student must be submitted that show each aspect of the 2000 standards identified below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2011 Standards</th>
<th>2000 Standards</th>
<th>Competency Portfolio Requirements (from the 2000 Curriculum Frameworks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.G.4</td>
<td>10.M.1</td>
<td>Calculate perimeter, circumference, and area of common geometric figures such as parallelograms, trapezoids, circles, and triangles. [Note: Include a variety of figures.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.G.6</td>
<td>10.M.2</td>
<td>Given the formula, find the lateral area, surface area, and volume of prisms, pyramids, spheres, cylinders, and cones, e.g., find the volume of a sphere with a specified surface area. [Note: All of the above must be shown for all three-dimensional forms listed.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSG-GPE.7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Relate changes in the measurement of one attribute of an object to changes in other attributes, e.g., how changing radius or height of a cylinder affects its surface area or volume.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At least four examples solved correctly by the student must be submitted that show each aspect of the 2000 standards identified below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2011 Standards</th>
<th>2000 Standards</th>
<th>Competency Portfolio Requirements (from the 2000 Curriculum Frameworks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.SP.4.MA.4c</td>
<td>10.D.1</td>
<td>Select, create, and interpret an appropriate graphical representation (e.g., scatter plot, table, stem-and-leaf plots, box-and-whisker plot, circle graph, line graph, line plot) for a set of data and use appropriate statistics (e.g., mean, median, range, mode) to communicate information about the data. Use these notions to compare different sets of data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.SP.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Approximate a line of best fit (i.e., draw a trend line) given a set of data (e.g., scatter plot). Use technology when appropriate. [Note: One trend line is sufficient.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSS-ID.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSS-ID.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSS-ID.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSS-ID.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSS-ID.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSS-ID.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING –Portfolios submitted for the CD in STE must reflect the Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering High School Standards (January 2006).

Portfolios may be submitted either in grade 9 or 10 and must be based on one of the following disciplines:
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Introductory Physics
- Technology/Engineering

In order to be considered for the CD, a high school STE portfolio must include evidence that a student has addressed and demonstrated knowledge and skills in a total of at least ten standards in the selected discipline (with evidence of at least one standard addressed in each topic) at a level comparable with that of students who have passed the standard MCAS test in the discipline. Portfolios
must reflect the *Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering High School Standards* (January 2006).

The portfolio must include the following information and materials:

- work samples created by the student that demonstrate **all aspects** of standards selected for the discipline and topics
- a completed STE High School Competency Portfolio Work Description attached to each work sample (or a collection of related work samples) produced for the portfolio
- a score (percent accurate) given by the teacher for each work sample. Work samples must be produced as independently as possible by the student, with all corrections clearly marked. Work samples may not be corrected by the teacher and submitted as the student’s own work.
- written evidence of the student’s thinking and problem-solving indicating the process used to solve each problem (i.e., show all student work)
- a clear indication of the type(s) and frequency of assistance provided to the student by the teacher (i.e., percent independence and any accommodations used by the student), either written directly on each piece or described on the High School Competency Portfolio Work Description
- submission of multiple-choice, matching, or fill-in-the-blank worksheets is strongly discouraged.

Topics in each STE discipline are listed in the following tables. In the discipline selected for the portfolio, **all topics** must be addressed, with evidence of at least **one standard** addressed in each topic, and a total of **ten standards** in all.

### BIOLOGY

**Topics:**

1. The Chemistry of Life
2. Cell Biology
3. Genetics
4. Anatomy and Physiology
5. Evolution and Biodiversity
6. Ecology

### INTRODUCTORY PHYSICS

**Topics:**

1. Motion and Forces
2. Conservation of Energy and Momentum
3. Heat and Heat Transfer
4. Waves
5. Electromagnetism
6. Electromagnetic Radiation

### CHEMISTRY

**Topics:**

1. Properties of Matter
2. Atomic Structure and Nuclear Chemistry
3. Periodicity
4. Chemical Bonding
5. Chemical **Reactions** and Stoichiometry
6. States of Matter, Kinetic Molecular Theory, and Thermochemistry
7. Solutions, Rates of Reaction, and Equilibrium
8. Acids and Bases and Oxidation-Reduction Reactions

### TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING

**Topics:**

1. Engineering Design
2. Construction Technologies
3. Energy and Power Technologies—Fluid Systems
4. Energy and Power Technologies—Thermal Systems
5. Energy and Power Technologies—Electrical Systems
6. Communication Technologies
7. Manufacturing Technologies

Work samples generated during one or more of the following activities must be provided in the portfolio that document the student’s scientific knowledge, skills, and understanding in the selected discipline at the grade 9 or 10 level, as identified by the Massachusetts *Science and Technology/Engineering High School Standards*:
• conducting investigations:
  o For example, the student engages in exploratory activities in which he or she identifies a key question, designs a process for gathering information and investigating the question, and incorporates scientific knowledge to produce a response, inference, conclusion, or analysis of findings.
• performing laboratory experiments:
  o For example, the student develops a hypothesis, designs or identifies a procedure for testing the hypothesis, performs a controlled experiment or series of trials, collects data accurately, summarizes and analyzes the results, and draws conclusions.
• conducting research:
  o For example, the student undertakes an activity in which he or she locates and applies available scientific knowledge and/or data from texts, articles, research summaries, etc., in order to describe a process or aspect of the discipline and provides a synthesis of the knowledge acquired, supportable conclusions, and an analysis of findings.
• conducting data analysis:
  o For example, the student accurately collects data generated either by the student, class, or teacher or data compiled from external sources and describes, synthesizes, and analyzes the data to articulate patterns, explain relationships between variables, and draw conclusions.
• completing an independent writing activity:
  o For example, the student writes a persuasive essay or answers a series of guided open-response questions which provide an analysis of scientific materials or data in support of a particular conclusion or point of view.
• developing a scientific model to represent a natural system:
  o For example, the student relates and explains how components of a natural system work together and creates a visual representation of that model.
• solving a technology/engineering design problem by creating a model or prototype:
  o For example, the student demonstrates technical knowledge and an understanding of the steps of the Engineering Design Process by describing a particular design challenge, analyzing relevant information, making predictions, and developing a prototype or model to test the predictions.

For further guidance in planning instructional activities, refer to the actual high school standards, the Scientific Inquiry Skills Standards, and the Steps of the Engineering Design Process in the Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework (January 2006).
PART IV

Portfolio Evidence
Portfolio Contents

A. Required Forms

The student’s MCAS-Alt portfolio must include the elements listed below. All forms may be photocopied from originals found in the Required Forms section and/or the Product Description Labels and Blank Data Charts section of this manual; or may be completed on the computer by using MCAS-Alt Forms and Graphs available online at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt. Do not include the student’s IEP, diagnostic assessments, or other information related to the student’s disability.

- an artistic cover (recommended, but not required) designed and produced by the student inserted in the front window of the three-ring portfolio binder
- (NEW for 2015) Competency and Grade-Level Portfolio Checklist (only if competency or grade-level portfolio is submitted)
- Portfolio Cover Sheet containing important information about the student
- Student’s Introduction to the Portfolio produced as independently as possible by the student using his or her primary mode of communication. The introduction may be written, dictated, or recorded on video and should describe “What I want others to know about me as a learner and about my portfolio.”
- Verification Form signed by the parent(s), guardian, or primary care provider signifying that they have reviewed their child’s portfolio or, at a minimum, were invited to do so. In the event no signature was obtained, the school must include a record of attempts to invite the parent(s), guardian, or primary care provider to view the portfolio.
- Consent Form to Photograph and Videotape a Student (required if images or recordings of the student are included in the portfolio), provided in English and Spanish, that must be signed by the parent or guardian before images or recordings of the student can be included. It is not necessary to submit this consent form in the portfolio, but a signed copy of this form must be kept on file at the school. This consent form gives permission only for the student to be recorded digitally in photographs or video for the MCAS-Alt portfolio and is not a consent form for the student to participate in an alternate assessment. Please do not substitute a “blanket” consent form for this purpose.
- the student’s weekly schedule that documents the student’s enrollment in a program of instruction, including participation in the general academic curriculum
- a printed copy of a school calendar indicating dates in the current school year (including summer school dates, if applicable) in which the school is in session. Submit previous school year calendar as well, if assessing Science and Technology/Engineering over a two-year period.
- Strand Cover Sheet related to the set of evidence that addresses a particular outcome in the required standard/strand.
- Work Description form (optional) attached to each piece of primary evidence that provides required information. Blank product descriptions are provided in the Product Description Labels/Blank Data Chart section of this manual, and in the Online Forms and Graphs application. If work description labels are not used, all required information must be written directly on each piece of evidence.
B. Requirements in Each Portfolio Strand

The student’s portfolio must include, at minimum, the primary evidence described below for each strand/domain/conceptual category required for the assessment of a student in that grade. It is advisable to **include more than the minimum evidence requirement** to reduce the chance that a portfolio will be scored as Incomplete.

A **minimum of one data chart and two pieces of additional primary evidence** (called the “core set of evidence”) is required in each portfolio strand that together assess the “measurable outcome” (See How to Create a Measurable Outcome below). Evidence can be collected beginning on July 1 for the school year.

Getting Started

- Review assessment requirements for student’s grade in the 2015 Educator’s Manual
- Refer to the Resource Guide for Students with Disabilities in the content area to be assessed
- Select a **learning standard** in the required strand/domain/conceptual category at the students grade
- Determine the appropriate **level of complexity** for the student, either
  - **at grade level**: addresses academic content based on learning standards as written; or
  - **entry point**: addresses academic content at lower levels of complexity; or
  - **access skill**: addresses motor and communication skills during a standards-based activity

Most students with significant disabilities will be able to access the “essence” of the standard through an entry point listed in the Resource Guide. However, a small number of students with the most complex and significant cognitive disabilities may not be ready to address academic content directly, even at the lowest level of complexity. In such cases, students may need to focus on goals that allow them to explore the tools, materials, and academic content by addressing “access skills” (i.e., targeted developmental communication and/or motor skills) **during a standards-based activity** in the content area assessed at that grade.

Figure 2

Excerpt from the Resource Guide for Students with Disabilities in ELA
Create a measurable outcome related to standards in the content area to be assessed

- Use the 2014 Resource Guide to select an entry point or access skill in the strand/domain/conceptual category required for assessment that is appropriate for the student. It is acceptable to select entry points from an earlier grade level in the same strand/domain/conceptual category. Skills identified for the MCAS-Alt should be challenging, yet attainable, and should allow the student to develop a new skill over an extended period of time. Pre-testing will help determine the appropriate level of complexity at which to begin assessing the skill.

- Select the desired percent of accuracy and independence that would constitute sufficient mastery of the skill (e.g., 80 percent accuracy and 80 percent independence). The criteria chosen for accuracy and independence are for instructional purposes only, and do not need to be attained at the time of submission of the portfolio.

- Create the measurable outcome based on the selected entry point or access skill, plus the percentage of accuracy and independence regarded as mastery of the skill by the teacher.

For example, the entry points are bolded in the following sample measurable outcomes:

- Pasquale will express a ratio based on two sets of objects with 75 percent accuracy and 90 percent independence.
- Nila will represent multiplication expressions using drawings or manipulatives with 80 percent accuracy and 100 percent independence.

Note: Entry points from the 2014 Resource Guide are all acceptable “as is” for creating measurable outcomes, without altering the wording or isolating a single skill from an entry point that may include multiple skills. Teachers may make minor modifications to entry points, provided that the essential meaning of the entry point is retained. For example, if an entry point says “Solve word problems involving the addition of fractions using manipulatives,” the words “using manipulatives” may be removed if the student will not use manipulatives to solve word problems. Use of entry points that do not appear in the Resource Guide are likely to result in a score of Incomplete in the content area, if the unique measurable outcomes was not reviewed and approved by the Department beforehand.

Figure 3
Access for All Students to Mathematics Standards in Geometry
The standards-based developmental sequence of complexity on which the Resource Guide is based

"Essence" of standard:
Solve mathematical problems involving 3-D shapes

H.G.-GMD.4
Identify the shapes of two-dimensional cross-sections of three-dimensional objects, and identify three-dimensional objects generated by rotations of two-dimensional objects.
C. Guidelines for Creating Data Charts (Required Primary Evidence)

A data chart is required for each portfolio strand. Data charts provide evidence of a student’s progress over time on his or her mastery of the skill outlined in the measurable outcome.

Collecting data on student performance is an essential part of good instruction and ongoing assessment. Instructional data help educators make valid and objective decisions about what to teach based on what the student has or has not already learned, and documents vital information on the effectiveness of the instruction provided.

Data can be collected either during routine classroom instruction, in a general education setting, in the community, or during tasks and activities set up specifically for the purpose of assessing the student.

Taking the time to understand the data collection strategies will encourage productive decision-making in order to complete the MCAS-Alt portfolio.

Each data chart must:

- indicate the level of a student’s performance during activities that are aligned with the strand/domain/conceptual category required for assessment;
  
  - The pieces of primary evidence (i.e., work samples) in the strand may be included as activities on the data chart, at the teacher’s discretion, but this is not required.

- show the student’s performance of the measurable outcome (based on an entry point or access skill) aligned with the assessment requirements for a student in that grade;

- reflect learning activities that match the measurable outcome;

- document the same skill on at least eight different and valid dates (i.e., not on dates for which school is not in session);

- include a brief description beneath each data point that clearly describes what the student did and how the student addressed the skill, taking particular care to document that the activity matched the measurable outcome;

- reflect varied instructional approaches and activity formats related to the measurable outcome;

- start below 80–100 percent accurate and/or independence to indicate that the student is not being taught a skill that he or she has already mastered.

Care should be taken to assess and record data only those skills directly based on the measurable outcome. The data will be inconclusive, and the chances of scoring Incomplete will increase, when unrelated or multiple skills are included on the same data chart.

Whenever a measurable outcome is changed or becomes more or less complex, a new data chart must be started. However, only one data chart with at least eight different dates is required for each portfolio strand.

Collecting data

It may take time to find a method and establish a consistent routine for collecting data. When data are collected consistently and systematically, summarized clearly, and analyzed objectively, educators can maximize instructional time and provide high-quality evidence for the MCAS-Alt portfolio. This will also increase the likelihood of the student’s success.

Instructional approaches should always be individualized, even when teaching similar activities in a small groups setting.

In designing instruction in which data and/or evidence will be collected, consider the following:

- What accommodations support the student to perform as independently as possible?
- What instructional adaptations or modifications are needed?
- Does the data change depending on where and when the instruction occurs?
• Does the data change because of who is delivering the instruction?
• Does the level of student engagement change depending on the use of various materials during instruction?

If the student’s data chart reflects that he/she is not making effective progress toward meeting the original outcome, consider the following possibilities:
• the activity format or materials may need to be altered
• instruction is not being delivered as intended
• the complexity of the skill may need to be lowered, a new measurable outcome established, and a new data chart created

Data Chart Formats
Any of the following formats may be used to collect data on the student’s performance for the MCAS-Alt portfolio:
• Field data charts are effective for collecting response-by-response data for many repeated tasks, trials, or activities conducted during a single session, and allow valuable and relevant information for each response to be collected while the activity is conducted. Field data charts are also effective for tasks that do not yield tangible products (i.e., work samples). A sample completed field data chart is provided on page 44, and a blank field data chart on page 87.
• Bar or Line graphs document the student’s performance of the measurable outcome over a period of time. Bar and line graphs provide a visual portrayal of the student’s overall performance “at a glance.”
  – A sample completed bar graph is provided on page 42, and a blank bar graph on page 88
  – A sample completed line graph is provided on page 43 and a blank line graph on page 89

Note: In cases where the student is addressing access skills and produces few or no work samples, the following may be substituted for the requirement to submit one data chart and two pieces of additional primary evidence for each strand:
  – one field data chart
  plus
  – one bar or line graph, summarizing the field data shown on the field data chart
  plus
  – one additional piece of primary evidence, other than a data chart (e.g., a teacher-scribed work sample or photograph, described on the following page)

Summarizing field data on a bar or line graph gives a visual representation of the data, either to share with parents/guardians or other professionals, and to detect trends and identify recurring issues that impact instruction.

D. Additional Primary Evidence
Primary evidence provides documentation of a student’s performance during activities based on the portfolio strand required for assessment. Although data charts are considered primary evidence, additional examples of primary evidence are described below. Primary evidence should match the skill selected for assessment as described in the measurable outcome, and may reflect a student’s performance in the classroom or other school settings, the community, or at home. Together, the primary evidence should provide tangible evidence of the student’s achievements over time in a specific area of his or her learning.

Each piece of evidence must include the following information, either on a Work Description label attached to the evidence (located in the Product Description Labels/Blank Data Chart section of this manual, or in the online Forms and Graphs application), or written directly on each piece of primary evidence:
• student’s name
- date of completion of the activity
- percentage of accuracy of the student’s overall performance on a single date
- percentage of independence (or frequency of cues and prompts provided)

The following are examples of primary evidence that may be submitted in the portfolio:

1. **Work samples:**
   - shows the student’s actual performance,
   - completed by the student, or
   - scribed by an adult or peer (and noted on the *Strand Cover Sheet*), if the student has difficulty producing written work

   **Note:** Fragile, perishable, or large products should *not* be included in the portfolio. Instead, submit a photograph of the final product, with the required identifying information. Do not include group work in the portfolio, unless the student’s accuracy and independence is indicated on clearly-defined tasks within the group activity.

2. **Teacher-scribed work sample:**
   - intended for students who do not produce written work
   - documents a series of trials conducted at the same time
   - records the student’s response (i.e., accuracy and independence) to each item/trial, including the student’s preferred mode of communication
   - contains detailed information describing the materials and context of the activity

3. **Photographs** that clearly show images of either:
   - a completed work product that is
     - three-dimensional,
     - temporary in nature (e.g., an exhibit or display), or
     - too large or fragile to include in the portfolio;
   - the steps, or sequence of steps, leading to a final product in an instructional activity that cannot be included in the portfolio (e.g., a pattern of shapes created by a student); or
   - the end-product of an instructional activity (e.g., using an interactive whiteboard or display board)

   **Note:** Prior written consent must be obtained from the parent, guardian, or student (if 18 years or older) before including a photographic or video image of a student. Photographs of student work may be included without written consent. If a student’s peers are shown in an image or video, consent must also be obtained for those students. **Consent forms** for these purposes are provided in the Required Forms section of this manual and must be kept on file at the school.

4. **Video samples:**
   - clearly demonstrates student performing the targeted skill
   - no more than three minutes in length
   - audio portion transcribed if difficult to understand
   - submitted on a standard DVD, CD, or a flash drive clearly labeled with student’s name and SASID, and the specific file name indicated
   - DVD/CD protected and secured within the portfolio binder

(Video Description form available on page 79 or in online Forms and Graphs application)

*Other digital evidence* may also be submitted in the following digital formats: Word, PowerPoint, .pdf, .txt, or .jpg (JPEG).
E. Calculating Accuracy and Independence

Accuracy and independence must be documented for each activity on the data chart and in the additional primary evidence. Upon completion of each activity, the teacher must calculate the overall percentage of accuracy and independence; then, all values for accuracy and independence for activities conducted on that date must be averaged, and recorded either on the data chart; or on a Work Description label or written directly on the evidence for each piece of additional primary evidence.

The percent of accuracy must indicate the proportion or percent of correct responses in relation to the number of possible total responses during the activity. Teachers must mark incorrect responses on the work samples so scorers can verify the percentage of accuracy.

The percent of independence indicates the percent of independent responses relative to the number of total possible responses during an activity. An independent response is a response by the student without the use of prompts or assistance provided by the teacher that would guide the student to give a correct response. Please note the following:

- Accommodations given to the student are not considered prompts for the purpose of calculating independence. (e.g., use of a text reader or calculator).
- Hand-over-hand assistance is always considered a non-independent response.
- The use of “independence scales,” or the weighting of different kinds of prompts, for the purpose of calculating independence is not allowed in the portfolio. Independence must indicate 0 percent for any prompt used within a prompt hierarchy, unless the student is 100 percent independent.

Review the example below regarding the calculation of accuracy and independence when a series of repeated activities (or trials) is conducted. Each question below is considered a separate trial or activity. After each response, the teacher indicates whether the student’s response was correct or incorrect (accuracy), and independent or prompted (independence).

**Measurable Outcome:** The student will answer simple comprehension questions based on informational text with 80% accuracy and 100% independence.

**Brief description:** Student orally responded to five comprehension questions about a story read in class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Accurate or Inaccurate</th>
<th>Independent or Prompted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 1</td>
<td>Correct response (accurate)</td>
<td>Verbal prompt* (not independent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 2</td>
<td>Incorrect response (inaccurate)</td>
<td>Verbal prompt (not independent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 3</td>
<td>Correct response (accurate)</td>
<td>Gestural prompt (not independent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 4</td>
<td>Incorrect response (inaccurate)</td>
<td>Verbal prompt (not independent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 5</td>
<td>Correct response (accurate)</td>
<td>No prompt (independent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Percent</td>
<td>60% accuracy (3/5 correct)</td>
<td>20% independence (1/5 independent)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: All prompted responses, even using partial or low-level prompts, are considered non-independent.
Rubrics are helpful when scoring writing assignments or project-based units. The following sites suggested by MCAS-Alt training specialists may be helpful in the creation of project-specific scoring rubrics: rubistar.4teachers.org; www.thinkfinity.org; and www.readwritethink.org

F. Evidence of Self-Evaluation

Self-evaluation activities document the student’s choices, decisions, and preferences before, during, and after instruction, including evidence that the student performed any of the following activities:

- planning and goal setting
- choosing an activity or next steps in an activity
- selecting a problem-solving strategy
- monitoring own progress or use of a strategy (e.g., by checking off steps as each is completed)
- deciding when to continue or end participation in an activity
- identifying and correcting his/her own errors
- graphing his/her own performance or progress on a chart, table, or graph
- determining own score using a rubric
- selecting work for his/her own portfolio
- reflecting on his or her performance; for example, the teacher can ask the student:
  - What did we do during this activity? What did I learn?
  - What did I do well? What am I good at? Was this too easy?
  - How could I do better? Where do I need help?
  - What should I work on next? What would I like to learn?

Note: Placing a sticker or stamp on primary evidence does not indicate self-evaluation, unless a choice made by the student related to his or her performance is clearly evident.

G. Evidence of Generalized Performance

Generalized performance reflects the student’s ability to transfer knowledge and/or skills to other learning situations through application of a range of instructional approaches and activity formats, including any of the following instructional elements:

- media and materials (e.g., using art materials, written text, manipulatives, computer)
- activity formats (e.g., classroom projects, small group discussions, paired research, experiments)
- presentation formats (e.g., oral, written, multimedia)
- method of response (e.g., handwritten, word-processed, oral, creation of a visual display, video)
- application of skills in community settings (e.g., grocery store)

H. Supporting Documentation

Products that show or describe the learning context of the activity, but not the student’s actual performance or a final product, are called “supporting documentation,” and include the following:

- Photographs or videos that show setting, instructional approach, materials, but not actual student performance
- Reflection sheets or other documentation of self-evaluation activities
- Aids, tools, and supports used by the student, such as:
  - graphic organizers
  - visual aids
  - adapted tools/materials
  - templates, blank activity sheets, sample activities on a computer screen
1. Ensuring That Portfolios Are Complete

Before submitting portfolios, educators should review the previous sections, plus the following information, to increase the likelihood of submitting a complete portfolio and to ensure that each skill being assessed, and each strand being submitted, meet all of the current requirements for the MCAS-Alt. Portfolios that have not met the criteria described below are more likely to receive strand scores of “M” and content area scores of Incomplete.

The following criteria will be used by scorers to determine the completeness of each strand.

For each content area:
- all required forms are completed and all pieces of evidence have been included in the portfolio

For each portfolio strand:
- a data chart and two pieces of primary evidence document the student’s performance of the measurable outcome indicated on the Strand Cover Sheet;
- the student’s name, date of completion, percent accuracy (with wrong answers clearly marked on all work samples), and percent independence are labeled on each piece of primary evidence or on a Work Description label.

For each measurable outcome:
- the measurable outcome is based either on a standard as written, entry point, or access skill in the strand/domain/conceptual category required for assessment;
- learning activities directly assess the measurable outcome;
- access skills are assessed during learning activities based on the strand required for assessment,(e.g., “Respond to materials representing informational text while listening to news article;” “Track materials that demonstrate ratios and proportional relationships;” “Grasp simple tools for 20 seconds during a simple machines activity.”);
- the selected entry point retains its essential meaning and has not been excessively modified; minor modifications to an entry point are permitted when creating a measurable outcome, provided the essential meaning is retained. For example, if the entry point says “Solve word problems involving the addition of fractions using manipulatives,” the words “using manipulatives” may be removed if the student will not use manipulatives to solve word problems;
- if an entry point uses “and” to join two acceptable skills in an entry point (e.g., “Label lines and angles by their attribute”), educators can choose to eliminate one of the skills; however, if both skills are selected for the measurable outcome, then both must be assessed on each date in the portfolio strand;
- if an entry points uses “or” to join two acceptable skills in an entry point (e.g., “Identify the meaning of words, phrases, or sentences”) educators may choose to assess any or all of the skills on any dates in the portfolio strand;
- Entry points in the 2014 version of the Resource Guide may be converted directly (as is) to measurable outcomes without isolating a single skill as required in previous years. Measurable outcomes created from entry points not found in the Resource Guide may not be assessed without prior Department approval;

For each data chart:
- the skill listed in the measurable outcome is assessed on at least eight dates;
- brief descriptions are provided below each learning activity that match the measurable outcome, and describe what the student was asked to do to address the measurable outcome, and how they did it. The following are examples of appropriate brief descriptions:
  - “(Student) matched synonyms on a worksheet”
“…orally answered four simple comprehension questions after reading Missing Links”
“…completed ten 2-digit by 1-digit multiplication problems on the computer”
“…classified objects into solid, liquid, and gas categories using an interactive whiteboard”
“…retold a birthday party story in chronological order using a topic board”
“…held magnetic object for 10 seconds during an activity on electro-magnetism”

- the first data point on the chart begins below 80 percent accuracy or independence (or both), indicating that the student was assessed on a skill he/she had not already mastered
- dates for all learning activities occurred when school was in session, unless “homework” is clearly indicated;

Note: See examples of completed data charts on the following pages.

**Important reminders about the ELA–Reading Portfolio Strand**

- Students should demonstrate knowledge and skills in ELA using their primary mode of communication (e.g., in writing, through the use of symbols, through actions or gestures, orally, or through the use of technology)
- Evidence or brief descriptions in the ELA–Reading strand must refer by name to the text from which words, phrases, or excerpts were selected for assessment, and must include either:
  - the title of the published text, or
  - the actual text (e.g., sentence, passage, narrative, etc.), or
  - a photocopy or printout, if text is teacher-created or includes selections from a print or digital source (e.g., teacher websites)
- Text used for the ELA–Reading strand must either be informational or literary, but a single portfolio strand may not include both.
- ELA–Reading includes the understanding of words, phrases, and sentences in the context of a text, rather than in isolation. For example, a list of idiomatic expressions matched to their meanings should not be included in the portfolio as evidence of text comprehension. Instead, students must identify the meaning of idiomatic expressions as they are used in a specific text.

**Educators are encouraged to:**

- review all sections of the 2015 Educator's Manual for MCAS-Alt;
- attend Department-sponsored training sessions held each October, January, and March;
- review periodic MCAS-Alt Newsletter emails sent to all teachers; and
- visit the Department's MCAS-Alt website at [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html) for current publications and information.
SAMPLE BAR GRAPH

DATA METHOD 2: BAR GRAPH (Instructional data summarizing the student's performance on each date)

Student Name: Larry Student
Content Area/Strand: English Language Arts
Learning Standard: L.3.5 Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

Measurable Outcome: Larry will identify words and their synonyms with 80% accuracy and 100% independence.

Accuracy: Independence:

PERCENTAGE

Date (m/d/y) 9/15/14 9/17/14 9/24/14 10/2/14 10/6/14 10/16/14 10/22/14 10/24/14 10/28/14 10/30/14

Brief Description
(Student was asked to identify the synonym by circling the correct corresponding word.)
(Student was asked to complete a worksheet where he identified the synonym of the word indicated by writing it.)
(Student was asked to identify the synonym from a word bank and match it to the correct word with a similar meaning.)
(Student identified synonyms by circling correct pair of words with similar meaning.)
(Student identified synonyms by drawing a line from the synonym to the correct word.)
(Student identified synonyms by cutting and pasting the correct pairs together.)
(Student was asked to identify a worksheet that asked him to identify the synonym pair.)
(Student identified the correct synonym from a choice of 4 words.)
(Student read the word in bold print then identified the synonym and wrote it on the line provided.)

Percentages:

A 0 100
I 10 100
A 25 100
I 33 50
A 40 60
I 65
A 80
I 90
A 83
I 100
A 83
I 100
A 88
I 100
SAMPLE LINE GRAPH

DATA METHOD 3: LINE GRAPH (Instructional data summarizing the student's performance on each date)

Student Name: Harriet Student
Content Area/Strand: Mathematics/Mathematics - Ratios and Proportional Relationships
Learning Standard: 8.RP.A.3 Use ratio and rate reasoning to solve real-world and mathematical problems, e.g., by reasoning about tables of equivalent ratios, tape diagrams, double number line diagrams, or equations.
Measurable Outcome: Harriet will solve for a unit rate in a real-life problem with 80% accuracy and 100% independence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date (m/d/y)</th>
<th>2/6/14</th>
<th>3/6/14</th>
<th>3/7/14</th>
<th>3/10/14</th>
<th>3/11/14</th>
<th>3/12/14</th>
<th>3/13/14</th>
<th>3/14/14</th>
<th>3/17/14</th>
<th>3/18/14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief Description</td>
<td>Given weight and quantity, student solved 3 real-world problems from a teacher's list with a given percentage.</td>
<td>Given a quantity from a real-life scenario, student calculated the unit rate of three problems.</td>
<td>Student used photos of store items from the supermarket and calculated the unit rate.</td>
<td>Student was given a mix of quantity and weight of objects and then calculated the unit rate of store items to find the best deals.</td>
<td>Given a quantity of objects from a newspaper flyer, student calculated and recorded the unit rate of the 6 items.</td>
<td>Given the weight of 4 items from a store, class calculated the unit rate from Trader Joe's flyer, given a quantity of objects.</td>
<td>Student calculated the unit rate from farmers' market.</td>
<td>After reviewing coupons, student calculated the unit rate of advertising specials, given a quantity of objects.</td>
<td>Class went to the market, student calculated unit rate on a work sample given quantity and/or weight of objects.</td>
<td>Student calculated unit rate on a work sample given quantity and/or weight of objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>40/100</td>
<td>67/67</td>
<td>25/75</td>
<td>88/80</td>
<td>100/80</td>
<td>100/50</td>
<td>100/75</td>
<td>82/80</td>
<td>100/95</td>
<td>100/100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MASSACHUSETTS COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM
2015 Educator's Manual for MCAS-Alt
## SAMPLE FIELD DATA CHART

**DATA METHOD 1: FIELD DATA CHART**

*student performance on a series of tasks, or on a collection of work samples, related to a targeted skill*

### COMPLETE ALL INFORMATION BELOW.

**Student Name:** Adam Student  
**Content Area/Strand:** Mathematics - Operations and Algebraic Thinking  
**Learning Standard:** 4.OA.1 Interpret a multiplication equation as a comparison, e.g., interpret 35 = 5 x 7 as a statement that 35 is 5 times as many as 7 and 7 times as many as 5. Represent verbal statements of multiplicative comparisons as multiplication equations.  
**Measurable Outcome:** Adam will solve problems involving addition and subtraction of one-digit numbers with a result no greater than 10

---

**At least eight (8) different dates are required.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date (mo/day/yr):</th>
<th>1/8/14</th>
<th>1/9/14</th>
<th>1/16/14</th>
<th>1/17/14</th>
<th>1/23/14</th>
<th>1/24/14</th>
<th>1/29/14</th>
<th>1/30/14</th>
<th>1/31/14</th>
<th>2/5/14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accuracy and</strong></td>
<td>-/I</td>
<td>-/I</td>
<td>+/P</td>
<td>+/P</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/P</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independence</strong></td>
<td>-/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/P</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>for each trial</strong></td>
<td>+/P</td>
<td>-/I</td>
<td>+/P</td>
<td>+/P</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>-/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(see KEY):</strong></td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
<td>+/I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### % Accuracy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Accuracy:</th>
<th>SUMMARY for this date</th>
<th>38</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>67</th>
<th>71</th>
<th>86</th>
<th>86</th>
<th>90</th>
<th>70</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### % Independence:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Independence:</th>
<th>SUMMARY for this date</th>
<th>63</th>
<th>67</th>
<th>67</th>
<th>86</th>
<th>86</th>
<th>83</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>90</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Brief Description (What was student asked to do and how did he/she do it?)

- **Student used manipulatives to add and subtract math problems of numbers 1-5 on a white board.**
- Using the interactive whiteboard student added and subtracted math problems of 1-6.
- Working with a partner and dice student added and subtracted math problems of 1-6 and recorded problems and answers.
- Student completed word problems by drawing, he completed addition and subtraction problems up to the number 10, manipulatives were available as needed.
- Student completed work problems by drawing, he completed addition and subtraction problems within 10 during morning work sessions.
- Student completed a word problem using manipulatives when needed for adding and subtracting numbers of 6-9.
- Student and a partner used playing cards (1-9) to add and subtract, each student recorded his own addition and subtraction work.
- Student created a worksheet with ten addition and subtraction problems up to 10 on the board each student wrote their answer on an individual white board - accuracy of answers recorded by paraprofessional.
- Teacher wrote addition and subtraction problems up to 10 for a partner, he had to create the answer key with the correct answers.
- Student completed an end of the year worksheet of problems on addition and subtraction up to 10.
PART V

Scoring Portfolios
and
Reporting Results
Scoring MCAS-Alt Portfolios

A. Scoring Student Portfolios

MCAS-Alt portfolios are scored by trained and qualified scorers whose performance is closely monitored by the Department to ensure that the score of each portfolio is accurate. All portfolios with missing or incomplete information, with evidence that is determined to be unmatched to the required Massachusetts curriculum framework standards for a student in that grade, or that includes evidence for a student who is performing at or close to grade-level expectations, will receive an additional round of review by expert scorers to ensure that results are accurate.

Through verification of the standards being assessed in the Resource Guide to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities and the application of a universal scoring rubric, the evidence of the student’s performance is evaluated and scored against research-based criteria on how students with significant disabilities learn and demonstrate knowledge and skills. The MCAS-Alt Rubric for Scoring Portfolio Strands was developed with assistance and feedback from hundreds of teachers and a statewide advisory committee. The criteria for scoring portfolios are listed and described in detail on the following pages.

The scoring of MCAS-Alt portfolios reflects the level at which a student learns, understands, and applies the knowledge and skills outlined in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. The MCAS-Alt portfolio measures progress over time, as well as the highest achievement attained by the student on the assessed standards, and incorporates the frequency of the use of cues, prompts, and other assistance provided to the student in determining an overall score.

B. MCAS-Alt Rubric for Scoring Portfolio Strands

The MCAS-Alt Rubric for Scoring Portfolio Strands is shown on page 48, with an explanation of each rubric area on the pages following. For a full explanation of how portfolios are scored, please see the Department’s publication entitled 2014 Guidelines for Scoring Student Portfolios posted to the Department’s website at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/results.html.

The Rubric for Scoring Portfolio Strands is used to generate a score in each portfolio strand based in each rubric area: Level of Complexity (1–5), Demonstration of Skills and Concepts (M–4), and Independence (M–4). A combined score for an entire subject is generated for Self-Evaluation (M–2) and Generalized Performance (1–2). A score of “M” means there was insufficient evidence or information to generate a numerical score in a rubric area.

Trained and qualified scorers examine each strand of the portfolio and apply the following criteria in order to produce a score in each rubric area, based on the evidence found in the portfolio:

- **completeness** of all portfolio materials
- **level of complexity** at which the student addresses standards in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks in the subject being assessed
- **accuracy** of the student’s responses to questions, or of his or her performance of specific tasks
- **independence** demonstrated by the student in responding to questions or performing tasks
- **self-evaluation** during or after each task or activity (e.g., reflection, self-correcting, goal-setting)
- **generalized performance** of a skill in different instructional contexts, settings, using different materials, or methods of response
C. Using the Rubric to Guide the Development of Student Portfolios

In order for a portfolio to receive the highest score, it must include evidence that the student has learned challenging new academic skills and is able to perform these skills accurately and independently. Evidence should address all areas of the scoring rubric, including self-evaluation and generalized performance. However, a single piece of portfolio evidence cannot, by itself, provide evidence of student learning in every rubric category. A variety of portfolio products must be submitted that support and complement one another.

The MCAS-Alt Rubric for Scoring Portfolio Strands serves several purposes:

- to inform educators and parents of the criteria that will be used to evaluate portfolios
- to score portfolios
- to guide teachers in planning and designing standards-based instruction that yields high-quality products for the student’s portfolio
## MCAS-Alt RUBRIC for Scoring Portfolio Strands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Complexity</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio strand reflects little or no basis in, or is unmatched to, curriculum framework learning standard(s) required for assessment.</td>
<td>Student primarily addresses motor and communication “access skills” during instruction based on curriculum framework standards in this strand.</td>
<td>Student addresses curriculum framework standards that have been modified below grade-level expectations in this strand.</td>
<td>Student addresses a narrow sample of curriculum framework standards (1 or 2) at grade-level expectations in this strand.</td>
<td>Student addresses a broad range of curriculum framework standards (3 or more) at grade-level expectations in this strand.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demonstration of Skills and Concepts</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The portfolio strand contains insufficient information to determine a score.</td>
<td>Student’s performance is primarily inaccurate and demonstrates minimal understanding in this strand (0–25% accurate).</td>
<td>Student’s performance is limited and inconsistent with regard to accuracy and demonstrates limited understanding in this strand (26–50% accurate).</td>
<td>Student’s performance is mostly accurate and demonstrates some understanding in this strand (51–75% accurate).</td>
<td>Student’s performance is accurate and is of consistently high quality in this strand (76–100% accurate).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independence</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The portfolio strand contains insufficient information to determine a score.</td>
<td>Student requires extensive verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (0–25% independent).</td>
<td>Student requires frequent verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (26–50% independent).</td>
<td>Student requires some verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (51–75% independent).</td>
<td>Student requires minimal verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (76–100% independent).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Evaluation</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of planning, self-correction, task-monitoring, goal-setting, and reflection was not found in the student’s portfolio in this content area.</td>
<td>Student infrequently plans, self-corrects monitors, sets goals, and reflects in this content area — only one example of self-evaluation was found in this strand.</td>
<td>Student plans, self-corrects monitors, sets goals, and reflects in this content area — multiple examples of self-evaluation were found in this strand.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generalized Performance</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student demonstrates knowledge and skills in one context or uses one approach and/or method of response and participation in this strand.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates knowledge and skills in multiple contexts or uses multiple approaches and/or methods of response and participation in this strand.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Expanded Version of the MCAS-Alt Rubric for Scoring Portfolio Strands

1) LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY

To what extent is the portfolio evidence aligned with the standards required for assessment in this subject?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio strand reflects little or no basis in, or is unmatched to, curriculum framework learning standard(s) required for assessment.</td>
<td>Student primarily addresses motor, and communication “access skills” during instruction based on curriculum framework standards in this strand.</td>
<td>Student addresses curriculum framework standards that have been modified below grade-level expectations in this strand.</td>
<td>Student addresses a narrow sample of curriculum framework standards (1 or 2) at grade-level expectations in this strand.</td>
<td>Student addresses a broad range of curriculum framework standards (3 or more) at grade-level expectations in this strand.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What each score means in this rubric area:

1. The evidence in this strand documents instruction that is either unrelated or unmatched to the Massachusetts curriculum framework standards required for assessment. Either the standards being assessed were not required in the portfolio of a student enrolled in the grade or the evidence does not document the student’s participation in a standards-based activity. If a score of 1 is given in Level of Complexity, other rubric areas will not receive a score.

2. The evidence indicates that the student is being exposed to the academic curriculum, but is not yet addressing academic content and skills in this subject. He or she is working on communication, and/or motor skills (“access skills”) during instructional activities based on curriculum frameworks assessed in that grade, which may include exploring methods, tools, and materials in the content area.

3. The evidence indicates that the student is addressing academic content and skills based on curriculum framework standards in this strand, but standards have been modified to a lower level of complexity (i.e., below grade-level expectations) compared with standards addressed by a typical student in this grade. Modified standards are called “entry points” and are described in detail in the Department publication Resource Guide to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities.

4. The evidence indicates that the student is addressing academic content and skills based on curriculum framework standards at grade-level expectations, though only a small number of standards (1 or 2) are included in the portfolio strand.

5. The evidence indicates that the student is addressing academic content based on curriculum framework standards at grade-level expectations, and a broad range of standards (3 or more) are included in the portfolio strand.

NOTE: A score of 5 in this rubric area is required for a student to be considered for a score of Needs Improvement or higher; and in high school, for a student to earn a Competency Determination. The student must submit the specific portfolio evidence described in Part III, Portfolios for Students Who are Achieving at Grade-Level.
2) DEMONSTRATION OF SKILLS AND CONCEPTS
How accurate was the student’s performance of the skills and concepts being assessed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The portfolio strand contains insufficient information to determine a score.</td>
<td>Student’s performance is primarily inaccurate and demonstrates minimal understanding in this strand (0–25% accurate).</td>
<td>Student’s performance is limited and inconsistent with regard to accuracy and demonstrates limited understanding in this strand (26–50% accurate).</td>
<td>Student’s performance is mostly accurate and demonstrates some understanding in this strand (51–75% accurate).</td>
<td>Student’s performance is accurate and is of consistently high quality in this strand (76–100% accurate).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary:
This rubric area measures the degree to which the student gave the correct or desired response(s) during a task or activity. Teachers must provide the student’s percentage of accuracy on (or attached to) each piece of primary evidence, and for each data point on the data chart. The percent of accuracy for points on the data chart is calculated by averaging the percentage(s) of accuracy on all tasks and activities performed by the student in the assessed strand or standard on a single date. Certain evidence may not lend itself to easy calculation of accuracy; when accuracy is not easily calculated, such as for a project or writing assignment, a scoring rubric specifically designed for the activity or project may be used. In these cases, include the rubric in the portfolio strand.

What each score means in this rubric area:
Each strand will be scored for Demonstration of Skills and Concepts by first identifying the “final 1/3 time frame” on the data chart (or the final three points, if fewer than twelve points are listed on the chart). An overall average accuracy percentage will be calculated by the scorer based on the percentage of accuracy for all data points during or after the final 1/3 time frame of the data chart. Based on the average percentage of the data points and evidence in the final 1/3 time frame, the overall score for Demonstration of Skills and Concepts (i.e., 1–4) in the strand is determined using the scoring rubric above.

A score of “M” (missing or insufficient evidence) will be given in both Demonstration of Skills and Concepts and in Independence when the following primary evidence is not included in the strand:

- **one data chart** (labeled correctly) documenting the student’s performance of the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates that shows the student’s overall (i.e., average) accuracy and independence for each date; the percentage must begin below 80 percent for either accuracy or independence or both. A brief description must be provided for each data point describing what the student was asked to do and how he/she addressed the measurable outcome.

- **two additional pieces of primary evidence** (labeled correctly), such as work samples, videos, or photographs, that document the student performing the same skill as the data chart.

A score of “M” will also be given for primary evidence that is not labeled either directly on the evidence or on attached work description labels with the student’s name, date of completion, percentage of accuracy, and percentage of independence.
3) **INDEPENDENCE**
How much support and direct assistance does the student require in order to demonstrate knowledge and skills?

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The portfolio strand contains insufficient information to determine a score.</td>
<td>Student requires extensive verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (0–25% independent).</td>
<td>Student requires frequent verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (26–50% independent).</td>
<td>Student requires some verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (51–75% independent).</td>
<td>Student requires minimal verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (76–100% independent).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary:**
This rubric area measures the frequency with which cues and prompts (either verbal, visual, gestural, or physical) were used to assist the student in responding to a task, activity, or assignment. The percent of independence for a single point on a data chart is calculated by averaging the percentage(s) of independent responses on all tasks and activities performed by the student on a single date based on the measurable outcome. *Any prompt given to the student during an instructional activity will count as a non-independent response* and the percentage of independence calculated as 0%.

**Scoring in this rubric area:**
Each strand will be reviewed by the scorer for Independence who will identify the “final 1/3 time frame” on the data chart (or the final three points, if fewer than twelve points are listed on the chart). An average score will be calculated for independence based on the percentage of independence for all data points during or after the final 1/3 time frame of the data chart. Based on the average of the data points and evidence, the overall score in the strand is then determined using the scoring rubric above. Also see the example shown on page 40.

A score of “M” (missing or insufficient evidence) will be given in both Demonstration of Skills and Concepts and in Independence when the following primary evidence is not included in the strand:
- **one data chart** (labeled correctly) documenting the student’s performance of the measurable outcome on at least eight different dates that shows the student’s overall accuracy and independence for each date; the percentage must begin below 80 percent for either accuracy or independence or both. A **brief description** must be provided for each data point describing what the student was asked to do and how he/she addressed the measurable outcome.
- **two additional pieces of primary evidence** (labeled correctly), such as work samples, videos, or photographs, that document the student performing the same skill as the data chart.
4) **SELF-EVALUATION**

How aware is the student of his or her performance, and how often does he or she make decisions or choices that affect the performance?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of planning, self-correction, task-monitoring, goal-setting, and reflection was <strong>not found</strong> in the student's portfolio in this content area.</td>
<td>Student infrequently plans, self-corrects monitors, sets goals, and reflects in this content area — only <strong>one example</strong> of self-evaluation was found in this strand.</td>
<td>Student frequently plans, self-corrects monitors, sets goals, and reflects in this content area — <strong>multiple examples</strong> of self-evaluation were found in this strand.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary:**

Self-evaluation, or “thinking about learning,” measures how well and how frequently the student:

- plans and sets goals
- chooses an activity or next steps in an activity
- selects a problem-solving strategy
- monitors his or her progress or use of a strategy (e.g., checks off steps as each is completed)
- decides when to continue or end participation in an activity
- self-corrects as necessary
- reflects on his or her performance
- determines own score using a rubric

Evidence of **self-evaluation** must either be clearly labeled with the student’s name and date. If it is included on another piece of primary evidence (for example, if the student reflects, self-corrects, or chooses the piece for the portfolio), then it should be described by the teacher (for example, “student corrected his/her incorrect answer” or “student chose this piece of work for the portfolio”).
5) **GENERALIZED PERFORMANCE**
How frequently does the student demonstrate knowledge and skills in different contexts, formats, and during instruction using multiple approaches?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student demonstrates knowledge and skills in <strong>one</strong> context or uses <strong>one</strong> approach and/or method of response and participation in this strand.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates knowledge and skills in <strong>multiple</strong> contexts or uses <strong>multiple</strong> approaches and/or methods of response and participation in this strand.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary:**
Students with significant cognitive disabilities often have difficulty generalizing skills in new settings and situations. This area measures the use of effective classroom strategies for ensuring that students are able to retain and transfer what they have learned (National Alternate Assessment Center, 2005).

Generalized Performance reflects the number of **instructional approaches and activity formats** through which the student acquires and demonstrates knowledge and skills, including any of the following elements of instruction:
- *media and materials* (using art materials, written text, manipulatives, computer)
- *activity formats* (classroom projects, small group discussions, paired research, experiments)
- *presentation formats* (oral, written, multimedia)
- *method of response* (handwritten, word-processed, oral, creation of a visual display, on a video)
- *application of skills and/or knowledge* in home and community settings

**Scoring Information:**
The score for Generalized Performance will not be increased based solely on changes in the **setting or people** who assist the student.

A score of M will not be given in this rubric area, since portfolio evidence will always demonstrate at least **one** approach or context and result in a score of at least 1.

**Age-appropriate instructional materials:** When the evidence in the portfolio indicates that materials used during instruction were inappropriate to the student’s chronological age, the Generalized Performance score in the strand will be lowered to 1.
Calculating the Overall Achievement Level in the Content Area

To determine the overall achievement level in a content area, each portfolio strand in the content area is scored separately using the Rubric for Scoring Portfolio Strands. A subscore is assigned to each strand by applying the score combinations shown in Table 5 below. An overall achievement level is then determined based on calculating the average of all subscores in the assessed strands of a content area (where In=1, Aw=2, Em=3, Pg=4, and NI+=5) and rounding to the nearest achievement level. Scores in Self-Evaluation and Generalized Performance are not included in the calculation of the overall achievement level.

Table 5
Calculating a “Subscore” in Each Portfolio Strand

A subscore is calculated for each portfolio strand based on the score combinations shown below using the Rubric for Scoring Portfolio Strands:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Complexity = 1</th>
<th>Level of Complexity = 2</th>
<th>Level of Complexity = 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstration of Skills &amp; Concepts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstration of Skills &amp; Concepts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstration of Skills &amp; Concepts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence&lt;br&gt;M&lt;br&gt;1</td>
<td>In</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>In</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>In</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>In</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence&lt;br&gt;M&lt;br&gt;4</td>
<td>In</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Complexity = 4</th>
<th>Level of Complexity = 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstration of Skills &amp; Concepts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstration of Skills &amp; Concepts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence&lt;br&gt;M&lt;br&gt;1</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:**
“M” means the required information was either missing or insufficient to determine a score.

**KEY**

| In | Incomplete |
| Aw | Awareness |
| Em | Emerging |
| Pg | Progressing |
| NI+ | Needs Improvement, Proficient, or Advanced (based on portfolio review by content experts) |
Reporting Results of MCAS-Alt

A. Reporting an Achievement Level in Each Content Area

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

- **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.

- **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.

*Note:* A student taking high school MCAS tests/retests or an alternate assessment must attain a minimum achievement level of Needs Improvement in order to meet the state’s Competency Determination requirement for receiving a high school diploma. Students who score at the Needs Improvement level in ELA and Mathematics must also fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan, (EPP), in English language arts and mathematics.

B. School and District Results

Preliminary school and district performance-level results and Portfolio Feedback Forms are posted to DropBox Central on the Department’s Security Portal at https://gateway.edu.state.ma.us/ in mid-June. Official results are posted in mid-September and reflect the changes made as a result of discrepancies reported to the Department and the results of MCAS-Alt Score Appeals. Students’ portfolios are returned to schools in mid-September.
Results at the district level include performance-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, approved or unapproved private special education schools, or programs in other public school districts.

To meet federal requirements for reporting results of statewide assessments for all students, the results of MCAS-Alt will be included in school, district, and statewide reports of MCAS results. Since scaled scores (i.e., numerical scores between 200 and 280) are not assigned to MCAS-Alt, results of alternate assessments will be reported as achievement levels only. The alternate assessment achievement levels of Incomplete, Awareness, Emerging, and Progressing will be included in the Warning/Failing achievement level for the purpose of school and district reporting.

C. Parent/Guardian Reports

In mid-September, districts will receive MCAS-Alt Parent/Guardian Reports. These reports will provide a detailed description of a child’s score in each area of the scoring rubric and an overall achievement level in each subject of the alternate assessment.

The district must send a parent/guardian reports to the student’s homes. If the student is also reported as limited English proficient (LEP), a copy in the student’s home language must be sent to the home of the student together with his or her actual report in English. Print copies of the translations of the report “shell” in ten languages are provided in the shipment of MCAS-Alt Parent/Guardian Reports. Report “shells” in ten languages are also available online at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/results.html.
Policy on 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 from which they were submitted the previous 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 (available at www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr23.html?section=06), 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 review temporary student records periodically 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 parents’ rights 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, 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 has developed the following recommended 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. Accordingly, the Department suggests the following retention schedule for MCAS-Alt portfolios:

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

After the recommended time period, if the student is no longer in the district, or if the parent doesn’t want the portfolio after receiving notice of the approximate date of destruction and the parent’s right to receive these materials, the school may destroy the portfolio. 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 recommended time period. For example, a student’s MCAS-Alt portfolio, particularly for a high school student, may be needed for a due process/BSEA hearing that occurs more than two years after a student took the assessment. For this reason, districts may wish to maintain MCAS-Alt portfolios for longer than the recommended periods of time and treat the destruction of MCAS-Alt portfolios for specific students on a case-by-case basis.

Districts are reminded in the meantime that, regardless of when student portfolios are destroyed, a copy of the MCAS-Alt portfolio shall be furnished by the district to the eligible student or parent upon request, per (603 CMR 23.07(2)).
MCAS-Alt and School and District Accountability

In February 2012, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) received approval from the U.S. Department of Education (USED) to waive certain requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law. As a result, the Progress and Performance Index (PPI) has replaced Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as the primary method of providing accountability determinations for districts and schools. The PPI is a 100-point index assigned to districts, schools, and student groups based on achievement and growth/improvement in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science; and for high schools, graduation and dropout rates. Each district and school will receive both an Annual PPI and a cumulative Four-Year PPI. The Four-Year PPI will be used to classify schools and districts into an accountability level. Additional information is available at www.doe.mass.edu/apa/general/.

All districts, schools, and subgroups will be expected to reduce the gap by half between their level of performance in 2011 and proficiency for all students by the 2016–2017 school year in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science. The Composite Performance Indices (CPI) shown on page 59 will be used to measure progress towards this goal.

What has not changed as a result of the flexibility waiver is the provision that allows states to count the results of students with significant cognitive disabilities who take alternate assessments differently from the results of all other students. Up to one percent of the total number of students assessed in the state who do not score Proficient on the MCAS-Alt may be counted “as if Proficient” and receive up to 100 Composite Performance Index points for the purpose of determining annual progress, if they meet the criteria described below. Note: This does not mean that an individual student is considered to be Proficient; this only affects how ESE calculates whether groups, schools, or districts are meeting annual gap-halving goals. This provision should not be confused with existing state requirements to meet the Competency Determination standard to be eligible for a high school diploma; nor should it be misinterpreted as a quota or cap on the number of students who may take alternate assessments.

USED requires that the total number of students taking the MCAS-Alt who receive 100 CPI points not exceed one percent of the total number of students assessed by MCAS. To meet this requirement, the following policies have been implemented (see Table 6):

1. ESE will assign 100 CPI points only to students scoring Progressing on the MCAS-Alt who have been identified through the Student Information Management System (SIMS) as having the following primary disabilities: Intellectual, Multiple Disabilities, Autism, Developmental Delay, and Sensory/Deaf and Blind, and whose level of need for special education services has been reported as High. These students are most likely to have significant cognitive disabilities whose academic performance will be determined based on “alternate achievement standards.” ESE will further prioritize among these students, as needed, to reach a total of one percent, based on the reported level of need for special education services.

2. The Department will assign 75 CPI points to students scoring Progressing, if they are:
   - reported in the above disability categories, but with lower levels of need; or
   - reported as having the following primary disabilities: Sensory/Hard of Hearing or Deaf, Communication, Sensory/Vision Impairment or Blind, Emotional, Physical, Health, Specific Learning Disabilities, or Neurological.

3. All other students with disabilities assessed using the MCAS-Alt who do not score at the Progressing level will continue to be assigned CPI points in accordance with prior years’ procedures (see Table 6). For example, students scoring at the Emerging level receive 75 CPI points, Awareness 50 CPI points, and Portfolio Incomplete 25 CPI points.
Students taking MCAS-Alt whose performance is based on grade-level achievement standards (i.e., students in grades 3–8 submitting grade-level portfolios and students in high school submitting competency portfolios) will receive CPI points based on equivalent MCAS test scores shown in Table 6.

The following table indicates how points are awarded to each school and district in ELA and mathematics based on MCAS and MCAS-Alt scores for students with and without disabilities. Point totals are used as one indicator of whether the school or district has made annual progress toward decreasing its proficiency gap.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>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
PART VI

Required Forms
2015 MCAS-Alt
PORTFOLIO CONTENTS CHECKLIST

The following items and completed forms must appear in the student’s MCAS-Alt portfolio and be submitted in a three-ring binder. Place a check next to each item included in the portfolio:

___ Artistic cover designed by the student, inserted in the front window of the three-ring portfolio binder (recommended, but not required)

NEW ___ Competency and Grade-Level Portfolio Checklist (only if a competency or grade-level portfolio is submitted)

___ Portfolio Cover Sheet with all required information

___ Student’s introduction to the portfolio it can be written, dictated, or recorded by the student expressing “What I want others to know about me as a learner and my portfolio.”

___ Verification Form signed by the parent or guardian documenting that the parent/guardian was given an opportunity to review the work in their child’s portfolio prior to submission. If this form is not signed, a record of attempts made by the school inviting parents to review the portfolio must be included.

___ Consent Form to Photograph and Audio/Videotape a Student signed by the parent or guardian is required only if electronic images or recordings of the student are included in the portfolio. This form need not be included in the portfolio, but must be kept on file at the school.

___ Student’s weekly schedule that verifies the student is receiving an instructional program that includes access to the general education (i.e., academic) curriculum

___ School calendar that verifies the days the school is in/out of session, including summer school, staff professional development, and school closing due to inclement weather (Note: submit the last two years’ calendars if submitting two years worth of science and technology/engineering evidence.)

___ Strand Cover Sheet attached to the evidence for each portfolio strand

___ Portfolio evidence (work samples, data charts, video, etc.) in the subject(s) being assessed

___ Work Sample Descriptions on all work samples, data charts, videotapes, and other evidence that include student’s name, date work was produced, and percentage of accuracy and independence. This information may be written directly on each piece of evidence, in which case these forms are unnecessary.
1) Student’s Name: ____________________________________________

2) State-Assigned Student Identifier (SASID): 10

3) Student’s grade as reported in the Student Information Management System (SIMS): _____________

4) School, Educational Collaborative, or Program attended by the student:
_________________________________________________________________________________

5) District-School Code: ___________ – ___________ (See http://profiles.doe.mass.edu)

6) Address of School or Program: _____________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

7) Student’s sending district, if program is outside the district in which the student lives:
_________________________________________________________________________________

8) Contact Information:
   Teacher’s Name: ______________________________________________________________
   School telephone and email: ______________________________________________________

9a) Content area(s) included in this portfolio (check all that apply):
   ☐ English Language Arts  ☐ Mathematics  ☐ Science and Technology/Engineering

9b) Indicate the order in which the strands appear in the portfolio:

   English Language Arts  Mathematics  Science and Technology/Engineering

   1. _________________________  1. _________________________  1. _________________________
   2. _________________________  2. _________________________  2. _________________________
   3. _________________________  3. _________________________  3. _________________________

10) Will this student take a standard MCAS test in any content area in spring 2015? If yes, which one(s)?
   ☐ English Language Arts  ☐ Mathematics  ☐ Science and Technology/Engineering
If this is a high school **Competency Portfolio**, indicate the content area(s) submitted:

- [ ] ELA
- [ ] MATHEMATICS
- [ ] SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING (STE)
  STE DISCIPLINE (Select one):
    - [ ] BIOLOGY
    - [ ] CHEMISTRY
    - [ ] INTRODUCTORY PHYSICS
    - [ ] TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING

If this is a grade 3 through 8 **Grade-Level Portfolio**, indicate the content area(s) submitted:

- [ ] ELA
- [ ] MATHEMATICS
- [ ] SCIENCE TECH/ENGINEERING
2015 MCAS-Alt

STRAND COVER SHEET

(A completed Strand Cover Sheet must be included with evidence in the strand being assessed.)

1) Student’s Name: _____________________________________________

2) Student’s grade as reported in the Student Information Management System (SIMS): __________

3) a. Content Area (Subject): _______________________________________
   b. Strand: _______________________________________________________
   c. Learning Standard(s): _________________________________________
      (List standards for the grade in which the student was reported in SIMS.)

4) Level of complexity: (Student addresses learning standard(s) in this strand at the following level)

   [ ] at “grade-level” (use Work Descriptions for “grade-level” or “competency” portfolio)
   [ ] through “entry points” (from the Resource Guide: Page_______)
   [ ] through “access skills” (practiced during academic instruction based on the grade-level standard listed above.)

5) Measurable outcome: Choose an acceptable skill from the Resource guide which the student is expected to learn as a result of instruction, at the appropriate level of complexity listed above (for example, “student will summarize key events in a literary text with 80% accuracy and 100% independence”).

   The student will . . . .

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

6) Adaptations, accommodations, and/or modifications routinely used by the student during instruction of this skill. List any augmentative and/or alternative communication (AAC) system, if used:

   ________________________________________________________________

7) Primary evidence checklist (optional):

   Use the checklist below to ensure that this portfolio strand includes at least the minimum required evidence and that all evidence is labeled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Evidence Checklist</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Accuracy</th>
<th>Independence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check boxes if product is included and labeled:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Data chart showing measurable outcome listed above</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Evidence #1 based on same measurable outcome:</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Evidence #2 based on same measurable outcome:</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2015 MCAS-Alt

Parent, Guardian, or Primary Care Provider

VERIFICATION FORM

Student’s Name: ________________________________________________

School: _______________________________________________________

Please check below:

_____ I HAVE BEEN GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW THE CONTENTS OF MY
CHILD’S PORTFOLIO.

______________________________________________Date:_____________________

Signature of Parent, Guardian, Primary Care Provider,
or Student (if over 18 years of age)

_____ PARENT OR GUARDIAN DID NOT VIEW
THE PORTFOLIO, BUT WAS INVITED TO DO
SO ON THE DATES LISTED IN THE SPACE BELOW.

OPTIONAL: Comments may be provided by the parent, guardian, or primary care provider
regarding the child’s MCAS-Alt portfolio (continue on reverse side if necessary):

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Please encourage parents to contact the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
directly with comments/questions at mcas@doe.mass.edu.

This form must be included in the student’s MCAS-Alt portfolio.
2015 Evaluación MCAS Alterna
Padre, Guardián, o Proveedor de Cuidado Principal
FORMA DE VERIFICACIÓN

Nombre del Estudiante:____________________________________________

Escuela:________________________________________________________

Marque abajo:

_____ YO HE TENIDO LA OPORTUNIDAD DE REPASAR EL CONTENIDO DEL
PORTAFOLIO DE MI HIJO/A.

Firma del Padre, Guardián, or Proveedor de Cuidado Principal, o estudiantes de 18 años, y fecha

_____ EL PADRE O GUARDIÁN NO REVISÓ EL PORTAFOLIO, PERO FUÉ INVITADO A
HACERLO EN LAS FECHAS INDICADAS ABAJO.

OPCIONAL: Comentarios del padre, guardián, or proveedor principal sobre el portafolio de
MCAS (continuar en el otro lado si es necesario):

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Anime a los padres a ponerse en contacto con el Departamento de Educación Elemental y
Secundaria directamente con comentarios o preguntas de MCAS a mcas@doe.mass.edu.

Este formulario debe ser incluido en el portafolio del estudiante.
2015 MCAS-Alt
CONSENT FORM

to Photograph and Audio/Videotape a Student
(Please keep on file at school)

To Teachers:
Please share the attached Consent Form with the parent(s) or guardian of a student participating in the MCAS-Alt for whom photographs, videotape, or audiotape will be submitted. Informed consent by the parent/guardian is required for this specific use. If consent is not obtained, electronic images and recordings of the student may not be created or submitted in the portfolio.

Please keep a signed copy of this Consent Form in the student’s file. It is not necessary to include this form in the portfolio.

Consent is necessary only for the creation of electronic images or recordings of the student. The signed IEP signifies consent by the parent to have the student participate in the MCAS-Alt.
2015 MCAS-Alt
CONSENT FORM
to Photograph and Audio/Videotape a Student
(Please keep on file at the school)

To Parents or Guardians:
State and federal laws require all students in Massachusetts to participate in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), the state’s student assessment program. Massachusetts gives MCAS tests in three subjects: English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology/Engineering. A student’s IEP team determines whether a student with a disability should take standard MCAS tests, either with or without test accommodations, or whether the student requires an alternate assessment. The MCAS-Alt provides a method for assessing the academic performance of students with significant disabilities who are unable to take standard MCAS tests, even with accommodations.

Brief Description of the MCAS-Alt: During the school year, your child’s teacher will collect educational information documenting your child’s performance. The teacher will compile this information in a portfolio and send it to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education where it will be reviewed and scored by qualified scorers. Portfolios are scored in April and will be returned to your child’s school in the fall. Your child’s portfolio will remain in his or her file.

Components of the MCAS-Alt: Your child’s MCAS-Alt portfolio will include some or all of the following:
Samples of student work: a collection of your child’s best classroom work demonstrating his or her performance at different times during the year

Photographs, videotape, or audiotape: documentation of your child participating in classroom activities and assignments through video or audio recordings, or photography.

Performance tasks: a record of your child’s participation in tasks and classroom activities related to the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, such as listening, communicating, and using objects and materials appropriately

Your child’s weekly school schedule: a schedule of the academic courses taken by the student

Other documentation: your child’s introduction to the portfolio; a verification letter signed by parents stating that they have reviewed their child’s portfolio, or were invited to do so; and letters of support (optional) by peers, employers, community members, etc.

Submission of the Portfolio: In early April, your child’s teacher will submit your child’s portfolio to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to be scored. In all, no more than 20 people outside your child’s school will view this material, including staff from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the state’s test contractor, and professional scorers under formal agreement with the Department trained for the purpose of scoring alternate assessments.

Confidentiality of Your Child’s Student Records: The information submitted as part of the MCAS-Alt constitutes student record material that is confidential under state and federal law. The people who review and score the information will be instructed regarding the confidentiality of the material. Your child’s
name and other identifying information will not be released to third persons other than those with whom
the Department has contracted for purposes of implementing the MCAS-Alt. Portfolios are returned to
your school and must be kept on file as part of your child’s temporary record.

Revocation of Consent: You may revoke your consent to allow your child to be recorded, photographed,
or video-taped for purposes of the MCAS-Alt at any time and for any reason. However, your child will
still be required to participate in the MCAS-Alt.

Obtaining More Information about the MCAS-Alt: If you have any questions about the
MCAS-Alt or your child’s participation, please contact the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and
Secondary Education at 781-338-3625 or by email at mcas@doe.mass.edu.

This Consent Form must be signed by one or both of the child’s parents or guardians. Consent signifies
agreement to your child being recorded on video, audio, or photography for purposes of the MCAS-Alt.

Within thirty days of receiving this form, sign and return it to your child’s teacher or principal.

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read and understand all of the information in this Consent Form. I knowingly and voluntarily allow
my child’s school to release information about my child:

_________________________________________________________________________________
(child’s name)
at ______________________________________________________________________________
(name of school and address)

I will allow my child to be photographed, videotaped, or recorded for purposes of the MCAS-Alt and for
my child’s school to release information about my child that is created and collected pursuant to the terms
of this agreement to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and
Measured Progress for review by trained professionals. I understand that I may withdraw my consent at
any time, with no penalty, by contacting my child’s teacher, Measured Progress, or the Massachusetts
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _______________________________________________________

Date: _________________________
To Parents or Guardians:
This year, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will work with your son or daughter’s school to conduct the MCAS-Alt. Your child’s teacher will be among those who use alternate assessments with a small number of students with significant disabilities who cannot take the standard MCAS tests, even with test accommodations.

One or more students in your child’s class will participate in the MCAS-Alt during the 2014–2015 school year. During this process, your child’s teacher may find it necessary to use cameras and/or tape recorders to obtain educational information on these students in order to determine how well they perform certain activities. It may be necessary for your child’s teacher to record the voice or image of the participating student when other students are present in the room. Therefore, there may be limited occasions during which your child may appear incidentally in videotapes and/or photographs or during which his/her voice may be recorded on audiotape. Your child will not be identified by name, nor would any student information or other materials be shared with others outside the school or district for this purpose. We request your consent to allow your child to appear in videotapes and photographs in this limited way. Thank you very much.

Student’s Name: __________________________________________________________

School Name/School District: ________________________________________________

Teacher’s Name: __________________________________________________________

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____________________________________________

Date: ___________________________
Para los Maestros:
Favor compartir la Forma de Permiso incluida con los padres o guardián de cualquier estudiante que está participando en la Evaluación MCAS Alterna durante el año escolar actual. Se requiere permiso para que un estudiante sea fotografiado o grabado para este propósito. Si no se obtiene permiso, no se podrán crear imágenes electrónicas y grabaciones del estudiante.

Favor notar
No es necesario obtener permiso para que un estudiante participe en la Evaluación MCAS Alterna, solamente para crear imágenes electrónicas o grabaciones del estudiante, y para ciertos componentes de los archivos confidenciales del estudiante.
Para Padres o Guardián:
Como usted sabe, las leyes estatales y federales requieren que todos los estudiantes en Massachusetts participen en la evaluación MCAS (Sistema de Evaluación Comprehensiva de Massachusetts), por sus siglas en inglés), el programa de exámenes para estudiantes del estado. Massachusetts administra exámenes MCAS en tres áreas: Artes de Lenguaje en Inglés, Matemáticas, y Ciencias y Tecnología/Ingeniería. El Equipo del Plan Educativo Individual del estudiante determina si un estudiante con impedimentos debe de tomar el exámen estandarizado MCAS, sea con o sin acomodos, o si el estudiante requiere una evaluación alterna. La Evaluación MCAS Alterna demuestra un medio para examinar el desempeño académico de estudiantes que no pueden participar en exámenes estandarizados MCAS, por causa de su discapacidad, aún con acomodos.

La participación de su hijo/a en la Evaluación MCAS Alterna constituirá cumplimiento del requisito, para que él o ella sea examinado/a a través de MCAS en el área en la cual se ha determinado anteriormente, que su hijo/a requiere una evaluación alterna.

Descripción Corta: La Evaluación MCAS Alterna requiere que durante el año escolar actual, el maestro de su hijo/a, a lleve a cabo ciertas actividades en el salón de clase con su hijo/a y recogerá información que refleje el desempeño educacional de su hijo/a. El maestro de su hijo/a recopilará esta información en un portafolio, y proveerá la información al Departamento de Educación Elemental y Secundaria para ser repasado por un equipo de repaso y personal específico de Medidas de Progreso (Measured Progress), el contratista de evaluaciones alternas del estado. El Equipo que repasa el portafolio incluye profesional anotadores entrenados/as, personal del Departamento y sus agentes contratistas. Los portafolios serán revisados y calificados durante la primavera por calificadores entrenados, para asegurar consistencia.

Componentes de la Evaluación MCAS Alterna: La Evaluación MCAS Alterna de su hijo/a consistirá de todos o algunos de los siguientes:

1. Ejemplos de Trabajo del Estudiante: Colección de ejemplos del mejor trabajo de su hijo/a demostrando el nivel en la cual su hijo/a está trabajando;

2. Fotografías, grabaciones de video o audio: Documentación de la participación de su hijo/a en actividades del salón de clase y asignaciones a través de grabaciones de videos, audios, o fotografías;

3. Trabajos Escolares: La participación de su hijo/a con el maestro en tareas y actividades en el salón de clase relacionados al Currículo tales como escuchando, comunicándose y usando objetos y materiales en el salón de clase;

4. Horario Semanal Escolar de su hijo/a: Esto demuestra los cursos académicos que toma su hijo/a.

5. Otra Documentación: Una introducción al portafolio creado por el estudiante; una carta firmada por los padres diciendo que ellos han repasado el portafolio de su hijo/a, o por lo menos fueron
invitados a hacerlo; y cualquier carta o cartas de apoyo provistas por los compañeros, empleadores, miembros de la comunidad, etc.

**Sometimiento del Portafolio para Repasar y Calificar:** A principios de abril, el maestro de su hijo/a someterá el portafolio del estudiante al Departamento para ser repasado por calificadores entrenados. En conjunto, no más de 20 personas fuera de la escuela de su hijo/a mirarán este material, todos ellos, sea personal del Departamento de Educación Elemental y Secundaria o personal contratista de exámenes del estado bajo acuerdo formal con el Departamento que están entrenados para el propósito de calificar evaluaciones Alternas.

**Confidencialidad de los Archivos de su Hijo/a/Estudiante:** La información creada y recogida como parte de la Evaluación MCAS Alterna constituye material de archivo del estudiante y es confidencial bajo la ley estatal y federal. Aquellas personas que constituyen el equipo de repaso de portafolio y quienes estarán repasando y evaluando la información con su consentimiento serán informados respecto a la confidencialidad del material. El nombre de su hijo/a y otra información que lo identifica no se dará a terceras personas fuera de las que el Departamento ha contratado para el propósito de creación y implementación de la Evaluación MCAS Alterna. Los portafolios son regresados a su escuela y deben permanecer archivados como parte del record temporal de su hijo/a.

**Revocación del Permiso:** Usted puede revocar su permiso para permitir que su hijo/a sea fotografiado y estar en video o audio para propósitos de la Evaluación MCAS Alterna en cualquier momento y por cualquier razón. Su decisión en hacerlo no afectará la relación entre usted o su hijo/a con la escuela o con el Departamento de Educación Elemental y Secundaria. Sin embargo, seguirá siendo requerido que su hijo/a participe en la Evaluación MCAS Alterna.

**Obteniendo Más Información Acerca de la Evaluación MCAS Alterna:** Si usted tiene alguna pregunta acerca de la Evaluación MCAS Alterna, o la participación de su hijo/a, favor comunicarse sea con el Departamento de Educación Elemental y Secundaria al tel: 781-338-3625 o por correo electrónico a mcas@doe.mass.edu.

Esta forma de permiso debe ser firmada por uno o ambos de los padres o guardianes del niño/a. Permiso significa estar de acuerdo que su hijo/a sea fotografiado o video grabado o audio grabado para propósito de la Evaluación MCAS Alterna.

Dentro de treinta días de recibir la forma, debe de ser firmada y devuelta al maestro del niño/a o Principal. El original debe de ser incluido en el portafolio de la Evaluación MCAS Alterna para someterla al Departamento, con una copia duplicada en el archivo temporal del estudiante.
Declaración de Permiso:
Yo he leído y yo entiendo toda la información en esta Forma de Permiso. Yo conscientemente y voluntariamente autorizo a la escuela de mi hijo/a a dar la información acerca de mi hijo/a:

(Nombre del niño/a) en (Nombre de la escuela y dirección).

a ser fotografiado, estar en video o audio grabado para propósitos de la Evaluación MCAS Alternativa y para que la escuela de mi hijo/a dé la información acerca de mi hijo/a que es creada y recogida en términos de este acuerdo al Departamento de Educación Elemental y Secundaria de Massachusetts y Measured Progress para ser repasada por profesionales entrenados. Yo entiendo que puedo retirar mi permiso en cualquier momento, sin ninguna penalidad, comunicándome con el maestro/a de mi hijo/a, Measured Progress o el Departamento de Educación Elemental y Secundaria de Massachusetts.

Firma del Padre/Madre o Guardián: ______________________________________________________

Fecha: _________________________
Para los Padres o Guardián:
Este año el Departamento de Educación Elemental y Secundaria una vez más llevará a cabo la Evaluación MCAS Alterna en salones de clase del a través del estado. El maestro de su hijo/a estará entre aquellos que usan evaluaciones alternas con un número pequeño de estudiantes con discapacidades significativas que no pueden tomar exámenes MCAS estandarizados, aún con acomodos de exámenes.

Uno o más estudiantes en la clase de su hijo/a participarán en la Evaluación MCAS Alterna durante el año escolar 2014–2015. Durante este proceso, el maestro de su hijo puede encontrar necesario el usar cámaras y grabadoras para obtener información educacional en estos estudiantes, para determinar cómo desempeñan ciertas actividades. Puede ser necesario para el maestro de su hijo/a el grabar la voz o imagen del estudiante, participando y envuelto en actividades de rutina en el salón de clase con otros estudiantes presentes en el salón. Por lo tanto, pueden haber ocasiones limitadas en la cual su hijo/a puede aparecer en grabaciones y/o fotografías, o su voz en grabaciones, aunque solamente incidentalmente. Su hijo/a no será identificado/a por nombre, ni se compartirán los archivos de su hijo/a con otros fuera de la escuela o distrito escolar para este propósito. Nosotros pedimos su permiso en que su hijo/a aparezca en videos y fotografías de esta manera limitada. Muchas gracias.

Nombre del Estudiante: ______________________________________________________________

Nombre de la Escuela/Distrito Escolar: __________________________________________________

Nombre del Maestro: ________________________________________________________________

Firma del Padre/Madre o Guardián: _________________________________________________

Fecha: ____________________________
PART VII

Product Description Labels

and

Blank Data Charts
Product Description Labels

The forms on the following pages may be used to describe each portfolio product. Blank forms may be photocopied and completed by hand or may be downloaded from the Department’s website at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html. If product description labels are used, one completed label must be attached to each piece of primary evidence, as appropriate. Labels are also part of the Forms and Graphs program found at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html.

- **Work Sample Description:**
  Complete and attach one label to each work sample in the portfolio.

- **Video Description:**
  Complete one label and insert it in the portfolio for video segments submitted on a DVD or flash drive.

- **Work Description for “Grade-Level” Portfolio**
  Complete and attach one label to each work sample if submitting a “grade-level” portfolio. Complete and attach new Competency and Grade-level Portfolio form (page xx) in front of the Portfolio Cover Sheet.

- **Work Description for High School “Competency” Portfolio**
  - English Language Arts
  - Mathematics
  - Science and Technology/Engineering
  Complete and attach one label to each work sample if submitting a “competency” portfolio. Complete and attach new Competency and Grade-level Portfolio form (page xx) in front of the Portfolio Cover Sheet.

Blank Data Charts

Submission of data charts is required in each portfolio strand, with the exception of “grade-level” portfolios for students in grades 3–8, and portfolios submitted for the Grade 10 Competency Determination.

The following three methods are suggested for collecting data on the student’s academic performance for the MCAS-Alt portfolio. Refer to the section entitled Guidelines for Collecting Data on Student Performance for more information and examples of completed data charts.

- **Data Method 1 – Field data chart**
- **Data Method 2 – Bar graph**
- **Data Method 2 – Line graph**

The data charts and graphs on the following pages may be used “as is,” or teachers may use the web-based Forms and Graphs Online to complete the required forms and graphs, which can be accessed through a secure website.
2015 MCAS-Alt

WORK SAMPLE DESCRIPTION
(Complete and attach one label to each work sample in the portfolio, or write this information directly on each piece. Do not use this label for data charts or videotapes.)

Name: _________________________ Subject: □ ELA □ Math □ STE
Date (m/d/y): ___________________ Strand: ___________________________

ACCURACY: %
INDEPENDENCE: %

Learning Standard: _______________________
Measurable Outcome: _______________________

Self-Evaluation: (Must be completed by, or scribed at the direction of, the student; evidence of student choice must be shown)

Briefly describe what the student was asked to do and how he/she did it:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
(Continue on reverse if necessary.)
**2015 MCAS-Alt**

**Video Description**

Complete one form for each submitted video segment. Insert this page in the portfolio. Videos must be submitted on standard DVD, CD, or flash drive or it cannot be scored.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content Area: __________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description of Each Video Sample in this Strand:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample #1 (TITLE):</th>
<th>Self-Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date (m/d/y):</td>
<td>(Must be completed by, or scribed at the direction of, the student; evidence of student choice must be shown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Standard:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable Outcome:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briefly describe how the measurable outcome was addressed by the student:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy %</td>
<td>Independence %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample #2 (TITLE):</th>
<th>Self-Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date (m/d/y):</td>
<td>(Must be completed by, or scribed at the direction of, the student; evidence of student choice must be shown.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Standard:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable Outcome:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briefly describe how the measurable outcome was addressed by the student:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy %</td>
<td>Independence %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WORK DESCRIPTION for “Grade-Level” Portfolio
for students in Grades 3-8

(Attach one WORK DESCRIPTION to each work sample in the portfolio.)

Student’s Name: ____________________________ Date work was produced: ______________

Student’s grade: ____________________________

Content Area (Check one):  □ English Language Arts  □ Mathematics  □ Science and Technology/Engineering

Strand/Domain: ________________________________________________________________

Learning Standard: _____________________________________________________________

Brief Description of the assignment or activity in the attached work sample:
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

What was the student’s overall percent of accuracy on this assignment?
(Level of Accuracy = ____________________ %)

How much of this assignment was done independently by the student (i.e., without the use of prompts, guidance, coaching, or suggestions)

(Level of Independence = ____________________ %)

(Please include any scoring matrix or rubric if used to determine Accuracy)

If Independence percentage is less than 100%, what type of assistance did the student receive on the attached work sample?
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

Describe any accommodations the student received (e.g., scribe, read-aloud, calculator, assistive/augmentative technology, or adaptive device). Note: Use of accommodations does not affect the Independence percentage.
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
### WORK DESCRIPTION for High School Competency Portfolio in ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

(Attach one WORK DESCRIPTION to each work sample in the portfolio.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s Name:</th>
<th>Date work was produced:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This Work Description includes virtually the same content as in previous years, but reflects the terminology found in the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. **The ELA competency portfolio must contain at least five (5) writing samples, listed below under A. and B., including multiple drafts edited and revised by the student.** Writing samples must be based on grade 10 texts. Editing by the teacher should guide the student’s own revisions.

Please provide the information below and attach this form to the work sample.

For the attached work sample, select either:
- A. “Reading” (and one of the accompanying categories) or
- B. “Writing” (and one of the accompanying categories).

The “Language Strand” may be documented either within the five required writing samples, or through additional work.

- **Language:**
  - (Check Language area(s) to the right for which the attached piece should be scored.)

- **Conventions of Standard English**
  - (Grammar and usage)

- **Knowledge of Language**
  - (Effective choices for meaning/style, and application in different contexts)

- **Vocabulary Acquisition and Use**
  - (Grade-appropriate words; literal/figurative language)

If a writing sample is attached, select A. or B. below, then check the appropriate box to the right:

A. **Reading:**
   - Fiction
   - Informational Text
   - Select one: Poetry OR Drama

   The attached writing sample is based on the following grade 10 text:

   Name of text: ______________________

   (check one) Draft: ____ Final: ____

B. **Writing:**
   - Analysis of a theme in literature
   - Narrative, Argument, or Informational/expository text

   (check one) Draft: ____ Final: ____

**ON THE ATTACHED WORK SAMPLE:**

What score did the student receive? (Level of Accuracy = _____ %)

How much was done independently by the student? (Level of Independence = _____ %)

(You may wish to use a scoring rubric to determine the percentages. If so, please attach the rubric.)

If Level of Independence is less than 100%, what type of assistance, coaching, and/or prompting did the student receive on the attached piece?

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________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This Work Description includes the content standard codes found in both the 2000 and 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The Mathematics competency portfolio must include:

- work samples with a minimum of four examples or problems solved by the student for each aspect of the learning standard listed below
- evidence of the student’s own thinking and problem solving (i.e., all work must be shown).
- a score (% accurate) for each piece of student work, with all incorrect answers marked.
- work produced as independently as possible by the student, with all corrections clearly marked, and a description of the assistance given to the student. The level of independence before corrections were made must be indicated below.
- work corrected by the teacher may not be submitted as the student’s own work.

Please indicate below the strand and learning standard documented in the attached work sample.

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<tr>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Standards</th>
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ON THE ATTACHED WORK SAMPLE:

What score did the student receive? (Level of Accuracy = _____ %)

How much was done independently by the student? (Level of Independence = _____ %)

If Level of Independence is less than 100%, what type of assistance, coaching, and/or prompting did the student receive on the attached piece?

Describe any accommodations the student received. (Note: Accommodations do not affect Level of Independence.)

What was the student asked to do in order to complete the attached piece (i.e., what was the assignment)?
Each topic in this discipline must be addressed at least once in the portfolio. A minimum of ten standards must be documented in all. Be sure to include:

- a clear description of the activity, a summary of the student’s observations, an explanation or analysis of findings, and conclusion(s). Drafts may also be included.
- a score (% accurate) for each piece of student work, with all incorrect answers marked.
- work samples produced as independently as possible by the student, with all corrections clearly marked and a description of the assistance given to the student. The level of independence must be indicated below. Work may not be corrected by the teacher and submitted as the student’s own work.

Please indicate the science topic(s) and learning standard(s) documented in the attached work sample(s).

- Chemistry of Life
  - 1.1
  - 1.2
  - 1.3
- Cell Biology
  - 2.1
  - 2.2
  - 2.3
  - 2.4
  - 2.5
  - 2.6
  - 2.7
  - 2.8
- Genetics
  - 3.1
  - 3.2
  - 3.3
  - 3.4
  - 3.5
  - 3.6
- Anatomy and Physiology
  - 4.1
  - 4.2
  - 4.3
  - 4.4
  - 4.5
  - 4.6
  - 4.7
  - 4.8
- Evolution and Biodiversity
  - 5.1
  - 5.2
  - 5.3
- Ecology
  - 6.1
  - 6.2
  - 6.3
  - 6.4

ON THE ATTACHED WORK SAMPLE:

What score did the student receive? (Level of Accuracy = _____ %)

How much was done independently by the student? (Level of Independence = _____ %)

If Level of Independence is less than 100%, what type of assistance, coaching, and/or prompting did the student receive on the attached piece?

________________________________________________________________________

Describe any accommodations the student received. (Note: Accommodations do not affect Level of Independence.)

________________________________________________________________________

What was the student asked to do in order to complete the attached piece (i.e., what was the assignment)?

________________________________________________________________________
WORK DESCRIPTION for High School Competency Portfolio
in High School Science and Technology/Engineering

CHEMISTRY

Student’s Name: ___________________________ Date work was produced: ___________________________

(Attach one WORK DESCRIPTION to each work sample or collection of related work samples in the portfolio.)

Each topic in this discipline must be addressed at least once in the portfolio. A minimum of ten standards must be documented in all. Be sure to include:

- a clear description of the activity, a summary of the student’s observations, an explanation or analysis of findings, and conclusion(s). Drafts may also be included.
- a score (% accurate) for each piece of student work with all incorrect answers marked.
- work samples produced as independently as possible by the student, with all corrections clearly marked and a description of the assistance given to the student. The level of independence must be indicated below. Work may not be corrected by the teacher and submitted as the student’s own work.

Please indicate the science topic(s) and learning standard(s) documented in the attached work sample(s).

- Properties of Matter
  - 1.1
  - 1.2
  - 1.3
- Atomic Structure and Nuclear Chemistry
  - 2.1
  - 2.2
  - 2.3
  - 2.4
  - 2.5
  - 2.6
  - 2.7
- Periodicity
  - 3.1
  - 3.2
  - 3.3
  - 3.4
- Chemical Bonding
  - 4.1
  - 4.2
  - 4.3
  - 4.4
  - 4.5
  - 4.6
- Chemical Reactions and Stoichiometry
  - 5.1
  - 5.2
  - 5.3
  - 5.4
  - 5.5
  - 5.6
- States of Matter, Kinetic Molecular Theory, and Thermochemistry
  - 6.1
  - 6.2
  - 6.3
  - 6.4
  - 6.5
- Solutions, Rates of Reaction, and Equilibrium
  - 7.1
  - 7.2
  - 7.3
  - 7.4
  - 7.5
  - 7.6
- Acids and Bases and Oxidation-Reduction Reactions
  - 8.1
  - 8.2
  - 8.3
  - 8.4

ON THE ATTACHED WORK SAMPLE:

What score did the student receive? (Level of Accuracy = ____ %)

How much was done independently by the student? (Level of Independence = ____ %)

If Level of Independence is less than 100%, what type of assistance, coaching, and/or prompting did the student receive on the attached piece?

___________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________

Describe any accommodations the student received. (Note: Accommodations do not affect Level of Independence.)

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What was the student asked to do in order to complete the attached piece (i.e., what was the assignment)?

___________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________

Student’s Name: __________________________ Date work was produced: ____________

Each topic in this discipline must be addressed at least once in the portfolio. A minimum of ten standards must be documented in all. **Be sure to include:**
- a clear description of the activity, a summary of the student’s observations, an explanation or analysis of findings, and conclusion(s). Drafts may also be included.
- a score (% accurate) for each piece of student work with all incorrect answers marked.
- work samples produced as independently as possible by the student, with all corrections clearly marked and a description of the assistance given to the student. The level of independence must be indicated below. Work may not be corrected by the teacher and submitted as the student’s own work.

Please indicate the science topic(s) and learning standard(s) documented in the attached work sample(s).

- [ ] Motion and Forces
  - 1.1
  - 1.2
  - 1.3
  - 1.4
  - 1.5
  - 1.6
  - 1.7
  - 1.8

- [ ] Conservation of Energy and Momentum
  - 2.1
  - 2.2
  - 2.3
  - 2.4
  - 2.5

- [ ] Heat and Heat Transfer
  - 3.1
  - 3.2
  - 3.3
  - 3.4

- [ ] Waves
  - 4.1
  - 4.2
  - 4.3
  - 4.4
  - 4.5
  - 4.6

- [ ] Electromagnetism
  - 5.1
  - 5.2
  - 5.3
  - 5.4
  - 5.5
  - 5.6

- [ ] Electromagnetic Radiation
  - 6.1
  - 6.2

**ON THE ATTACHED WORK SAMPLE:**

What score did the student receive? (Level of Accuracy = ________ %)

How much was done independently by the student? (Level of Independence = ________ %)

If Level of Independence is less than 100%, what type of assistance, coaching, and/or prompting did the student receive on the attached piece?

________________________________________________________________________

Describe any accommodations the student received. (Note: Accommodations do not affect Level of Independence.)

________________________________________________________________________

What was the student asked to do in order to complete the attached piece (i.e., what was the assignment)?

________________________________________________________________________
WORK DESCRIPTION for High School Competency Portfolio in High School Science and Technology/Engineering

TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING

Student’s Name: __________________________ Date work was produced: __________________________

(Attach one WORK DESCRIPTION to each work sample or collection of related work samples in the portfolio.)

Each topic in this discipline must be addressed at least once in the portfolio. A minimum of ten standards must be documented in all. Be sure to include:

• a clear description of the activity, a summary of the student’s observations, an explanation or analysis of findings, and conclusion(s). Drafts may also be included.
• a score (% accurate) for each piece of student work with all incorrect answers marked.
• work samples produced as independently as possible by the student, with all corrections clearly marked, and a description of the assistance given to the student. The level of independence must be indicated below. Work may not be corrected by the teacher and submitted as the student’s own work.

Please indicate the science topic(s) and learning standard(s) documented in the attached work sample(s):

[ ] Engineering Design
[ ] Construction Technologies
[ ] Energy and Power Technologies—Fluid Systems
[ ] Energy and Power Technologies—Thermal Systems
[ ] Energy and Power Technologies—Electrical Systems
[ ] Communication Technologies
[ ] Manufacturing Technologies

1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4 1.5
2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5 2.6
3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4 3.5
4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4
5.1 5.2 5.3 5.4 5.5
6.1 6.2 6.3 6.4 6.5
7.1 7.2 7.3

ON THE ATTACHED PIECE OF STUDENT WORK:

What score did the student receive? (Level of Accuracy = _____ %)

How much was done independently by the student? (Level of Independence = _____ %)

If Level of Independence is less than 100%, what type of assistance, coaching, and/or prompting did the student receive on the attached piece?

________________________________________

Describe any accommodations the student received. (Note: Accommodations do not affect Level of Independence.)

________________________________________

________________________________________

What was the student asked to do in order to complete the attached piece (i.e., what was the assignment)?

________________________________________
DATA METHOD 1: FIELD DATA CHART  (student performance on a series of tasks or collection of work samples related to measurable outcome)

COMPLETE ALL INFORMATION BELOW. AT LEAST EIGHT (8) DIFFERENT DATES ARE REQUIRED.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s Name:</th>
<th>Learning Standard:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Content Area/Strand:</th>
<th>Measurable Outcome:</th>
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**Accuracy and Independence** for each trial (see KEY):

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<th>% Independence:</th>
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<th>SUMMARY for this date</th>
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<th>Brief Description</th>
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**KEY**

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 MASSACHUSETTS COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM
2015 Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt 87
DATA METHOD 2: BAR GRAPH  (Instructional data summarizing the student’s performance on each date)

COMPLETE ALL INFORMATION BELOW. AT LEAST EIGHT (8) DIFFERENT DATES ARE REQUIRED.

Student’s Name: ____________________________________________
Content Area/Strand: _________________________________________
Learning Standard: ___________________________________________
Measurable Outcome: _________________________________________

| List % | A | I | A | I | A | I | A | I | A | I | A | I | A | I | A | I | A | I | A |
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| 85    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 80    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 75    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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| 30    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 25    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 20    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 15    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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Date (m/d/y) ____________________________________________

Brief Description
(What was student asked to do and how did he/she do it?) ____________________________

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System
2015 Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt
**DATA METHOD 3: LINE GRAPH**  
(Instructional data summarizing the student’s performance on each date)

Complete all information below. At least eight (8) different dates are required.

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<th>Student’s Name:</th>
<th>Content Area/Strand:</th>
<th>Learning Standard:</th>
<th>Measurable Outcome:</th>
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**Brief Description**  
(What was the student asked to do and how did he/she do it?)
APPENDICES

Why It’s Important to Include Students with Disabilities in MCAS

Frequently Asked Questions About MCAS-Alt
Why It’s Important to Include Students with Disabilities in MCAS

Since 1998, students with disabilities in Massachusetts have been included in MCAS for the following reasons:

It’s the law. State and federal laws require the participation of all students in statewide assessments in order to measure their academic performance. The alternate assessment portfolio ensures that students with the most intensive disabilities have an opportunity to “show what they know” and receive instruction at a level that is challenging and attainable based on the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks.

Students who are tested are those who get taught. Students with disabilities have become more “visible” in their schools as a result of taking the MCAS and the MCAS alternate assessment, and have a greater chance of being considered when decisions are made to allocate staff and resources to improve their academic achievement.

As a result of participation in MCAS, learning has improved as expectations are raised. Evidence indicates that students with disabilities learn more than expected when they are given opportunities to engage in challenging instruction with the necessary support. Indeed, the performance of students with disabilities on MCAS, and the rate at which these students meet state and local graduation requirements, has steadily increased.

Participation in MCAS helps to determine whether, and how much, students with disabilities are learning. In the past, it was not always possible to determine what had been taught and whether special education had been successful with a student; nor was it possible to compare outcomes among students and across programs, schools, and districts.

Standards-based instruction is for all students. All students are capable of learning at a level that engages and challenges them. One important reason to include students with significant disabilities in standards-based instruction is to explore their capabilities. While “daily living skills” are critical for these students to function as independently as possible, academic skills are also important. Standards in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks are defined as “valued outcomes for all students.” Why, then, should separate standards be used with some students, and not others? And who, if anyone, should decide which students should receive instruction based on academic standards and which should not?

State graduation requirements apply to all students, even those taking MCAS alternate assessments. All students without exception are required to achieve a score of Proficient on the grade 10 MCAS tests in ELA and Math (or Needs Improvement, plus fulfilling the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan in ELA and mathematics), and a score of Needs Improvement on a high school Science and Technology/Engineering test. No student will be denied a high school diploma simply on the basis of taking an alternate assessment if he or she can achieve a score that is equivalent to that of a student who passed the required high school MCAS tests. Massachusetts is the only state that allows students to meet the graduation requirement by taking an alternate assessment. However, the majority of students who take alternate assessments are those with significant cognitive disabilities and therefore, the number earning a Competency Determination will likely remain low in relation to the number of students who meet the Competency Determination requirement on the MCAS tests.

For additional information and participation guidelines, please visit the Department’s MCAS Alternate Assessment website at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt.

For additional information on meeting graduation requirements, please visit the Department’s MCAS website at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html.
Frequently Asked Questions About MCAS-Alt
The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education receives many inquiries like the ones below concerning the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt).

Why assess students with disabilities on the alternate assessment?
*Rationale:* First, it’s the law. Students with disabilities must participate in MCAS in order to assess their performance of skills and knowledge of content found in the state’s curriculum frameworks. This means students with disabilities must take MCAS tests, either with or without accommodations, or take an alternate assessment if they cannot take the tests due to the severity of their disabilities.

Another reason for requiring alternate assessments is to measure the academic performance of students with the most significant disabilities. Before 2001, academic learning was not measured or reported for these students. Since taking alternate assessments, students have become more “visible” in their schools and have a greater chance of being considered when decisions are made to allocate staff and resources.

There is more to the alternate assessment than “passing” the test. The alternate assessment gives honest, accurate, and detailed feedback that can be used to identify challenging goals and instruction for each student. The evidence submitted in a portfolio ensures that students with the most intensive disabilities have an opportunity to “show what they know” and to receive instruction at a level that is challenging and attainable.

Portfolios require some effort. How can teachers manage the portfolio process efficiently?
*Rationale:* The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has made school administrators aware of the need to coordinate this process in schools and to meet regularly with teachers who conduct alternate assessments to identify resources for teachers who need assistance. The Department encourages all adults who work with a student to be involved in developing his or her portfolio.

At statewide teacher training sessions held during the fall and winter, the Department emphasizes the need for teachers to begin collecting student work early in the school year and to complete all required forms and cover sheets well in advance of the submission deadline. Teachers report that after the first year of creating student portfolios, they find the process much easier, and they have developed strategies to organize and manage this task more efficiently. They have made the creation of alternate assessment portfolios a part of their daily instruction and have begun to use them to plan instruction, identify educational goals for students, write progress reports, and share information with parents. Thousands of teachers have conducted alternate assessments and are assisting each other in the process. Teachers find that portfolios help them document their students’ performance in order to focus their time and attention where it is most needed.

We encourage teachers to request assistance from the Department when they need it. Expert teachers are available to help teachers who are new to the process.

How do we know that portfolios truly reflect what students have learned?
*Rationale:* If teachers follow instructions outlined in the 2015 Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt, they can be assured the portfolio will receive the score it deserves based on the evidence submitted. Teachers should become familiar with the scoring rubric in the Educator’s Manual to make certain the portfolio samples and data charts address each rubric category. Each year, written feedback is provided directly to the teachers who created each portfolio. This feedback is intended to assist teachers to improve the portfolios the following year.
Why use the same standards for these students?

*Rationale:* One reason to include students with significant disabilities in standards-based instruction is to more fully explore and expand their capabilities. Performance expectations for these students have traditionally been quite low, and data on their performance have only recently been collected. *Standards* are defined as “valued outcomes for all students.” Therefore, why should separate standards be identified for some students, and not others? And who, if anyone, should decide which students should receive standards-based instruction and which should not?

All students are capable of learning at a level that engages and challenges them. Teachers who have incorporated standards into their instruction cite unanticipated gains in students’ performance and understanding. Using the curriculum resources provided by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to improve and enhance their instruction, they have become excited about new teaching possibilities offered by this approach.

An additional advantage to using this approach is that some social, communication, motor, self-help, and other daily living skills can be addressed during activities in which standards are taught, as outlined in the Department’s publication *The Resource Guide to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities.* The Resource Guide is available online at [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt).

Why is the graduation rate low for students taking the alternate assessment?

*Rationale:* All students without exception are required to meet the Competency Determination standard by earning a minimum score of *Proficient* on English Language Arts and Mathematics MCAS tests (*or Needs Improvement,* plus fulfilling the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan); and a minimum score of *Needs Improvement* on a high school Science and Technology/Engineering test. No student will be denied a high school diploma simply on the basis of taking an alternate assessment if he or she can achieve a score equivalent to that of a student who met the CD requirement on the required high school tests. Massachusetts allows students with disabilities who take alternate assessments to meet the graduation requirement, provided they demonstrate in their MCAS-Alt portfolio a level of performance equivalent to a student who has achieved these scores on the MCAS tests.

Each year, a small number of students score sufficiently well to meet the state’s graduation requirement. Since 2001, more than 200 students taking the MCAS-Alt have earned the Competency Determination in at least one subject. These students would not have earned a Competency Determination without this option. As students gain greater access to academic instruction and teachers become more proficient at documenting their students’ performance, this number may increase in the future. However, since students with significant cognitive disabilities comprise the majority of students taking alternate assessments, the number achieving a score of *Needs Improvement* will likely remain low in comparison to the number of students who meet the Competency Determination requirement by taking standard MCAS tests.

*For additional information, updates, materials, and participation guidelines, please visit the Department’s MCAS Alternate Assessment website at [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt).*

*For additional information on Educational Proficiency Plans (EPP), please visit the Department’s College and Career Readiness website at [www.doe.mass.edu/ccr](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr).*