2014 – 2015 Update

Requirements for the Participation of English Language Learners in ACCESS for ELLs, MCAS, and PARCC

A Guide for Educators and Parents/Guardians
Purpose of This Manual

The Requirements for the Participation of ELLs in ACCESS for ELLs, MCAS, and PARCC is intended to support the participation of English language learners (ELLs) in statewide assessments, including

- ACCESS for ELLs, the state’s English proficiency assessment;
- MCAS, the state’s assessment of English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science and technology and engineering (STE); and
- PARCC, the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), a new consortium-based online assessment of ELA/literacy and mathematics. Massachusetts districts will choose whether to administer the MCAS or PARCC tests in grades 3–8.

This year, the ACCESS for ELLs tests will be administered for the third consecutive year in Massachusetts. Massachusetts is a member of the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) consortium. The ACCESS tests measure the WIDA English Language Development standards, which were adopted by Massachusetts in 2012.

The policies and procedures for statewide test administration in the 2014–2015 school year have been updated to include information on the participation of ELLs in ACCESS for ELLs assessments; the participation of ELLs in PARCC assessments; voluntary participation in the computer-based ACCESS Listening field test; and plans for the 2015-2016 administration of computer-based ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessments. Therefore, it is important that you review this information carefully.

With increasing numbers of English language learners entering our public schools every day, providing quality instruction and assessment becomes even more critical. As English language learners strengthen their English skills, they are likely to become more successful academically. Therefore, it is important to teach these skills as rapidly and efficiently as possible. The focus on academic language, which is at the core of the WIDA ELD standards and the ACCESS for ELLs tests, will accelerate ELL students’ abilities to learn core academic subject matter.

Thank you for participating in this vital component of the statewide assessment system and for the work you perform with English language learners.
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I. Overview of Statewide Testing Requirements for English Language Learner (ELL) Students

A. Background

State and federal laws require that ELL students participate in statewide assessments. Massachusetts ELL students will meet this requirement by participating in either the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) or Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) tests, and the ACCESS for ELLs tests.

Massachusetts has been a member of the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) consortium for English language development and academic achievement, based at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, since 2012. The ACCESS for ELLs tests are based on the WIDA English language development standards.

**ACCESS for ELLs tests are administered in January/February** to all publicly funded ELL students in grades K–12, as described below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCESS for ELLs Test</th>
<th>Participation Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten Test (individually administered)</td>
<td>All students enrolled in Kindergarten who:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• were reported as LEP in the October 2014 SIMS, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• arrived after October and will be reported as LEP in the March 2015 SIMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking Test (individually administered)</td>
<td>All students enrolled in grades 1–12 who:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• were reported as LEP in the October 2014 SIMS, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• arrived after October 2014 and will be reported as LEP in the March 2015 SIMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading, Writing, and Listening Tests (group administered)</td>
<td>Students in grades 1–12 who:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• were reported as LEP in the October 2014 SIMS, or will be reported as LEP in the March 2015 SIMS, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• require an alternate assessment, as determined by their IEP or in their 504 plan; or if in grades 1–2, would be likely to participate in the MCAS-Alt because of a significant cognitive disability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional information about ACCESS for ELLs can be found on the WIDA website at wida.us and at wida.us/membership/states/Massachusetts.aspx. Information is also available on the Department’s website at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/access.

B. Definition of an ELL Student

An ELL student is defined by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as “a student whose first language is a language other than English and who is unable to perform ordinary classroom work in English.” The terms “ELL” and “LEP” are used interchangeably.
When a student has been evaluated by the school district and meets the above criteria, he or she is considered an English language learner, regardless of whether the student’s parent or guardian “opts out” of a program of language support or services for their child. ELL students are required to participate in statewide tests according to the guidelines provided in this document.

C. Identification and Reporting of ELL Students

Districts are required to have a procedure in place to evaluate the English proficiency of all students whose home language is not English to determine whether they are ELLs. Students must be evaluated in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking (603 CMR 14.02). In addition, districts must have a procedure in place for determining when a student is no longer an ELL. For more details, refer to *Transitional Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement, and Reclassification of English Language Learners* (2013), available at [www.doe.mass.edu/ell/guidance_laws.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/guidance_laws.html).

Questions regarding the **identification screening, placement, and reclassification of ELL students** should be directed the Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement at 781-338-3584 or via email at ell@doe.mass.edu.

Districts must report a student’s ELL (LEP) status in the Student Information Management System (SIMS) data collection in October, March, and June, and remove the designation when the student is no longer identified as an ELL.

Questions regarding SIMS should be directed to the district’s SIMS contact. The names of SIMS contacts in each district are available at [profiles.doe.mass.edu/search/search.aspx?leftNavID=11239](http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/search/search.aspx?leftNavID=11239) (select SIMS Contact from the Function menu, and click Get Results).
II. Participation of ELL Students in ACCESS for ELLs Tests

A. General Participation Requirements

ELL students must be assessed annually to measure their English language proficiency and progress in learning English in the four domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students who have been determined to be English language learners, must participate in ACCESS for ELLs testing, including:

- ELL students who were reported as LEP in October 2014 SIMS, AND
- ELL students who enroll in a Massachusetts school after the October 2014 SIMS submission and will be reported as LEP in the March 2015 SIMS

A very small number of ELL students are not required to participate in ACCESS for ELLs tests, as follows:

| Students Not Required to Participate in ACCESS for ELLs tests:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• ELL students reported as LEP in October 2014 SIMS who have exited ELL status before the beginning of the testing window (i.e., before January 8, 2015). The ELL designation for students who exit ELL status prior to testing must be removed in the district’s March 2015 SIMS submission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ELL students in kindergarten with significant disabilities who would likely be designated for an alternate assessment in the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Foreign exchange students who are coded #11 under “Reason for Enrollment” in SIMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ELL students with a medically documented absence who are unable to participate in make-up testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ELL students in grades 1–12 who require the following unavailable accommodations and therefore cannot participate in all domains (sections) of the test:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Accommodation 26: Test administrator reads aloud the ELA reading comprehension test. Note: These students must take the Listening, Speaking, and Writing tests, but not the Reading test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Accommodation 28: Electronic Text Reader for the ELA reading comprehension test. Note: These students must take the Listening, Speaking, and Writing tests, but not the Reading test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ELL students whose primary disability is reported as “deaf or hard of hearing” must take the Reading and Writing tests, but not the Listening or Speaking tests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ELL students whose primary disability is reported as “blind or visually impaired” must take the Braille version of the Reading and the Writing tests, but not the Listening and Speaking tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ELL students with significant cognitive disabilities who are designated for MCAS-Alt, or are in grades 1 or 2 and would be likely to take MCAS-Alt in the future, must take the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs (see page 5).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. Participation in Grade-Level Clusters and Testing Tiers

Students must take the ACCESS for ELLs tests intended for administration in their grade-level cluster, as follows: kindergarten, grades 1–2, 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12.

For grades 1–12, ACCESS for ELLs test forms are divided into three tiers in each grade-level cluster: Tier A, Tier B, and Tier C. Each tier assesses students at different levels of English language proficiency in that grade cluster. To ensure an appropriate testing experience for each student and the most meaningful results, it is necessary to select the testing tier for each student that best matches his or her proficiency level. There are no testing tiers for kindergarten or for the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs.

Selection of testing tiers must be completed before the ACCESS for ELLs tests are ordered in late October—early November.

Tier A is appropriate for beginning ELLs who:
- have enrolled in schools in the U.S. during the current academic school year without previous instruction in English
- currently receive literacy instruction ONLY in their native language

Tier B is appropriate for most ELL students who:
- have social language proficiency and some, but not extensive, academic language proficiency in English
- have acquired some literacy in English though have not yet reached grade level literacy

Tier C is appropriate for students who are close to exiting ELL status and who:
- are approaching grade-level proficiency in literacy and academic language in the core content areas
- will likely meet the exit criteria for support services by the end of the academic year

The following criteria may also be considered in determining a student’s testing tier:
- scores from the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT), described on the following page
- scores on other English language assessments, if any, used by the district
- written observations by staff working closely with the student

Test questions in each tier overlap somewhat, with Tier A targeting ACCESS for ELLs proficiency levels 1-3; Tier B levels 2-4; and Tier C levels 3-5.

Capping the Scores of Students Taking Tier A and Tier B tests
Students who take Tier A or Tier B forms of the ACCESS for ELLs tests will not receive language proficiency levels above 4.0 for Tier A, or above 5.0 for Tier B, because the most difficult test items do not appear on tests in those tiers.
W-APT Placement Test
The Department recommends the use of the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT), an optional, no-cost placement test, to screen incoming ELL students and to determine the most appropriate ACCESS for ELLs test tier to administer.

The W-APT, along with materials to assist educators in administering the test and interpreting results, is available on the WIDA website at wida.us/assessment/w-apt/ in the “Downloads and Products” section. A user name and password to access these materials was sent to ELL directors in each district for distribution to staff who will use the W-APT materials. New ELL directors or those who cannot locate their district login information should contact the Department at mcas@doe.mass.edu or by calling 781-338-3625.

C. Accommodations for ELL Students with Disabilities

ELL students with disabilities are entitled to receive accommodations on MCAS and other statewide tests, including ACCESS for ELLs, with few exceptions. The student’s IEP team or 504 coordinator must determine how the student will participate in ACCESS for ELLs testing and document this information in the student’s IEP or 504 plan. The student’s IEP or 504 plan must specify precisely which test accommodation(s) he or she will receive, or if the student will participate in the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs. IEP’s must be signed by the parent/guardian before an accommodation may be given. In cases where a 504 plan is under development, the school personnel responsible for developing the plan must have already met and agreed upon the necessary test accommodation(s) before a student may be provided the accommodation(s).

Accommodations listed in the Requirements for the Participation of Students with Disabilities in MCAS (posted at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation/sped.pdf) are available for ACCESS for ELLs testing, with the following exceptions:

- Signing any test to a student who is Deaf (MCAS Accommodations 17 and 27)
- Electronic Text Reader for any test (MCAS Accommodations 18 and 28)
- Reading aloud the Reading Comprehension MCAS test to a student (MCAS Accommodation 26)

Note: ELL students with disabilities who have accommodation 16 or 26 (test read aloud) listed in their IEP or 504 plan may have the Listening test (including all text-based answer options) and the Writing test read aloud. These students must be tested in a separate setting with no more than five other students, all of whom have this accommodation.

Braille Test
ELL students whose primary disability is reported as “blind or visually impaired” must take the ACCESS for ELLs Reading and the Writing tests. WIDA will provide the Tier B version of the Reading and Writing tests in Braille. If the student will participate in the Braille tests, then

- Braille tests must be ordered by the school at the same time other test materials are ordered.
- The student's responses must be transcribed verbatim by a test administrator into a regular ACCESS for ELLs test booklet, with spelling, punctuation, and paragraph breaks dictated or noted by the student.
- The writing assessment must be transcribed verbatim into the test booklet by a test administrator.
- All Braille test materials must be returned with other test materials.
D. Alternate ACCESS for ELLs (Grades 1-12)

ELL students in grades 1–12 with significant disabilities who participate in the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt), as determined by their IEP team or in their 504 plan, or who would likely require MCAS-Alt beginning in grade 3, must take the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs. This assessment will be administered during the same administration window as the regular ACCESS for ELLs. The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an individually-administered paper-and-pencil assessment that consists of four sections, one each in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

- On the Reading and Listening tests, students are asked to select responses by pointing.
- On the Writing test, students are asked to draw, trace, copy, or write.
- On the Speaking test, they are asked to repeat or say words or phrases.

Test scripts include modeling and repetition of tasks, and the use of prompts. Students will have multiple opportunities to respond to test questions. All sections of the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs will be scored by the test administrator. Further information is available at www.wida.us/assessment/alternateaccess.aspx.

E. Procedures for Students Who Transfer to and from a Massachusetts School During Testing

When a student takes one or more sections of the ACCESS for ELLs test in one school, then transfers to or from another school (either in the same or another district), the student should only take only the remaining sections in the new setting. A Student Transfer Form must be completed by both schools, and the school that administered the first part of the test should contact the new school to inform them which sections have already been administered. The test contractor will use the information on the forms from both schools to score a complete test for the student, and report the results to the receiving school. Student should not retake any section of the test. A blank Student Transfer Form (with instructions) is sent to each school with their test materials.

F. Participation by Students Who Arrive in Massachusetts Schools During Testing

Every effort should be made to test newly arrived students before the end of the testing window. It is important to establish a baseline score for the student so the district can serve the student’s language needs appropriately, and so that the student’s progress can be measured the following year. The last day to order additional testing materials is January 30, 2015. Students should be designated for a test tier (A, B, or C) and tested, if they are identified as ELL before this date. Non-participation by students who arrive after the testing window begins on January 9, however, will not affect the school’s or district’s MCAS ELA participation rates for accountability.
G. Test Administrator Training

Test administrators who were certified to administer the ACCESS for ELLs group-administered tests in Grades 1-12 (Listening, Reading, and Writing) in 2013–2014 will not be required to retrain or recertify to administer ACCESS tests in 2015. However, training and certification/re-certification will be required to administer the following tests in 2015:

- Speaking test
- Kindergarten test
- Alternate ACCESS for ELLs test

Test administrators administering the ACCESS tests for the first time must participate in online training modules for all tests they plan to administer, and receive a score of at least 80 percent on all applicable quizzes, prior to administering the 2015 ACCESS for ELLs tests. Returning test administrators must also receive scores of at least 80 percent, if they plan to administer one or more of the three tests listed above. Online training modules and certification quizzes are offered on the WIDA website, once a WIDA personal account has been set up and the user has logged in.

Further information about setting up a personal account on the WIDA website is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/access/PersonalAccount-Instruct.html and in the Principal's Pre-Administration Manual available in early fall 2015 at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/access/.

H. ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Field Test and Computer-based Operational Tests

New computer-based ACCESS for ELLs tests (called ACCESS for ELLs 2.0) are being developed by WIDA for students in grades 1–12 for the 2015-2016 school year. Paper-based versions of ACCESS 2.0 will be available as an accommodation; and paper-based versions of the Kindergarten and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs tests will be administered to all students, as before. Additional information about the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 is available at assets.wceruw.org/assessmentSystem/summative.aspx#whatsNew.

In March 2015, a field test of the new computer-based Listening test will be conducted in Massachusetts on a voluntary basis. Schools that wish to participate will administer the Listening field test. Field testing will require approximately one hour for each group test administration.

For more information about the ACCESS field test, see assets.wceruw.org/implementation/fieldtest.aspx. Schools may volunteer to administer the online Listening field test by contacting asbauer@wisc.edu.
III. Participation of ELL Students in MCAS and PARCC

In spring 2015, districts, educational collaboratives, and approved private schools will select either MCAS or PARCC to administer to their students in grades 3–8 in English language arts and literacy, and mathematics. Participation requirements for ELLs are common to both assessments, although some policies and procedures are unique to each.

A. General Participation Requirements

ELL students must participate in all MCAS or PARCC tests scheduled for their grades regardless of the language program and services they are receiving or the amount of time they have been in the United States. The one exception applies to first-year ELL students who enrolled in U.S. schools after March 1, 2014. Schools have the option of administering English language arts (ELA) tests to first-year ELL students, provided they have also participated in ACCESS for ELLs testing. First-year ELL students must participate in MCAS or PARCC mathematics, and MCAS science and technology/engineering (STE) tests, although results will be reported only for diagnostic purposes and will not be included in school and district summary results, or in state and federal accountability reporting.

### ELL Participation Requirements for Spring 2015 MCAS/PARCC Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MCAS or PARCC ELA</th>
<th>MCAS or PARCC Mathematics</th>
<th>MCAS STE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-Year ELL Students¹</td>
<td>Optional²</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Students</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Results for first-year ELL students are not included in MCAS school and district summary results.
² Optional provided that the student has participated in ACCESS for ELLs.

Foreign Exchange Students

Foreign exchange students who are coded as #11 under “Reason for Enrollment” in SIMS are not required to participate in MCAS/PARCC tests.

B. Participation Requirements for ELL Students with Disabilities

ELL students with disabilities must participate in MCAS and/or PARCC by taking either

- MCAS or PARCC ELA or mathematics test(s) and MCAS STE tests, with or without accommodations
  OR
- MCAS Alternate Assessments (MCAS-Alt)

The ELL student’s IEP or 504 plan must indicate how the student will participate in MCAS and/or PARCC testing. Additional information is available in the:

C. Use of Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionaries and Glossaries by ELL Students on MCAS and/or PARCC Tests

ELL students, including those who have been identified as LEP in the past, but are no longer reported as LEP, may use an authorized bilingual word-to-word dictionary and/or glossary on the following MCAS and/or PARCC tests:
- ELA—authorized word-to-word dictionary (if available)
- Mathematics—authorized word-to-word dictionary and glossary (if available)
- Science and Technology/Engineering—authorized word-to-word dictionary and glossary (if available)

Bilingual dictionary use for MCAS and PARCC tests is strictly limited to those that provide word-to-word translations. Dictionaries that include definitions, synonyms, antonyms, phrases, and other information are strictly prohibited. Note: The use of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries and glossaries is prohibited on all ACCESS for ELLs tests.

A list of authorized bilingual dictionaries and glossaries is available on the Department’s website at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation/?section=ell. To seek the approval of a word-to-word dictionary not included in the list, please email the Department at mcas@doe.mass.edu or call 781-338-3625.

D. Reporting MCAS/PARCC Results for ELL Students

Results for ELL students are reported with those of other students, and separately in the ELL/Former ELL and high-needs subgroups. The one exception is the reporting of results for first-year ELL students as shown in the table below. In reporting results for state and federal accountability, scores for ELL students with disabilities are included in the following subgroups: students with disabilities, ELL students, and high-needs.

State and Federal Accountability Reporting for First-Year ELL Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Results are Reported for MCAS/PARCC Content Area Tests</th>
<th>English Language Arts (Testing optional)</th>
<th>Mathematics (Testing required)</th>
<th>Science and Technology/Engineering (Testing required)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student-level MCAS/PARCC Results</td>
<td>Student item analysis roster report (if tested)</td>
<td>Student item analysis roster report</td>
<td>Student item analysis roster report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation for Accountability</td>
<td>Counted as participating whether tested or not, provided that student participated in ACCESS for ELLs</td>
<td>Counted as participating unless absent</td>
<td>Counted as participating unless absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement and Growth for Accountability</td>
<td>Not included in state and federal accountability calculations</td>
<td>Not included in state and federal accountability calculations</td>
<td>Not included in state and federal accountability calculations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E. High School MCAS English/Spanish Mathematics Tests

Grade 10 Spanish-speaking ELL students who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for fewer than three years may choose to take the English/Spanish edition of the grade 10 MCAS Mathematics test if they can read and write in Spanish at or near grade level. English/Spanish editions of the Mathematics test are available for the grade 10 MCAS Mathematics test and retests only. Students who are eligible for an English/Spanish MCAS test will take the test during the same time period in which the English edition of the test is administered. The designated test administrator must be fluent in both English and Spanish. Students may respond to test questions in English or in Spanish.

F. High School Competency Determination (CD)

All Massachusetts students, including English language learners, are required to meet the CD standard in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science and technology/engineering (STE) in order to be eligible for a diploma in Massachusetts.

To earn a CD, students must either earn a scaled score of at least 240 on both the grade 10 MCAS ELA and Mathematics tests, or a scaled score between 220 and 238 on both tests and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP). Students must also earn a scaled score of at least 220 on one of the high school STE tests in Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics, or Technology/Engineering. In addition to passing MCAS tests, students must meet all local graduation requirements.

Students eligible to take the English/Spanish edition of the MCAS grade 10 Mathematics test may meet the CD requirement in Mathematics through this test, but must also pass ELA and STE tests in English.

Since the CD requirement may present a challenge for ELL students who have recently enrolled in a U.S. school, some ELL students may need to continue their education beyond grade 12 in order to attain the requisite knowledge and skills in ELA, mathematics, and STE. After grade 12, students who still need to pass one or more of the required MCAS tests may take the MCAS retest(s) at the school in which they were last enrolled. Some students may also be eligible for an MCAS performance appeal.

In 2014, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approved extending the use of high school MCAS tests for students to earn the Competency Determination (CD) for high school graduation through the class of 2019.

For more information on meeting the graduation requirement, please refer to the Department’s website at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html.
IV. Participation of ELLs in PARCC

A. Background

As part of the two-year "test drive" of PARCC, districts may choose whether to administer MCAS or PARCC to students in grades 3-8 in spring 2015. PARCC assessments assess the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and literacy, and mathematics, and are designed to determine whether students are college- and career-ready. The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will vote whether to fully adopt PARCC as the state's new testing program in fall 2015.

Participation requirements for ELLs in MCAS and PARCC are virtually the same, regardless of which assessment the district is administering. See General Participation Requirements on page 8 for information. PARCC will be delivered on a computer-based test platform, although a paper-based option is also available. Technical guidelines and specifications are available at www.parcconline.org/technology.

The PARCC testing program includes several components, including:
- A performance-based assessment (PBA) administered after three-quarters of the school year has been completed, and
- An end-of-year assessment (EOY) for both ELA and mathematics in grades 3-11

B. Accessibility

PARCC has adopted most of the accommodations that were permitted for MCAS testing. However, many accommodations will be delivered differently on computer-based PARCC tests than they were on paper-based MCAS tests.

PARCC also makes a distinction between universally-designed accessibility features (computer-based tools) and test administration considerations (testing procedures) that will be available to all students at the discretion of the principal (or designee); and accommodations that will be available only to students with disabilities, ELLs, and ELLs with disabilities. The following are available to ELL students as indicated on PARCC tests.

**Accommodations for English Language Learners**

Accommodations for English language learners, with or without disabilities, who may need specific supports during PARCC assessment administration include:
- extended time (up to the end of a school day to complete a test session)
- general test directions read aloud, repeated, and/or clarified as needed in English or student’s native language
- scribing (speech-to-text) responses on the mathematics assessment dictated by the student in English
- use of Bilingual word-to-word dictionaries

**Accommodations for ELLs with disabilities**

ELLs with disabilities are entitled to the same accommodations available to other students with disabilities as described in the PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual, provided these are listed in the student’s IEP or 504 plan.
Accessibility Features and Testing Procedures available for all students

The following accessibility features can be used by any students taking PARCC, including ELLs:

- Background/font color
- Use of blank paper
- Directions read aloud and/or clarified
- Highlighter
- Headphones/noise buffer
- Magnification/enlargement
- Redirect a student’s attention to the test
- Spell checker
- Read aloud/text-to-speech for the PARCC Mathematics test

The following testing procedures are available to any student taking PARCC assessments, at the discretion of the principal (or designee):

- Small group testing
- Frequent breaks
- Time of day
- Separate/alternate testing location
- Specified area or seating
- Adaptive/specialized equipment, furniture, or lighting

Differences between MCAS and PARCC accessibility and accommodations policies

A few important differences exist between MCAS and PARCC accessibility and accommodations policies, including:

- PARCC tests are timed, while MCAS tests are untimed. Extended time is allowed only for students with disabilities and ELLs;
- ELA graphic organizers and individualized mathematics reference sheets/checklists are not permitted on PARCC tests;
- Paper-based PARCC assessments may be administered as an accommodation, either to an English learner who recently entered the school with little or no prior experience or familiarity with technology, or a student with a disability who is unable to use a computer
- Read-aloud (text-to speech) on the PARCC Mathematics test is an accessibility feature available to all students

For additional information on PARCC accessibility features, test administration considerations, and accommodations, see

- the PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual (Second Edition) available at www.parcconline.org/parcc-accessibility-features-and-accommodations-manual; and
- the PARCC Accessibility and Accommodations Overview for Massachusetts Educators available at www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/.
V. Available Resources

For policy questions regarding the assessment of ELL students, please contact Student Assessment Services at 781-338-3625 or by email at mcas@doe.mass.edu. For questions regarding the identification, services, and reclassification of English language learners, contact the Office of Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement at 781-338-6220.

Resources to support educators, parents, and others who work with ELL students are available on the Department’s website at www.doe.mass.edu/ell. Specific resources are listed below:

- This document is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation/ell.pdf.
- ACCESS for ELLs test administration resources are available at www.wida.us/assessment/ACCESS/ and www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/access.
- *Bilingual Dictionaries and Glossaries Authorized for Use by English Language Learners* is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation/?section=ell.
- *PARCC Accessibility and Accommodations Overview for Massachusetts Educators* and general information on PARCC is available at www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/
- The *WIDA English Language Development Standards* assessed on ACCESS for ELLs tests are available at wida.us/downloadLibrary.aspx.
- The ACCESS for ELLs *Interpretive Guide for Score Reports* is available at wida.us/assessment/ACCESS/#scores, under “Downloads and Products.”
- *Requirements for the Participation of Students with Disabilities in MCAS* is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation/?section=sped
- WIDA/ACCESS for ELLs Performance Definitions are available at wida.us/get.aspx?id=5.
- State-specific WIDA information is available at wida.us/membership/states/Massachusetts.aspx.