2015–2016 Update

Requirements for the Participation of English Language Learners in ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, MCAS, and PARCC

A Guide for Educators and Parents/Guardians
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 current 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 consortium-based online assessment of ELA/literacy and mathematics. (The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will vote in November 2015 on whether to adopt PARCC as the state’s assessment)

Massachusetts is a member of the WIDA consortium, and will administer the ACCESS for ELLs tests for the fourth consecutive year. 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 2015–2016 school year have been updated to include information on the participation of ELLs in the new ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 online and paper-based 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 English Language Development (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 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. This year, WIDA consortium member states will administer the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, a new online (computer-based) test, with an option for schools to administer a paper-based version of the test, if needed.

**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 <strong>Kindergarten</strong> who:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• were reported as LEP in the October 2015 SIMS, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• arrived after October 2015 and will be reported as LEP in the March 2016 SIMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking Test (individually or group administered)</td>
<td>All students enrolled in <strong>grades 1–12</strong> who:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• were reported as LEP in the October 2015 SIMS, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• arrived after October 2015 and will be reported as LEP in the March 2016 SIMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading, Writing, and Listening Tests (group administered)</td>
<td>Students in <strong>grades 1–12</strong> who:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• were reported as LEP in the October 2015 SIMS, or will be reported as LEP in the March 2016 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 and at the WIDA Massachusetts state page. Information is also available on the Department’s website.

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 (2015).

Questions regarding the identification screening, placement, and reclassification of ELL students should be directed to 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 (select SIMS Contact from the Function menu, and click Get Results).
II. Participation of ELL Students in ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 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 2.0 testing, including:

- ELL students who were reported as LEP in October 2015 SIMS,
  And
- ELL students who enroll in a Massachusetts school after the October 2015 SIMS submission who will be reported as LEP in the March 2016 SIMS

Foreign Exchange Students

Foreign exchange students who are coded as #11 under “Reason for Enrollment” in SIMS must participate in ACCESS for ELL tests.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Not Required to Participate in ACCESS for ELLs tests:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• ELL students reported as LEP in October 2015 SIMS who have exited ELL status before the beginning of the testing window (i.e., before January 7, 2015). The “LEP” designation for students who exit ELL status prior to testing must be removed in the district’s March 2016 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 (Alternate ACCESS is given to students in grades 1–12 only).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ELL students in grades 1–12 who meet the guidelines to receive the following accommodations and therefore must take the Listening, Speaking, and Writing tests, but not the Reading test. (Note: Student with a disability must be “virtually unable” to decode written text to be designated for this accommodation):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Accommodation 26: Test administrator reads aloud the ELA reading comprehension test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Accommodation 28: Electronic Text Reader for the ELA reading comprehension test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ELL students whose primary disability is reported as “deaf” must take the Reading and Writing tests, but not the Listening and Speaking tests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ELL students whose primary disability is reported as “blind” 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, do not take standard ACCESS tests, but participate instead in the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs (see page 5).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Computer-based Tests

New computer-based ACCESS for ELLs tests (called ACCESS for ELLs 2.0) will be available for students in grades 1–12 for the 2015–2016 school year. Schools will have the option to deliver the assessment as a computer-based or paper-based assessment, or use a combination of both. 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 continue to be administered to all students. Additional information can be found at ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. A comparison of ACCESS computer- and paper-based test formats is provided below.

A Comparison of Paper- and Computer-Based ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Paper-based test</th>
<th>Computer-based test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening</strong></td>
<td>Test administrator plays the listening passages on a CD.</td>
<td>Listening passages are played to students on the computer through headphones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students select response from multiple-choice options on paper.</td>
<td>Students select response on computer screen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Answer sheets scanned and hand-scored centrally.</td>
<td>Student responses are scored electronically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td>Students read passages on paper test.</td>
<td>Students read passages on computer screen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students select response from multiple-choice options on paper.</td>
<td>Students select response on computer screen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Answer sheets are scanned and hand-scored centrally.</td>
<td>Student responses are electronically scored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaking</strong></td>
<td>Students speak in response to pre-recorded questions played on CD; each student tested individually</td>
<td>Students speak in response to integrated audio and visual prompts on computer; requires a headset for each student; group size up to 7 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected responses modeled for students.</td>
<td>Expected responses modeled for students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local test administrators score their own students during test administration (requires training and certification).</td>
<td>Student responses are computer-recorded for centralized scoring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td>Test booklet contains writing prompts.</td>
<td>Integrated audio and visual writing prompts will be shown on the computer screen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected responses are modeled in test booklet.</td>
<td>Expected responses are modeled by computer via textual, visual, and audio support, as appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students hand-write all responses.</td>
<td>Handwritten for students in grades 1–3; students in grades 4–12 may either keyboard or handwrite responses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### A Comparison of Other ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Test Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Paper-based test</th>
<th>Computer-based test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade Clusters</strong></td>
<td>1, 2–3, 4–5, 6–8, 9–12 (Grade 1 test was added for ACCESS for ELLs 2.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training</strong></td>
<td>Test Administrators complete online training modules for Group Test Administration (Listening, Reading, and Writing) and Speaking. Speaking test certification required; completion of an electronic checklist of training tasks required for the Group Test Administration.</td>
<td>Test Coordinators and Test Administrators complete selected online training modules and checklist for computer-based test. Technology Coordinators complete online training modules and checklist on WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS), the new online administrative portal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accommodations and Accessibility Features</strong></td>
<td>Expanded list of supports allowed for a range of student needs, including non-disabled students; other accommodations only allowed for students with disabilities Principals can approve changes in test setting, group size, and timing/scheduling of tests.</td>
<td>Many built-in supports and accessibility tools allowed for a range of student needs, including non-disabled students; others allowed only for students with disabilities Principals can approve changes in test setting, group size, and timing/scheduling of tests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Test Preparation</strong></td>
<td>Paper-based sample and practice test items available</td>
<td>Video tutorials; sample and practice test items using online test platform available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Test Administration</strong></td>
<td>Administration of test sessions by grade and tier. Tiers must be selected for each student before ordering test materials. Speaking test administered individually.</td>
<td>No need to select tiers. Multiple grades and tiers can be tested together. Can administer Speaking test in groups of up to 7 students. Test administrators track student progress on test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Test Timing</strong></td>
<td>Tests are timed, but all students may have up to 50 percent additional time beyond the recommended test duration to complete a test. Extended time (until the end of a school day) is allowed only for ELLs with a disability. This information should be added to the IEP or 504 plan of affected students.</td>
<td>Tests are timed, but all students may have up to 50 percent additional time beyond the recommended test duration to complete a test. Extended time (until the end of a school day) is allowed only for ELLs with a disability. This information should be added to the IEP or 504 plan of affected students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### C. 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, and grades 1, 2–3, 4–5, 6–8, and 9–12.
For grades 1–12, ACCESS for ELLs, *paper-based* test forms are divided into **three tiers in each grade-level cluster**: Tier A, Tier B, and Tier C. Each tier assesses students at a different level 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 that best matches each student’s proficiency level. **Note that there are no testing tiers for the online assessment, kindergarten, or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs.**

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

If the student is taking the paper-based test, tier selection should be based on the student’s overall (composite) proficiency level on the 2015 ACCESS for ELLs test, if the student received an overall score. Additional suggested criteria for tier selection are as follows:

**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 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. A new online **WIDA screener** will become available in spring 2016, in addition to the W-APT.

The W-APT, together with materials to assist educators in administering the test and interpreting the results, is available on the **WIDA website** in the “Downloads and Products” section. The materials can be accessed through a **WIDA personal account**.
D. Accommodations and Other Supports for ELL Students with and without Disabilities

ELL students with disabilities are entitled to receive accommodations on statewide tests, including ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, with few exceptions. The student’s IEP team (or adults familiar with the student, in the case of a 504 plan) 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).

ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 incorporates the use of the following supports for students taking the tests:

- universally-designed accessibility tools available to all students;
- test administration procedures available to all students, at the discretion of the principal (or designee); and
- accommodations available only to ELLs with disabilities.

Accommodations, accessibility tools, and test administration features are described in detail in the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines and the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Accessibility and Accommodations Descriptions on the WIDA web page, and ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Accessibility and Accommodations Overview for Massachusetts Educators on the Department’s webpage, are summarized below.

**Accommodations for ELLs with disabilities** *(The two-letter code in parentheses following the name of each accommodation is to be used when entering accommodations data for the student).*

**Presentation of the test to student**
- Interpreter signs test directions in ASL (SD)
- Manual control of item audio (MC)*
- Repeat item audio (RA)*
- Read aloud Listening test by human reader, including all response options (LH)
- Repeat Listening test item response options by human reader (RL)
- Read aloud test items by human reader (IH)
- Repeat test items by human reader (RI)
- Large print version of test (LP)
- Braille version of test (BR)

**Response to test items by student**
- Scribed response (SR)
- Word processor or similar keyboarding device to respond to test items (WD)
- Student responds orally using external assistive technology device or software (AC)
- Student responds using a recording device, which is played back and transcribed by student (RD)
- Student responds using a braile writer or braille notetaker (BW)
- Student uses assistive technology to respond to test items (AT)
Flexible Timing/Scheduling
- Extended response time for Speaking test (ES)*
- Extended testing time within the school day (i.e., until the end of a school day for each test) (ET)

* Will require pre-selection at the time students are registered

Accessibility Tools available for all students

**Computer-based Test Administration**
- Audio aids
- Highlight tool
- Line guide
- Screen magnifier
- Color overlay
- Sticky notes
- Color contrast
- Scratch/blank paper (including lined or graph paper)
- Keyboard shortcuts/equivalents

**Paper-based Test Administration**
- Audio aids
- Highlighters, colored pencils, or crayons
- Place marker or tracking device
- Low-vision aids or magnification devices
- Color overlay
- Scratch/blank paper (including lined or graph paper)
- Equipment or technology that the student uses for other tests and school work

Test Administration Procedures available to any student, at principal’s discretion

**Presentation of the test to student**
- Read test directions by test administrator
- Repeat test directions by test administrator
- Explain/clarify test direction in English by test administrator
- Clarify test directions in student’s native language by test administrator
- Provide verbal praise or tangible reinforcement to a student
- Verbally redirect student’s attention to test, in English or in student’s native language
- Allow student to take the paper-based test

**Response to test items by student**
- Student reads test aloud to self
- Test administrator monitors placement of responses onscreen or in test booklet
- Student provides handwritten response, rather than a keyboarded response, on the computer-based Writing test

**Test Environment/Setting**
- By school staff familiar to student (certified as a test administrator)
- By school personnel other than student’s teacher, including special educator
- In a small group or individually
- In a separate room
- With preferential or adaptive seating
- In a study carrel
- In a space with special lighting
• In a space with special acoustics
• With adaptive or specialized furniture or equipment
• Redirect a student’s attention to the test; use tools/techniques to minimize distractions or maintain focus

Flexible Timing/Scheduling
• Up to 50 percent additional testing time (since ACCESS tests are timed)
• Frequent or additional supervised breaks
• Test administered in short segments

The following supports may not be provided to any student on ACCESS tests:
• Signing any test to a student who is Deaf (ref. MCAS Accommodations 17 and 27)
• Reading aloud the Reading test to a student (ref. MCAS Accommodation 26)
• Electronic text reader (text-to-speech) for the Reading test (ref. MCAS Accommodations 18 and 28)
• Bilingual word-to-word dictionaries

Braille Tests
ELL students whose primary disability is reported as “blind/visual impairment” are required to take either the contracted or uncontracted Braille version of the Reading and Writing tests, Tier B. In 2016, English Braille American Edition (EBAE) code will be used for these tests. In 2017 and beyond, Unified English Braille (UEB) code will be used.

If the student will participate in the Braille tests:
• Braille tests must be ordered by the school at the same time other test materials are ordered.
• If the student will dictate responses, or use a Braille note-taker or Braille writer to respond, his or her responses must be transcribed verbatim by a test administrator into a regular ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 test booklet. For the Writing test, spelling, punctuation, and paragraph breaks must be dictated or noted by the student.
• All Braille test materials must be returned with other test materials.

E. ACCESS for ELLs Kindergarten Test

The ACCESS for ELLs Kindergarten Test is individually administered, and is not tiered so all students take the same test. It is scored locally by the test administrator. Test items are thematically presented in two sections, each based on a particular type of text, either narrative or expository. Students are given multiple opportunities to respond within each language domain through both types of text. Each section is divided into five levels corresponding with the five WIDA English language proficiency levels 1 through 5, with tasks designed to assess language for a student at each level. Each student is tested in all sections and language domains, although each student may or may not be administered all questions in each part, depending on their ability to respond as questions become more difficult.

F. Alternate ACCESS for ELLs (Grades 1-12)

ELL students in grades 1–12 with significant disabilities should be considered for the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs, particularly if they participate in the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt), or are in grades K–2, 9, 11, or 12, and would likely require the MCAS-Alt in a tested grade.
The decision as to whether a student should take the standard or Alternate ACCESS assessment is determined by the student’s IEP team or in the case of a 504 plan, adults familiar with the student. This assessment is 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 contains four sections, one each in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and requires the test administrator to use a script to assess the student as follows:

- 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 the modeling and repetition of tasks, and the use of prompts, if needed. 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 during the test administration. There are no test tiers on the Alternate ACCESS.

G. 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 another school (either in the same or another district), the student should take only the remaining test sections in the new setting. The student should not be required to retake any section of the test. The procedure for assessing a student who transfers during testing, as well as the procedure used to report the results of a student who transfers, will be provided in the ACCESS test administration manuals.

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

Every effort must be made to test newly-arrived students before the end of the testing window. It is important to establish a baseline for the student’s English language proficiency so the district can address the student’s language needs appropriately, and so that the student’s progress can be measured the following year.

If a newly-arrived student will be identified as an ELL in the district’s March or June SIMS report, the student must participate in ACCESS testing. If the student is taking the paper-based ACCESS tests, he or she must be designated for a test tier (A, B, or C). The last day to order additional testing materials will be January 29, 2016.

I. Test Administrator Training

The previous certifications of test administrators to administer ACCESS for ELLs are no longer valid, since this will be the first year administering the new computer-based and redesigned paper-based ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 tests. Therefore, all test administrators must complete the WIDA online training and, where applicable, take certification quizzes for the tests they will administer, as described below.

Paper-Based Testing
Test administrator training, and certification quiz (except where noted), will be required to administer the following 2015–2016 ACCESS paper-based tests:
− Group-administered ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 tests (Listening, Reading, and Writing)  
  (no certification quiz required)
− ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Speaking test
− Kindergarten test
− Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

Test administrators must receive a score of at least 80 percent on all certification quizzes. Each training module and quiz should take about 1.5 hours to complete, and may be taken in one or multiple sessions, as needed.

**Computer-Based Testing**

Test administrator training will be required to administer the 2015–2016 ACCESS computer-based tests, including completion of a checklist and viewing online training modules on the following topics (**no certification quizzes will be required**):

− WIDA AMS Account Set Up
− Documents Download
− Test Session Creation
− Manage Students
− Booklet Labeling and Student Demographic Page Completion
− System Corrections/Data Validation
− Accessing Score Reports

Each prospective test administrator must set up a personal account in order to access the WIDA training modules on the WIDA website. To set up a WIDA personal account, see WIDA personal account instructions.

Further information will be available in the Principal’s Pre-Administration Manual fall 2015.
III. General Participation Requirements for ELL Students in MCAS and/or PARCC

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, or if we will continue to administer the MCAS assessments. In either case, Massachusetts will continue to administer MCAS tests in science and technology/engineering (STE), high school (all subjects, at least through the graduating class of 2019), and the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt).

A. Participation Requirements in MCAS and/or PARCC

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, 2015 and who did not appear in the March 2015 SIMS report. Schools have the option to administer English language arts (ELA) tests to these 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-Year ELL Students¹</th>
<th>Optional²</th>
<th>Required</th>
<th>Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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 required to participate in MCAS (or 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 Assessment (MCAS-Alt) in the content areas required for the assessment of other students in that grade.

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:

- Requirements for the Participation of Students with Disabilities in MCAS (2015–2016 Update)
- PARCC Accommodations and Accessibility Overview for Massachusetts Educators
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. To seek approval to use 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. MCAS Test Administration for ELLs

Assigning ELLs to Testing Locations
Principals may assign students to spaces other than regular classrooms, as long as security, testing conditions, and staffing requirements are met. Do not mark this as an accommodation on a student’s MCAS answer booklet unless it is listed in the student’s IEP or 504 plan.

“Stop Testing” Policy
If an ELL student does not seem to be responding to test questions after an appropriate period of time (i.e., 15–20 minutes), the test administrator may ask if the student is finished. If so, collect the test materials. The student may sit quietly or read a book until the test session ends.

E. 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 following table. 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>
</tbody>
</table>
### Participation for Accountability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation for Accountability</th>
<th>Counted as participating whether tested or not, provided that student participated in ACCESS for ELLs</th>
<th>Counted as participating unless absent</th>
<th>Counted as participating unless absent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Achievement and Growth for Accountability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement and Growth for Accountability</th>
<th>Not included in state and federal accountability calculations</th>
<th>Not included in state and federal accountability calculations</th>
<th>Not included in state and federal accountability calculations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**E. High School MCAS English/Spanish Mathematics Tests**

All students in grade 10 (through the graduating class of 2019) will continue to take MCAS ELA and 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. The state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education has approved the use of high school MCAS tests for students to earn the Competency Determination (CD) for high school graduation through the class of 2019.

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.

For more information on meeting the graduation requirement, please refer to the Department’s website.
IV. Participation of ELLs in PARCC

A. Background

Although participation requirements for ELLs in MCAS and PARCC are virtually the same, regardless of which assessment is being administered, accommodations policies for students with disabilities differ somewhat on each test. PARCC will be delivered primarily on a computer-based test platform, although a paper-based option is also available. Technical guidelines and specifications are available.

B. Accessibility and Accommodations

The PARCC accessibility and accommodations policies allow the use of most of the accommodations that were permitted for MCAS testing. However, many accommodations will be delivered differently on computer-based PARCC tests than on paper-based tests.

PARCC test policies include:
- a range of tools and supports (called accessibility features) for all students;
- test administration policies and procedures that allow, at the principal’s discretion, a broad range of options for adapting the testing environment, group size, and testing schedule;
- accommodations available for ELLs with disabilities

The following accommodations, accessibility features, and administration procedures are available for ELL students on PARCC tests:

**Accommodations for all English language learners, with or without disabilities:**
- 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 (or speech-to-text) responses on the mathematics assessment, if 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 available for all students:**
- Background/font color
- Use of blank paper (including graph or lined paper)
- Directions read aloud and/or clarified (in English)
- Highlighter
- Headphones/noise buffer
- Magnification/screen enlargement
- Redirect a student’s attention to the test
- External spell checker
- Read aloud/text-to-speech for the PARCC Mathematics test
Testing procedures available to any student, including ELLs, at the discretion of the principal (or designee):

- Small group or individual 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;
- Individualized ELA **graphic organizers** and mathematics **reference sheets** are not permitted on PARCC tests;
- **Paper-based** PARCC assessments may be administered as an accommodation, either to an ELL 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;
- **Reading aloud (or using text-to-speech feature) on the PARCC Mathematics test** is an **accessibility feature** available to any student.

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

- **PARCC Accommodations and Accessibility Overview for Massachusetts Educators**
- **PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual**
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 781-338-3584.

Resources to support educators, parents, and others who work with ELL students are available on the Department’s website. Specific resources are listed below:

- Requirements for the Participation of English Language Learners in ACCESS for ELLs, MCAS, and PARCC
- ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines
- ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Accessibility and Accommodations Descriptions
- ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Accessibility and Accommodations Overview for Massachusetts Educators
- WIDA Webpage ACCESS for ELLs test administration resources and DESE Webpage ACCESS for ELLs test administration resources
- Bilingual Dictionaries and Glossaries Authorized for Use by English Language Learners
- PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual
- PARCC Accessibility and Accommodations Overview for Massachusetts Educators and general information on PARCC
- WIDA English Language Development Standards
- ACCESS for ELLs Interpretive Guide for Score Reports, under “Downloads and Products.”
- Requirements for the Participation of Students with Disabilities in MCAS
- WIDA/ACCESS for ELLs Performance Definitions Listening and Reading
- WIDA/ACCESS for ELLs Performance Definitions Speaking and Writing
- Massachusetts State-specific WIDA information