

Disability Data Focus Groups Discussion Guide – Part I

Massachusetts Department
of Education
Special Education Planning
and Policy Development

December 2003

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General Demographics

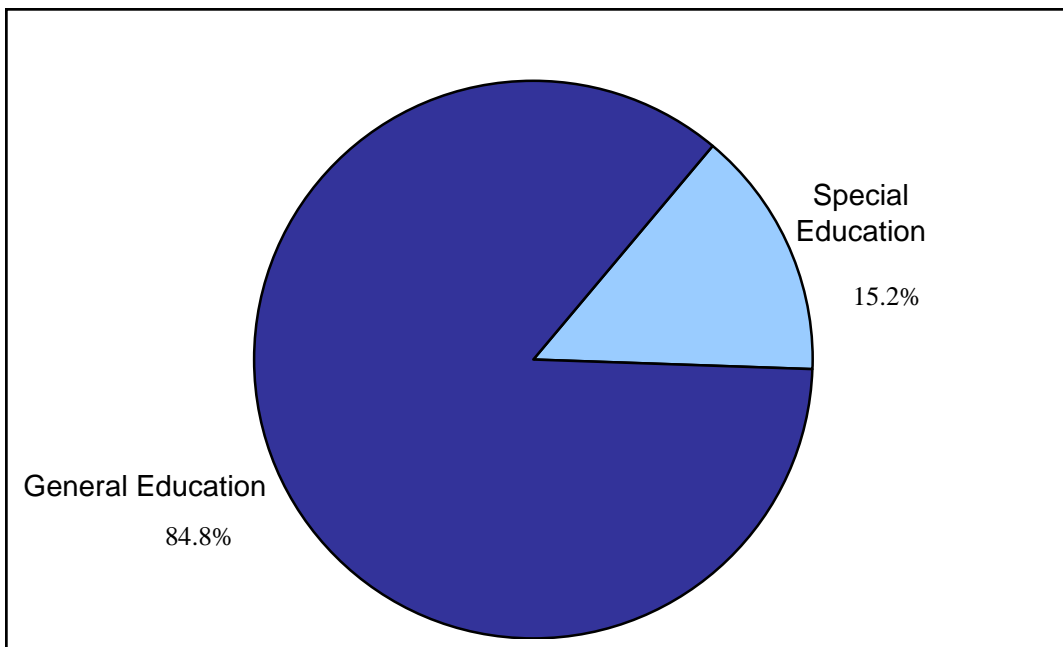
Items 1 and 2 detail the state total counts and rates for students with disabilities receiving special education services, for general education students, and for all students combined. In school year 2002-03, students with disabilities comprised 15.15 percent of the entire Massachusetts' public school student population.

Item 1

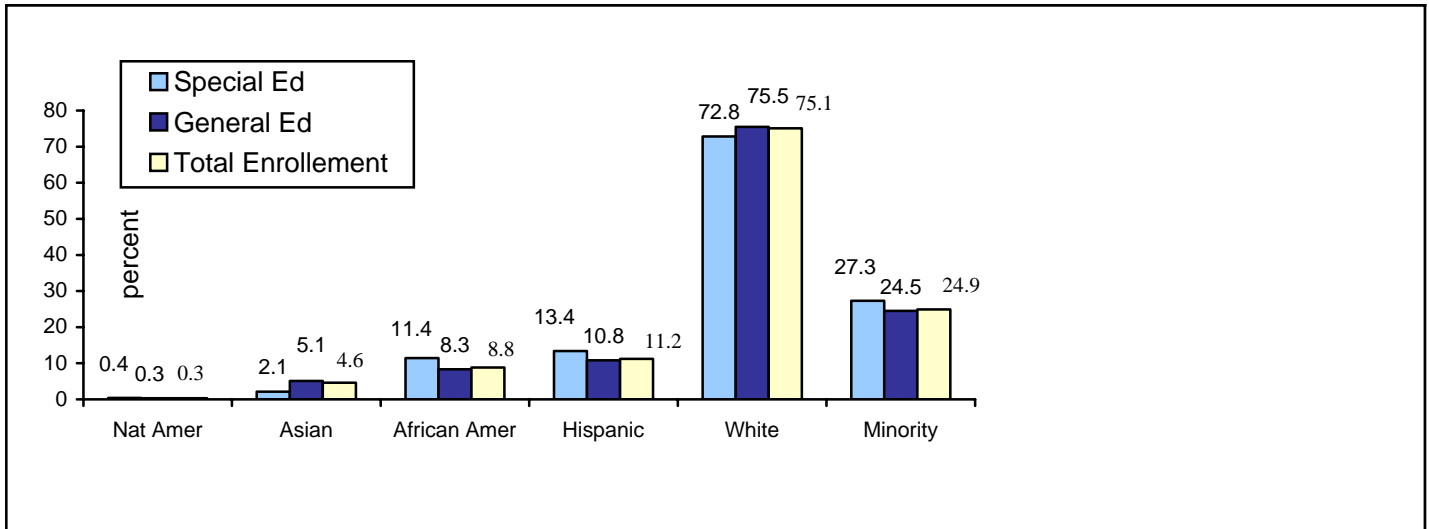
Public Students in Massachusetts: 2002-03		
	Count	Rate
Students with Disabilities Receiving Special Education Services	150,551	15.15
General Education Students	894,912	84.85
Total Enrollment	993,463	—

**October 1, 2002 (FY03) data*

Item 2: Distribution of Students with Disabilities Receiving Special Education Services Compared to the General Education Population 2002-03

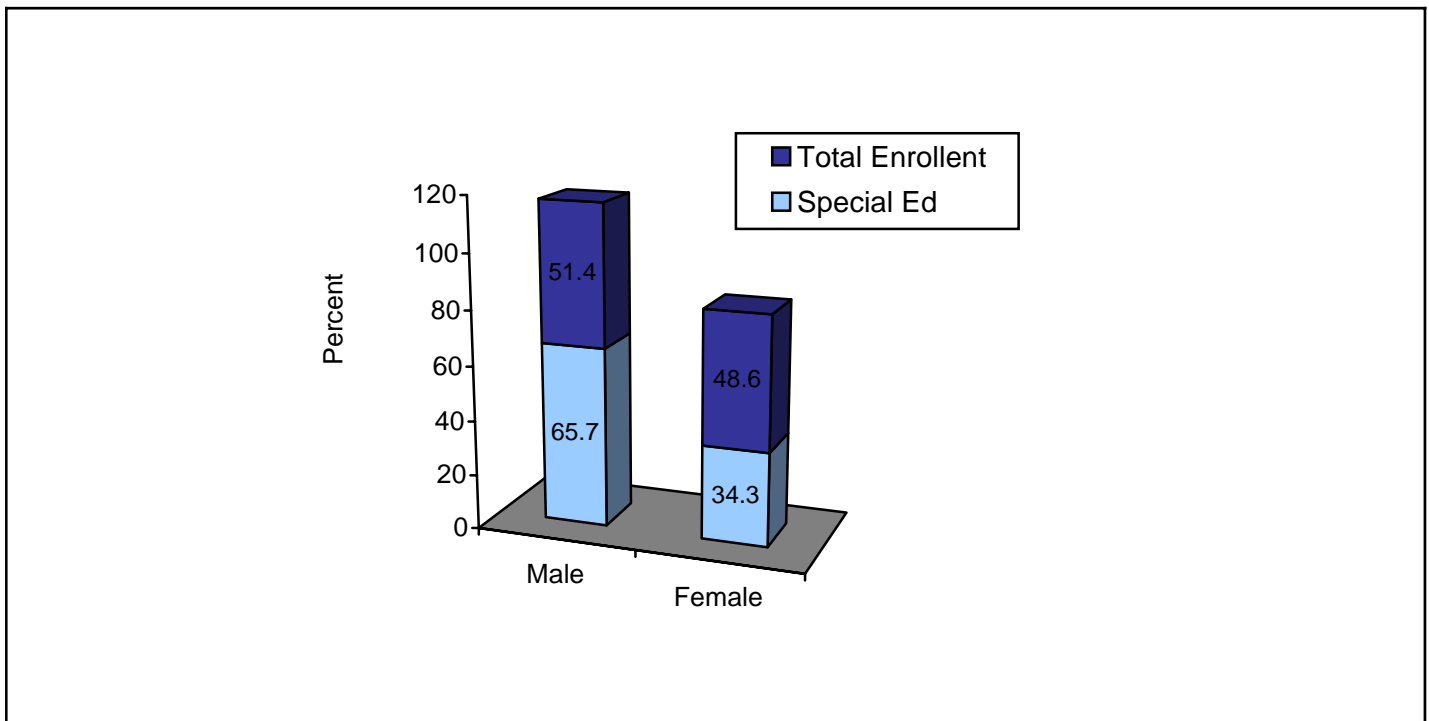


Item 3: Students with Disabilities and Total Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity: School Year 2002-03



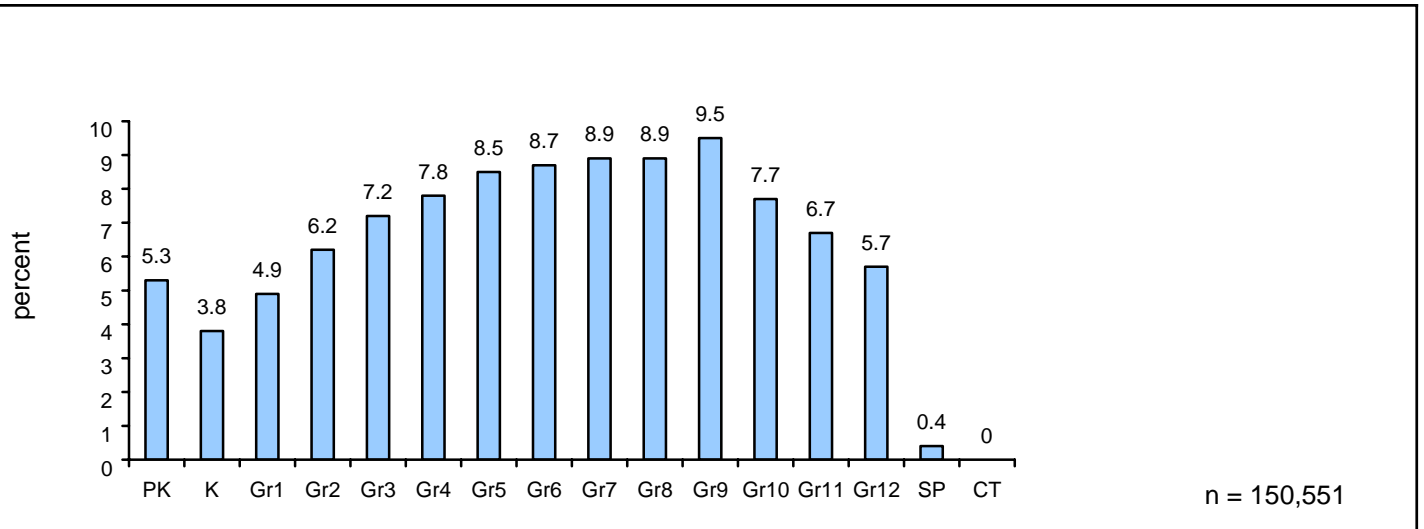
Item 3 details the percent of all students (total enrollment) and students with disabilities by race/ethnicity for FY 2002-03.

Item 4: Students with Disabilities Receiving Special Education Services and General Education Students by Gender: School FY03

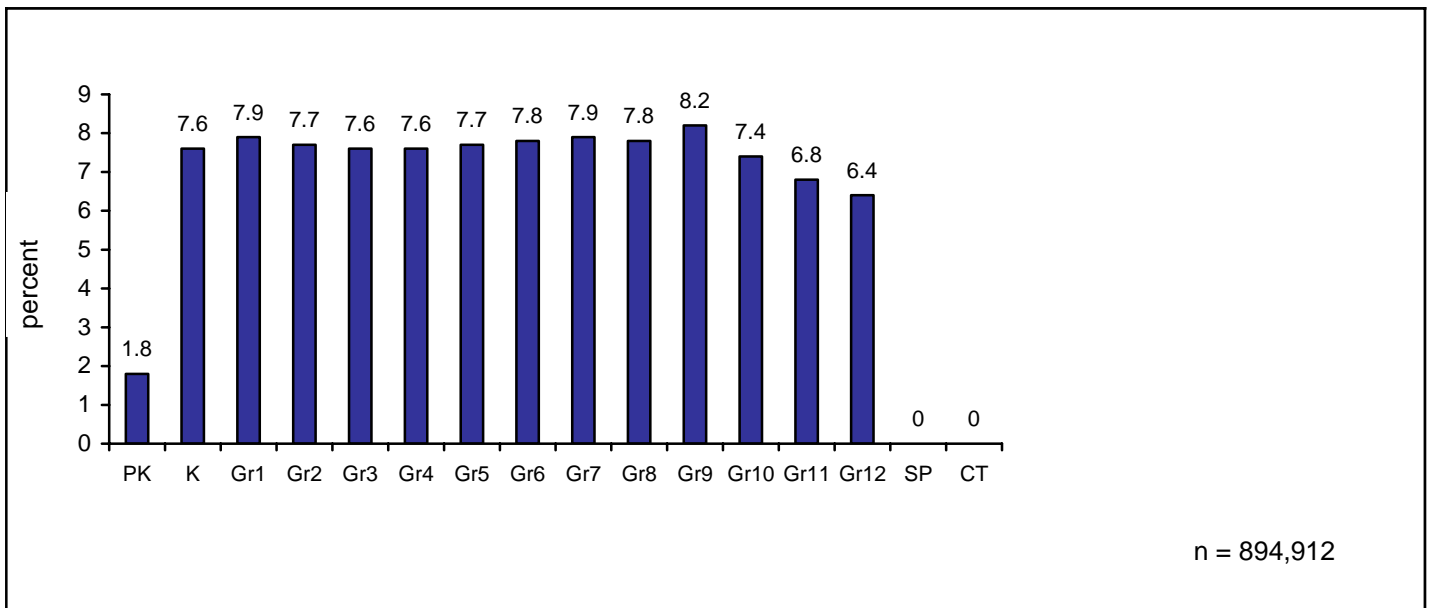


Item 4 details the percent of all students (total enrollment) and all students with disabilities by gender

Item 5: Grade Level Distribution: Special Education School Year 2002-03



Item 6: Grade Level Distribution: General Education Students School Year 2002-03

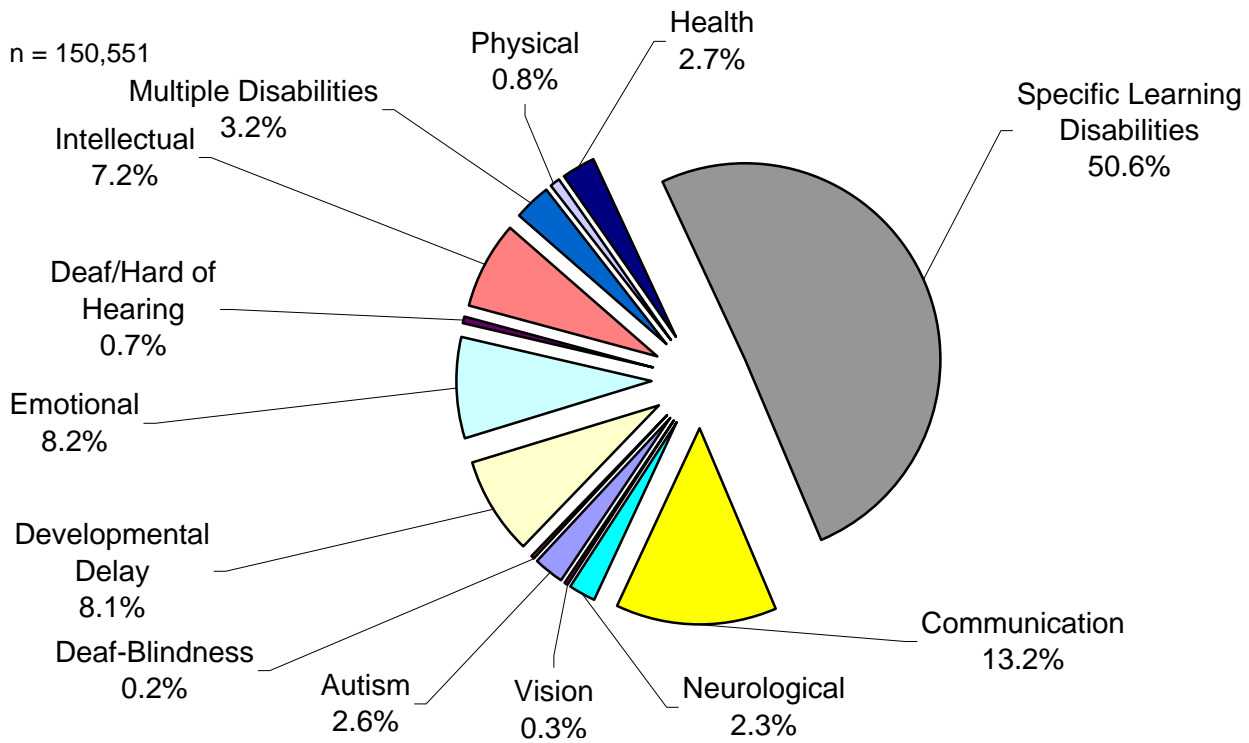


Grade

Items 5 details the percent of all students with disabilities by grade for school year 2002-03. Item 6 details the percent of general education students by grade for school year 2002-03.

Disability

Item 7: State Disability Distribution: School Year 2002-03



Disability

Item 7 represents data derived from the December 1 collection and determines the percents of students with disabilities within each disability category (see glossary for definitions of each disability category)

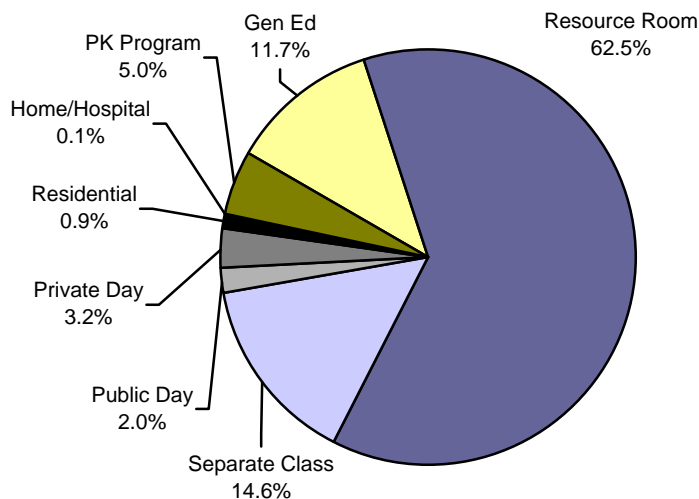
Item 8 examines the level of need of students with disabilities by specific disability type for 2002– 03.

Level of Need by Disability: School Year 2002-03								
	Low		Moderate		High		Total	
	Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate
Intellectual	755	6.8	4,299	38.5	6,103	54.7	11,157	100.0
Sensory/Hearing	109	10.6	395	38.3	526	51.1	1,030	100.0
Communication	6,532	31.9	11,379	55.6	2,563	12.5	20,474	100.0
Sensory/Vision	104	23.1	216	47.9	131	29.0	451	100.0
Emotional	854	6.7	3,653	28.8	8,188	64.5	12,695	100.0
Physical	369	29.9	608	49.2	258	20.9	1,235	100.0
Health	788	18.8	2,889	68.9	518	12.3	4,195	100.0
Specific Learning Disabilities	17,598	22.4	53,336	68.0	7,546	9.6	78,480	100.0
Sensory/Deaf-blind	41	12.1	110	32.5	187	55.3	338	100.0
Multiple Disabilities	303	6.2	1,555	31.8	3,039	62.1	4,897	100.0
Autism	168	4.1	1,153	28.3	2,759	67.6	4,080	100.0
Neurological	560	15.4	2,259	62.1	819	22.5	3,638	100.0
Developmental Delay	2,076	16.6	6,821	54.4	3,637	29.0	12,534	100.0
Total (All Disabilities)	30,257		88,673		36,274		155,204	

Items 8 represents data derived from the December 1 collection and examines the level of need of students with disabilities by specific disability type for 2002– 03.

Item 9 illustrates reported placement types for 2002-03 (see glossary for placement definitions). For instance, 32% of all students with disabilities receiving special education services were reported to be placed in an approved

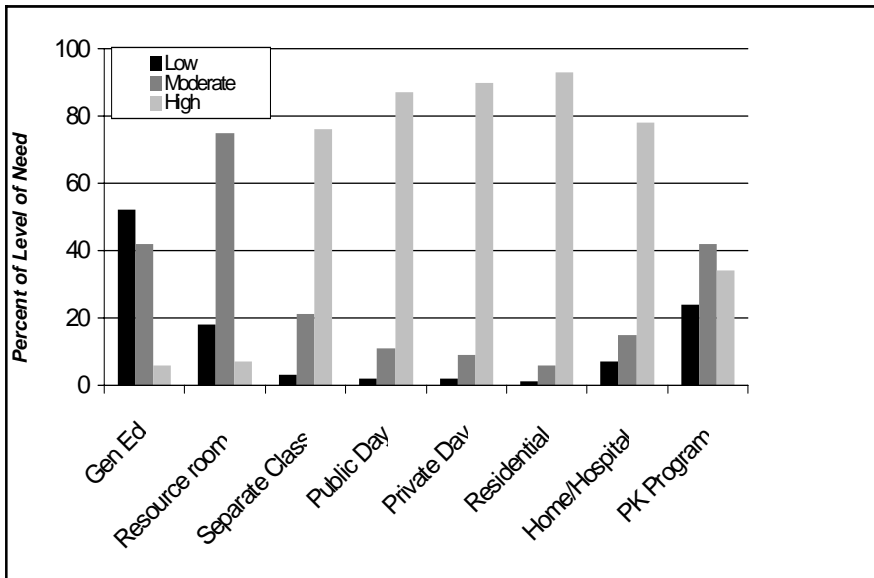
Item 9: Overall Placement: School Year 2002-03



Placement

Item 9: Overall Placement: School Year 2002-03

Item 10: Percent of Level of Need within Placement: School Year 2002-03



Item 10 reveals the percent of level of need by each placement category. Each of the placement analyses were derived from the October 1, 2002 reporting period, recorded on the Admin-

Item 11 identifies the rates of students with disabilities receiving special education services by race/ethnicity and gender within each placement category. For instance, 63.6 percent of all the students in the general education environment were reported to be male. All Placement Categories refers to the race and gender rates of all students with disabilities. For example, 2.1 percent of all students with disabilities were reported to be Asian. 2002-03 rate of Total Enrollment refers to the state rate of race/ethnicity and gender for all students (with and without disabilities). For instance, out of all the students reported, 0.3 percent were reported to be Native American.

Item 11: Race/Ethnicity and Gender within placement categories: School Year 2002-03

State Totals	Native American	Asian	African American	Hispanic	White	Total Race/Ethnicity	Male	Female	Total Gender
General Ed	0.4	1.4	7.7	10.8	79.8	100.0	63.6	36.4	100.0
Resource Room	0.4	2.0	9.9	12.1	75.5	100.0	64.7	35.3	100.0
Separate Class	0.4	2.7	21.3	21.8	53.8	100.0	67.4	32.6	100.0
Public Day	0.5	1.3	18.2	19.6	60.3	100.0	75.1	24.9	100.0
Private Day	0.3	1.7	12.7	12.0	73.4	100.0	71.7	28.3	100.0
Residential Facility	0.2	1.8	8.7	5.7	83.5	100.0	69.0	31.0	100.0
Home/Hospital	0.0	2.8	5.1	8.5	83.5	100.0	59.7	40.3	100.0
PK Program	0.3	3.0	6.4	10.8	79.5	100.0	70.4	29.6	100.0
All Placement Categories	0.4	2.1	11.4	13.4	72.8	100.0	65.7	34.3	100.0
2002-03 Rate of General Ed.	0.3%	5.1%	8.3%	10.8%	75.5%	100.0	49.0%	51.0%	100.0
2002-03 Rate of Total Enrollment	0.3%	4.6%	8.8%	11.2%	75.1%	100.0	51.4%	48.6%	100.0

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment (MCAS) Test

Items 12 and 13 illustrate the number of general education students and students with disabilities who receive special education services who participated in the English Language Arts and Mathematics exams, both in the MCAS and in the Alternate Assessment tests combined. Students with disabilities who are receiving services through a 504 plan are included in the SPED data.

Item 12

English Language Arts: School Year 2001-02 and 2002-03				
	2001-02		2002-03	
	<i>Gen Ed</i>	<i>SPED</i>	<i>Gen Ed</i>	<i>SPED</i>
Gr 3	63,341	10,810	62,426	11,516
Gr 4	63,233	11,785	62,655	12,220
Gr 7	63,870	12,730	65,837	13,219
Gr 10	55,979	9,452	58,545	10,238
Total	246,423	44,777	249,463	47,193

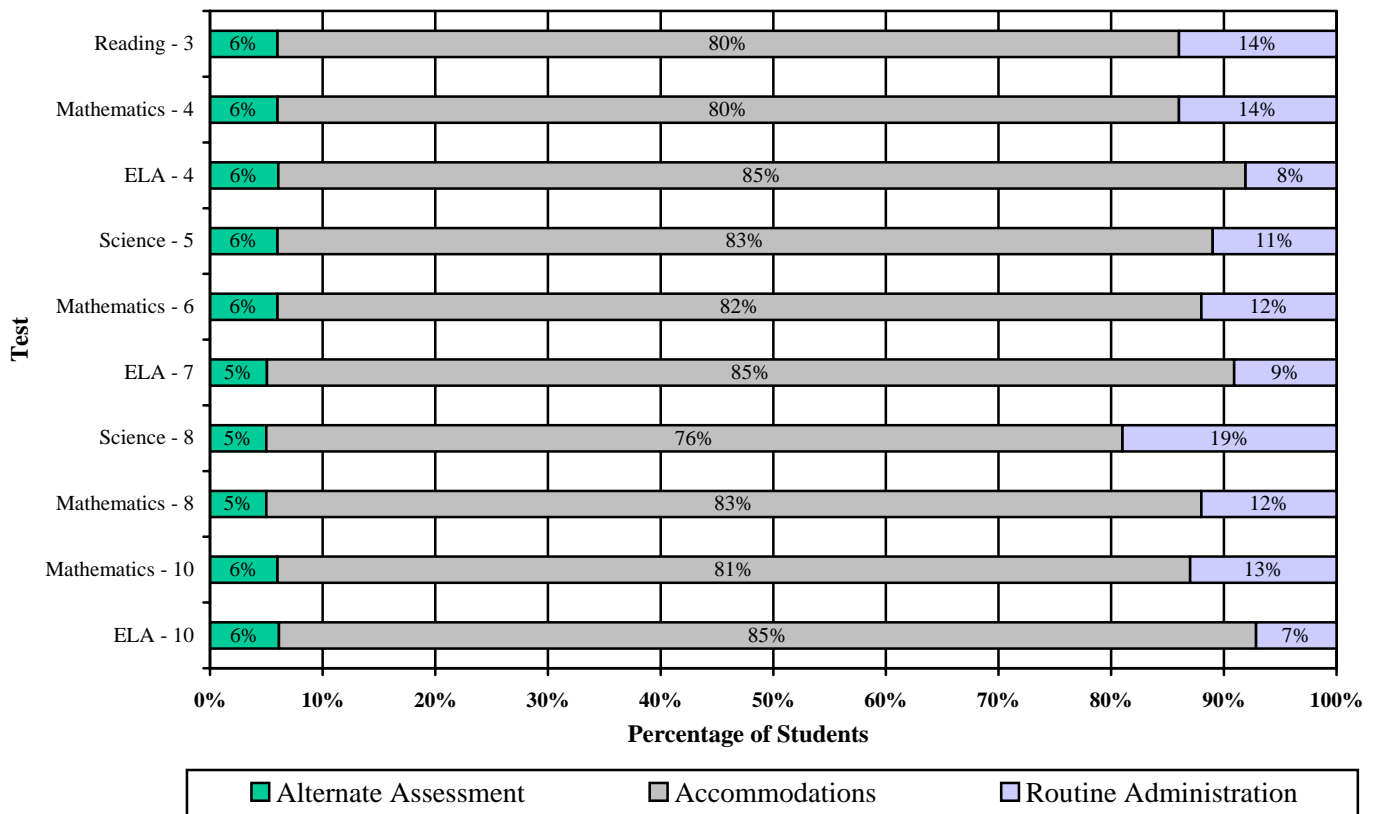
Item 13

Mathematics: School Year 2001-02 and 2002-03				
	2001-02		2002-03	
	<i>Gen Ed</i>	<i>SPED</i>	<i>Gen Ed</i>	<i>SPED</i>
Gr 4	63,787	11,899	62,874	12,299
Gr 6	65,557	13,019	64,848	12,977
Gr 8	62,739	12,274	65,096	13,098
Gr 10	56,884	9,756	58,989	10,410
Total	248,967	46,948	251,807	48,784

Item 14: Rate and Method of Participation by Students with Disabilities

Table 8
2003

MCAS Rate and Method of Participation by Students with Disabilities



Information regarding the participation of students with disabilities receiving special education services, can be found in the document "Participation of Students with Disabilities in MCAS" at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/spedreq/letter.html. Students with disabilities receiving services through a 504 plan are included.

Performance

Items 15 and 16 depict the MCAS performance of students with disabilities receiving special education services, on English Language Arts and Mathematics, school year 2002-2003, as compared to general education students. Students with disabilities receiving services through a 504 plan are included in the 'SPED' data. In the future, students with disabilities receiving services through a 504 plan will be included in the 'Gen Ed' data.

Item 15

<i>MCAS Performance English Language Arts: School Year 2002-03</i>								
	Advanced		Proficient		Needs Improvement		Failing/Warning	
	<i>Gen Ed</i>	<i>SPED</i>	<i>Gen Ed</i>	<i>SPED</i>	<i>Gen Ed</i>	<i>SPED</i>	<i>Gen Ed</i>	<i>SPED</i>
Gr 3	NA	NA	68.5%	30.5%	27.3%	46.8%	4.2%	22.7%
Gr 4	12.1%	1.3%	50.0%	21.6%	31.6%	47.2%	6.3%	30.0%
Gr 7	9.3%	0.5%	63.7%	24.3%	23.4%	49.8%	3.6%	25.4%
Gr 10	22.9%	2.1%	44.3%	20.2%	25.5%	42.4%	7.3%	35.3%

Item 16

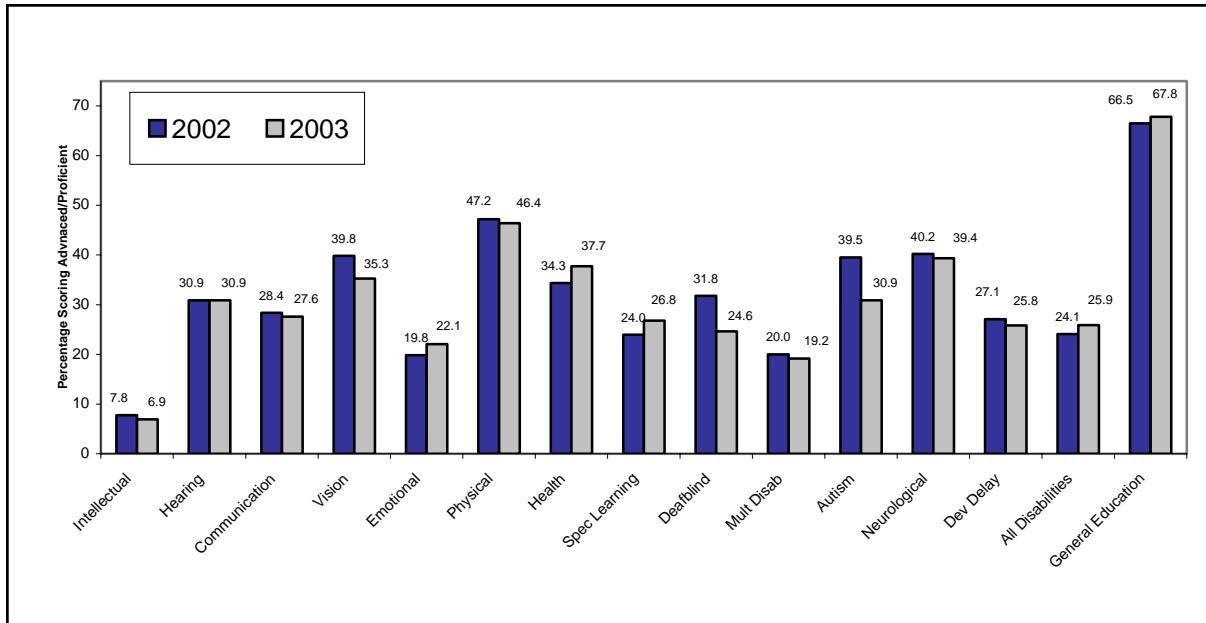
<i>MCAS Performance Mathematics: School Year 2002-03</i>								
	Advanced		Proficient		Needs Improvement		Failing/Warning	
	<i>Gen Ed</i>	<i>SPED</i>	<i>Gen Ed</i>	<i>SPED</i>	<i>Gen Ed</i>	<i>SPED</i>	<i>Gen Ed</i>	<i>SPED</i>
Gr 4	14.2%	2.2%	31.0%	12.9%	43.1%	45.0%	11.6%	39.8%
Gr 6	18.7%	2.0%	29.6%	8.5%	33.0%	26.1%	18.7%	63.4%
Gr 8	14.3%	1.0%	28.8%	5.8%	31.4%	20.8%	25.5%	72.3%
Gr 10	27.2%	3.7%	29.4%	14.5%	28.4%	29.1%	15.1%	52.8%

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment (MCAS) Test

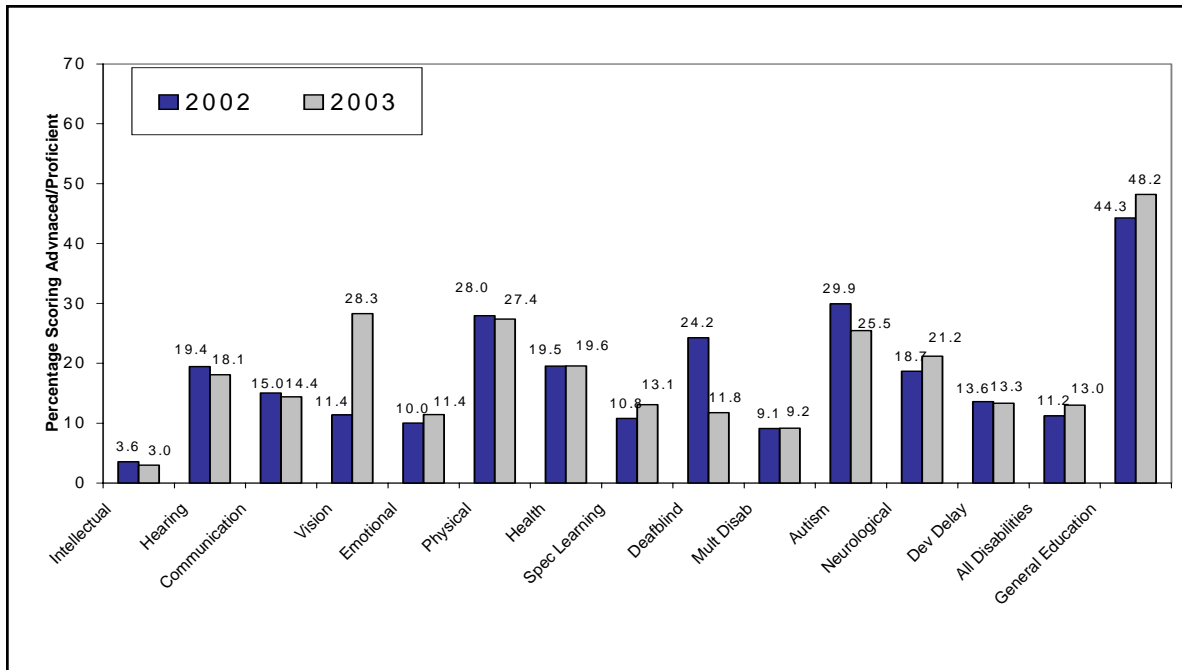
Performance

Items 17 and 18 reflect the performance of students with disabilities receiving special education services in the Advanced and Proficient categories on the English Language Arts and Mathematics tests, FY2002 and FY 2003. While there is a tendency to make comparison across years, it is important to remember that each year represents a different cohort of students. The data is presented to illustrate performance across disabilities. The data does NOT include students who took the Alternate Assessment.

Item 17: Advanced or Proficient in English Language Arts: School Years 2001-02 and 2002-03



Item 18: Advanced or Proficient in Mathematics: School Years 2001-02 to 2002-03



Glossary - Disability

Autism - A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction. The term shall have the meaning given it in federal law at 34 CFR 300.7.

Communication Impairment - The capacity to use expressive and/or receptive language is significantly limited, impaired, or delayed and is exhibited by difficulties in one or more of the following areas: speech, such as articulation and/or voice; conveying, understanding, or using spoken, written, or symbolic language. The term may include a student with impaired articulation, stuttering, language impairment, or voice impairment if such impairment adversely affects the student's educational performance.

Developmental Delay - The learning capacity of a young child (3-9 years old) is significantly limited, impaired, or delayed and is exhibited by difficulties in one or more of the following areas: receptive and/or expressive language; cognitive abilities; physical functioning; social, emotional, or adaptive functioning; and/or self-help skills.

Emotional Impairment - As defined under federal law at 34 CFR §300.7, the student exhibits one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects educational performance: an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors; an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers; inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances; a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems. The determination of disability shall not be made solely because the student's behavior violates the school's discipline code, because the student is involved with a state court or social service agency, or because the student is socially maladjusted, unless the Team determines that the student has a serious emotional disturbance.

Health Impairment - A chronic or acute health problem such that the physiological capacity to function is significantly limited or impaired and results in one or more of the following: limited strength, vitality or alertness including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli resulting in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment. The term shall include health impairments due to asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit with hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, and sickle cell anemia, if such health impairment adversely affects a student's educational performance.

Intellectual Impairment - The permanent capacity for performing cognitive tasks, functions, or problem solving is significantly limited or impaired and is exhibited by more than one of the following: a slower rate of learning; disorganized patterns of learning; difficulty with adaptive behavior; and/or difficulty understanding abstract concepts. Such term shall include students with mental retardation.

Multiple Disabilities - This category should be selected only if the child has multiple primary disabilities.

Neurological Impairment - The capacity of the nervous system is limited or impaired with difficulties exhibited in one or more of the following areas: the use of memory, the control and use of cognitive functioning, sensory and motor skills, speech, language, organizational skills, information processing, affect, social skills, or basic life functions. The term includes students who have received a traumatic brain injury.

Physical Impairment - The physical capacity to move, coordinate actions, or perform physical activities is significantly limited, impaired, or delayed and is exhibited by difficulties in one or more of the following areas: physical and motor tasks; independent movement; performing basic life functions. The term shall include severe orthopedic impairments or impairments caused by congenital anomaly, cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures if such impairment adversely affects a student's educational performance.

Sensory Hearing - The capacity to hear, with amplification, is limited, impaired, or absent and results in one or more of the following: reduced performance in hearing acuity tasks; difficulty with oral communication; and/or difficulty in understanding auditorally-presented information in the education environment. The term includes students who are deaf and students who are hard-of-hearing.

Sensory Vision - The capacity to see, after correction, is limited, impaired, or absent and results in one or more of the following: reduced performance in visual acuity tasks; difficulty with written communication; and/or difficulty with understanding information presented visually in the education environment. The term includes students who are blind and students with limited vision.

Sensory/Deaf-Blind - Concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes severe communication and other developmental and educational needs.

Specific Learning Disability - The term means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. Use of the term shall meet all federal requirements given in federal law at 34 C.F.R. §§300.7(c)(10) and 300.541.

Glossary - Placement

Placement considers the time outside of the general education environment compared to the entire school day. The following

10 - General education at Least 80% of the Time - services outside the general education classroom for at Least 80% of the Time - Students 3 to 21 years of age who receive services outside the general education classroom for at least 80% of the time.

20 - Resource Room— services outside the general education classroom 20% to 60% of the time

Students 3 to 21 years of age who receive services outside the general education classroom for at least 20% and not more than 60% of the time.

40 - Substantially Separate Classroom – services outside the general education classroom for more than 60% of the time

Students 3 to 21 years of age who receive services outside the general education classroom for more than 60% of the time.

4i - Public Separate Day School

Students 3 to 21 years of age who receive special education and related services in a public separate day school. The separate day school must be a special education day program located in a building or facility outside of the general education environment that provides educational services primarily to students with disabilities and is approved under 603 CMR 28.09. This includes students placed in: Public day schools that provide educational services primarily to students with disabilities; or Collaborative programs in separate buildings that provide educational services primarily to students with disabilities.

50 - Private Separate Day School

Students 3 to 21 years of age who receive special education and related services in a private separate day school. The private separate facility must be a special education program located in a building or facility outside of the general education environment that provides educational services primarily to students with disabilities is approved under 603 CMR 28.09.

60 - Residential School

Students 3 to 21 years of age who receive special education and related services, at public expense, in a public or a private residential facility. The residential facility must be a special education program located in a building or facility outside of the general education environment that provides educational services primarily to students with disabilities and is approved under 603 CMR 28.09.

70 - Homebound/Hospital

Students 3 to 21 years of age who are at home or in a hospital pursuant to doctors' orders and who are receiving all of their special education and related services in the principal residence of the students' family or caregivers or at hospital facilities.

80 - PK Program

Students 3 and 4 years of age who were enrolled in a Pre-school program.

90 - Public Residential Institutional Facilities

Students 3 to 21 years of age who receive their special education and related services in public residential institutional facilities. This category is limited to those students attending Tri-County Hospital (Taunton), Mass Hospital School (Canton), East District (Belmont), and Central/West (Westborough).

Glossary - Other

CT - Career and Technical Education beyond Grade 12.

December 1 data - is slightly different from the October 1 collection because it is collected as of December 1 and includes students with disabilities receiving any special education services at public expense, despite full-time enrollment status.

Level of Need - refers to the amount of services inside and outside of the general education classroom and is calculated using the Level of Need Grid on the Administrative Placement (PL2) form.

October 1 data - refers to data collected as of October 1 of the respective year on all full-time students, with and without disabilities, for whom the district was financially responsible.

SIMS Changes - In School Year 2001-02, the Massachusetts Department of Education (MA DOE) moved from an aggregate collection of data to a student-level collection. The new Student Information Management System, or SIMS, required that each district provide specific information on individual students rather than submitting a district summary, as was the practice previously. By using a unique student identification number, the MA DOE was able to track the services provided to individual students, and follow the movement of students across districts.

SP - Special Education beyond Grade 12

The adoption of this new system had many positive effects including: reducing duplicate records, increasing the accuracy of district reports, and enhancing the State's ability to validate, adjust, and refine its data at both the student and aggregate levels. However, it should be noted that longitudinal comparison of data will be affected by these improvements in the collection of data. Therefore, use of data de-