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|   | Student Assessment Update October 27, 2020 |

# Contact Information

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| [**MCAS Service Center**](http://mcas.pearsonsupport.com/support/) | Email: mcas@cognia.org  | Phone: 800-737-5103 |
| *for logistical support, including tech support for PearsonAccess Next and TestNav* |
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| [**Schedule a Call with Technology Support Specialists**](http://mcas.pearsonsupport.com/technology-setup/) |
| *available November 2, 2020 – January 13, 2021* |
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| [**Student Assessment Services**](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/) | Email: mcas@doe.mass.edu | Phone: 781-338-3625 |
| *for policy questions, including student participation* |

# Latest Updates from Student Assessment Services

**For All Schools**

1. **Winter 2021 Statewide Testing Schedule**

We are pleased to release a detailed [MCAS testing schedule](https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/2021schedule.docx) for January–February 2021, including registration dates and administration deadlines, as well as the ACCESS for ELLs testing schedule and the submission deadline for the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt). Districts and schools should review the schedule and contact mcas@doe.mass.edu with any concerns. The schedule for spring 2021 MCAS will be provided in a later update.

***Clarification of Participation Requirements for High School Students***

Students in the classes of 2021 and 2022 must pass the required MCAS tests in order to earn their Competency Determination (CD). Schools and districts are required to provide the January and May testing opportunities to all students in these two classes. However, individual students may choose whether to participate in either or both administrations. We strongly recommend that students take advantage of every opportunity presented to them.

1. **Student Assessment Services Update Now Being Sent via MailChimp**

We are now using MailChimp, a program that was adopted by other DESE units to design and email newsletters. Please note the new subscribe and unsubscribe links in the footer of this email, and contact mcas@doe.mass.edu with any questions or comments.

1. **TestNav System Requirements**

The TestNav system requirements have been updated for 2020–21 and are available on the [TestNav System Requirements page](https://support.assessment.pearson.com/display/TN/TestNav%2BSystem%2BRequirements). Technology Coordinators are encouraged to review these updated requirements as well as the [TestNav System Requirement Policy](https://support.assessment.pearson.com/display/TN/TestNav%2BSystem%2BRequirement%2BPolicy). Updated TestNav applications became available on 6/29/2020. Schools and districts utilizing iOS devices should also refer to the [technical bulletin](https://support.assessment.pearson.com/display/TN/TestNav%2BApp%2Bfor%2BiOS%2Bversion%2B1.9.1%2B237) regarding the TestNav app for iOS to aid in their preparations. No additional TestNav updates are expected before spring. Refer to this [technical bulletin](https://support.assessment.pearson.com/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=32840191) for more details. Additional information and best practices regarding preparing student devices while districts are engaging in remote learning will be forthcoming.

1. **Reminders from the Previous Update**
	1. **ACCESS for ELLs Administration Dates and Training Webinars**

The ACCESS for ELLs tests will be administered between January 7 and February 25, 2021. Training webinars for ACCESS for ELLs Test Coordinators will be held in November and December. For more information on training dates, important deadlines, and steps to prepare for 2021 ACCESS testing, please refer to the [previous update](https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/2020/updates/1009.docx).

* 1. **Transition to One Paper Copy of MCAS Parent/Guardian Reports**

Student Assessment Services will transition to sending **one** paper copy of Parent/Guardian reports to districts beginning with the spring 2021 administrations. Electronic versions of **next-generation** parent/guardian reports will continue to be available in [PearsonAccess Next](https://mcas.pearsonaccessnext.com/).

**For High Schools**

* + - 1. **Registration Window for the Special January Administration of the ELA and Mathematics Tests Begins on November 9**
			Schools must complete the Student Registration/Personal Needs Profile (SR/PNP) process **between November 9 and 23** to order student test materials for the January tests.

To assist schools in registering students for the January tests, the Department will place a CSV file in the MCAS 2021 DropBox in the [DESE Security Portal](https://gateway.edu.state.ma.us/edu/myportal/meoe) on November 9. The file includes students in grades 11 and 12 who have not yet earned a passing score on the MCAS ELA and/or Mathematics tests. The file is also pre-populated with accommodations that grade 11 students used in their spring 2018 MCAS tests. Schools that will not register students for the January ELA and Mathematics tests should inform the MCAS Service Center of their decision (see the contact information in the footer of this update). Please see [this memo](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/cal.html) for more information about the January tests and schedule.

New principals or test coordinators who do not have access to [PearsonAccess Next](http://mcas.pearsonsupport.com/pearsonaccessnext/) (the site used to complete the SR/PNP) should contact other PearsonAccess Next users at their school or district for information concerning how to gain access. The MCAS Service Center can provide support if there are questions about adding new users.

The updated guide to the SR/PNP process for the January test administration will be available by November 9 in the [MCAS Resource Center](http://mcas.pearsonsupport.com/); an online training module is [also available](http://mcas.pearsonsupport.com/training/).

* + - 1. **Process to Request a Waiver from the MCAS CBT Expectation: Submit by November 13**
			Schools are expected to administer the special January high school ELA and Mathematics tests online.

Districts/organizations with unique, extenuating circumstances may apply to instead administer paper-based testing for all students for this administration **by** **Friday, November 13**, for any of the following reasons:

* Technology constraints or related issues make computer-based testing unfeasible.
* All students will take paper-based tests as an accommodation.

Please note the following:

* Requests should be submitted at the district/organization level and must be approved by the superintendent/director.
* Requests may be made at a granular level by school, grade, and subject (e.g., School A is requesting a waiver for January because this grade is being housed in a temporary location while the new school is being built).

To request a waiver, please write to mcas@doe.mass.edu, and include the following in your request:

* the district and school name
* test(s) for which a waiver is requested
* the reason why your organization is submitting the request

Please note: Requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

* + - 1. **MCAS BYOD Participation: Notify DESE by Friday, November 13**

A “bring your own device” (BYOD) policy allows students to use their own devices for instruction. Schools with students who are using their own devices for remote or in-person instruction, and who would like to utilize these devices for January MCAS testing, should email mcas@doe.mass.edu **by** **Friday, November 13**, for instructions on preparing devices.

* + - 1. **Additional Option for Technology Support Prior to Computer-Based Testing**
			Technology coordinators will be able to schedule one-on-one support from Pearson's support specialists (i.e., Field Services Engineering) prior to test administration, between **November 2, 2020** and **January 13, 2021**. They may use [this website](http://mcas.pearsonsupport.com/technology-setup/) to schedule "office hours" support for a 15-, 30-, or 60-minute phone meeting.

			This is an opportunity for technology coordinators to receive support with the following:
* Technology set-up and site readiness
* Questions about TestNav
* ProctorCache set-up
* TestNav configurations in PearsonAccess Next
* Infrastructure Trials (set-up as well as debriefing)

These "office hours" supplement the support provided by the MCAS Service Center (see contact information in the footer) and will only be available prior to test administration. During test administration, the MCAS Service Center will be available for real-time support.

Please share this information with your technology coordinators and staff.

1. **Legacy Testing for January**

A blank ePAT (electronic practice assessment tool) for the January 2021 MCAS high school English Language Arts composition is available on the [English Language Arts Design and Test Development page](https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/tdd/ela.html?section=other) and on the [MCAS Resource Center](http://mcas.pearsonsupport.com/student/practice-tests-ela/) website. This blank ePAT is a tool that educators can use to help students practice writing the composition.

1. **Passing Scores for the Competency Determination on the January MCAS Tests**
Students in the classes of 2021 and 2022 taking the January MCAS test administration must earn a legacy scaled score of at least 240 on the grade 10 ELA and Mathematics tests or earn a legacy scaled score between 220 and 238 and fulfill the requirements of an [Educational Proficiency Plan](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/ccr/epp/). Please see the Department’s [Graduation Requirements](https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html) page for more information.
2. **MCAS Performance Appeals for High School Students**

**Cohort appeals** must be received by the Department by the **first Friday** of each month between October and June in order to be reviewed that month. The next round of appeals must be received by the Department **by Friday, November 6**, for the next cohort appeals review scheduled for November 10.  **Cohort appeals must be submitted online.** Please review the [step-by-step guide](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcasappeals/filing/online-guide.pptx) for the new online application process.

**Please Note:** Students in the classes of 2021 and 2022 who have not earned a CD in ELA or mathematics may be eligible to have an MCAS appeal filed on their behalf after **two**, instead of the usual three, failed attempts at passing an MCAS test.

Also note that **portfolio appeals** scheduled for review in November must be submitted to the Department by **Friday, October 30,** with findings reported to districts by December 4. Portfolio appeals may be submitted either using a paper-based format or the new online submission process on the [Security Portal](https://gateway.edu.state.ma.us/). Refer to the step-by-step guide linked above for submitting MCAS appeals online.

Other important information about submission deadlines, cohort appeals, portfolio appeals, and required appeals submission forms can be found [here](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcasappeals/).

1. **Class of 2021 John and Abigail Adams Scholarship Data Files Posted to DropBox Central**In addition to providing electronic and paper versions of the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship letters for the class of 2021, as noted in the [October 9 update](https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/2020/updates/1009.docx), the Department has posted a data file of award recipients. The CSV file is available in the MCAS 2020 Data folder in DropBox Central, which is located in the Department’s [Security Portal](https://gateway.edu.state.ma.us/). The file includes each student’s legacy-equivalent scaled score for each subject and a total scaled score for all subjects.

**Additional Resources**

* Information on the January 2021 MCAS high school [English Language Arts (ELA) test](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/tdd/testdesign/ghs-ela.docx) and [Mathematics test,](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/tdd/testdesign/ghs-math.docx) including reporting categories, alignment to standards, question types, and the structure of the test
* [*Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2020−2021 MCAS Tests/Retests*](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/accessibility/)
* [*Assistive Technology Guidelines for MCAS*](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/accessibility/guidelines.docx) (September 2020 edition)
* [ELA graphic organizers and supplemental mathematics reference sheets](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/accessibility/organizers/)
* MCAS-Alt Resources:
	+ [MCAS-Alt News (September/October)](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/newsletter/2020-09-10.docx)
	+ [Registration Flyer for Fall Educator and Administrator Virtual Training Sessions](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/training.docx)
	+ [*2021 Educators Manual for MCAS-Alt*](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/edmanual.docx)
	+ [*2021 Principal’s MCAS-Alt Administration Manual*](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/pam.docx)
	+ [*Fall 2020 Resource Guides to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities*](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html)
	+ [2021 MCAS-Alt Forms and Graphs](https://profile.measuredprogress.org/MCAS-Alt/login.aspx)

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