|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | |
|  | 2021 MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt): State Summary of Participation and Achievement |
|  |
| December 2021  [Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education](http://www.doe.mass.edu)  75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148  Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370 |
| This document was prepared by the  Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  Jeffrey C. Riley  Commissioner  **State Seal of Massachusetts**  The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, an affirmative action employer, is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public.  We do not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation.  Inquiries regarding the Department’s compliance with Title IX and other civil rights laws may be directed to the  Human Resources Director, 75 Pleasant St., Malden, MA 02148 781-338-6105.  © 2021 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  Permission is hereby granted to copy any or all parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes. Please credit the “Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.”  Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906  Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370 | | |

**Purpose of this Document**

This report provides a summary of the statewide participation rates and achievement results of students with significant cognitive disabilities who participated in the 2021 MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt). The MCAS-Alt evaluates and reports on the annual achievement of these students in meeting state standards and provides parents and teachers with vital information to assist in planning students’ instructional programs and monitoring their progress.

This report includes the results of 6,186 students in grades 3–10 who submitted an MCAS-Alt in school year 2020–2021 in ELA, Mathematics, or STE for school, district, and state accountability purposes. Results for students who took the high school STE assessment in grade 9 in 2021 are not included in this report and will be summarized with the results of students assessed in grade 10 in 2022 for accountability purposes. MCAS-Alt results are reported based on *alternate academic achievement standards*, rather than on the grade-level achievement standards used for reporting the results of students who participated in standard MCAS testing.

Students with significant cognitive disabilities are required by law to participate in statewide academic assessments and to be counted in the achievement results of all assessed students. Massachusetts publicly reports the aggregated results of all students, including those who participated in MCAS-Alt, in order to hold schools, districts, and the state accountable for the participation and achievement of *all* students, and when determining whether each Massachusetts school and district is making progress toward reducing proficiency gaps.

In 2021, among students participating in MCAS-Alt (not including students who are first-year ELs), approximately 66 percent of students taking the MCAS-Alt earned a score at the *Progressing* achievement level. This is the highest achievement level a student can earn on the MCAS-Alt. The percentage of students achieving at this level indicates that most students with significant cognitive disabilities are provided with challenging educational opportunities to address the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and are achieving their academic goals with a high degree of accuracy and independence.

**Table of Contents**

[Executive Summary 1](#_Toc23853687)

[I. Introduction 3](#_Toc23853688)

[II. Background 3](#_Toc23853689)

[Participation Guidelines 3](#_Toc23853690)

[MCAS-Alt and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) 4](#_Toc23853691)

[Scoring MCAS-Alts 5](#_Toc23853693)

[III. Student Participation in 2021 MCAS-Alt 6](#_Toc23853694)

2021 Standard MCAS and MCAS-Alt Participation by Nature of Disability…………………8

[IV. 2021 MCAS-Alt Student Results 9](#_Toc23853695)

[V. School and District Accountability 10](#_Toc23853698)

[VI. Resources and Professional Development for Educators 12](#_Toc23853699)

[Appendix A. 2021 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results by Grade and Subject 13](#_Toc23853700)

[Appendix B. 2021 Participation in Standard Tests and MCAS-Alt by Grade and Subject 16](#_Toc23853701)

[Appendix C: 2021 Participation Rate and Method of Participation](#_Toc23853702) [by Students with Disabilities…………………………………………………………………………………...](#_Toc23853703)18

Appendix D: Achievement Levels and Descriptors………………………………………….19

[Appendix E. MCAS-Alt Rubric for Scoring Strands 20](#_Toc23853704)

# Executive Summary

The participation and achievement of students with disabilities in the 2021 MCAS-Alt (the state’s alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards, or AA-AAAS) administration are summarized below. Please see the appendices for results in each grade and subject and a list of Achievement Levels and Descriptors.

* The number of students in grades 3–10 who participated in an alternate assessment in at least one content area was 6,186 or 1.3 percent of the total tested population. The overall number has decreased for the seventh consecutive year. The percentage of students with disabilities who participated in MCAS-Alt was 6.1 percent of all students with disabilities, which represents a 0.8 percentage point decrease from 2019.
* In English Language Arts (ELA), 44 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level, a decrease of 12 percentage points from 2019. Achievement at the *Progressing* level in ELA ranged from a high of 47 percent at grade 8, to a low of 41 percent at grade 3.
* In Mathematics, 69 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level, a decrease of eight percentage points from 2019. Achievement at the *Progressing* level in Mathematics ranged from a high of 71 percent of students at grades 4 and 5, to a low of 65 percent at grade 10.
* In Science and Technology/Engineering (STE), averaged across grades 5 and 8, 57 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level, a decrease of 12 percentage points from 2019, when 69 percent of students did so. Achievement at the *Progressing* level in STE was 57 percent at grades 5 and 8. Grade 9 achievement results will be reported in 2022, when they will be summarized with grade 10 achievement results. Grade 10 students were not required to participate in STE in 2021.
* In 2019 and 2021, student achievement in ELA increased by 5 percentage points at the *Emerging* level, one achievement level below *Progressing*, increased from 36 to 41 percent. In Mathematics, achievement at the *Emerging* level was unchanged at 10 percent. In STE, achievement at the *Emerging* level was also unchanged at 19 percent.
* Student achievement at the *Awareness* level, one level below *Emerging*, was between 1.1 and 3.7 percent in all grades and subjects.
* The percentage of students whose alternate assessment were determined to be *Incomplete* increased in all subjects. Between 2019 and 2021, averaged across all grades, the percentage in ELA increased from six to 12 percent; increased in Mathematics from 12 to 19 percent; and increased from 10 to 20 percent in STE.
* See Table 1 for a summary of MCAS-Alt participation and achievement levels in each subject.

**Table 1. 2021 MCAS-Alt Statewide Achievement Level Results by Subject**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject/ (**Grades) | **MCAS-Alt Achievement Level** | | | | | | | | **Total  MCAS-Alt with an Achievement Level Score** |
| **Awareness** | | **Emerging** | | **Progressing** | | **Incomplete** | |  |
| **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** | **Number** |
| **ELA**  (3−8, and 10) | 132 | 2 | 2,456 | 41 | 2,624 | 44 | 721 | 12 | 5,933 |
| **Mathematics**   (3−8, and 10) | 124 | 2 | 619 | 10 | 4,102 | 69 | 1,109 | 19 | 5,954 |
| **Science and Technology/ Engineering\***  (5 and 8) | 54 | 4 | 295 | 19 | 869 | 57 | 310 | 20 | 1,528 |

\* Results of students who took one of the four high school STE tests in 2021 when they were in grade 9 will be summarized for official reporting purposes with the results of grade 10 students who take one of the four STE tests in 2022.

# I. Introduction

This report describes the statewide participation rates and achievement results from the spring 2021 administration of the MCAS-Alt in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology/Engineering. The MCAS-Alt has been administered annually since the 2000-2001 school year with the exception of 2019-2020 and is offered in every subject and grade for which a statewide academic assessment is required. Participation in Science and Technology/Engineering was not required for students in grade 10 in 2021 for MCAS or MCAS-Alt.

This report also presents information on students who participated in the MCAS-Alt, including the nature of their disabilities, their participation rates relative to students taking standard tests, and the methods used to evaluate and score student assessments and report student results.

State summaries of MCAS-Alt for 2013–2021 are available on the Department’s [website](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/results.html) (with the exception of 2020, when statewide assessments were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic).

# II. Background

According to state and federal laws, all students, including students with disabilities, are required to participate in statewide assessments. Student with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take the standard tests, even with accommodations, must take the MCAS-Alt. Decisions as to how each student with a disability will participate in MCAS are made by the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) team and documented in the student’s IEP, or in a 504 plan developed by the school or district. Information about the participation of students with disabilities in MCAS is available on the Department’s [website](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation.html).

For each student scheduled to participate in the MCAS-Alt, schools must submit a binder consisting of instructional data charts and work samples based on the grade-level content found in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks that has been modified to reflect challenging and attainable entry points for each student. The basis for assessing students on the MCAS-Alt based on modified academic outcomes is described inthe[*Resource Guide to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities*](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html).

The purposes of the MCAS-Alt are to:

* + ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities are receiving a program of instruction based on the state’s academic standards;
  + determine how much knowledge and skills based on the curriculum frameworks students with significant cognitive disabilities have learned; and
  + include difficult-to-assess students in statewide assessment and accountability systems.

## Participation Guidelines

A student should be considered for an alternate assessment by his or her IEP team, when he or she:

* has a significant cognitive disability;

AND

* participates in routine academic instruction based on learning standards in the curriculum frameworks for which the levels of complexity of content and skills have been modified substantially below the expectations of a non-disabled student enrolled in the same grade;

AND

* receives intensive, individualized instruction across all settings in which a subject is taught, in order for the student to acquire, demonstrate, and generalize knowledge and skills;

AND

* is generally unable to demonstrate knowledge and skills on a standardized computer-based or paper-and-pencil test in the subject being assessed, even when accommodations are provided.

## MCAS-Alt and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The federal education law, passed in December 2015 and effective in the 2016−2017 school year, imposes a statewide cap of one percent of all assessed students on those taking alternate assessments based on *alternate achievement standards*.

The Commissioner posted guidelines based on the new restrictions in March 2017 (updated in 2018) and requested that districts review their recent data on students taking the MCAS-Alt. If a district projects that more than one percent of students would take the MCAS-Alt in the following school year, a justification in writing must be provided to the Department, plus assurances that IEP teams will be retrained annually on the updated guidelines provided by the Department. IEP team training materials are available, as is a sample parent notification letter (translated into five languages) required by ESSA to be sent by districts informing parents of students for whom the MCAS-Alt was proposed that their “child’s participation in an alternate assessment may eventually delay or affect their ability to complete the state’s requirements for a high school diploma, since the MCAS-Alt assesses learning standards that are below the expectations needed to earn the “Competency Determination.” Information and materials regarding the new ESSA “one percent” requirement are available on the Department’s [MCAS-Alt web page](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/essa/).

## Assessment Contents and Structure

An MCAS-Alt Skills Survey is conducted for each student in each area being assessed. Skills Survey, introduced in 2019, is a standardized component of the MCAS-Alt that must be administered by the teacher to each student before selecting an entry point or access skill in the subject required for assessment. The survey helps determine a student’s current level of knowledge, skills, and abilities so that challenging entry points can be selected in each strand. The survey also familiarizes teachers with the range of entry points in a strand/domain that may be selected for the assessment.

After an entry point (or access skill) is selected for assessment, based on the results of the skills survey, “evidence” is collected by the student’s teacher(s) and other school staff throughout the year in the subject being assessed according to discipline-specific guidelines. The evidence is organized by the school and may include the following types of products and information:

* “Primary evidence,” including work samples, video clips, and/or photographs documenting the student’s performance of tasks based on the standards being assessed.
* Data charts (except for the ELA−Writing, STE Grades 5, 8 and high school Biology and Introductory Physics assessments, for which only “primary evidence” is submitted) documenting the student’s accuracy and independence over a period of time performing activities based on the learning standards being assessed. Data must be collected during at least 8 different instructional activities and must begin at a level of *accuracy* and/or *independence* below 80 percent in order to demonstrate that the student was taught challenging new skills, knowledge, and concepts. *Accuracy* is considered to be the percentage of correct student responses, and *independence* the percentage of tasks, items, or activities requiring *no* assistance to the student in responding.
* Supporting documentation, including descriptions provided by the teacher, reflection sheets that allow the student to evaluate his/her own performance, and other evidence that indicates the context of the instruction and/or the method of demonstrating knowledge and skills in the subject being assessed.

The development of student assessments is guided by information found in the *Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt*, which is updated annually, and posted on the Department’s [website](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html).

## Scoring the MCAS-Alt

Once assessments are submitted to the Department each spring, they are reviewed and scored by scorers who are trained and supervised by Department staff and its testing contractor. Prospective scorers receive extensive training and must qualify to become scorers. Scorers are closely monitored by the Department for accuracy and consistency throughout the scoring process. The Rubric for Scoring Strands, shown in Appendix E, is used as the basis for scoring student assessments, as well as the [*Guidelines for Scoring 2021 MCAS-Alts*](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/scoreguide.docx). Assessments that lack the minimum required evidence and provide insufficient information are scored *Incomplete*.

Once preliminary scores are provided to districts, typically in mid-June, a **score appeals** process allows a school to initiate a request to rescore portions of the assessment, based on a perceived inaccuracy in the preliminary scoring. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Department staff and its contractor review the student’s assessments and if necessary, rescore the section(s) in question. Scores may not be changed after the score appeals process is completed during the summer following the assessment.

# III. Student Participation in 2021 MCAS-Alt

A total of 6,186 students in grades 3–10, or 1.3 percent of the total assessed population, participated in the MCAS-Alt in one or more content areas, as shown in Table 2. In grades 3–8, between 1.3 and 1.5 percent of students were alternately assessed in ELA, Mathematics, and grades 5 and 8 STE. At the high school level, 1.3 percent of students participated in the MCAS-Alt in ELA and Mathematics, while 1.2 percent participated in MCAS-Alt in STE. See Appendix B for the MCAS-Alt participation rates in each grade and subject.

Between 6.6 and 7.5 percent of all assessed students with disabilities in each grade participated in the 2021 MCAS-Alt. See Appendix C for comparative rates of participation in each MCAS assessment format (i.e., routinely tested, tested with accommodations, or alternately assessed) by subject.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 2. Rate of Participation in MCAS-Alt by Students with Disabilities in Grades 3–8 and 10 in at Least One Content Area Since 2004** | | | |
| **Year** | **Total Students  Taking MCAS-Alt** | **Percentage of All Assessed Students Taking MCAS-Alt** | **Percentage of Students  with Disabilities  Taking MCAS-Alt** |
| 2004 | 5,139 | 1.0% | 5.5% |
| 2005 | 6,131 | 1.2% | 6.4% |
| 2006 | 7,006 | 1.3% | 7.7% |
| 2007 | 7,621 | 1.4% | 8.4% |
| 2008 | 8,199 | 1.5% | 8.4% |
| 2009 | 8,738 | 1.6% | 9.0% |
| 2010 | 9,286 | 1.7% | 9.1% |
| 2011 | 9,325 | 1.7% | 8.6% |
| 2012 | 9,386 | 1.7% | 8.8% |
| 2013 | 9,111 | 1.7% | 9.3% |
| 2014 | 8,896 | 1.6% | 8.9% |
| 2015 | 8,650 | 1.7% | 8.9% |
| 2016 | 8,373 | 1.7% | 9.0% |
| 2017 | 8,242 | 1.6% | 8.6% |
| 2018 | 7,601 | 1.5% | 7.7% |
| 2019 | 7,453 | 1.4% | 6.9% |
| 2020 | - | - | - |
| 2021 | 6,186 | 1.3% | 6.1% |

Table 3 shows the number of students with disabilities who took the 2021 MCAS-Alt in each grade and subject.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 3. Participation in 2021 MCAS-Alt by Grade and Subject** | | | |
| **Grade** | **English Language Arts** | **Mathematics** | **Science and**  **Technology/**  **Engineering** |
| 3 | 913 | 915 | – |
| 4 | 855 | 845 | – |
| 5 | 850 | 863 | 791 |
| 6 | 856 | 851 | – |
| 7 | 876 | 894 | – |
| 8 | 794 | 798 | 738 |
| 9\* |  |  | 125\* |
| 10 | 819 | 815 | Not Required in 2021 |
| **Total** | **5,963** | **5,981** | **1,654** |

\*Participation for grade 9 students in one of the four high school STE tests is shown here but is not summarized in 2021 for official school, district, or state reporting. Participation for these students will be included next year with grade 10 students who take one of the four STE tests in 2022.

**2021 Standard MCAS and MCAS-Alt Participation by Nature of Disability**

Table 4 shows the distribution of primary disabilities among standard MCAS and MCAS-Alt participants. Approximately 87 percent of students who took MCAS-Alt had an **intellectual disability, autism, neurological disability,** or **multiple disabilities**. See table 4 below and the circle graph on page 12 for a summary of the students assessed in each of the primary disability categories.

**Table 4. Nature of Primary Disability Among Standard MCAS and MCAS-Alt Participants in Grades 3–10a**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Primary Disability b** | **A:**  **Number of All Assessed Participants in Disability Category** | **B:**  **Number of MCAS-Alt Participants in Disability Category** | **C:**  **Percentage of All Assessed Students in Disability Category Who Took MCAS-Alt (B/A)** | **D:**  **Percentage of MCAS-Alt Participants in Disability Category (B/6,186)** |
| Autism | 11,756 | 2,843 | 24.2% | 46.0% |
| Communication | 11,989 | 169 | 1.4% | 2.7% |
| Developmental Delay | 2,222 | 133 | 6.0% | 2.2% |
| Emotional | 10,612 | 37 | 0.3% | 0.6% |
| Health | 18,536 | 121 | 0.7% | 2.0% |
| Intellectual | 4,033 | 1,703 | 42.2% | 27.5% |
| Multiple Disabilities | 917 | 449 | 49.0% | 7.3% |
| Neurological | 6,492 | 530 | 8.2% | 8.6% |
| Physical | 388 | 23 | 5.9% | 0.4% |
| Sensory/Deaf and Blind | 87 | 17 | 19.5% | 0.3% |
| Sensory/Hard of Hearing or Deaf | 602 | 37 | 6.1% | 0.6% |
| Sensory/Vision Impairment or Blind | 306 | 23 | 7.5% | 0.4% |
| Specific Learning Disabilities | 32,862 | 66 | 0.2% | 1.1% |
| Unidentified Disability | 217 | 35 | 16.1% | 0.6% |
| Total | 101,019 | 6,186 | 6.1% | 100.0% |
| a The number of standard MCAS and MCAS-Alt participants includes all students who took MCAS-Alt for accountability purposes in at least one subject. | | | | |
| b Primary disability data were reported by districts to the Department's Student Information Management System (SIMS) in March and June 2021. | | | | |

**2021 MCAS-Alt Participation by Nature of Disability**

# IV. 2021 MCAS-Alt Student Results

On school and district summaries of results, MCAS-Alt scores are reported in the lowest achievement level on the standard MCAS tests: *Not Meeting Expectations* in ELA, Mathematics, and grades 5 and 8 STE; and *Failing* in high school STE.

For diagnostic and educational planning purposes, MCAS-Alt results are reported in the following three MCAS-Alt *alternate academic achievement levels*: *Progressing, Emerging*, and *Awareness.* These three MCAS-Alt achievement levels provide meaningful information to interpret the achievement of students whose performance is significantly below grade-level.

See Appendix D for descriptions of the MCAS-Alt achievement levels.

In 2021, the majority of students with significant cognitive disabilities performed at the *Progressing* level, indicating that they had demonstrated the attainment of challenging academic goals at high levels of accuracy and independence, although below the grade-level expectations for nondisabled students. Results for the 2021 MCAS-Alt administration are summarized below.

* In grades 3–8 and 10, the percentage of students who scored *Progressing* was:
  + 44 percent in ELA (The percentage was lower than in other subjects due to uniform, rather than locally-selected, scoring criteria for ELA–Writing)
  + 69 percent in Mathematics
  + 57 percent in Science and Technology/Engineering (grades 5 and 8 only)\*
* The percentage of students who scored *Emerging* was:
  + 41 percent in ELA (Due to uniform scoring criteria for ELA–Writing, more students earned this score than in other subjects)
  + 10 percent in Mathematics
  + 19 percent in Science and Technology/Engineering\*
* The percentage of students who scored *Awareness* was:
  + 2 percent in ELA
  + 2 percent in Mathematics
  + 4 percent in Science and Technology/Engineering\*
* Overall, 16 percent of students who participated in the MCAS-Alt scored *Incomplete* in at least one subject, indicating that the assessment did not include the requisite evidence to generate an overall achievement level in the subject being assessed. The percentage of students who scored *Incomplete* by content area was:
  + 12 percent in ELA
  + 19 percent in Mathematics
  + 20 percent in Science and Technology/Engineering\*

Appendix A displays achievement level results by grade and subject.

\* Results for grade 9 students who participated in one of the four high school STE tests are not included here or summarized for official school, district, or state reporting until 2022, when they will be included with grade 10 students who took one of the four STE tests in 2022. Grade 10 students were not required to participate in STE in 2021.

# 

# V. Accountability

The state’s updated accountability system was recently approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). MCAS-Alt results are included, together with the results of students who took the standard MCAS tests.

**Accountability Reporting for 2021**

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations in 2021. For more information, visit the MA DESE [Accountability Lists, Materials, and Tools](http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/lists-tools/) website.

Accountability classifications are typically provided for schools that administered MCAS tests in grades 3–8 and 10 and are based on a combination of indicators, including:

* composite scaled MCAS scores in ELA and mathematics in grades 3-8, and an assigned MCAS-Alt scaled score equivalent, averaged for the school in each subject;
* average student growth percentile (SGP) in ELA and mathematics;
* progress toward attaining English language proficiency for students reported as English learners;
* percentage of chronically absent students; and
* for high schools:
  + four-year cohort graduation rate
  + annual dropout rate
  + extended engagement rate
  + percentage of 11th and 12th grade students completing one or more advanced courses

Full details on the state’s accountability system are available on the [Department’s website](http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/).

The achievement level and associated scaled score range used for next-generation MCAS tests is shown in Table 5.

**Table 5. Next-Generation MCAS Tests Scaled Score Ranges**

ELA and Mathematics – Grades 3–8

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Standard Next Generation MCAS**  **Achievement level** | **MCAS Scaled Score Range** |
| Not Meeting Expectations (NM) | 440-469 |
| Partially Meeting Expectations (PM) | 470-499 |
| Meeting  Expectations (M) | 500-529 |
| Exceeding Expectations (E) | 530-560 |

The use of MCAS scores as an accountability indicator necessitates assigning an *equivalent scaled score* to students who took the MCAS-Alt in ELA, mathematics, and grades 5 and 8 STE, as shown in Table 6.

**Table 6. Next-Generation MCAS Composite Scaled Score Equivalents Assigned to**

**MCAS-Alt Scores**

ELA and Mathematics Grades 3–8

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MCAS-Alt achievement level,**  **based on alternate achievement standards** | **MCAS Composite Scaled Score** |
| Incomplete (INP) | 455 |
| Awareness (AWR) | 470 |
| Emerging (EMG) | 485 |
| Progressing (PRG) | 500 |

# VI. Resources and Professional Development for Educators

The Department sponsors approximately 17 regional training sessions annually for educators responsible for conducting the MCAS-Alt. During the pandemic, trainings were held virtually. Technical assistance is available throughout the school year from the Department’s Student Assessment Services office and from members of the MCAS-Alt Teacher Network who assist their in-district colleagues and who assist at Department-sponsored training sessions.

Notices of [training opportunities](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html) are sent to each school by email and in bimonthly newsletters sent to subscribers by email. Publications related to MCAS-Alt are available on the Department’s [website](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt) and are distributed at Department training sessions.

Assistance for educators conducting MCAS-Alt is available by contacting the Department by email at [mcas@doe.mass.edu](mailto:mcas@doe.mass.edu) or by phone at 781-338-3625, or by contacting the MCAS Service Center at 800-737-5103.

## Appendix A. 2021 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results by Grade and Subject

**Table 8. 2021 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 3**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | English Language Arts | | Mathematics | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent a** | **Number** | Percent a |
| Incomplete | 90 | 10% | 185 | 20% |
| Awareness | 26 | 3% | 10 | 1% |
| Emerging | 419 | 46% | 86 | 9% |
| Progressing | 375 | 41% | 633 | 69% |
| Total | **910** |  | **914** |  |
| a Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. | | | | |

| Table 9. 2021 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 4 | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts** | | Mathematics | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent a** | **Number** | Percent a |
| Incomplete | 74 | 9% | 128 | 15% |
| Awareness | 21 | 2% | 19 | 2% |
| Emerging | 376 | 44% | 98 | 12% |
| Progressing | 381 | 45% | 598 | 71% |
| Total | **852** |  | **843** |  |
| a Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. | | | | |

| Table 10. 2021 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 5 | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts** | | Mathematics | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent a** | **Number** | Percent a |
| Incomplete | 91 | 11% | 145 | 17% |
| Awareness | 17 | 2% | 16 | 2% |
| Emerging | 352 | 41% | 85 | 10% |
| Progressing | 389 | 46% | 616 | 71% |
| Total | **849** |  | **862** |  |
| a Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. | | | | | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Table 11. 2021 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 5 STE | | | | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | Science and Technology/ Engineering | | |  | **Number** | Percent a | | Incomplete | 138 | 17% | | Awareness | 29 | 4% | | Emerging | 174 | 22% | | Progressing | 450 | 57% | | Total | **791** |  | | a Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. | | | | |

| Table 12. 2021 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 6 | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts** | | Mathematics | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent a** | **Number** | Percent a |
| Incomplete | 105 | 12% | 143 | 17% |
| Awareness | 21 | 2% | 25 | 3% |
| Emerging | 358 | 42% | 88 | 10% |
| Progressing | 372 | 43% | 595 | 70% |
| Total | **856** |  | **851** |  |
| a Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. | | | | |

| Table 13. 2021 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 7 | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts** | | Mathematics | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent a** | **Number** | Percent a |
| Incomplete | 127 | 14% | 200 | 22% |
| Awareness | 18 | 2% | 25 | 3% |
| Emerging | 359 | 41% | 68 | 8% |
| Progressing | 368 | 42% | 598 | 67% |
| Total | **872** |  | **891** |  |
| a Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. | | | | |

| Table 14. 2021 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 8 | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts** | | Mathematics | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent a** | **Number** | Percent a |
| Incomplete | 130 | 16% | 191 | 24% |
| Awareness | 16 | 2% | 14 | 2% |
| Emerging | 276 | 35% | 54 | 7% |
| Progressing | 370 | 47% | 533 | 67% |
| Total | **792** |  | **792** |  |
| a Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. | | | | | |

**Table 15. 2021 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 8 STE**

| |  | Science and Technology/ Engineering | | | --- | --- | --- | |  | Number | Percent a | | Incomplete | 172 | 23% | | Awareness | 25 | 3% | | Emerging | 121 | 16% | | Progressing | 419 | 57% | | Total | 737 |  | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

a Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

| Table 16. 2021 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 10\* | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts** | | Mathematics | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent a** | **Number** | Percent a |
| Incomplete | 104 | 13% | 117 | 14% |
| Awareness | 13 | 2% | 15 | 2% |
| Emerging | 316 | 39% | 140 | 17% |
| Progressing | 369 | 45% | 529 | 65% |
| Total | **802** |  | **801** |  |
| a Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.  \* Results for grade 9 students who participated in one of the four high school STE tests in 2021 are not included here or summarized for official school, district, or state reporting until 2022, when they will be included with grade 10 students who take one of the four STE tests in 2022. | | | | | |

## Appendix B. 2021 Participation in Standard Tests and MCAS-Alt by Grade and Subject

| Table 18. Participation in 2021 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 3 | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts** | | Mathematics | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | Percent |
| Standard tests | 62,877 | 98.6 | 62,995 | 98.6 |
| MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards | 913 | 1.4 | 915 | 1.4 |
| Total students assessed | 63,790 |  | 63,910 |  |
|  | | | | |

| Table 19. Participation in 2021 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 4 | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts** | | Mathematics | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | Percent |
| Standard tests | 64,344 | 98.7 | 64,512 | 98.7 |
| MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards | 855 | 1.3 | 845 | 1.3 |
| Total students assessed | 65,199 |  | 65,357 |  |
| . | | | | |

| Table 20. Participation in 2021 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 5 | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts** | | **Mathematics** | | Science and Technology/ Engineering | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | **Percent a** | **Number** | Percent |
| Standard tests | 64,732 | 98.7 | 64,796 | 98.7 | 64,657 | 98.79 |
| MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards | 850 | 1.3 | 863 | 1.3 | 791 | 1.2 |
| Total students assessed | 65,582 |  | 65,659 |  | 65,448 |  |
|  | | | | | | |

| Table 21. Participation in 2021 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 6 | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts** | | Mathematics | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | Percent |
| Standard tests | 65,793 | 98.7 | 65,827 | 98.7 |
| MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards | 856 | 1.3 | 851 | 1.3 |
| Total students assessed | 66,649 |  | 66,678 |  |
|  | | | | |

| Table 22. Participation in 2021 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 7 | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts** | | Mathematics | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | Percent |
| Standard tests | 66,884 | 98.7 | 66,910 | 98.7 |
| MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards | 876 | 1.3 | 894 | 1.3 |
| Total students assessed | 67,760 |  | 67,804 |  |
|  | | | | |

| Table 23. Participation in 2021 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 8 | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts** | | **Mathematics** | | Science and Technology/ Engineering | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | Percent |
| Standard tests | 66,901 | 98.8 | 67,008 | 98.8 | 52,308 | 98.61 |
| MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards | 794 | 1.2 | 798 | 1.2 | 738 | 1.4 |
| Total students assessed | 67,695 |  | 67,806 |  | 53,046 |  |
|  | | | | | | |

| Table 24. Participation in 2021 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grades 9 | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts** | | **Mathematics** | | Science and Technology/ Engineering a | |
|  | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | **Percent a** | **Number** | Percent |
| Standard tests | 63,671 | 98.7 | 63,418 | 98.7 | 48,575 | 99.7 |
| MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards | 819 | 1.3 | 815 | 1.3 | 125 | 0.3 |
| Total students assessed | 64,490 |  | 64,233 |  | 48,700 |  |
| a STE includes students in grades 9 who participated in any of the four STE discipline assessments (Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics, and Technology/Engineering). Grade 10 students were not required to participate in STE in 2021. | | | | | | |

## Appendix C. 2021 Participation Rate and Method of Participation

## by Students with Disabilities

(Percentages of total students with disabilities in each grade)

**Appendix D. Achievement Levels and Descriptors** shown below are reported in each assessed subject for MCAS Legacy and Next Generation assessments. MCAS-Alt scores are based on the *Rubric for Scoring Strands* (see Appendix E).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ELA and Mathematics Achievement Level and Descriptor**  **(“Next-Generation” MCAS)** | | **STE Achievement Level and Descriptor**  **(“Legacy” MCAS)** |
| ***Exceeding Expectations***  Students exceed grade-level expectations for knowledge, skills, and understanding and are academically well prepared to succeed at the next grade level. | | ***Advanced\****  Student demonstrates a comprehensive and in-depth understanding in the content area and provides sophisticated solutions to complex problems at grade-level expectations. |
| ***Meeting Expectations***  Students meets grade-level expectations for knowledge, skills, and understanding and are academically prepared to succeed at the next grade level. | | ***Proficient***\*  Student demonstrates a solid understanding of challenging subject matter in the content area and solves a wide variety of problems at grade-level expectations. |
| ***Partially Meeting Expectations***  Student partially meets grade-level expectations for knowledge, skills, and understanding. May need coordinated assistance to succeed at the next grade level. | | ***Needs Improvement\****  Student demonstrates a partial understanding of subject matter in the content area and solves some simple problems at grade-level expectations. |
|  | | \*In order to earn a Competency Determination, students must achieve a score of either *Proficient* on the grade 10 English Language Arts and Mathematics tests; or a score of *Needs Improvement*, and satisfy the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan; for Science and Technology Engineering students must achieve a score of *Needs Improvement* on one of four high school STE tests. |
|  | | | |
| **Alternate Academic Achievement Level and Descriptor ( MCAS-Alt for all grades)** | | | |
| ***Awareness*** | The student demonstrates very little understanding of learning standards in the content area (as indicated in the alternate assessment). The student requires extensive prompting and assistance, and performance is primarily inaccurate. | | |
| ***Emerging*** | The student demonstrates a simple understanding of a limited number of learning standards in the content area at below-grade-level expectations (as indicated in the alternate assessment). The student requires frequent prompting and assistance, and performance is limited and inconsistent. | | |
| ***Progressing*** | The student demonstrates a partial understanding of a limited number of learning standards in the content area, and addresses below-grade-level expectations (as indicated in the alternate assessment). The student appears to be receiving challenging instruction and is steadily learning new skills, concepts, and content. The student requires minimal prompting and assistance, and the performance is fundamentally accurate. | | |

## 

## Appendix E. MCAS-Alt Rubric for Scoring Strands

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| **Level of Complexity** | Strand reflects little or no basis in, or is unmatched to, curriculum frameworks learning standard(s) required for assessment. | Student primarily addresses social, motor, and communication “access skills” during instruction based on curriculum frameworks learning standards in this strand. | Student addresses curriculum frameworks learning standards that have been modified below grade-level expectations in this strand. | Student addresses a narrow sample of curriculum frameworks learning standards (1 or 2) at grade-level expectations in this strand. | Student addresses a broad range of curriculum frameworks learning standards (3 or more) at grade-level expectations in this strand. |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **M** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **Demonstration of Skills and Concepts** | The strand contains insufficient information to determine a score. | Student’s performance is primarily inaccurate and demonstrates minimal understanding in this strand.  **(0–25% accurate)** | Student’s performance is limited and inconsistent with regard to accuracy and demonstrates limited understanding in this strand. **(26–50% accurate)** | Student’s performance is mostly accurate and demonstrates some understanding in this strand.  **(51–75% accurate)** | Student’s performance is accurate and is of consistently high quality in this strand.  (**76–100% accurate**) |
| **Independence** | The strand contains insufficient information to determine a score. | Student requires extensive verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand.  **(0–25% independent)** | Student requires frequent verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand. (**26–50% independent)** | Student requires some verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand. (**51–75%** **independent)** | Student requires minimal verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand.  (**76–100% independent)** |
| **Self-Evaluation** | The strand does not show evidence of self-correction, task-monitoring, goal-setting, and reflection in this content area. | Student infrequently self-corrects monitors, sets goals, and reflects in this content area— only one example of self-evaluation was found in this strand. | Student self-corrects monitors, sets goals, and reflects in this content area—multiple examples of self-evaluation were found in this strand. |  |  |
| **Generalized Performance** |  | Student demonstrates knowledge and skills in one context, or uses one approach and/or method of response and participation in this strand. | Student demonstrates knowledge and skills in multiple contexts, or uses multiple approaches and/or methods of response and participation In this strand. |  |  |