**Policy on Storage and Destruction of Returned MCAS-Alt Materials**

Each year, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) returns scored MCAS-Alt assessments to the school from which it was submitted the previous spring. Once returned, an MCAS-Alt becomes part of a student’s *temporary record and* must be kept by the school in a secure location. Under the [Massachusetts Student Records Regulations](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr23.html?section=06), a temporary record contains everything that is not in the transcript and that is “clearly of importance to the educational process.” Principals or their designees are required periodically to review temporary student records and to destroy portions that are “misleading, dated, or irrelevant.” Prior to destroying these records, **schools must give parents and eligible students written notice of the intent to destroy records, and of parents’ rights to receive copies of these records before they are destroyed** (603 CMR 23.06(2)).

Regardless of the obligation to review and periodically purge temporary records of “misleading, dated, or irrelevant” documents, schools *must* destroy students’ temporary records no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from public school (i.e., a student’s temporary records *must* be destroyed *within* seven years after the student exits). However, **schools *may* destroy “misleading, dated, or irrelevant” documents** prior to this time by providing written notice to the student and his/her parentof the approximate date of destruction of the record and of their right to receive these materials in whole or in part prior to their destruction.

The Department recommends the **following time periods for schools to retain MCAS-Alt assessments** once they have been returned to the school, based on the general view that, over time, the importance of the assessment to the educational process diminishes and ultimately becomes “dated and irrelevant:”

* grades 3−8 ELA and Mathematics binders: may be destroyed **two years** after return to the school
* grades 5 and 8 Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) binders:
  + **three years** after grade 5 STE are returned to the school
  + **two years** after grade 8 STE are returned to the school
* high school ELA, Mathematics, and STE binders: **two years after the student exits** public education

After the recommended time period, if the student is no longer in the district, or if the parent doesn’t want the assessment after receiving notice of the approximate date of destruction and the parent’s right to receive these materials, the school may destroy the assessment.

Despite these recommendations, schools and districts should be aware of circumstances in which it may be prudent to retain a student’s MCAS-Alt *longer* than the recommended time periods and treat the destruction of MCAS-Alt for specific students on a case-by-case basis. However, **in all cases, records must be destroyed within the seven-year period described above.**

**Please Note:**

Districts are reminded that the district must furnish a copy of the assessment to the eligible student or parent upon request, per (603 CMR 23.07(2)).

Additionally, when a student is transferring from one Massachusetts district to another, the Department recommends that the previous district send the student’s current and/or most recent MCAS-Alt to the new district.