

Who must take MCAS?

All students in grades 3–8 and 10 who attend publicly funded school programs are required to participate in MCAS statewide assessments. A relatively small number of students with the most significant disabilities take the MCAS-Alt if they are unable to take regular MCAS tests, even with accommodations.

Eligibility to participate in an alternate assessment is made each year based on DESE’s criteria by the student’s IEP team, which includes parents/guardians. Students who take the alternate assessment receive individualized instruction that has been substantially modified from the instruction other students receive. Please be aware that participation in the MCAS-Alt may impact your child’s ability to earn a high school diploma.

Why include students with disabilities in the MCAS and MCAS-Alt?

It’s the law.

State and federal laws require the participation of all students in statewide assessments. The alternate assessment allows students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who cannot take regular MCAS tests to “show what they know” and to receive instruction at a level that is challenging and attainable for them.

MCAS helps to determine how much a student is learning.

An MCAS-Alt shows what skills the student has learned during the school year. Achievement scores provide feedback that can be used to identify challenging goals and instruction for the future.

Including all students ensures that all students are taught.

Counting the results of students who take the MCAS-Alt means that those students are more likely to be considered when resource decisions are made.

As learning improves, expectations are raised.

Evidence indicates that students learn more when they are engaged in instruction based on the state’s learning standards and when they participate in assessments based on those learning standards.

How are the MCAS-Alt results used?

MCAS-Alt results should be used by the school and the IEP team to:

- identify challenging academic goals and plan instruction for the student
- measure the student’s progress in achieving skills based on alternate academic standards from the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks
- allocate sufficient school resources for the student’s education
- establish whether schools and districts are making progress in educating students with the most significant disabilities

Can students meet the state’s graduation requirement and earn a diploma if they participate in the MCAS-Alt?

We want you to be aware that participation in an alternate assessment may impact your child’s ability to complete the state’s requirements to receive a high school diploma because the MCAS-Alt assesses learning standards that are **below** the expectations needed to meet the state’s graduation requirement. Therefore, students who participate in the MCAS-Alt will not be able to meet the state’s graduation requirement.

The purpose of the state’s graduation requirement is to ensure that a student earning a Massachusetts diploma can demonstrate basic competencies in English language arts, mathematics, and science and technology/ engineering before entering post-secondary education or the workplace. This requirement has been in place for all students beginning with the graduating class of 2003. You can learn more about graduation requirements at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html.

To meet the state’s graduation requirement, a student must do one of the following:

- take and pass the required MCAS tests;
- submit a competency portfolio that demonstrates the student’s knowledge and skills at a grade 10 level of achievement; or
- be granted an MCAS Performance Appeal that documents their grade point average compared with other students who take grade-level courses. Information on MCAS appeals is available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcasappeals/>.

For more information

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) www.doe.mass.edu/mcas
MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt
MCAS participation requirements for students with disabilities..... www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/accessibility
Graduation requirements and MCAS performance appeals www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html
If you have questions Email: mcas@mass.gov

Spring 2024 MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) Parent/Guardian Report



Name:

SASID:

School:

Grade:

District:

Date of Birth:

Enclosed are your child’s results from the 2024 MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt). All students are required to participate in MCAS, either by taking the standard MCAS tests or by participating in the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) for students with the most significant disabilities who meet the eligibility requirements. Your child’s school submitted their MCAS-Alt last spring, as indicated in their IEP or 504 plan. The MCAS-Alt is a record of your child’s level of achievement, including a collection of their academic work. Before it was submitted, your child’s school was required to invite you to review your child’s assessment.

Please meet with your child’s teacher(s) to discuss the meaning of these results and talk about your child’s goals for the coming school year. Your support is extremely important. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) would like to acknowledge the hard work of your child’s teachers in compiling the MCAS-Alt and contributing to this important and worthwhile effort.

Your Child’s Overall Results

English Language Arts

Achievement Level

Mathematics

Achievement Level

Science and Technology/Engineering

Achievement Level

Purposes of the MCAS-Alt

The MCAS-Alt is an assessment designed to measure the achievement of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology/Engineering. Your child is expected to demonstrate knowledge of the state’s learning standards at a level that is challenging and appropriate.

The purpose of the MCAS-Alt is to make sure schools are teaching the standards to all students, regardless of their disability and even when they cannot show what they know on a standard test.

What is the MCAS-Alt?

Your child’s MCAS-Alt includes samples of their schoolwork and a record of their progress in the subject(s) being assessed. Each assessment includes work samples and documentation of progress in the same subjects that are assessed on the standard MCAS tests for a student in that grade. Students taking the MCAS-Alt are working on knowledge and skills based on alternate achievement standards. More elements about the MCAS-Alt are provided in the *Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt*, which is available at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/edmanual.docx>.

Name: _____ Grade: _____
 SASID: _____ Spring 2024

Achievement Level Descriptors

Exceeding Expectations	A student who performed at this level exceeded grade-level expectations by demonstrating mastery of the subject matter.
Meeting Expectations	A student who performed at this level met grade-level expectations and is academically on track to succeed in the current grade in this subject.
Partially Meeting Expectations	A student who performed at this level partially met grade-level expectations in this subject. The school, in consultation with the student’s parent/guardian, should consider whether the student needs additional academic assistance to succeed in this subject.
Not Meeting Expectation	A student who performed at this level did not meet grade-level expectations in this subject. The school, in consultation with the student’s parent/guardian, should determine the coordinated academic assistance and/or additional instruction the student needs to succeed in this subject.
Progressing	A student at this level demonstrated a partial understanding below grade-level expectations of selected standards and core knowledge topics contained in the Massachusetts curriculum framework for the subject. Students at this level are steadily learning new knowledge, skills, and concepts. Students require minimal prompting and assistance, and their performance is basically accurate.
Emerging	A student at this level demonstrated a simple understanding below grade-level expectations of a limited number of standards and core knowledge topics contained in the Massachusetts curriculum framework for the subject. Students at this level require frequent prompting and assistance, and their performance is limited and inconsistent.
Awareness	A student at this level demonstrated very little understanding of standards and core knowledge topics contained in the Massachusetts curriculum framework for the subject. Students at this level require extensive prompting and assistance, and their performance is mostly inaccurate.
Incomplete	Sufficient evidence and information was not included in the assessment to allow an achievement level to be determined in the subject.

Your Child’s Achievement Level (✓)

English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science & Technology/ Engineering
KEY to the text you <i>may</i> see on your child’s report: NOT ASSESSED FOR A STUDENT IN THIS GRADE [Translation] REQUIRED BUT NOT SUBMITTED [Translation] STUDENT TOOK STANDARD TEST [Translation] ABSENT [Translation]		

The section above shows your child’s overall achievement level in each subject of the alternate assessment. The MCAS-Alt area was scored in each area shown below. Scores for *Level of Complexity*, *Demonstration of Skills and Concepts (accuracy)*, and *Independence* were combined to give the overall achievement level.

MCAS-Alt Scoring Areas and Your Child’s Scores

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS						MATHEMATICS					SCIENCE and TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING																						
	Level of Complexity					Demonstration of Skills and Concepts				Independence	Self-Evaluation	Generalized Performance		Level of Complexity				Demonstration of Skills and Concepts			Independence	Self-Evaluation	Generalized Performance										
	1	2	3	4	5	M	1	2	3	4	M	1	2	3	4	M	1	2	1	2		1	2	3	4	M	1	2	3	4	M	1	2
Language	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Reading	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Writing	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

KEY to text you *may* see in the boxes above on your child’s report:

Expressions and Equations [Translation]	Number and Operations in Base Ten [Translation]	Ratios and Proportional Relationships [Translation]
Functions [Translation]	Number and Operations – Fractions [Translation]	Statistics and Probability [Translation]
Measurement and Data [Translation]	Geometry [Translation]	The Number System [Translation]
Operations and Algebraic Thinking [Translation]	Algebra [Translation]	Number and Quantity [Translation]

KEY to text you *may* see in the boxes above on your child’s report:

Earth and Space Science [Translation]	Physical Sciences [Translation]
Life Science [Translation]	
Biology [Translation]	
Chemistry [Translation]	

Your child’s portfolio was scored in the following Scoring Areas:

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

Demonstration of Skills and Concepts — The percentage of accurate (correct) responses
 4 - Student’s performance is accurate and is of consistently high quality in this strand (76–100% accurate).
 3 - Student’s performance is mostly accurate and demonstrates some understanding in this strand (51–75% accurate).
 2 - Student’s performance is limited and inconsistent with regard to accuracy and demonstrates limited understanding in this strand (26–50% accurate).
 1 - Student’s performance is primarily inaccurate and demonstrates minimal understanding in this strand (0–25% accurate).
 M - Strand contains insufficient information to determine a score.

Independence — The amount of assistance your child received
 4 - Student requires minimal verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (76–100% independent).
 3 - Student requires some verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (51–75% independent).
 2 - Student requires frequent verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (26–50% independent).
 1 - Student requires extensive verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (0–25% independent).
 M - Strand contains insufficient information to determine a score.

Self-Evaluation — Your child’s awareness of their performance
 2 - Student frequently plans, self-corrects, monitors, sets goals, and reflects in this subject; multiple examples of self-evaluation were found in this strand.
 1 - Student infrequently plans, self-corrects, monitors, sets goals, and reflects in this subject; only one example of self-evaluation was found in this strand.
 M - Evidence of planning, self-correction, task-monitoring, goal-setting, and reflection was not found in the student’s portfolio in this strand.

Generalized Performance — The number of approaches used by your child to demonstrate knowledge and skills
 2 - Student demonstrates knowledge and skills in multiple contexts, or uses multiple approaches and/or methods of response and participation in this strand.
 1 - Student demonstrates knowledge and skills in one context, or uses one approach and/or method of response and participation in this strand.