



Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Dear Members of the Class of 2026 (entering Ninth Graders) and Parents/Guardians of the Class of 2026:

This year's incoming ninth graders have entered high school at a time when the state is transitioning to new passing standards for the MCAS Competency Determination (CD) requirement in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science and Technology/Engineering (STE). I hope this letter will help clarify the graduation requirement for your class.

At its August 15, 2022, special meeting, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted to update the Competency Determination (CD) requirement beginning with the class of 2026. The new standard establishes minimum passing scores in ELA, Mathematics, and STE in order to graduate from high school. Students in the classes of 2026 through 2030 must meet the following requirements to be eligible for a high school diploma (in addition to meeting all local graduation requirements):

- earn a scaled score of 486 or higher on the ELA and Mathematics tests or retests; or
- earn a scaled score of 470-485 on the ELA and Mathematics tests or retests and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP) in those subjects; and
- earn a scaled score of 470 or higher on the STE test in Biology or Introductory Physics
 - students are eligible to take the high school STE test in the 9th or 10th grade.

Students will continue to have retest opportunities on high school MCAS tests and will have the opportunity to qualify for scholarship programs through the high school MCAS tests. Information about scholarships is available at www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships.

If you have questions about graduation requirements, please contact your school guidance counselor or principal or visit www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html for more information.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education