**DESE logo
Participation Guidelines for the   
2024 High School Science Tests**

Refer to the information below on student participation in the 2024 MCAS Biology and Introductory Physics tests. Additional guidance on participation related to scholarships as well as other important information is provided below the table. Refer to the [separate guidance](https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/highschool.html) on grade 10 ELA and Mathematics tests/retests participation, and for additional information on high school graduation requirements, refer to [this guidance](https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html).

Note that for each administration (February or June), a student may not test in more than one subject.

Questions about these participation guidelines should be directed to [mcas@doe.mass.edu](mailto:mcas@doe.mass.edu).

| **Administration** | **Participation Guidelines** |
| --- | --- |
| **February 2024** | **Eligible**   * Students in grade 9 or 10 who have completed or are expected to complete a high school course in biology or introductory physics and have not yet earned their [Competency Determination](https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html) (CD) in Science[[1]](#footnote-2) * Students in grade 11 or 12 who have not yet earned their CD in Science2 * Repeating grade 10 students and students in grade 11 who are attempting to raise their score for [Koplik Award](http://www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships/mastery/) purposes * Adult learners who have not yet earned their CD in Science   **Not eligible**   * Students who have already earned their CD in Science (except those taking the test for Koplik purposes) * Grade 9 students who have not completed a biology or introductory physics course |
| **June 2024** | **Required**   * Grade 10 students who have not yet taken a high school MCAS Science test1   **Eligible**   * Students in grade 9 or 10 who have completed or are expected to complete a high school course in biology or introductory physics and have not yet earned their [CD](https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html) in Science1 * Students in grade 11 or 12[[2]](#footnote-3) who have not yet earned their CD in Science * Repeating grade 10 students and students in grade 11 who are attempting to raise their score for [Koplik Award](http://www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships/mastery/) purposes * Adult learners who have not yet earned their CD in Science   **Not eligible**   * Students who have already earned their CD in Science (except students repeating grade 10 or in grade 11 taking the test for Koplik purposes) |

**Additional Student Participation Guidelines for the 2024 MCAS High School Science Tests**

Guidance on Participation in Grade 9 or 10

The Department encourages students taking a biology or physics course in grade 9 to participate in the test that corresponds to their course. However, parents/guardians, in consultation with principals and other school personnel, have the option to request that their child participate in testing at grade 10 instead.

Because eligibility for the Adams Scholarship is based on students’ first-time MCAS test scores, the Department recommends that schools notify all students and their parents/guardians about this criterion, regardless of whether students participate in grade 9 or 10.

Additional Guidance for Students in Grade 10 and Above

Students in grade 10 and above who previously participated in Science but did not earn a passing score have additional opportunities to take a Science test for CD purposes. Students who took the Biology test and did not earn their CD may participate in the Biology test the following year, regardless of the science course in which they are then enrolled, or they may take Introductory Physics (and vice versa).

A student who participates in February but does not earn their CD may participate in June.

Accountability Determinations for Science

School and district accountability determinations are made when students complete grade 10, using the tests they participated in grade 9 or 10. Note that determinations also include students in grade 11 or 12 who were in grade 9 the previous school year.

1. Results will also be used to determine eligibility for the [Adams Scholarship](https://www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships/adams/default.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Results will not be available in time for graduation. Principals may want to file MCAS performance appeals for eligible grade 12 students in addition to, or instead of, having them participate in June High School Science MCAS tests. Information about the performance appeals process is posted at [www.doe.mass.edu/mcasappeals](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcasappeals/). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)