

APPENDIX S

SAMPLE REPORTS – MCAS-ALT



Spring 2016 MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) Parent/Guardian Report

What is the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt)?

The MCAS-Alt is a collection of student work that measures a student's achievement of the learning standards in the state's curriculum frameworks. For each student taking the MCAS-Alt, the student's teacher and other adults who work with the student develop a portfolio over the course of the school year in one or more subjects. The portfolio may include samples of work, video, photographs, charts of the student's performance and progress in the subject being assessed, and other information. Each section of the portfolio is called a "strand" and matches the areas of the curriculum framework that are assessed by the standard tests. Students taking the MCAS-Alt may work on knowledge and skills at lower levels of difficulty than do their peers, though this is not always the case.

Who must take MCAS?

All students in grades 3-10 who attend publicly funded school programs are required to participate in statewide assessments. A relatively small number of students with disabilities must take the MCAS-Alt when they are unable to take regular MCAS or PARCC tests, even with accommodations.

The decision to participate in an alternate assessment in one or more subjects is made each year by the student's IEP team or is included in a student's 504 plan. Most students who take the alternate assessment receive individualized instruction that has been substantially modified from the instruction other students receive.

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 significant disabilities who cannot take regular MCAS tests to "show what they know" and to receive instruction at a level that is challenging and attainable.

The MCAS helps to determine how much a student is learning. An MCAS-Alt portfolio shows what the student has learned during the school year. Scores provide accurate and detailed feedback that can be used to identify challenging goals and instruction.

Including all students in a school's or district's test results ensures that all students will be 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 than expected when they are engaged in instruction based on the state's learning standards, and participate in assessments based on those learning standards. The MCAS-Alt also provides an alternative pathway for some high school students with disabilities to earn a Competency Determination and be eligible to receive a diploma.

How are the MCAS-Alt results used?

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

- make decisions about a student's daily instruction
- identify challenging academic goals and plan instruction for a student
- measure a student's progress in achieving the academic standards in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks
- allocate sufficient school resources for a student's education
- establish whether the school and district are making progress in educating students with disabilities.

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

A student must meet both state and local requirements in order to graduate. However, only a small number of students who participate in the MCAS-Alt have been able to meet the state's graduation requirement.

In order to meet the state's graduation requirement by taking the MCAS-Alt, a student must submit a "competency portfolio" that

- demonstrates the student's knowledge and skills at a grade 10 level of performance
- includes independently produced work samples that address the required high school learning standards.

These requirements are described in the *Educator's Manual for MCAS-Alt*, which is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html.

For more information

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

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SASID: D111000002

School: Demonstration School 1

Grade: 11

District: Demonstration District B

Date of Birth: 01/18/1999

Letter from the Commissioner

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Enclosed are your child's scores from the 2016 MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt). As you are aware, all students were required this year to participate in either the MCAS, PARCC, or MCAS-Alt. Your child took the MCAS-Alt, as indicated in his or her IEP or 504 plan. Last April, your child's school submitted his or her portfolio to the state for scoring. The MCAS-Alt is a collection of your child's work, based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Your child's school was required to invite you to review the portfolio before it was submitted. Your support is extremely important, and I hope you were able to view the portfolio, and observe your child's progress.

Please meet with your child's teacher to help you understand the meaning of these results, and to discuss your child's goals for the coming school year.

I would also like to acknowledge the hard work of your child's teachers in creating the portfolio and contributing to this important and worthwhile effort.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Purposes of the MCAS-Alt

The MCAS-Alt is an assessment designed for students with significant disabilities that measures achievement in selected areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics in grades 3-8 and 10, and in Science and Technology/Engineering in grades 5, 8, and high school. As is true for students taking the standard MCAS test, your child is expected to demonstrate knowledge of the academic learning standards in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks at a level that is challenging and appropriate.

The purpose of the MCAS-Alt is to make sure schools are teaching the state's learning standards to *all* students regardless of their disability, to increase their independence, and to explore students' capabilities, even when they cannot show what they know on a standard test.

Achievement Level Descriptors

A score of *Needs Improvement*, *Proficient*, or *Advanced* on the high school MCAS-Alt is required to meet the state's graduation requirement.

Advanced	Students at this level demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of challenging grade-level subject matter and provide sophisticated solutions to complex problems.
Proficient	Students at this level demonstrate a solid understanding of challenging grade-level subject matter and solve a wide variety of problems.
Needs Improvement	Students at this level demonstrate a partial understanding of grade-level subject matter and solve some simple problems.
Progressing	Students at this level demonstrate a partial understanding below grade-level expectations of selected learning standards and core knowledge topics contained in the Massachusetts curriculum framework for the content area. Students are steadily learning new knowledge, skills, and concepts. Students require minimal prompting and assistance, and their performance is basically accurate.
Emerging	Students at this level demonstrate a simple understanding below grade-level expectations of a limited number of learning standards and core knowledge topics contained in the Massachusetts curriculum framework for the content area. Students require frequent prompting and assistance, and their performance is limited and inconsistent.
Awareness	Students at this level demonstrate very little understanding of learning standards and core knowledge topics contained in the Massachusetts curriculum framework for the content area. Students require extensive prompting and assistance, and their performance is mostly inaccurate.
Incomplete	Insufficient evidence and information was included in the portfolio to allow an achievement level to be determined in the content area.

Your Child's Achievement Level (✓)

English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science & Technology/Engineering
✓	✓	✓

The top section of this report shows your child's overall achievement level in the content area of the alternate assessment. The MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) portfolio was scored in each area shown below. Scores in *Level of Complexity*, *Demonstration of Skills and Concepts*, and *Independence* were combined to give the overall achievement level.

MCAS-Alt Scoring Areas and Your Child's Scores

Level of Complexity - How your child addressed the learning standards in each subject	English Language Arts			Mathematics					Science & Technology/Engineering			
	Language	Reading	Writing	Functions	Geometry	Statistics and Probability	Number and Quantity	Algebra	Biology 1	Biology 2	Biology 3	Biology 4
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 - Portfolio 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 - The portfolio 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 - The portfolio strand contains insufficient information to determine a score.												
Self-Evaluation - Your child's awareness of his or her performance												
2 - Student self-corrects, monitors, sets goals, and reflects in this content area - multiple examples of self-evaluation were found in this strand.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
1 - Student infrequently self-corrects, monitors, sets goals, and reflects in this content area - only one example of self-evaluation was found in this strand.								✓				
M - Evidence of self-correction, task-monitoring, goal-setting, and reflection was not found in the student's portfolio in this content area.												
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 .									✓			