

"It's not how smart you are that matters; what really counts is *how you are smart.*"

~ Howard Gardner

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Forms and Graphs Online—Available Now!

- Create MCAS-Alt forms, data charts, and work description labels for each student, plus **NEW** for grades 3–8 Mathematics only, “click and load” your measurable outcomes directly from the Forms and Graphs program, at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html .

Where can I find.....in the 2013 Educator's Manual?

- Contact information for general portfolio questions (page 1)
- Information about which primary evidence is acceptable to include in the portfolio (pp. 34–35)
- Data chart guidelines and requirements (pp. 33–34, 37–42)
- Whether it's okay to include work samples on the data chart (page 34, third bullet)
- How to write clear and brief descriptions (pp. 33–34, 37)
- Ensuring that portfolios are complete (pp. 36–37)
- Information about the new Progress and Performance Index (PPI) that replaces AYP (pp. 58–59)
- A timeline of where I should be in the process of creating portfolios (page 6)
- The MCAS-Alt Score Appeal deadline (page 2)

The *2013 Educator's Manual for MCAS-Alt* is posted at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/edmanual.pdf.

For those who were unable to attend the educator training workshops in October, the training materials are available at: www.mcas-alt.org/materials.

Mathematics Resource Guide (Grades PreK-8)

The MCAS-Alt will transition to the new 2011 standards (i.e., the “Common Core”) in phases. This school year, the standards and domains in the *2011 Mathematics Curriculum Framework* will be assessed on the MCAS-Alt in grades 3–8 using the Fall 2012 version of the **Resource Guide to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities** which is posted at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html. All other content areas (ELA and Science and Tech/Eng), plus high school Mathematics, will be assessed this year using the 2006 version of the Resource Guide. A schedule of MCAS-Alt assessments in each grade is shown on pages 12–19 of the **2013 Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt**. We anticipate updating the ELA section of the Resource Guide in time for the 2013-2014 school year.

Features of the new Mathematics Resource Guide:

- The format is similar to the 2006 version.
- Entry points “spiral” down from the grade level of the student to the lowest grade in each domain.
- Each entry point represents a skill that can be directly exported for use as a measurable outcome for the required domain—no need to isolate single skills within each entry point.*
- Many examples of activities are provided (“e.g.,...”) to illustrate and model the standard
- Low entry points are identified even in domains that begin in higher grades
- Access skills specific to the content area are listed at the lowest grade in each domain.

* **Example:** The following entry point, “*Compare number quantities using the symbols <, >, =*” can be converted to the measurable outcome, “(Student) will compare numbers using the correct symbol (<,>, =) with 80% accuracy and 100% independence.

January Portfolio Review Sessions

Portfolios-in-progress review sessions and MCAS-Alt overview training will be held at regional locations across the state according to the schedule below. Each session will be from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Please review the informational flyer that has been faxed to each school and district office available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html.

Dates and locations for these sessions are as follows:

- January 7—Peabody Marriott
- January 8—Westborough Doubletree
- January 10—Taunton Holiday Inn
- January 11—Springfield Marriott

Register for **Portfolios-in-Progress** or **MCAS-Alt Overview** sessions by Tuesday, January 2, 2013 online at www.mcasservicecenter.com. Choose “MCAS Alternate Assessment” and then “Registration for Training.” If you have questions, please contact the MCAS Service Center at 800-737-5103.

Administrator’s Corner

(Teachers: Please share this information with your school or program administrator)

The Administrator’s Corner is intended to provide recommendations for administrators to assist educators in completing their portfolios. The following activities should be conducted this fall:

- Identify teachers who are responsible for assembling MCAS-Alt portfolios.
- Consult with teachers to determine how best to support their needs.
- Consider developing a schedule to allow teachers to work on their students’ portfolios.
- Designate a mentor, if available (perhaps another teacher with MCAS-Alt experience), to assist teachers who are new to the MCAS-Alt process.
- Plan to allow teachers to attend a portfolio review session in January (see schedule above).

We'd like to hear from you.

Please [let us know](#) if there is a topic you'd like us to address in a future MCAS-Alt newsletter.

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