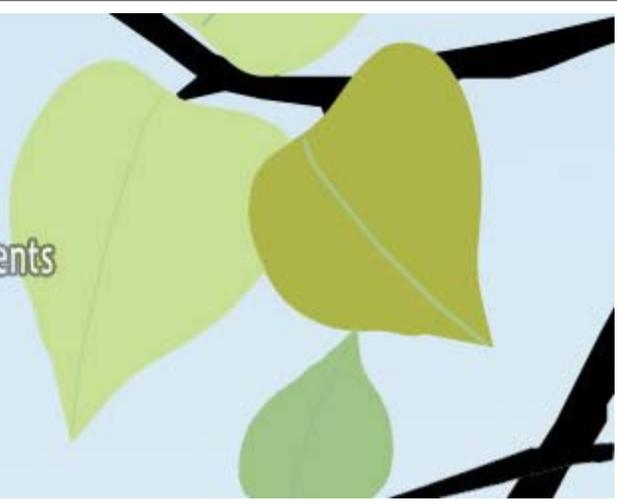


MCAS-Alt

Same Standards • High Expectations for ALL Students



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www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt



This newsletter is published by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and will provide Massachusetts educators with information, advice, and support to teach the Massachusetts learning standards to students with significant disabilities, and to conduct the MCAS Alternate Assessment.

"Learning is not achieved by chance; it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence."
--Abigail Adams



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Congratulations to those of you who compiled MCAS-Alt student portfolios throughout the school year and submitted them by the April 1 deadline. Your PDP certificate will be sent to your school in early June. We applaud your hard work!

Thank you to the MCAS-Alt Training Specialists who assisted us throughout the school year. More than 2,500 teachers attended Department-sponsored trainings. We could not have done this without you!



Announcements

The updated ELA Resource Guide is coming soon! The ELA Resource Guide is being revised to reflect the new 2011 (Common Core) standards and will be available online in early summer at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html. We will notify you in the MCAS-Alt News email when this has been posted. The 2014 MCAS-Alt will assess the (new) **2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for English Language Arts** standards, rather than assessing the previous (2001) ELA standards.

The MCAS-Alt assessment requirements for the 2013-2014 school year will be announced this summer and will reflect the updated *ELA Resource Guide*. This will also be addressed during the fall training sessions. In the meantime, we encourage you to review the 2011 ELA curriculum framework standards available at www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html.

High School competency portfolio requirements will remain as before for 2013-2014.

NOTE:

- An updated edition of the **Mathematics Resource Guide** will also be available on the MCAS-Alt website in early summer and will contain minor revisions to last year's *Mathematics Resource Guide*.
- Both updated Resource Guides (ELA and Mathematics) will be available in digital format at the state-led training sessions in October.



Updates and Reminders

- 2013 MCAS-Alt preliminary results will be reported electronically to districts and schools in mid-June. Once results are posted, encourage your principal to share the results with you and give you a copy of the Portfolio Feedback Forms (PFF). This will allow you to review the scores and comments for the portfolios, assist you in making instructional decisions for students, and improve the quality of alternate assessments for next year.
- **MCAS-Alt Parent/Guardian Reports** will be sent to districts in mid-September and must be sent to the homes of all students.
- MCAS-Alt Score Appeals may be submitted to the Department once MCAS-Alt scores have been reported to districts and schools, if the school perceives that the portfolio score was inaccurate. Schools must have maintained a photocopy of the student's portfolio in order to file a score appeal, and must follow the guidelines posted to www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/scoreappeal_overview.html. This link will become active after the preliminary results are posted in mid-June. The deadline for submitting an MCAS-Alt score appeal is Friday, June 28, at 5:00 p.m.
- Consider applying to become an MCAS-Alt Training Specialist for the 2013-2014 school year. Training specialists serve as resources to other teachers in the district and will assist the Department at one training session each in October, January, and March. In exchange, they will have access to the latest information and resources to guide the development of MCAS-Alt portfolios. Training specialist must attend a full day training session in late September and have at least two years' prior experience conducting the MCAS-Alt in order to apply.

If you are interested in becoming an MCAS-Alt Training Specialist, please discuss this opportunity with your principal. He or she must agree and sign off on your application.

Information on applying to become an MCAS-Alt Training Specialist will be available in the back-to-school edition of this *MCAS-Alt Newsletter*.



Administrator's Corner

- MCAS-Alt results will be available electronically on the Department's Security Portal in mid-June. We encourage you to review the results and share a copy of each Portfolio Feedback Form (PFF) with the student's teacher. PFFs provide information on the portfolio score and the comments of scorers. PFFs will also help determine whether to submit an MCAS-Alt Score Appeal (see above). Information on MCAS-Alt score appeals is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/results.html
- MCAS-Alt portfolios will be returned to schools by mail in mid-September once your school receives the portfolios, they become part of the student's temporary record, which must remain on file and follow the student to any subsequent placement. For information concerning student portfolios, please review the *Policy on Storage and Destruction of Returned MCAS-Alt Portfolios* on page 5 of the *2013 Educator's Manual for MCAS-Alt*, available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html.
- **Parent/Guardian Reports** will be sent to districts in mid-September which must be sent to the home of each student. If the student's home language is a language other than English, a translated report "shell" in the student's home language will be included in the shipment and must also be sent to the home of the student, along with the actual report in English.
- Is there a teacher in your school who consistently compiles high-quality MCAS-Alt portfolios? If so, you may want to encourage him or her to apply to become an MCAS-Alt Training Specialist for next school year. Training Specialists receive additional training and can serve as an important resource to their colleagues who are conducting the MCAS-Alt. They will also receive instructional ideas and resources that they will bring back to your school and district. Training specialists must commit to a one-day training session in September, and assist at one Department-sponsored workshop in October, January, and March. Detailed information, including the application process will be available in early September.



Courses for Educators

For Your Interest: Professional Development Opportunities

A number of course opportunities exist for Massachusetts educators to learn more about their profession, including courses on the 2011 curriculum frameworks (Common Core standards). The links below may be of interest to you. They list a range of courses and will be updated throughout the spring:

- Professional Development Institutes (PDIs) — free summer courses on a first come, first served basis, with fall follow-up, at www.doe.mass.edu/candi/institutes/12/
Note: Certain courses (i.e., Massachusetts Intel Math Initiative; Increasing Accessibility to Algebra and Geometry for all Students; and Developing Math Practices for Algebra) give preference to special educators.
- MA FOCUS Academy — Online courses in fall and spring, at www.doe.mass.edu/sped/mfa/. Participants will receive 67.5 PDPs upon course completion, and have the option to purchase graduate level units at a discounted rate through partnering institutions of higher education.
Note: Spring courses are full, but bookmark this site for fall 2013.

This is the final edition of MCAS-Alt News for the 2012-2013 school year.

We will continue to provide important updates and information on our website.

We wish you all a productive end to the school year.
Have a safe and healthy summer!

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Get on our mailing list. [Click here](#) to sign up for the MCAS-Alt News.

We'd love 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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