2015 MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt): State Summary of Participation and Achievement

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Purpose of this Document

This report provides a summary of the statewide participation rates and achievement results of students with significant disabilities who participated in the 2015 MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt). The MCAS-Alt evaluates and reports on the annual achievement of those students in meeting state standards and provides parents and teachers with vital information to assist in monitoring students' progress. In 2015, 8,650 students in grades 3–10 participated in the MCAS-Alt.

Students with significant disabilities are required by law to participate in statewide academic assessments and to be counted in overall achievement results. The Commonwealth is required to report aggregate results publicly to hold schools, districts, and the state accountable for the achievement of all students. Additionally, under the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), federal law requires that students with significant disabilities be included when determining whether all students participated in MCAS assessments, and whether each Massachusetts school and district is making progress toward reducing proficiency gaps.

In 2015, approximately 75 percent of students earned a score at the *Progressing* achievement level on their MCAS-Alt portfolios. The percentage of students at this level indicates that most students with significant disabilities are being provided with challenging educational opportunities to address the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and are achieving their academic goals with a high degree of accuracy and independence.

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Executive Summary

The participation and achievement of students with disabilities in the 2015 MCAS-Alt administration are summarized below. Please see Appendix D for Achievement Levels and Descriptors.

- The number of students in grades 3–10 who participated in alternate assessments in at least one content area was 8,650, or 1.7 percent of the total tested population. The percentage of students with disabilities who participated in MCAS-Alt was 8.9 percent, which is unchanged from 2014.

- In English Language Arts (ELA), 75 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level, an increase of 9.4 percentage points from 2014, when 65.6 percent did so. The highest achievement in ELA was at grade 3, where 80.6 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level. By contrast, the lowest achievement in ELA was at grade 10, where 61.4 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level.

- In Mathematics, 78 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level, an increase of 1.5 percentage points from 2014, when 76.5 percent did so. The highest achievement in Mathematics was at grade 3, where 82.5 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level. By contrast, the lowest achievement was at grade 10, where 62 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level.

- In Science and Technology/Engineering (STE), averaged across grades 5, 8, 9 and 10, 73.2 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level, an increase of 8.2 percentage points from 2014, when 65 percent of students did so. The highest achievement in STE was at grade 5, where 78 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level. At high school, 65.7 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level, a marked increase of 8.6 percentage points from 2014, when 57.1 percent of students did so.

- Between 2014 and 2015, student achievement at the *Emerging* level, one level below *Progressing*, decreased marginally in ELA to 11.4 percent and increased marginally in Mathematics to 8.6 percent. In STE, averaged across grades 5, 8, 9 and 10, 14.4 percent of students performed at the *Emerging* level, a marginal decrease from 2014. As in 2014, the highest percent of students performing at the *Emerging* level was at high school in all content areas (ELA, Mathematics, and STE).

- Student achievement at the *Awareness* level, one level below *Emerging*, decreased in all content areas. In ELA, Mathematics, and STE, .7 percent, 1.1 percent, and 0.5 percent of students, respectively, performed at the *Awareness* level.

- The percentage of students whose portfolios were determined to be *Incomplete*, averaged across all grades and content areas, decreased from 17 percent in 2014 to 12.4 percent in 2015. The greatest decrease in incomplete portfolios was in grade 8 Mathematics, where 20 percent of portfolios were not complete, a decrease of over 16 percentage points from 2014. The increase in the percentage of portfolios submitted with all required evidence suggests a greater awareness of portfolio submission requirements by educators conducting the MCAS-Alt.

Table 1. 2015 MCAS-Alt Statewide Results by Subject

Subject / Grades	MCAS-Alt Achievement Level										Total MCAS-Alt Portfolios
	Awareness		Emerging		Progressing		Needs Improvement (or Higher)		Incomplete		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	Number
ELA (All Grades)	59	0.7	934	11.4	6,160	75.0	5	0.1	1,056	12.9	8,214
Mathematics (All Grades)	90	1.1	718	8.6	6,521	78.0	14	0.2	1,017	12.2	8,360
Science and Technology/ Engineering (STE) (Grades 5 and 8)	9	0.4	303	13.7	1,696	76.6	2	0.1	205	9.3	2,215
High School STE (Biology, Chemistry, Intro Physics, and Tech/Eng)	7	0.7	159	15.8	660	65.7	6	0.6	172	17.1	1,004

I. Introduction

This report describes the statewide participation rates and achievement results from the spring 2015 administration of the MCAS-Alt in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology/Engineering. The MCAS-Alt has been administered annually since spring 2001 and is offered in every subject and grade for which a standard test is required.

This report also presents information on the students who participated in MCAS-Alt, including the nature of their disabilities, the participation of students in MCAS-Alt relative to students taking standard tests, and the methods used to evaluate student portfolios and report student scores and achievement levels.

State summaries of MCAS-Alt for 2001–2015 are available on the Department's website.

II. Background

According to state and federal laws, all students, including students with disabilities, are required to participate in statewide assessments. Student with significant disabilities who are unable to take the standard tests, even with accommodations, must take the MCAS-Alt. Decisions as to how each student with a disability will participate in MCAS are made by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team and documented in the student's IEP, or in a 504 plan developed by the school or district. Information about the participation of students with disabilities in MCAS is available on the Department's website.

For each student scheduled to participate in the MCAS-Alt, schools must submit a portfolio consisting of data charts and work samples based on the grade-level content found in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks that has been modified to reflect challenging and attainable entry points for each student. The basis for modifying academic curriculum for students taking the MCAS-Alt is described in the *Resource Guide to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities*, available on the Department's website.

The purposes of the MCAS-Alt are to:

- ensure that students with significant disabilities are receiving a program of instruction based on the state's academic standards;
- determine what students with significant disabilities have learned;
- include difficult-to-assess students in statewide assessment and accountability systems;
- provide alternative pathways for some students with disabilities to earn a comparable score to a student in grades 3–8 who has taken the standard test in that subject, and in high school to earn a Competency Determination (CD) and become eligible to receive a diploma.

Participation Guidelines

A student with a *significant cognitive disability* is considered for an alternate assessment by his or her IEP team, when he or she:

- receives routine academic instruction based on learning standards in the curriculum frameworks for which the level of complexity of content and skills has been modified and is well below the expectations of a non-disabled student enrolled in the same grade;

  AND

- receives intensive, individualized instruction across all settings in which a subject is taught, in order for the student to acquire, generalize, and demonstrate knowledge and skills;

  AND

- is generally unable to demonstrate knowledge and skills on a standardized paper-and-pencil test in the subject being assessed, even when accommodations are provided.

In addition, students with other complex and significant (though not necessarily *cognitive*) disabilities may be considered for an alternate assessment based on grade-level achievement standards if their disabilities would present *unique and significant challenges* to fully demonstrating their knowledge and skills on a standardized paper-and-pencil test, even if accommodations were provided.

Using all the same criteria listed above, an alternate assessment can be documented on a 504 plan.

Portfolio Contents and Structure

"Evidence" is collected by the student's teacher(s) and other school staff throughout the year in the subject being assessed, and the "evidence" is organized in a portfolio that includes the following types of products and information:

- Work samples, video clips, and/or photographs documenting the student's performance of tasks based on the standards being assessed.

- Data charts documenting the student's performance over a period of time during activities based on the learning standards being assessed. Data must be collected on at least 8 different dates and must begin at a level of *accuracy* and/or *independence* below 80 percent in order to show that the student was taught new skills, knowledge, and concepts.
  - *Accuracy* is considered to be the percentage of correct student responses.
  - *Independence* is considered to be the percentage of tasks, items, or activities in which the student required *no* assistance in attaining the correct answer.

- Supporting documentation, including descriptions provided by the teacher, reflection sheets allowing the student to evaluate his/her own performance, and other evidence that indicates how the student was instructed and/or how he or she demonstrated knowledge and skills in the subject being assessed.

Development of portfolios is guided by information in the *Educator's Manual for MCAS-Alt*, which is updated annually, distributed at Department-sponsored training events, and posted on the Department's website.

Scoring MCAS-Alt Portfolios

Once student portfolios are submitted to the Department in early April, they are reviewed and scored by scorers who are supervised by Department staff. Prospective scorers receive extensive training and must qualify to become scorers. Scorers are monitored closely for accuracy and consistency throughout the scoring process. The Rubric for Scoring Portfolio Strands, shown in Appendix E, is used as the basis for scoring student portfolios.

Educators should be aware of current portfolio requirements, since portfolios that lack the minimum required evidence and information are scored *Incomplete*. Detailed information on scoring portfolios is found in the *2015 Guidelines for Scoring Student Portfolios*.

Once preliminary scores are provided to districts in mid-June, a score appeal process enables a school to initiate a request to review the score of any portion of a portfolio, based on a perceived inaccuracy in the scoring of the portfolio. Upon submission of an appeal, the student's portfolio is reviewed by a panel of expert scorers and rescored if necessary.

III. Student Participation in 2015 MCAS-Alt

A total of 8,650 students in grades 3–10, or 1.7 percent of the total assessed population, participated in the MCAS-Alt in one or more content areas, as shown in Table 2. A slightly higher relative proportion of students in grades 3–8 took the MCAS-Alt compared with students in grade 10. Slightly more students were alternately assessed in Mathematics than in English Language Arts (ELA). See Appendix B for the MCAS-Alt participation rates in each grade and subject.

Between 7.9 and 11.0 percent of all assessed students with disabilities in each grade participated in the 2015 MCAS-Alt. See Appendix C for comparative rates of participation in each MCAS assessment format (i.e., routinely tested, tested with accommodations, or alternately assessed) by subject.

Table 2. Rate of Participation in MCAS-Alt by Students with Disabilities in Grades 3–10 in at Least One Content Area

Year	Total Students Taking MCAS-Alt	Percentage of All Assessed Students Taking MCAS-Alt	Percentage of Students with Disabilities Taking MCAS-Alt
2004	5,139	1.0%	5.5%
2005	6,131	1.2%	6.4%
2006	7,006	1.3%	7.7%
2007	7,621	1.4%	8.4%
2008	8,199	1.5%	8.4%
2009	8,738	1.6%	9.0%
2010	9,286	1.7%	9.1%
2011	9,325	1.7%	8.6%
2012	9,386	1.7%	8.8%
2013	9,111	1.7%	9.3%
2014	8,896	1.6%	8.9%
2015	8,650	1.7%	8.9%

Table 3 shows the number of students with disabilities who took the 2015 MCAS-Alt in each grade and subject.

Table 3. Participation in 2015 MCAS-Alt by Grade and Subject

Grade	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science and Technology/ Engineering
3	1,219	1,206	–
4	1,271	1,276	–
5	1,229	1,245	1,411
6	1,242	1,297	–
7	1,195	1,218	–
8	1,095	1,138	1,071
9	–	–	195
10	963	980	809
Total	**8,214**	**8,360**	**3,219**

Table 4 shows the distribution of primary disabilities among MCAS-Alt participants. Slightly more than seventy percent of students who took MCAS-Alt had either an intellectual disability, autism, or multiple disabilities, with the remaining students accounted for in ten other disability categories.

Table 4. Nature of Primary Disability Among 2015 MCAS-Alt Participants in Grades 3-10[a]

Primary Disability [b]	Total Number of Students in Primary Disability Category	Number of MCAS-Alt Participants in Primary Disability Category (n)	Percentage of Total MCAS-Alt Participants in Primary Disability Category [c] (n/8,650 x 100)	Percentage of Students in Primary Disability Category Who Took MCAS-Alt
Intellectual	5,182	2,810	32.5%	54.2%
Autism	8,774	2,835	32.8%	32.3%
Multiple Disabilities	2,304	819	9.5%	35.5%
Neurological	6,147	550	6.4%	8.9%
Communication	15,809	403	4.7%	2.5%
Specific Learning Disabilities	32,335	285	3.3%	0.9%
Emotional	9,125	204	2.4%	2.2%
Health	14,346	226	2.6%	1.6%
Developmental Delay	1,911	223	2.6%	11.7%
Sensory/Hard of Hearing or Deaf	631	73	0.8%	11.6%
Unidentified Disability	N/A	114	1.3%	N/A
Physical	658	54	0.6%	8.2%
Sensory/Vision Impairment or Blind	314	32	0.4%	10.2%
Sensory/Deaf and Blind	81	22	0.3%	27.2%
Total	97,617	8,650	100.0%	8.9%

[a] The number of MCAS-Alt participants includes all students who took MCAS-Alt in at least one subject.

[b] Primary disability data were reported by districts to the Department's Student Information Management System (SIMS) in March and June 2015.

[c] Percentages of participants by primary disability may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

IV. 2015 MCAS-Alt Student Results

The lowest achievement level for students taking the standard MCAS tests is *Warning/Failing*. MCAS-Alt results are reported in one of three subcategories of *Warning/Failing* called *Progressing*, *Emerging*, and *Awareness.* These three achievement levels provide meaningful information to interpret the achievement of students whose performance is below grade-level. See Appendix D for descriptions of the achievement levels.

In 2015, the majority of students with significant disabilities performed at the *Progressing* level, indicating that they demonstrated their attainment of challenging academic goals at high levels of accuracy and independence, although these goals were below the grade-level expectations for nondisabled students. 2015 MCAS-Alt results are summarized below.

- Across all grades, the percentage of students who scored *Progressing* was:
  - 75.0 percent in ELA
  - 78.0 percent in Mathematics
  - 76.6 percent in Science and Technology/Engineering (grades 5 and 8)
  - 65.7 percent in high school Science and Technology/Engineering

- The percentage of students who scored *Emerging* was:
  - 11.4 percent in ELA
  - 8.6 percent in Mathematics
  - 13.7 percent in Science and Technology/Engineering (grades 5 and 8)
  - 15.8 percent in high school Science and Technology/Engineering

- The percentage of students who scored *Awareness* was:
  - 0.7 percent in ELA
  - 1.1 percent in Mathematics
  - 0.4 percent in Science and Technology/Engineering (grades 5 and 8)
  - 0.7 percent in high school Science and Technology/Engineering

- Overall, 12.4 percent of students who participated in the MCAS-Alt scored *Incomplete*, indicating that their portfolios did not include the requisite evidence to generate an overall achievement level in the subject being assessed. The percentage of students who scored *Incomplete* by content area was:
  - 12.9 percent in ELA
  - 12.2 percent in Mathematics
  - 9.3 percent in Science and Technology/Engineering (grades 5 and 8)
  - 17.1 percent in high school Science and Technology/Engineering

Appendix A displays achievement level results by grade and subject.

V. Competency Determination Portfolios

While the majority of students who participate in MCAS-Alt achieve learning standards that are below the level of complexity of their grade-level peers, each year a small number of students who participate in the high school MCAS-Alt meet the state's minimum passing standard for high school graduation and earn a Competency Determination (CD). Students who participate in the MCAS-Alt are eligible to earn a CD if they demonstrate a level of knowledge and skills comparable to that of a student who has passed the standard grade 10 MCAS tests in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology/Engineering. Portfolios are evaluated by panels of content area experts to ensure that they meet the appropriate standard of performance in that subject. Specific requirements for submission of portfolios for the CD are described in the *Educator's Manual for MCAS-Alt*.

Alternate assessments guide educators to provide opportunities for students to learn the standards required to meet the state's graduation requirement. It is not anticipated, however, that the majority of students with significant cognitive disabilities will earn a CD, because most are working well below grade-level expectations. Students may elect, but are not required, to resubmit their portfolios either in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and/or Science and Technology/Engineering each year beyond grade 10 until they have earned an achievement level of *Needs Improvement*, or have exited publicly funded education. Table 5 shows the number of students who have earned an achievement level of *Needs Improvement* or higher on their MCAS-Alt portfolios since 2001.

Table 5. Number of Students Who Participated in MCAS-Alt and Met the Competency Determination Requirement in Each Subject

Subject	Year														Total (2001–2015)
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2014	2015	
English Language Arts	8	8	11	3	13	5	10	4	8	8	3	1	3	2	87
Mathematics	3	1	15	6	10	12	10	14	10	7	3	1	12	4	108
Science and Technology/ Engineering	—	—	—	—	—	—	0	3	14	12	11	5	9	6	60

Note: STE was added to the Competency Determination requirement beginning with the class of 2010.

VI. MCAS-Alt and Accountability: PPI Determinations

The participation and achievement of students who take alternate assessments are included in determinations of school and district Progress and Performance Index (PPI) results, using the indices shown in Tables 6. In 2012, the PPI replaced Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as the primary method of providing accountability determinations for districts and schools.

In calculating PPI, each school and district is assigned a 100-point index for each student subgroup based on their achievement and growth/improvement in ELA, mathematics, and STE; and for high schools, graduation and dropout rates. All districts, schools, and subgroups are expected to reduce by half the gap between the 2011 Composite Performance Index (CPI) baseline and proficiency for all students (100 percent) by the 2016–2017 school year.

Students assessed on the MCAS-Alt receive CPI points for the purpose of determining PPI according to the guidelines below. This provision should not be confused with existing state requirements to meet the CD standard, nor should this be misinterpreted as a quota or cap on the number of students who may take alternate assessments.

Table 6
Assignment of Composite Performance Index Points

Students taking standard tests and MCAS-Alt participants who do not have significant cognitive disabilities			MCAS-Alt participants with significant cognitive disabilities	
MCAS Scaled Score	**Achievement Level**	**CPI Points Awarded**	**MCAS-Alt Achievement Level**	**CPI Points Awarded**
240–280	Proficient and Advanced	**100**	Progressing (for certain disability types)[1]	**100**
230–238	Needs Improvement – High	**75**	Progressing (for certain disability types)[2] and Emerging	**75**
220–228	Needs Improvement – Low	**50**	Awareness	**50**
210–218	Warning/Failing – High	**25**	Portfolio Incomplete	**25**
200–209	Warning/Failing – Low	**0**	Portfolio Not Submitted	**0**

[1] Intellectual, Sensory/Deaf and Blind, Multiple Disabilities, Autism, and Developmental Delay

[2] Sensory/Hard of Hearing or Deaf, Communication, Sensory/Vision Impairment or Blind, Emotional, Physical, Health, Specific Learning Disabilities, Neurological

Since 2010, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the total number of students taking the MCAS-Alt who receive 100 CPI points and are included in PPI determination may not exceed one percent of the total number of students assessed. To meet this requirement, the following policy changes have been implemented.

1. The Department will assign 100 CPI points only to students

- who score *Progressing* on the MCAS-Alt; and
- who have been identified through the Student Information Management System (SIMS) as having the following **primary disabilities**: *Intellectual, Sensory/Deaf and Blind, Multiple Disabilities, Autism,* and *Developmental Delay*; and
- whose **level of need** for special education services has been reported as *High*.

Students with *Intellectual, Sensory/Deaf and Blind, Multiple Disabilities, Autism,* and *Developmental Delays* are most likely to have significant cognitive disabilities, and as a result, their academic achievement will be measured by "alternate achievement standards." The Department will further prioritize among these students, as needed, to reach a maximum total of one percent, based on the nature of disability and reported level of need for special education services.

2. The Department will assign 75 CPI points to students who score *Progressing* (from the above categories, but with lower levels of need) as well as those who have been identified in SIMS as having the following primary disabilities: *Sensory/Hard of Hearing or Deaf, Communication, Sensory/Vision Impairment or Blind, Emotional, Physical, Health, Specific Learning Disabilities,* or *Neurological*.

3. All other students with disabilities assessed using the MCAS-Alt who do not score at the *Progressing* level will be assigned CPI points as follows: students scoring at the *Emerging* level receive 75 CPI points, *Awareness* 50 CPI points, and *Incomplete* 25 CPI points.

VII. Resources and Professional Development for Educators

The Department sponsors approximately 16 regional training sessions annually for educators responsible for conducting the MCAS-Alt. In addition, technical assistance is available throughout the school year from the Department's Student Assessment Services office and from members of the MCAS-Alt Teacher Network who are available to assist their colleagues within their district.

Notices of training opportunities are sent by fax and newsletters are by email. Publications related to MCAS-Alt are available on the Department's website and are distributed at Department training sessions.

Assistance for educators conducting MCAS-Alt is available by contacting the Department by email at mcas@doe.mass.edu or by phone at 781-338-3625, or by contacting the MCAS Service Center at 800-737-5103.

Appendix A. 2015 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results by Grade and Subject *

Table 7. 2015 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 3

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]
Incomplete	143	11.7	105	8.7
Awareness	9	0.7	14	1.2
Emerging	84	6.9	92	7.6
Progressing	983	80.6	995	82.5
Needs Improvement	0	0	0	0
Proficient	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	**1,219**	**100**	**1,206**	**100**

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 8. 2015 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 4

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]
Incomplete	59	4.6	156	12.2
Awareness	12	0.9	14	1.1
Emerging	242	19.0	90	7.1
Progressing	955	75.1	1012	79.3
Needs Improvement	3	0.2	4	0.3
Proficient	0	0.0	0	0.0
Advanced	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	**1,271**	**100**	**1,276**	**100**

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 9. 2015 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 5

	English Language Arts		Mathematics		Science and Technology/ Engineering	
	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]
Incomplete	178	14.5	139	11.2	94	8.2
Awareness	6	0.5	8	0.6	4	0.3
Emerging	67	5.5	87	7.0	154	13.5
Progressing	978	79.6	1011	81.2	892	78.0
Needs Improvement	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Proficient	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Advanced	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	**1,229**	**100**	**1,245**	**100**	**1,144**	**100**

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

* Results for first-year ELL students are included in these summaries if they submitted a portfolio.

Table 10. 2015 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 6

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]
Incomplete	198	15.9	141	10.9
Awareness	8	0.6	17	1.3
Emerging	59	4.8	72	5.6
Progressing	977	78.7	1065	82.1
Needs Improvement	0	0.0	2	0.2
Proficient	0	0.0	0	0.0
Advanced	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	**1,242**	**100**	**1,297**	**100**

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 11. 2015 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 7

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]
Incomplete	117	9.8	137	11.2
Awareness	10	0.8	14	1.1
Emerging	199	16.7	86	7.1
Progressing	869	72.7	979	80.4
Needs Improvement	0	0.0	2	0.2
Proficient	0	0.0	0	0.0
Advanced	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	**1,195**	**100**	**1,218**	**100**

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 12. 2015 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 8

	English Language Arts		Mathematics		Science and Technology/ Engineering	
	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]
Incomplete	218	19.9	191	16.8	111	10.4
Awareness	6	0.5	9	0.8	5	0.5
Emerging	61	5.6	89	7.8	149	13.9
Progressing	810	74.0	847	74.4	804	75.1
Needs Improvement	0	0.0	2	0.2	2	0.2
Proficient	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Advanced	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	**1,095**	**100**	**1,138**	**100**	**1,071**	**100**

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 13. 2015 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grades 9 and 10

	Grade 10 English Language Arts		Grade 10 Mathematics		Grades 9 and 10 Science and Technology/ Engineering	
	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]
Incomplete	132	14.3	144	15.4	167	17.2
Awareness	8	0.9	14	1.5	7	0.7
Emerging	216	23.4	197	21.0	154	15.9
Progressing	568	61.4	581	62.0	637	65.7
Needs Improvement	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	0.5
Proficient	0	0.0	1	0.1	0	0.0
Advanced	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	**925**	**100**	**937**	**100**	**970**	**100**

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 14. 2015 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grades 11 and 12

	English Language Arts		Mathematics		Science and Technology/ Engineering	
	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]
Incomplete	11	28.9	4	9.3	5	14.7
Awareness	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Emerging	6	15.8	5	11.6	5	14.7
Progressing	20	52.6	31	72.1	23	67.6
Needs Improvement	1	2.6	3	7.0	1	2.9
Proficient	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Advanced	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	**38**	**100**	**43**	**100**	**34**	**100**

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Appendix B. 2015 Standard Tests and MCAS-Alt Participation by Grade and Subject *

Table 15. Participation in 2015 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 3

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]
Standard tests	68,431	98.3	69,494	98.3
MCAS-Alt, based on grade-level achievement standards	0	0.0	0	0.0
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	1,218	1.7	1,205	1.7
Total students assessed	**69,649**	**100**	**69,669**	**100**

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 16. Participation in 2015 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 4

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]
Standard tests	67,822	98.2	67,945	98.2
MCAS-Alt, based on grade-level achievement standards	3	0.0	4	0.0
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	1,268	1.8	1,269	1.8
Total students assessed	**69,093**	**100**	**69,218**	**100**

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 17. Participation in 2015 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 5

	English Language Arts		Mathematics		Science and Technology/ Engineering	
	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]
Standard tests	69,197	98.3	69,219	98.2	69,720	98.4
MCAS-Alt, based on grade-level achievement standards	0	0.0	1	0.0	0	0.0
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	1,228	1.7	1,242	2.0	1,141	1.6
Total students assessed	**70,425**	**100**	**70,461**	**100**	**70,861**	**100**

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 18. Participation in 2015 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 6

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent [a]	Number	Percent [a]
Standard tests	69,256	98.2	69,240	98.2
MCAS-Alt, based on grade-level achievement standards	0	0.0	2	0.0
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	1,238	1.8	1,289	1.8
Total students assessed	**70,494**	**100**	**70,531**	**100**

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

***** Tables in Appendix B include students who participated in standard MCAS tests, and students in grades 3–8 who participated in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) tests in ELA and Mathematics. All students in grades 9 and 10, and all students in STE tested grades 5, 8, and 9/10, participated in MCAS.

Table 19. Participation in 2015 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 7

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	**Percent [a]**	**Number**	**Percent [a]**
Standard tests	68,663	98.3	68,483	98.2
MCAS-Alt, based on grade-level achievement standards	0	0.00	2	0.0
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	1,195	1.7	1,214	1.7
Total students assessed	**69,858**	**100**	**69,699**	**100**

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 20. Participation in 2015 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 8

	English Language Arts		Mathematics		Science and Technology/ Engineering	
	Number	**Percent [a]**	**Number**	**Percent [a]**	**Number**	**Percent [a]**
Standard tests	70,084	98.5	69,955	98.4	70,792	98.5
MCAS-Alt, based on grade-level achievement standards	1	0.0	3	0.0	3	0.0
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	1,094	1.5	1,133	1.6	1,066	1.5
Total students assessed	71,179	100	71,091	100	71,861	100

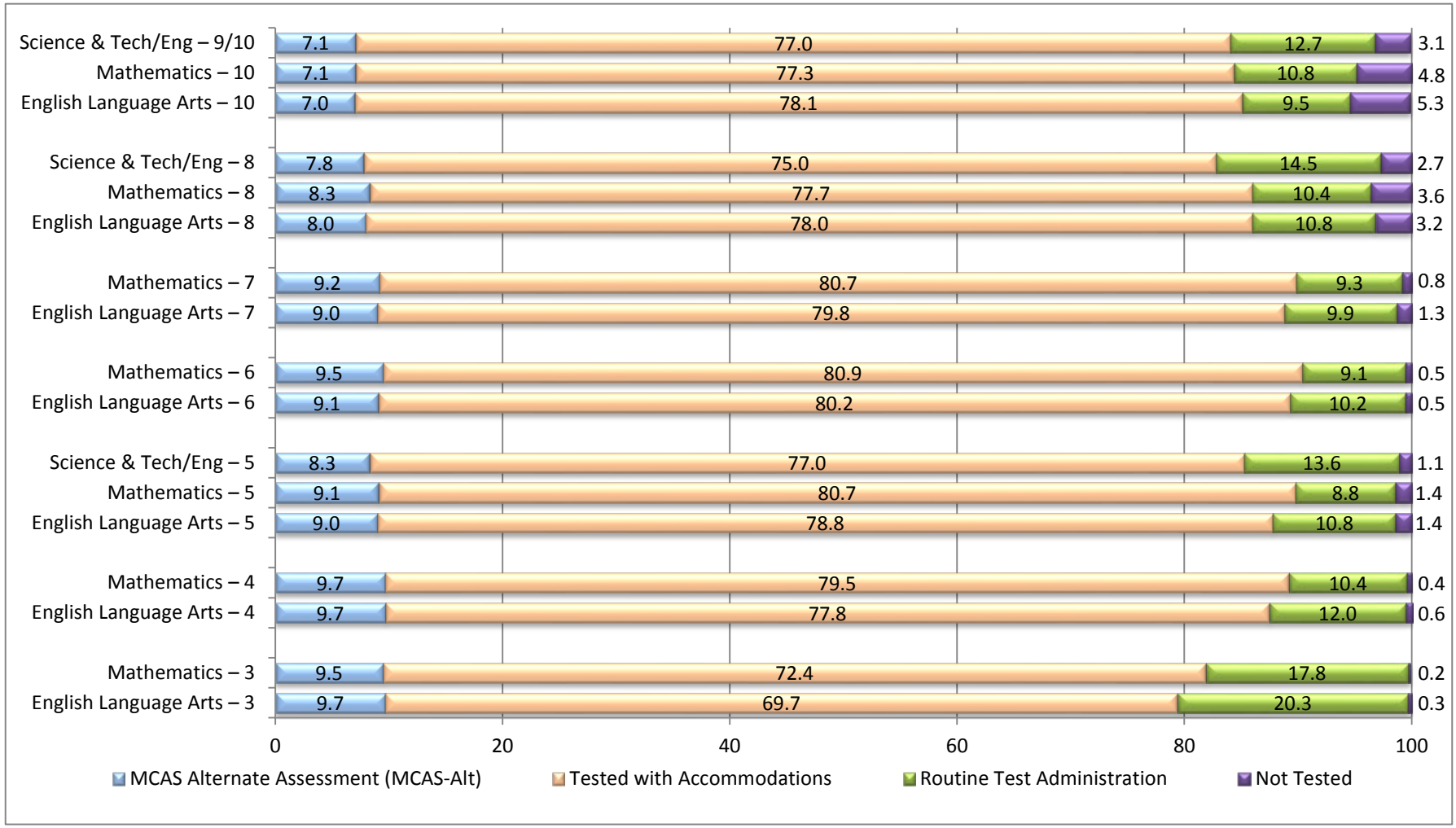
[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 21. Participation in 2015 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grades 9 and 10

	Grade 10 English Language Arts		Grade 10 Mathematics		Grades 9 and 10 Science and Technology/ Engineering	
	Number	**Percent [a]**	**Number**	**Percent [a]**	**Number**	**Percent [a]**
Standard tests	68,882	98.8	68,888	98.7	69,743	98.7
MCAS-Alt, based on grade-level achievement standards	4	0.0	4	0.0	6	0.0
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	865	1.2	875	1.3	723	1.0
Total students assessed	69,751	100	69,767	100	70,472	100

[a] Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Appendix C
2015 Participation Rate and Method of Participation by Students with Disabilities*
(Percentages of total students with disabilities in each grade)



* Appendix C includes students who participated in standard MCAS tests and students in grades 3–8 who participated in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) tests in ELA and Mathematics. All students in grades 9 and 10, and all students in STE tested grades 5, 8, and 9/10, participated in MCAS.

Appendix D. MCAS-Alt Achievement Levels and Descriptors

The MCAS-Alt achievement levels shown below are reported for each assessed subject based on scores obtained using the *Rubric for Scoring Portfolio Strands* (see Appendix E).

Achievement Level	Descriptor
Incomplete	The student's portfolio did not include the requisite evidence and information to allow an achievement level to be determined in the content area.
Awareness	The student demonstrates very little understanding of learning standards in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks in the content area (as indicated in the alternate assessment portfolio). The student requires extensive prompting and assistance, and performance is primarily inaccurate.
Emerging	The student demonstrates a simple understanding of a limited number of learning standards in the Massachusetts curriculum framework in the content area at below-grade-level expectations (as indicated in the alternate assessment portfolio). The student requires frequent prompting and assistance, and performance is limited and inconsistent.
Progressing	The student demonstrates a partial understanding of a limited number of learning standards in the Massachusetts curriculum framework in the content area, and addresses below-grade-level expectations (as indicated in the alternate assessment portfolio). The student appears to be receiving challenging instruction and is steadily learning new skills, concepts, and content. The student requires minimal prompting and assistance, and the performance is fundamentally accurate.
*Needs Improvement	The student demonstrates a partial understanding of subject matter in the Massachusetts curriculum framework in the content area and solves some simple problems at grade-level expectations.
*Proficient	The student demonstrates a solid understanding of challenging subject matter in the Massachusetts curriculum framework in the content area and solves a wide variety of problems at grade-level expectations.
*Advanced	The student demonstrates a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of subject matter in the Massachusetts curriculum framework in the content area and provides sophisticated solutions to complex problems at grade-level expectations.

* In order to earn a Competency Determination, students must achieve a score of either *Proficient* on the grade 10 English Language Arts and Mathematics tests, or a score of *Needs Improvement*, and satisfy the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan; for Science and Technology/Engineering, students must achieve a score of *Needs Improvement* on one of four high school STE tests.

Appendix E. 2015 MCAS-Alt Rubric for Scoring Portfolio Strands

	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Complexity	Portfolio strand reflects little or no basis in, or is unmatched to, curriculum frameworks learning standard(s) required for assessment.	Student primarily addresses social, motor, and communication "access skills" during instruction based on curriculum frameworks learning standards in this strand.	Student addresses curriculum frameworks learning standards that have been modified below grade-level expectations in this strand.	Student addresses a narrow sample of curriculum frameworks learning standards (1 or 2) at grade-level expectations in this strand.	Student addresses a broad range of curriculum frameworks learning standards (3 or more) at grade-level expectations in this strand.

	M	1	2	3	4
Demonstration of Skills and Concepts	The portfolio strand contains insufficient information to determine a score.	Student's performance is primarily inaccurate and demonstrates minimal understanding in this strand (0–25% accurate).	Student's performance is limited and inconsistent with regard to accuracy and demonstrates limited understanding in this strand (26–50% accurate).	Student's performance is mostly accurate and demonstrates some understanding in this strand (51–75% accurate).	Student's performance is accurate and is of consistently high quality in this strand (76–100% accurate).
Independence	The portfolio strand contains insufficient information to determine a score.	Student requires extensive verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (0–25% independent).	Student requires frequent verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (26–50% independent).	Student requires some verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (51–75% independent).	Student requires minimal verbal, visual, and physical assistance to demonstrate skills and concepts in this strand (76–100% independent).
Self-Evaluation	The portfolio strand does not show evidence of self-correction, task-monitoring, goal-setting, and reflection in this content area.	Student infrequently self-corrects monitors, sets goals, and reflects in this content area— only one example of self-evaluation was found in this strand.	Student self-corrects monitors, sets goals, and reflects in this content area—multiple examples of self-evaluation were found in this strand.		
Generalized Performance		Student demonstrates knowledge and skills in one context, or uses one approach and/or method of response and participation in this strand.	Student demonstrates knowledge and skills in multiple contexts, or uses multiple approaches and/or methods of response and participation In this strand.		