



2018 MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt): State Summary of Participation and Achievement

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Commissioner



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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 2018 MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt). The MCAS-Alt evaluates and reports on the annual achievement of these students in meeting state standards and provides parents and teachers with vital information to assist in planning students' instructional programs and monitoring their progress. In 2018, 7,976 students in grades 3–12 participated in the MCAS-Alt in at least one subject. This number represents an unduplicated count of *all* students who submitted a portfolio in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and/or Science and Technology/Engineering (STE), including first-year English learners (ELs) and high school students resubmitting their portfolios in grades 11–12.

This report includes the results of 7,601 students who participated for the first time in the ELA and/or Mathematics assessments in grades 3–8 and 10, and who took an STE assessment in grades 5 and 8, and either in grade 9 in 2017 or in grade 10 in 2018. Students who took the high school STE assessment in grade 9 are counted the following year, with the results of students in grade 10, for the purpose of determining school, district, and state accountability.

Students with significant disabilities are required by law to participate in statewide academic assessments and to be counted in the achievement results of all assessed students. Massachusetts publicly reports the aggregated results of all students, including those who participated in MCAS-Alt, in order to hold schools, districts, and the state accountable for the participation and achievement of *all* students, and when determining whether each Massachusetts school and district is making progress toward reducing proficiency gaps.

In 2018, among students participating in MCAS-Alt (not including students who are resubmitting a high school portfolio or who are first-year ELs), approximately 68 percent of students taking the MCAS-Alt earned a score at the *Progressing* achievement level. The percentage of students achieving 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 2018 MCAS-Alt administration are summarized below. Please see the appendices for results in each grade and subject, and for Achievement Levels and Descriptors.

- The number of students in grades 3–8 and 10 who participated in an alternate assessment in at least one content area was 7,601, or 1.5 percent of the total tested population. The overall number has decreased for the fifth consecutive year. The percentage of students with disabilities who participated in MCAS-Alt was 7.8 percent of all students with disabilities, which represents a 0.8 percent decrease from 2017.
- In English Language Arts (ELA), 58 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level, a decrease of 3 percentage points from 2017, when 61 percent did so. The highest achievement in ELA was at grade 5, where 63 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level. By contrast, the lowest achievement in ELA was at grade 10, where 51 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level.
- In Mathematics, 76 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level, a decrease of 2 percentage points from 2017, when 78 percent did so. The highest achievement in Mathematics was at grade 3, where 80 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level. By contrast, the lowest achievement was at grade 10, where 63 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level.
- In Science and Technology/Engineering (STE), averaged across grades 5, 8, and 10, 75 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level, a decrease of 1 percentage point from 2017, when 76 percent of students did so. The highest achievement in STE was at grade 5, where 79 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level. In grade 10, 67 percent of students performed at the *Progressing* level.
- Between 2017 and 2018, student achievement in ELA at the *Emerging* level, one level below *Progressing*, increased by 2 percentage points from 32 to 34. In Mathematics, students performing at the *Emerging* level increased by 2 percentage points to 10. In STE, 14 percent of students performed at the *Emerging* level.
- Student achievement at the *Awareness* level, one level below *Emerging*, was between 0.5 and 2 percent in all grades and subjects.
- The percentage of students whose alternate assessment portfolios were determined to be *Incomplete* increased in ELA. Between 2017 and 2018, averaged across all grades, the percentage in ELA increased from 5 to 6; was unchanged in Mathematics at 13 percent; and increased by one percentage point to 11 in STE.

Table 1. 2018 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 (3–8, and 10)	131	2	2479	34	4244	58%	4	0	440	6	7,298
Mathematics (3–8, and 10)	98	1	741	10	5569	76	5	0	947	13	7,360
Science and Technology/ Engineering* (5, 8, and 9/10)	14	0	392	14	2110	75	7	0	309	11	2,832

* Results of students who took one of the four high school STE tests in 2017 when they were in grade 9 are included in the 2018 grade 9/10 High School STE results listed above. However, results for grade 9 students who participated in 2018 high school STE tests will not be summarized for official school, district, or state reporting until 2019, when they will be included with the results of grade 10 students who took one of the four STE tests in 2018. Grade 10 STE results include only students continuously enrolled in the state from fall of grade 9 through spring of grade 10.

I. Introduction

This report describes the statewide participation rates and achievement results from the spring 2018 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 statewide academic assessment is required.

This report also presents information on students who participated in the MCAS-Alt, including the nature of their disabilities, their participation 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 2013–2018 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 instructional 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 assessing students on the MCAS-Alt based on modified academic outcomes is described in the [Resource Guide to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities](#).

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 how much knowledge and skills based on the curriculum frameworks 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 a 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 levels of complexity of content and skills have been modified substantially 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 disabilities may be considered for an alternate assessment based on *grade-level* (rather than *alternate*) achievement standards if their disabilities would present unique and significant challenges to demonstrating their knowledge and skills on a standardized computer- or paper-based test, even if accommodations were provided.

MCAS-Alt and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

This federal education law, passed in December 2015 and effective in the 2017–2018 school year, imposes a statewide cap of one percent of all students eligible for statewide testing on those taking alternate assessments based on *alternate achievement standards*. (Note: This cap does not include the “grade-level” or “competency” MCAS-Alt; only students taking the basic MCAS-Alt (i.e., alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards) who are achieving well-below grade-level expectations are included in the 1 percent).

The Commissioner posted guidelines based on the new restrictions in March 2017 and requested that districts review their recent data on students taking the MCAS-Alt. If a district projects that more than one percent of students would take the MCAS-Alt in the following school year, a justification in writing must be provided to the Department, plus assurances that IEP teams will be retrained annually on the updated guidelines provided by the Department. IEP team training materials are available, including a sample parent notification letter (translated into five languages) required by ESSA to be sent by districts informing parents of students for whom the MCAS-Alt was proposed that their “child’s participation in an alternate assessment may eventually delay or affect their ability to complete the state’s requirements for a high school diploma, since the MCAS-Alt assesses learning standards that are below the expectations needed to earn the Competency Determination.” Information and materials regarding the new ESSA “one percent” requirement are available on the Department’s [MCAS-Alt web page](#).

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 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 (except for the ELA–Writing assessment) documenting the student’s accuracy and independence over a period of time performing activities based on the learning standards being assessed. Data must be collected during at least 8 different instructional activities and must begin at a level of *accuracy* and/or *independence* below 80 percent in order to demonstrate that the student was taught challenging new skills, knowledge, and concepts. *Accuracy* is considered to be the percentage of correct student responses, and *independence* the percentage of tasks, items, or activities requiring *no* assistance to the student in responding.
- Supporting documentation, including descriptions provided by the teacher, reflection sheets that allow the student to evaluate his/her own performance, and other evidence that indicates the context of the instruction and/or the method of demonstrating knowledge and skills in the subject being assessed.

The development of portfolios is guided by information found 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 portfolios are submitted to the Department each spring, they are reviewed and scored by scorers who are supervised by Department staff and their expert trainers. 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, as well as the [Guidelines for Scoring MCAS-Alt Portfolios](#). Portfolios that lack the minimum required evidence and provide insufficient information are scored *Incomplete*.

Once preliminary scores are provided to districts in mid-June, a score appeals process allows a school to initiate a request to rescore portions of a portfolio, based on a perceived inaccuracy in the preliminary scoring. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Department staff and its contractor review the student’s portfolio and if necessary, rescore the section(s) in question. Scores may not be changed after the score appeals process is completed in late June.

III. Student Participation in 2018 MCAS-Alt

A total of 7,601 students in grades 3–8 and 10, or 1.5 percent of the total assessed population, participated in the MCAS-Alt in one or more content areas, as shown in Table 2. In grades 3–8, between 1.3 and 1.6 percent of students were alternately assessed in ELA, Mathematics, and grade 5 and 8 STE. At the high school level, 1.3 percent of students participated in the MCAS-Alt in ELA, Mathematics, and STE. See Appendix B for the MCAS-Alt participation rates in each grade and subject.

Between 7 and 9 percent of all assessed students with disabilities in each grade participated in the 2018 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 3–8 and 10 in at Least One Content Area Since 2004

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%
2016	8,373	1.7%	9.0%
2017	8,242	1.6%	8.6%
2018	7,601	1.5%	7.7%

Table 3 shows the number of students with disabilities who took the 2018 MCAS-Alt in each grade and subject.

Table 3. Participation in 2018 MCAS-Alt by Grade and Subject

Grade	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science and Technology/Engineering
3	1036	1034	–
4	1172	1180	–
5	1116	1128	1,052
6	1130	1144	–
7	1026	1033	–
8	946	959	914
9*	–	–	247
10	872	882	904
Total	7,298	7,360	3,117

*Participation for grade 9 students in one of the four high school STE tests is shown here but is not summarized for 2018 official school, district, or state reporting. The results of grade 9 students who participated in 2018 will be included next year with grade 10 students who took one of the four STE tests in 2019.

2018 Standard MCAS and MCAS-Alt Participation by Nature of Disability

Table 4 shows the distribution of primary disabilities among standard MCAS and MCAS-Alt participants. Approximately seventy-six percent of students who took MCAS-Alt had an **intellectual disability, autism, or multiple disabilities**, while seventy-eight percent of students who took standard MCAS had a **communication, emotional, health, or a specific learning disability**. See table 4 below and the pie chart on page 12 for students assessed in each of the primary disability categories.

Table 4. Nature of Primary Disability Among 2018 Standard MCAS and MCAS-Alt Participants in Grades 3–10^a

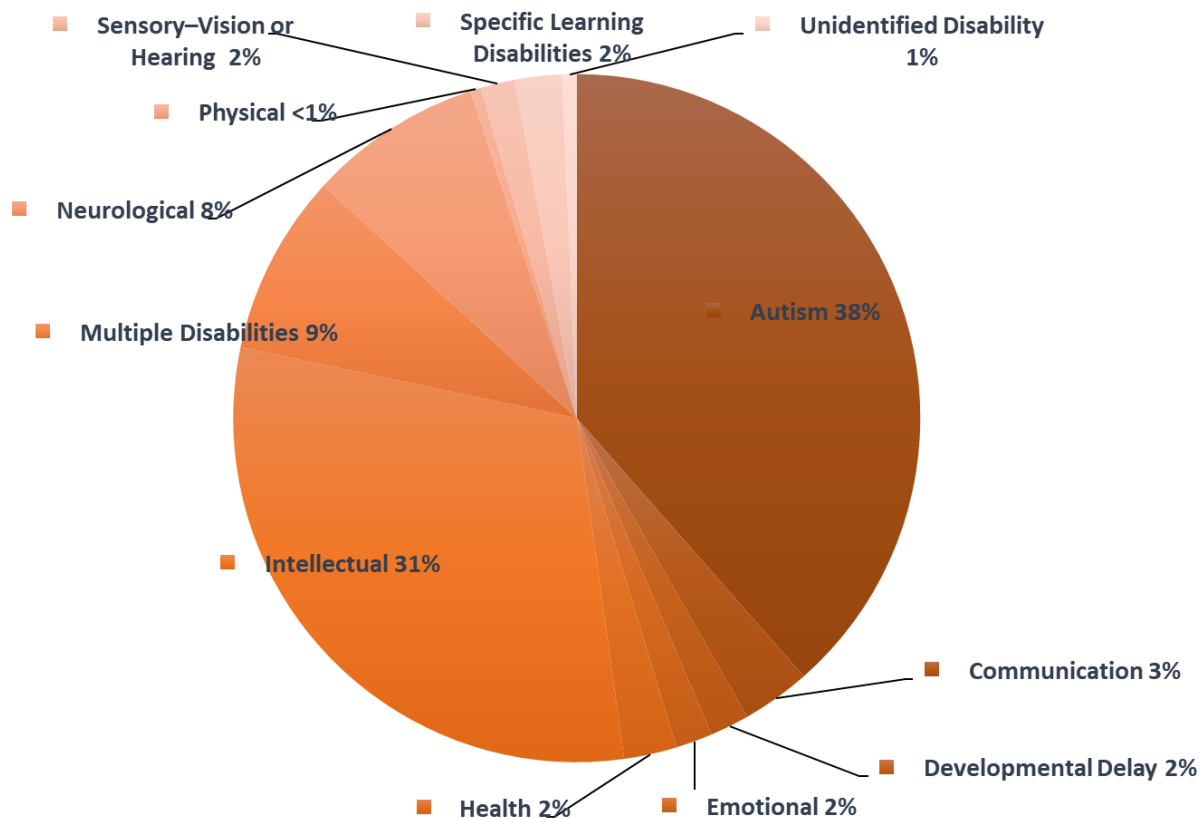
Primary Disability ^b	Number of Standard MCAS Participants in Primary Disability Category (n)	Percentage of Standard MCAS Participants in Primary Disability Category (n/90,134) ^c	Number of MCAS-Alt Participants in Primary Disability Category (n)	Percentage of MCAS-Alt Participants in Primary Disability Category (n/7,601) ^c
Autism	7,287	8.1	2,927	38.5
Communication	12,332	13.7	245	3.2
Developmental Delay	1,615	1.8	140	1.8
Emotional	10,244	11.4	132	1.7
Health	16,280	18.1	189	2.5
Intellectual	2,276	2.5	2,319	30.5
Multiple Disabilities	939	1.0	647	8.5
Neurological	5,905	6.6	622	8.2
Physical	469	0.5	37	0.5
Sensory/Deaf and Blind	59	0.1	26	0.3
Sensory/Hard of Hearing or Deaf	585	0.6	72	0.9
Sensory/Vision Impairment or Blind	301	0.3	25	0.3
Specific Learning Disabilities	31,651	35.1	168	2.2
Unidentified Disability	191	0.2	52	0.7
Total	90,134		7,601	

^a The number of standard MCAS and MCAS-Alt participants includes all students who took MCAS-Alt for accountability purposes 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 2018.

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

2018 MCAS-Alt Participation by Nature of Disability



IV. 2018 MCAS-Alt Student Results

On school and district rosters of results, MCAS-Alt scores are reported in the lowest achievement level on the standard MCAS tests: *Not Meeting Expectations* in ELA and Mathematics in grades 3–8; *Failing* in grade 10 ELA, Mathematics, and high school STE; and *Warning* in grades 5 and 8 STE.

For diagnostic and educational planning purposes, MCAS-Alt results are reported in the following three MCAS-Alt achievement levels: *Progressing*, *Emerging*, and *Awareness*. These three MCAS-Alt achievement levels provide meaningful information to interpret the achievement of students whose performance is below grade-level.

See Appendix D for descriptions of the MCAS-Alt achievement levels.

In 2018, the majority of students with significant disabilities performed at the *Progressing* level, indicating that they demonstrated the attainment of challenging academic goals at high levels of accuracy and independence, although below the grade-level expectations for nondisabled students. Results for the 2018 MCAS-Alt administration are summarized below.

- In grades 3–8 and 10, the percentage of students who scored *Progressing* was:
 - 58 percent in ELA
 - 76 percent in Mathematics
 - 75 percent in Science and Technology/Engineering*
- The percentage of students who scored *Emerging* was:
 - 34 percent in ELA
 - 10 percent in Mathematics
 - 14 percent in Science and Technology/Engineering*
- The percentage of students who scored *Awareness* was:
 - 2 percent in ELA
 - 1 percent in Mathematics
 - 0.5 percent in Science and Technology/Engineering*
- Overall, 10 percent of students who participated in the MCAS-Alt portfolio scored *Incomplete* in at least one subject, indicating that the portfolio 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:
 - 6 percent in ELA
 - 13 percent in Mathematics
 - 11 percent in Science and Technology/Engineering*

Appendix A displays achievement level results by grade and subject.

*Results for grade 9 students who participated in one of the four high school STE tests are not included here or summarized for official school, district, or state reporting until 2018, when they will be included with grade 10 students who took one of the four STE tests in 2018. Grade 10 results include only students continuously enrolled in the state from fall of grade 9 through spring of grade 10.

V. Grade-level Portfolios

A relatively small number of students who achieve grade-level expectations in their classwork, but who are unable to participate in standard MCAS tests even with the use of accommodations, due to the nature and severity of their disabilities, are encouraged to submit a “grade-level” MCAS-Alt portfolio (i.e., an alternate assessment based on *grade-level* achievement standards).

Grade-level portfolios require students to submit a range of work samples that address all aspects of selected standards in each content area that show evidence of the student’s thinking and independent problem-solving.

Students who demonstrate grade-level knowledge and skills on the grade 10 ELA or mathematics, or on the grade 5, 8, or high school STE test and who submit grade-level portfolios, are eligible to earn a score equivalent to a student who scores *Needs Improvement*, *Proficient*, or *Advanced* on one of the standard legacy MCAS tests.

Students, who demonstrate grade-level knowledge and skills in grades 3–8 ELA and/or mathematics, and who submit grade-level portfolios, are eligible to earn a score equivalent to a student who scores *Partially Meeting*, *Meeting*, or *Exceeding Expectations*.

VI. Competency Determination Portfolios

It is not anticipated that students with significant cognitive disabilities will meet the state’s minimum passing standard for high school graduation and earn a Competency Determination (CD) because the vast majority are working well below grade-level achievement standards. However, each year a small number of students who are working grade-level achievement standards and who participate in the high school MCAS-Alt, are able to earn a CD by submitting a portfolio that demonstrates a level of knowledge and skills comparable to that of a student who has passed the standard grade 10 MCAS tests in ELA, mathematics, and STE. Competency portfolios are evaluated by panels of content area experts to ensure that they meet the required standard of performance in that subject. Specific requirements for submission of CD portfolios are described in the [Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt](#).

Students may elect, but are not required, to resubmit their portfolios in ELA, mathematics, and/or STE 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 the MCAS-Alt and Met the Competency Determination Requirement in Each Subject

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
ELA	8	8	11	3	13	5	10	4	8	8	3	1
Math	3	1	15	6	10	12	10	14	10	7	3	1
Science and Tech/Eng							0	3	14	12	11	5
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total (2001-2018)					
ELA	3	1	2	0	0	2	90					
Math	12	5	4	4	4	2	123					
Science and Tech/Eng	9	12	6	5	10	7	94					

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

VII. School and District Accountability

The state’s updated accountability system was recently approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). MCAS-Alt results are included, together with the results of students who took the standard MCAS tests.

Changes to Accountability Reporting for 2018

Accountability classifications for schools that administer next-generation MCAS tests in grades 3–8 beginning in spring 2018 will be based on a combination of indicators, including:

- composite scaled MCAS scores in ELA and mathematics in grades 3-8 that are averaged for a school in each subject;
- average student growth percentile (SGP) in ELA and mathematics;
- progress toward attaining English language proficiency for students reported as English learners; and
- percentage of chronically absent students.

Full details on the state’s accountability system are available on the [Department’s website](#).

The score scale used for next-generation MCAS tests is shown in Table 6.

Table 6
Next-Generation MCAS Tests Scaled Score Ranges
ELA and mathematics grades 3–8

Standard Next Generation MCAS Achievement level	MCAS Scaled Score Range
Not Meeting Expectations (NM)	440-469
Partially Meeting Expectations (PM)	470-499
Meeting Expectations (M)	500-529
Exceeding Expectations (E)	530-560

The use of MCAS scores as an accountability indicator for grades 3–8 will necessitate assigning an *equivalent scaled score* to students who took the MCAS-Alt in ELA and mathematics in grades 3–8, as shown in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 7
Next-Generation MCAS Composite Scaled Score Assigned to MCAS-Alt Scores
 ELA and mathematics grades 3–8

MCAS-Alt achievement level, based on alternate achievement standards	MCAS Composite Scaled Score
Incomplete (INP)	455
Awareness (AWR)	470
Emerging (EMG)	485
Progressing (PRG)	500

Table 8
Grade-level MCAS-Alt Scaled Score Equivalents
 ELA and mathematics grades 3–8

MCAS-Alt achievement level, based on grade-level achievement standards	MCAS Composite Scaled Score
Partially Meeting Expectations (PM)	485
Meeting Expectations (M)	500
Exceeding Expectations (E)	530

Accountability reporting in 2018 for **grade 10 ELA and mathematics, and for high school science and technology/engineering (STE)** remains unchanged, with MCAS-Alt results reported using the Composite Performance Index (CPI) shown in Table 9.

Table 9
Composite Performance Index
 ELA and mathematics grade 10; STE grades 5, 8, and high school

Legacy MCAS Scaled Score	MCAS Achievement level	MCAS-Alt Achievement Level	CPI Points Awarded
240–280	Proficient and Advanced	Progressing (for certain disability types) ¹	100
230–238	Needs Improvement – High	Progressing (for certain disability types) ² and Emerging	75
220–228	Needs Improvement – Low	Awareness	50
210–218	Warning/Failing – High	Portfolio Incomplete	25
200–208	Warning/Failing – Low	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

So that the total number of students taking the MCAS-Alt who received 100 CPI points and were included in accountability determinations did not exceed one percent of the total number of students assessed, the following policy was implemented:

1. The Department assigned 100 CPI points only to students
 - who scored *Progressing* on the MCAS-Alt; and
 - who were identified through the Student Information Management System (SIMS) as having one of the following **primary disabilities**: *Intellectual, Sensory/Deaf and Blind, Multiple Disabilities, Autism, and Developmental Delay*; and
 - whose **level of need** for special education services were reported as *High*.

The Department further prioritized 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 assigned 75 CPI points to students who scored *Progressing* (from the above categories, but with lower levels of need), as well as those who were identified in SIMS as having one of 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 did not score at the *Progressing* level were assigned CPI points as follows: students scoring at the *Emerging* level received 75 CPI points, *Awareness* 50 CPI points, and *Incomplete* 25 CPI points.

VIII. Resources and Professional Development for Educators

The Department sponsors approximately 17 regional training sessions annually for educators responsible for conducting the MCAS-Alt. 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 assist their in-district colleagues and who assist at Department-sponsored training sessions.

Notices of [training opportunities](#) are sent to each school by fax, and bimonthly newsletters are sent to subscribers 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. 2018 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results by Grade and Subject

Table 10. 2018 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 3

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent ^a	Number	Percent ^a
Incomplete	45	4	111	11
Awareness	20	2	15	1
Emerging	398	38	84	8
Progressing	572	55	823	80
Partially Meeting	1	0	1	0
Meeting	0	0	0	0
Exceeding	0	0	0	0
Total	1,036		1,034	

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

Table 11. 2018 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 4

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent ^a	Number	Percent ^a
Incomplete	62	5	128	11
Awareness	21	2	23	2
Emerging	431	37	115	10
Progressing	657	56	912	77
Partially Meeting	1	0	2	0
Meeting	0	0	0	0
Exceeding	0	0	0	0
Total	1,172		1,180	

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

Table 12. 2018 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 5

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent ^a	Number	Percent ^a
Incomplete	51	5	152	13
Awareness	13	1	8	1
Emerging	353	32	89	8
Progressing	699	63	879	78
Partially Meeting	0	0	0	0
Meeting	0	0	0	0
Exceeding	0	0	0	0
Total	1,116		1,128	

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

Table 13. 2018 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 5 STE

Science and Technology/ Engineering		
	Number	Percent ^a
Incomplete	87	8
Awareness	5	0
Emerging	125	12
Progressing	835	79
Needs Improvement	0	0
Proficient	0	0
Advanced	0	0
Total	1,052	

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

Table 14. 2018 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 6

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent ^a	Number	Percent ^a
Incomplete	69	6	152	13
Awareness	18	2	18	2
Emerging	376	33	98	9
Progressing	667	59	876	77
Partially Meeting	0	0	0	0
Meeting	0	0	0	0
Exceeding	0	0	0	0
Total	1,130		1,144	

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

Table 15. 2018 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 7

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent ^a	Number	Percent ^a
Incomplete	65	6	132	13
Awareness	16	2	12	1
Emerging	308	30	74	7
Progressing	637	62	815	79
Partially Meeting	0	0	0	0
Meeting	0	0	0	0
Exceeding	0	0	0	0
Total	1,026		1,033	

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

Table 16. 2018 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 8

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent ^a	Number	Percent ^a
Incomplete	59	6	144	15
Awareness	18	2	9	1
Emerging	304	32	94	10
Progressing	565	60	712	74
Partially Meeting	0	0	0	0
Meeting	0	0	0	0
Exceeding	0	0	0	0
Total	946		959	

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

Table 17. 2018 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 8 STE

	Science and Technology/ Engineering	
	Number	Percent ^a
Incomplete	72	8
Awareness	3	0
Emerging	142	16
Progressing	697	76
Needs Improvement	0	0
Proficient	0	0
Advanced	0	0
Total	914	

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

Table 18. 2018 MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Results: Grade 10

	English Language Arts		Mathematics		Science and Technology/ Engineering ^b	
	Number	Percent ^a	Number	Percent ^a	Number	Percent ^a
Incomplete	89	10	128	15	154	17
Awareness	25	3	13	1	7	1
Emerging	309	35	187	21	130	15
Progressing	447	51	552	63	590	66
Needs Improvement	2	0	0	0	4	0
Proficient	0	0	2	0	3	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	872		882		888	

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

^b Results for grade 9 students who participated in one of the four high school STE tests in 2018 are not included here or summarized for official school, district, or state reporting until 2018, when they will be included with grade 10 students who took one of the four STE tests in 2018.

Appendix B. 2018 Participation in Standard Tests and MCAS-Alt by Grade and Subject

Table 19. Participation in 2018 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 3

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Standard tests	69,264	98.6	69,465	98.5
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	1,019	1.4	1,044	1.5
Total students assessed	70,283		70,509	

Table 20. Participation in 2018 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 4

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Standard tests	71,607	98.4	71,685	98.4
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	1,153	1.6	1,190	1.6
Total students assessed	72,760		72,875	

Table 21. Participation in 2018 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 5

	English Language Arts		Mathematics		Science and Technology/ Engineering	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent ^a	Number	Percent
Standard tests	71,943	98.5	72,016	98.5	71,979	98.6
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	1,104	1.5	1,130	1.5	1,053	1.4
Total students assessed	73,047		73,146		73,032	

Table 22. Participation in 2018 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 6

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Standard tests	70,671	98.4	70,725	98.4
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	1,118	1.6	1,150	1.6
Total students assessed	71,789		71,875	

Table 23. Participation in 2018 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 7

	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Standard tests	70,465	98.6	70,490	98.6
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	1,019	1.4	1,035	1.4
Total students assessed	71,484		71,525	

Table 24. Participation in 2018 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grade 8

	English Language Arts		Mathematics		Science and Technology/ Engineering	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Standard tests	71,657	98.7	71,688	98.7	71,542	98.7
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	943	1.3	964	1.3	919	1.3
Total students assessed	72,600		72,652		72,461	

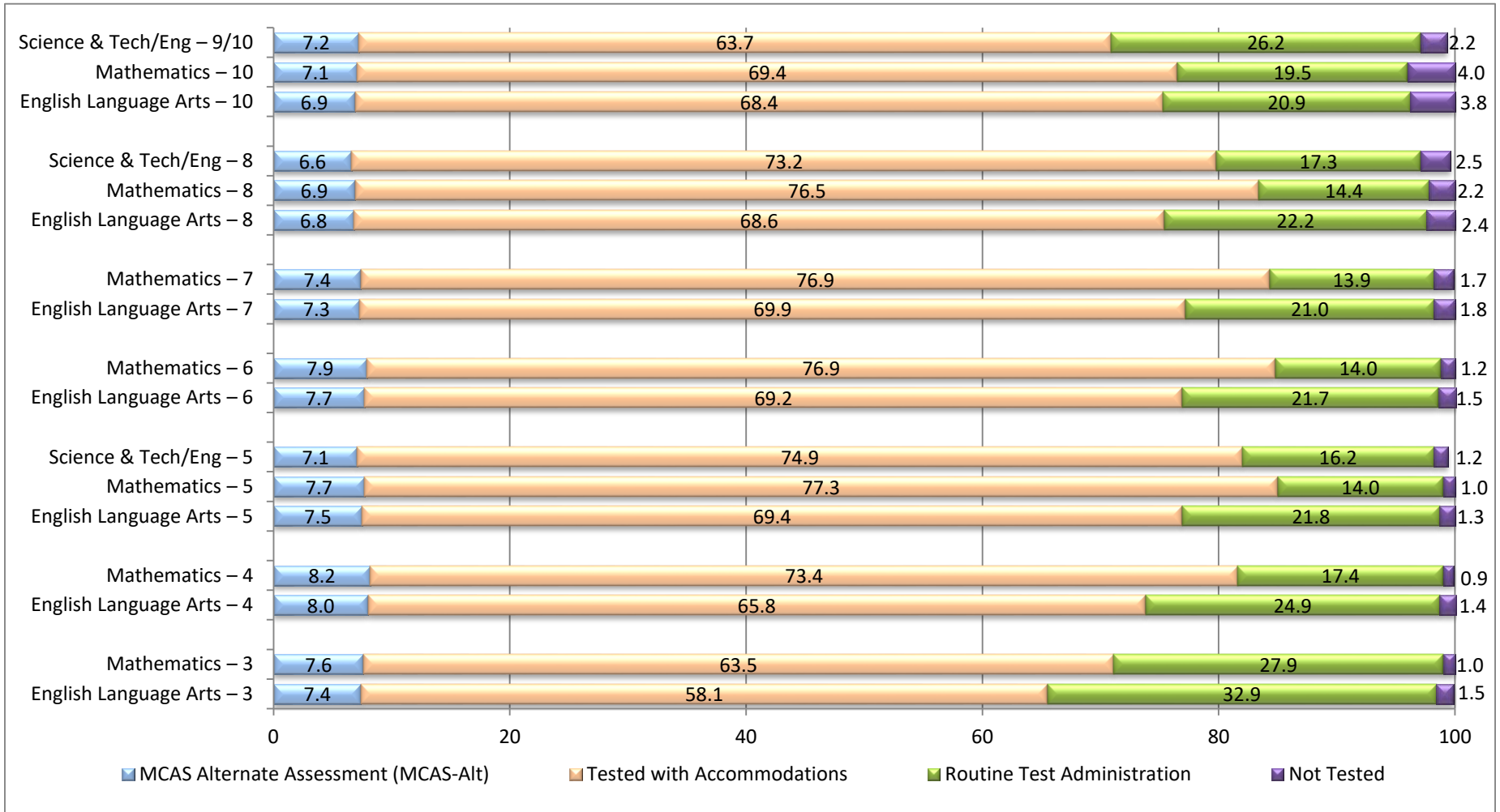
Table 25. Participation in 2018 MCAS and MCAS-Alt: Grades 9/10

	English Language Arts		Mathematics		Science and Technology/ Engineering ^a	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent ^a	Number	Percent
Standard tests	70,450	98.8	70,150	98.8	70,974	98.7
MCAS-Alt, based on alternate achievement standards	862	1.2	883	1.2	907	1.3
Total students assessed	71,312		71,033		71,881	

^aSTE includes students in grades 9 and 10 who participated in any of the four subjects (Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics, and Technology/Engineering).

Appendix C: 2018 Participation Rate and Method of Participation by Students with Disabilities

(Percentages of total students with disabilities in each grade)



Appendix D. Achievement Levels and Descriptors shown below are reported for each assessed subject for MCAS Legacy and Next Generation test. MCAS-Alt scores are based on the *Rubric for Scoring Portfolio Strands* (see Appendix E). All MCAS-Alt assessments are based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

High School and STE Achievement Level and Descriptor ("Legacy" MCAS)	Grades 3-8 Achievement Level and Descriptor ("Next-Generation" MCAS)
<p>Advanced* Student demonstrates a comprehensive and in-depth understanding in the content area and provides sophisticated solutions to complex problems at grade-level expectations.</p>	<p>Exceeding Expectations Students exceed grade-level expectations for knowledge, skills, and understanding and are academically well prepared to succeed at the next grade level.</p>
<p>Proficient* Student demonstrates a solid understanding of challenging subject matter in the content area and solves a wide variety of problems at grade-level expectations.</p>	<p>Meeting Expectations Students meets grade-level expectations for knowledge, skills, and understanding and are academically prepared to succeed at the next grade level.</p>
<p>Needs Improvement* Student demonstrates a partial understanding of subject matter in the content area and solves some simple problems at grade-level expectations.</p>	<p>Partially Meeting Expectations Student partially meets grade-level expectations for knowledge, skills, and understanding. May need coordinated assistance to succeed at the next grade level.</p>
<p>*In order to earn a Competency Determination, students must achieve a score of either <i>Proficient</i> on the grade 10 English Language Arts and Mathematics tests; or a score of <i>Needs Improvement</i>, and satisfy the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan; for Science and Technology Engineering students must achieve a score of <i>Needs Improvement</i> on one of four high school STE tests.</p>	

MCAS-Alt Achievement Level Descriptors (for all grades)

<p>Awareness</p>	<p>The student demonstrates very little understanding of learning standards in the content area (as indicated in the alternate assessment portfolio). The student requires extensive prompting and assistance, and performance is primarily inaccurate.</p>
<p>Emerging</p>	<p>The student demonstrates a simple understanding of a limited number of learning standards 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.</p>
<p>Progressing</p>	<p>The student demonstrates a partial understanding of a limited number of learning standards 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.</p>

Appendix E. 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.		