Quincy Public Schools

MCAS 2.0
A Resource Guide for Parents
December 2016

Quincy Public Schools
Curriculum and Assessment Team
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What is MCAS 2.0?

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) is in the process of upgrading MCAS to better measure the critical thinking skills students need for success in the 21st century.

The new test, informally called "Next-Generation MCAS," will build upon the best aspects of the MCAS assessments that have served the Commonwealth well for the past two decades. The test will include innovative items developed by PARCC, along with new items specifically created to assess the Massachusetts learning standards.

Next-Generation MCAS are designed to be taken on a computer. The plan is to phase in computer-based testing so that computer-based tests are fully administered statewide in 2019, with many students participating as well in 2017 and 2018.

The development of Next-Generation MCAS will focus on:

- Combining PARCC, MCAS, and newly developed items into new ELA and math tests
- Creating stronger alignment to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks
    - Introducing writing in response to text at all grades
    - Developing and implementing new types of items that more deeply assess the standards
    - Assessing Massachusetts-specific standards
- Developing a consistent set of performance standards across all grades
- Phasing in computer-based testing
- Developing an appropriate sequence of tests for high school to gauge college and career readiness
- Setting standards for the 10th grade Competency Determination (CD) tests in English language arts and math, beginning with the class of 2021, to provide reliable feedback on whether students are on track for success after high school. (The current MCAS remains a requirement through the class of 2020.)

(Information collected from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)

Transitioning to MCAS 2.0

2017: All students in grades 3-8 will be transitioning to MCAS 2.0 in the spring.
- Students in grades 4 and 8 will be participating in the <u>computer-based</u> administration of MCAS 2.0.
- Students in grades 3, 5, 6, and 7 will be taking the <u>paper-based</u> version of MCAS 2.0.
- Students in grade 10 will be given the current MCAS test. Transition to MCAS 2.0 will not occur until the class of 2021 (this year's eighth graders).

2018: All students in grades 4, 5, 7, and 8 will be participating in the <u>computer-based</u> administration of MCAS 2.0.
- Students in grades 3 and 6 will take the <u>paper-based</u> version of MCAS 2.0.
- Students in grade 10 will be given the current MCAS test. Transition to MCAS 2.0 will not occur until the class of 2021.

2019: All students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 will be participating in the <u>computer-based</u> administration of MCAS 2.0.

2017 Test Schedule Grades 3-8

ELA test session window	April 3rd – May 3rd
Math test session window	April 4th – May 26th
STE test session window (5 and 8)	April 5th – May 26th

(Information collected from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)

Test Design

English Language Arts

Some parts of the MCAS 2.0 assessment will remain the same.
1) Students will be given reading passage sets (both Literary and informational) to complete.
2) All test questions are based on the given reading passages.

Some parts of the MCAS 2.0 will be new for students.
1) The test will be computer based. (see Transitioning to MCAS 2.0)
2) MCAS 2.0 will include new question types.
3) Writing will be embedded within the ELA test at all grade levels and connected to the reading passages.

Mathematics

Some parts of the MCAS 2.0 assessment will remain the same.
1) Students will participate in two sessions.
2) Certain test item types will remain the same. (Multiple-choice, short- answer, and open-response)
3) The number of open-response items per grade will remain the same. (4 per grade level)

Some parts of the MCAS 2.0 will be new for students.
1) The test will be computer based. (see Transitioning to MCAS 2.0)
2) MCAS 2.0 will include new item types.
3) Calculator restrictions for grades 7-8.
- Grade 7: A five-function calculator is allowed (Session 2 only)
- Grade 8: A scientific calculator is allowed (Session 2 only)
3) The number of points in grade 3 has increased.
4) Students will not be using tool kits as on previous tests.
5) Updated reference sheets for will be available for grades 5-8.

(Information collected from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)

MCAS 2.0 Question Types

English Language Arts

Question Type	Total Points	Grade Levels
Multiple Choice Students select the correct answer(s) from among several answer options.	1 or 2	3-8
Technology Enhanced Students taking the computer-based test answer questions using technology such as drag-and-drop or hot spot.	2	3-8
Short Response Students construct a short written response, approximately the length of a paragraph.	3	3 and 4
Narrative Essay Students write an essay in response to text they have read.	12-15	3-8
Text-Based Essays Students write an essay in response to text(s) they have read.	7	3-5
	8	6-8

Mathematics

Question Type	Total Points	Grade Levels
Multiple Choice Students select one correct answer from among several answer options.	1	3-8
Multiple Select Students select more than one correct answer from among several answer options.	1	3-8
Short Answer/Fill-in-the-Blank Students construct a short written response, typically only a word or a number.	1	3-8
Technology Enhanced Students answer questions using technology such as drag-and-drop or hot spot (on the computer based test only).	1 or 2	3-5
	1, 2, or 4	6-8
Open Response Students write a response to a multi-part item that includes answers and explanations to all parts.	2 or 3	3
	3 or 4	4-8

Accessibility and Accommodations

For Spring 2017, the following will be available for all students.
- Untimed test sessions
- Blank scratch paper
- Assistance from a test administrator regarding the use of the computer-based testing platform.

The following are accessibility features and accommodations that will be available to students in grades 3-8.

Universal Accessibility Features: Many supports that were previously considered accommodations are now available to *all* students, either on the computer-based tests or on the paper-based equivalent.

- Use of a highlighter or highlighting tool
- Alternative background or font color
- Use of a magnification tool
- Tracking device or line reader tool (masks text so only part of the text is visible at one time)
- Use of answer masking
- Item flag or bookmarker
- Test administrator reads aloud selected words on Mathematics or Science and Technology/Engineering test, as requested by the student
- Test administrator redirects student's attention to the test
- Read aloud, repeat, or clarify general test administration directions to student, as needed.

Accommodations: As before, accommodations will be available to students with disabilities, with several new accommodations now available to English language learners. Teams and educators responsible for developing   Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 plans must make decisions regarding accommodations, and these must be listed in the plan of each student.

Special Access Accommodations: Formerly called *nonstandard accommodations*, these accommodations will be offered to students who meet certain guidelines and criteria.

(Information collected from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)

Accommodations for Students Who Are English Language Learners (ELLs)

In addition to universal features and designated features available to all students, the following accommodations are available to ELLs, either with or without disabilities, on MCAS tests.

- **Paper-based editions** of the grades 3−8 Mathematics or Science and Technology/Engineering tests may be administered to a first-year ELL student
- Approved Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionary and Glossary
- Text-to-Speech for Mathematics test only or human read aloud for Mathematics and/or Science and Technology and Engineering Tests
- Scribe for Mathematics and/or Science and Technology and Engineering Tests
- Read aloud, repeat, or clarify general test administration directions in English

(Information collected from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)

Helping Your Child At Home

The following are suggested links to websites and resources that may assist your child in preparing for MCAS 2.0. In addition, your child's teacher will also spend time throughout year exposing your child to sample questions, passages, and practice tests so that they are prepared to participate in the spring testing sessions.

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Systems Home Page
http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/

ELA Test Design
http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/tdd/ela.html?section=testdesign

Mathematics Test Design
http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/tdd/math.html?section=testdesign

PARCC Resources
PARCC information for Parents
http://www.parcconline.org/resources/parent-resources

PARCC released items
https://prc.parcconline.org/assessments/parcc-released-items

PARCC Test Tutorials
https://parcc.pearson.com/tutorial/

PARCC Sample Items Using Computer-Based Tools
https://parcc.pearson.com/sample-items/

Keyboarding Resources:
BBC – Bitesize Dance Mat Typing
http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/z3c6tfr

e-learning for kids
http://www.e-learningforkids.org/computer-skills/

Learning Games for Kids.com
http://www.learninggamesforkids.com/keyboarding_games.html

Sense~Lang.org
http://www.sense-lang.org/typing/

FreeTypingGame.net
http://www.freetypinggame.net/

Practice Using Technology Enhanced Items
http://nextgen.apps.sparcc.org/