Presenters

- Shannon Cullen, Test Administration Coordinator
- Robert Pelychaty, Manager of Inclusive Assessment
- David Ragsdale, Test Security Specialist
- Jodie Zalk, Manager of Test Administration and Publications
- Marco Andrade, Director of Research and Accountability at Worcester Public Schools

Logistics for This Session

- Use the Q&A feature to ask a question.
  - We will answer some questions aloud at specified times during this training session, and we will email the Q&A afterwards.
  - Use the thumbs-up icon to "upvote" someone else's question.
  - Email student-specific questions to mcas@mass.gov instead of asking here.
- Closed captioning has been enabled for participants who need it.
- This session is being interpreted into ASL. Our interpreting team will be onscreen with the presenters.
- Please be advised that DESE does not authorize attendees to record or to use AI transcription tools during the meeting and DESE does not endorse any unauthorized transcripts created by third parties of its meetings.

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Slides for This Session

- Slides were emailed to participants before this session from MCASEvents@cognia.org.

- Slides are now being posted in the chat.
  - If you cannot access the slides in the chat, ask in the Q&A.

- After the session, we will send the slides again to participants, and they will be posted in the MCAS Resource Center along with the recording.

Today's Agenda

1. Introduction and Resources
2. Test Administration Protocols
3. Preparation for Computer-Based Testing
4. Test Security Requirements
5. Accessibility and Accommodations
6. A District's Perspective: Worcester Public Schools
7. Additional Resources, Support, and Next Steps
8. Protocols for Paper-Based Testing (PBT)

Poll Question

Have you attended any of DESE's MCAS training sessions this school year?

A. 3 or more
B. 1 or 2
C. This is my first one.

1. Introduction and Resources

Introduction to MCAS Computer-Based Testing

- **MCAS Portal**: The test administration and management website used by test coordinators, technology coordinators, and test administrators.

- **MCAS Training Site**: Test coordinators, technology coordinators, and test administrators may use this site to practice with MCAS Portal tasks and administer practice tests.

- **MCAS Student Kiosk**: Student testing platform

Commonly Used Acronyms

- **CBT:** Computer-based testing
- **PBT:** Paper-based testing
- **SIMS:** Student Information Management System
- **EL:** English learner
- **ELA:** English Language Arts
- **STE:** Science and Technology/Engineering

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Commonly Used Terminology

- **Form-Dependent Accommodation:** A subset of accommodations that are particularly important to assign correctly before a student begins testing, including ASL, Compatible Assistive Technology, Human Read-Aloud, Human Signer, Screen Reader, and Spanish/English for CBT, and Large Print, Braille, and Spanish/English for PBT.

MCAS Portal Terminology

- **Class:** A group of students in the MCAS Portal taking the same test at the same time in the same place. Schools group students into "classes" in the MCAS Portal before testing.

- **Proctor password:** A proctor password is an additional security measure that is required in certain situations. The proctor password is available on the MCAS Portal Administration home page.

Delivery Dates for Manuals and Materials for Paper-Based Testing (PBT)

- Grades 3–8:
  - **March 9:** Receive all manuals, and ELA PBT materials
  - **April 13:** Receive Math/STE/Civics PBT materials
- Grade 10:
  - **March 10:** Receive manuals for ELA and Math, and ELA PBT materials
  - **May 5:** Receive Math PBT materials
- High School Science:
  - **May 19:** Receive manuals and PBT materials

MCAS Page on the DESE Website

Spring 2026 MCAS Test Administration Resources for Grades 3–8 and High School

- MCAS Pre-Administration Guide 2025–26
- Test Administration Manuals
  - Principal's Administration Manual (PAM) and Test Administrator's Manuals (TAMs) available now
  - Spanish/English scripts to be available soon
- Test Administration Sample Forms and Materials
- Additional Policies/Resources
- Technology-Related Resources for Computer-Based Testing
- High School Participation Guidelines

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MCAS Resource Center

MCAS RESOURCE CENTER   MCAS Portal   Tech Setup   Training +   Practice Tests +   Released Items +   Service Center

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Welcome to the MCAS Resource Center

This website provides access to test administration information, training, practice tests, and other resources to help schools and districts prepare for and administer the MCAS tests. Select the logo to the left for test administration manuals and policy guidance.

MCAS Portal

Sign in to the MCAS Portal to manage test administration tasks, such as completing student registration, updating user accounts, and managing online testing. Also on this page, access guides and other resources for completing MCAS Portal tasks.

MCAS Portal

Technology Setup

Access technology requirements and user guides.

Technology Setup

Training

Access short training modules that provide step-by-step instructions to computer-based testing and using the MCAS Portal, and view recordings of previous training sessions.

Training

Practice Tests

Access resources to prepare students for computer-based testing, including the tutorial, practice tests, equation editor guides, and other resources.

Released Items

Access released items from the computer-based and paper-based MCAS tests.

Released Items

MCAS Service Center

Access the MCAS Service Center website for test administration and reporting tasks (e.g., completing the Principal's Certification of Proper Test Administration, ordering additional

MCAS Resource Center

- MCAS Portal page
  - Live links to the MCAS Portal and MCAS Training Site
  - Guide to the MCAS Portal and excerpts

- Technology Setup page
  - Download links for the MCAS Student Kiosk
  - MCAS Student Kiosk Technology Guide and excerpts

- Training page
  - Contains links to previously recorded webinars and accompanying slides and training modules

- Practice Tests page
  - CBT and PBT practice tests, tutorial, and other resources

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Orientation to the *Principal's Administration Manual* (PAM)

Icons:

technology coordinators

accessibility and accommodations, and information related to students with disabilities and ELs

training

Front matter	purpose of the PAM, contact information and information on online accounts, testing schedule, updates	
Part I	MCAS Test Security Requirements	page 1
Part II	Student Participation	page 11
Page III	MCAS Test Administration Protocols	page 15
Part IV	Tasks to Complete for Test Administration	page 37
	Checklist of tasks	page 38
Appendix A	Tasks and Guidance for Technology Coordinators	page 55
Appendix B	Procedures for Paper-Based testing	page 73
Appendix C	Accessibility and Accommodations	page 93
Appendix D	Procedures Related to Student Information and Guidance on Reporting	page 129
Appendix E	Selected Forms	page 137

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2. Test Administration Protocols

General Timeline for MCAS CBT Pre-Administration Tasks

Beginning in Fall 2025

- (Ongoing) Read biweekly Student Assessment Updates.
- Become familiar with CBT components.
- Identify the school test administration team.
- Establish a communication plan with the test administration team.
- Update contact info with DESE.
- Begin planning for accessibility features and accommodations.

At least 2 months before testing

- Update user accounts in the MCAS Portal and create additional accounts.
- View online modules and participate in training sessions.
- Meet with the technology coordinator, who will review the tech specs and prepare the school's technology, including Site Readiness.
- Complete Student Registration.
- Administer the student tutorial and practice tests.

At least 2 weeks before testing

- Train test administrators in protocols and security requirements.
- Prepare devices and materials.
- Review instructions in the *Principal's Administration Manual*.
  - Delivered to schools 2 weeks before spring ELA, and one week before each fall/winter administration. Available online beforehand.

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Identify Your Test Administration Team

- Meet with the technology coordinator and begin technology preparations.

- Consider assignments for test administrators.

- Develop your communication plan for technology and administration.

- Update contact information with DESE and in the MCAS Portal as needed.

  - See the Guide to the MCAS Portal, Part II: MCAS Portal User Management for guidance on updating MCAS Portal accounts.

Identify "Who," "Where," and "When" (Late Winter/Early Spring)

- Particularly for high schools, identify all students participating in each grade's tests.
  - High school participation guidelines available

- Assign accessibility features and accommodations.
  - Plan for where accommodations will be administered (e.g., students with a one-to-one administration).
  - Determine which staff members will administer accommodations requiring the Nondisclosure Acknowledgment form.

- Establish testing locations and develop staffing plans.
  - Prepare list of test administrators and students for school records, and assign/update user roles in the MCAS Portal (details on upcoming slide).
  - Begin training plans for test administrators and staff.
  - Plan for secure testing environments.
  - Slide template for training test administrators to be updated in early Feb.; template for February Science available

Scheduling Considerations

- The MCAS Student Kiosk will be available between 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday–Friday, except the week of April school vacation; request special access to test outside these hours (see PAM page 24).

- Grades 4 and 10 Math, and grades 5 and 8 STE:
  - Decide whether to administer the optional questionnaire directly after Session 2 or another time.

- Plan logistics related to scheduling.
  - One break per session, around 3–5 minutes, at test administrator's discretion.
  - Make plans for students who finish early and students who need extra time, including students who work through lunch; consider using dismissal waves.

Scheduling Considerations (cont'd)

- If needed for efficiency, you can group together students in different grades taking the same subject-area test for make-up testing, as long as the TAM script matches.
  - **ELA:** Grades 3–8
  - **Math:** Grades 3 and 4, grades 5 and 6, grades 7 and 8
  - **STE:** Grades 5 and 8
- Do not group together students doing CBT and any students doing PBT.

Scheduling Considerations (cont'd)

- Note that in the MCAS Portal, classes are grade and subject-specific for grades 3–8. **New for 2026**, high school classes are subject-specific; students from multiple grade levels taking the same test can be placed in the same class.

dese | Home | Site Readiness | Students | Enrollment Transfer | Classes | Test Scheduling | Materials Management | Student Registration | Dashboard

👤 Shannon Cullen | ❓ MCAS Resource Center | ⏻ Log Out

Mathematics Classes in Cyber City Sch DLV1

Cyber City Sch DLV1 (Cyber City) ⇕   Mathematics ⇕   Create Course Level Class | Upload Classes

Important Note: Schools must select the appropriate tab below before continuing.
- High schools must select the **Course level tab** below to create course-level classes.
- Grades 3-8 must select the **Grade level tab** below to create grade-level classes.

Course Level | Grade Level

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Scheduling Considerations for Spanish/English Tests

- As staffing permits, DESE recommends separate testing locations for students taking a Spanish/English and students taking an English test. Why?
    - If both groups of students will test at the same time, both scripts must be read to all students (this will extend the time needed for testing).
    - Test administrators will also need to manage two separate "classes" and access codes in the MCAS Portal (students taking the Spanish/English tests must be assigned to a separate class).

Update Student Information

In SIMS (DESE Student Information Management System)

- Go to the [People Search page](#) on the Profiles website, select **SIMS Contact** from the Function menu, and click **Get Results**

- Data source: School Interoperability Framework (SIF) for Student Registration for districts that use SIF (October SIMS for non-SIF districts)

In the MCAS Portal

- Pre-administration Student Registration deadlines for PBT test materials and CBT/PBT manuals are as follows:
  - **January 30** for grades 3–8
  - **February 6** for grade 10 ELA and Mathematics
  - **April 28** for High school Science

[January 15 Overview of Student Registration Webinar](#)

Poll Question

Where do you work?

A. At an elementary school
B. At a middle school
C. At a combined middle/high school
D. At a high school
E. At a district office
F. Other

2026 Grades 3–8 <u>Administration Schedule</u>

ELA testing window	**March 23–April 17** (Note that ELA will be administered earlier than Mathematics and STE.)
Mathematics testing window	**April 27–May 22**
STE testing window (grades 5 and 8)	**April 27–May 22**
Civics testing window (grade 8)	**April 27–June 5**

- These testing windows include *all* make-up testing.
- The sequence for administering tests should be as follows, *when possible*
  - *first* ELA
  - *followed by* Mathematics
  - *followed by* STE
  - Civics can be administered at any time between April 27 and June 5.

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Recommended Testing Times for Grades 3–8

MCAS Subject Area Test for Grades 3–8	Recommended Testing Times for Spring 2026 (2 sessions per test)
ELA	2 to 2½ hours per session
Mathematics	1½ hours per session
Grades 5 and 8 STE	1 to 1½ hours per session
Grade 8 Civics	State-level performance task: 1 hour
	End-of-course (EOC) test: 1 hour

- Each test session must be administered simultaneously to all students taking that particular test in your school except for students who receive DF10 (Specific Time of Day) or DF3 (Frequent Breaks). See Part III, section C, of the PAM for scheduling guidance.

2026 Grade 10 Administration Schedule

ELA Testing Window	**March 24–April 2**
Recommended dates:	
• ELA Session 1	March 24
• ELA Session 2	March 25
Mathematics Testing Window	**May 19–27**
Recommended dates:	
• Mathematics Session 1	May 19
• Mathematics Session 2	May 20

New for 2025–26: High school tests now have testing windows and DESE is providing recommended dates instead of prescribed dates.

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2026 High School Science Administration Schedule

High School Science Testing Window	June 2–10
Recommended dates:	
• High School Science Session 1	June 2
• High School Science Session 2	June 3

New for 2025–26: High school tests now have testing windows and DESE is providing recommended dates instead of prescribed dates.

Recommended Testing Times for High Schools

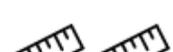| MCAS Subject Area Test for High School	Recommended Testing Times for Spring 2026 (2 sessions per test)
Grade 10 ELA	Session 1: 2½ hours Session 2: 1½ to 2 hours
Grade 10 Mathematics	1½ to 2 hours per session
High School Science	1½ hours per session

Preparing Students and Families for CBT
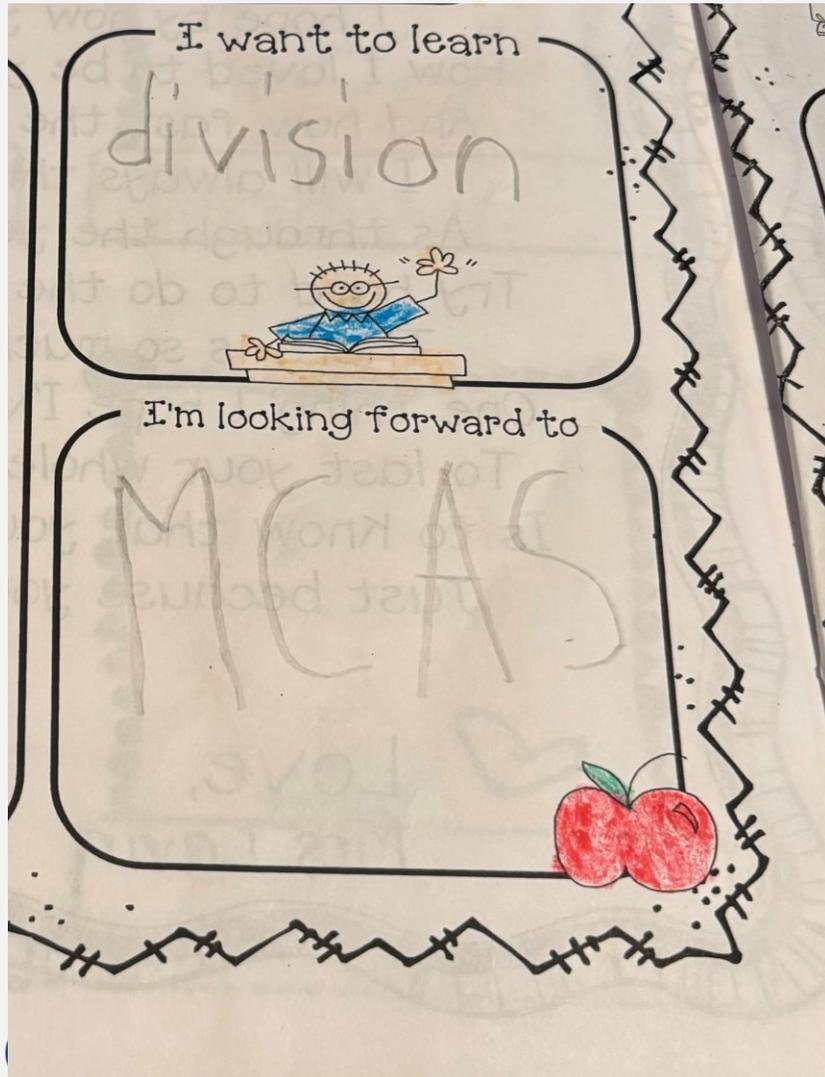
- Student tutorial
  - Demonstration of the navigation, tools, and features for CBT
  - Students complete it independently (no audio)
- Practice tests
  - Simulation of the tools and features for CBT
  - Include accessibility features and accommodated test forms
  - Equation editor guides and reference sheets for Math and STE
- MCAS Item Library (previously released items)
- Sample student work from previous MCAS tests
- Resources for parents/guardians
- Topics in the PAM for students and parents/guardians; newsletter or meetings (pages 32–35)

Prepare Materials that Your School Will Provide to Students

For the list of materials that are required or permitted for testing, and materials prohibited from testing, refer to the PAM beginning on page 17.

3. Preparation for Computer-Based Testing

Test Coordinator Tasks in the MCAS Portal – Before Testing

Fall 2025
- Create/update MCAS Portal user accounts
- Download the updated MCAS Student Kiosk to student devices and conduct Site Readiness (tech. coordinators)

Approx. 2 months before testing
Submit Student Registration

Approx. 2 weeks before testing
- Create classes in the MCAS Portal
- Verify accommodations

One week before testing
Schedule classes to tests

Up to one week before testing
Print student logins (DESE recommends 1–2 days)

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Test Coordinator Tasks in the MCAS Portal – During and After Testing

During Testing

- Resolve incorrect accommodations and other issues
- Manage makeup testing
- Void tests as needed

After Testing

- Fill in not tested codes
- Void tests as needed

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Poll Question

As a principal or school test coordinator, who should you contact if you don't have an MCAS Portal account?

A. Another principal or test coordinator
B. Technology coordinator
C. Call the MCAS Service Center
D. District test coordinator

MCAS Portal Accounts

- MCAS Portal accounts do not expire automatically. Districts and schools are responsible for updating and deactivating user accounts as needed.

- MCAS Portal passwords expire every 365 days. Users will need to reset their password after this time frame.

- For assistance with MCAS Portal accounts, users should request support as described below.

Role	Who to contact for support
Test administrators and school-level technology coordinators	Their principal or school test coordinator
Principals, school test coordinators, and district-level technology coordinators	Their district test coordinator
District test coordinators	MCAS Service Center

CBT Technology Preparations – Technology Coordinator

- Technology Coordinator tasks include:
  - Review the MCAS Student Kiosk Technology Guide
    - Includes technology setup and guidelines, kiosk installation instructions, and site readiness instructions.
  - Install the updated MCAS Student Kiosk on testing devices (*fall 2025*).
    - Schools using Chromebooks: Technology coordinators will follow the instructions to install the new PWA.
      - Refer to Part IV A of the MCAS Student Kiosk Technology Guide and the recording of the January 13 ChromeOS Kiosk Installation webinar for step-by-step instructions.
  - Conduct Site Readiness (*fall 2025*).
  - Review Appendix A of the PAM for additional tasks.
  - Review the Overview of MCAS Administration Tasks for Technology Coordinators training session.

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CBT Technology Preparations – Principal/Test Coordinator

- Principals/test coordinators should meet with the technology coordinator to confirm they have completed the tasks listed above, and plan for set-up and troubleshooting during test administration.
  - See PAM page 42 (section B, step 1), and Appendix A (page 55).
  - Prepare devices, hardware, and network settings.
    - Can use the Computer-based Testing Device Planner
    - e.g., power strips, battery adapters, extension cords, extra devices for each testing area, external keyboards for tablets, headphones for text-to-speech accommodation

Site Readiness

- Site readiness is a two-step process (Site Readiness Testing and Site Certification) conducted by technology coordinators to:
  - Confirm that installation of the updated MCAS Student Kiosk was done correctly on student devices
  - Confirm that testing devices meet the minimum requirements and have been properly configured
  - Confirm that test content reaches student devices without issue
  - Identify any potential technology-related issues before testing begins

- Site readiness should have been conducted in fall 2025. Please confirm with your technology coordinators.
  - If the school's technology setup has changed since conducting Site Readiness, it is recommended to conduct Site Readiness again prior to testing.

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Site Readiness (cont'd)

- General steps for Site Readiness:
  - Technology coordinators complete two-part test on each device type
  - Technology coordinators certify Site Readiness in the MCAS Portal.
  - School and district test coordinators confirm that technology coordinators have completed Site Certification.

- DESE will follow up with schools that do not complete Site Readiness.

Test Administrator Tasks in the MCAS Portal

Approx. 3 weeks before testing

Verify access to MCAS Portal account

Up to 2 days before testing

Verify that students have the correct form-dependent accommodations in the MCAS Portal (slide 45)

Before students arrive

- Verify student roster
- Verify accommodations on student summary page

During testing

- Distribute student logins
- Monitor student testing status in the MCAS Portal
- Enter proctor password as needed

Note: Schools may choose to have the test coordinator complete these tasks instead of test administrators.

CBT Preparations – Test Administrators

- Familiarize test administrators with tasks they may need to complete in the MCAS Portal
  - Instructions and troubleshooting steps: CBT TAM Appendix E
  - If there is a technology situation in which a student is waiting more than 15–20 minutes, schedule the student to complete the session at another time, after calling the MCAS Service Center for support (800-737-5103).
- Overview of the MCAS Portal for Test Administrators module to be available on the MCAS Resource Center soon.

Test Administrator Tasks in the MCAS Portal

Refer to the pages in the Guide to the MCAS Portal listed below for further details and screenshots.

- Accessing the proctor password (pages 9–10)
- Viewing scheduled tests (pages 110–113)
- Verifying accommodated form assignments (pages 111–112)
- Verifying accommodations on student summary sheet (page 115)
- Accessing the access codes (pages 111–112, 115)
- Monitoring student testing status (pages 126–127)

Sample Student Summary Page

Class Name: Class One-(Grade -03)
Test Name: ELA_G3_Practice Test
Testing Window: 1/8/2025 to 1/31/2025

Test administrators will write the access code on the board.

Session Sequence	Session Name	Access Code
1	Session 1	7228380883
2	Session 2	7762508063

Student Name	Date of Birth	Username	Password	Accommodations
Demo, Matt	5/30/2005	4087153355	jf9s8xmp	
Demo, Steve	5/30/2005	7059530559	zq25893j	ELA03-(Mouse Pointer,Text to Speech Special)
Demo, Zachery	5/30/2005		f522b	
Four, Student	1/2/2008		25sfh	ELA03-(Mouse Pointer,Speech to Text Special)

Check that accommodations are correct before testing.

Steps to Complete for Principals/Test Coordinators During and After Testing

- CBT tasks for principals/test coordinators:
  - Tasks to complete during testing: beginning on PAM page 49
  - Tasks to complete after testing: beginning on PAM page 52

- Ask the district SIMS contact to update student data as necessary.

- Be prepared to check preliminary data according to the reporting schedule, which will be provided in a spring edition of the Student Assessment Update.

- Additional training sessions will be held later this winter.

Go online to the __MCAS Service Center website__ to complete the PCPA.

- Principals must complete the PCPA to certify that the school has followed proper MCAS test security protocols.
- See PAM page 52 (section I, step 4) for steps to complete the PCPAs.
  - Note: The PCPA may not be completed by a designee.
- Use your school's 2026 password for the MCAS Service Center website to access the PCPA.
  - Password letters are in DropBox Central in DESE's Security Portal.
  - See the Dec. 10 Student Assessment Update for details.
  - Schools that do not find their password in their DropBox should email mcas@mass.gov, and questions about completing the PCPA should be sent to mcas@cognia.org.
- Deadline dates for submitting the PCPAs:
  - Grades 3–8: **June 8**
  - Grade 10 ELA and Math: **May 28**
  - High school Science: **June 11**

Resources for MCAS Portal Tasks

General MCAS Portal Resources

- [Guide to the MCAS Portal](#)
- [Recordings of recent training sessions](#)
- [Register](#) for future trainings and office hours sessions

Resources for Completing (and Updating) Student Registration

- [Guide to the MCAS Portal Part III: Student Registration](#)
- [Guide to the MCAS Portal Part IV: Enrollment Transfers](#)
- [Student Registration Data Definitions](#)
- [Student Registration Template](#)

Resources for Pre-Administration Tasks in the MCAS Portal

- [Guide to the MCAS Portal Part V: Creating and Managing Classes](#)
- [Guide to the MCAS Portal Part VI: Scheduling Tests, Printing Student Logins, and Other Tasks on the Test Scheduling Page](#)
- [Modules](#)

Questions and Answers

Use the "Q&A" feature to
ask questions.
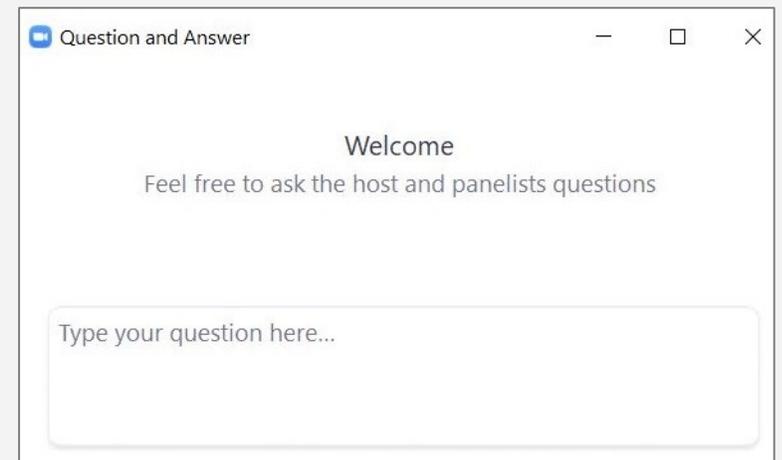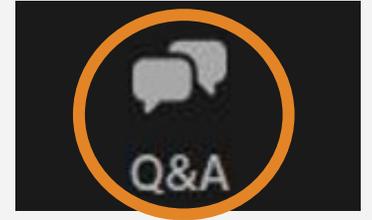
4. Test Security Requirements

Poll Question

Which of these are testing irregularities? *(Select all that apply.)*

A. wearing a smartwatch during testing
B. a student with accommodation A9 using a filled-in supplemental reference sheet for Introductory Physics
C. using a handheld calculator on a computer-based Science test
D. students passing notes during testing
E. photographing the computer screen and using an AI app to solve a question
F. listening to music with wireless earbuds during testing
G. reading a word aloud to a student (who requests it) on the grade 8 Civics test

The Importance of Leadership

- Staff and students take their cues from above – leaders set the tone.
- Superintendents
    - should review their principals' test security plans and be comfortable with the procedures in their buildings (PAM, page 3)
    - are encouraged to visit their schools and observe testing
- Principals
    - must establish school-wide expectations for a proper test administration
    - must ensure that test administrators are properly trained
    - must ensure that MCAS protocols are being followed
    - must ensure that accommodations are correctly given
    - must sign the Principal's Certification of Proper Test Administration (PCPA) at the end of testing and attest to a proper test administration

Poll Question

Which of the following materials are secure? *(Select all that apply.)*

A.   blank scratch paper

B.   used scratch paper

C.   student logins

D.   supplemental reference sheets for students with accommodation A9

E.   test & answer booklets

F.   summary pages

Secure Content and Materials for CBT

- ## Secure content
  - MCAS questions not publicly released by DESE
    - including reading passages, diagrams, writing prompts and other information on testing screens and (for PBT) in testing booklets
  - student responses to test questions

- ## Secure materials
  - student logins and test administrator logins
  - summary pages from the student login PDFs
  - used scratch paper after testing (until it is securely destroyed)
  - booklets containing test content or student responses (for PBT)

Confidentiality of Secure Test Content

- Principals, test administrators, and others are prohibited from
    - Viewing test content (on screens or in booklets)
    - Duplicating or reproducing test content
        - Technology staff may not take photographs of computer screens.
    - Discussing test content with anyone before, during, or after testing
        - Exception for a student reporting a concern about a test question (refer to instructions in the PAM)

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Exceptions to Prohibition of Test Administrators Viewing MCAS Content

- Administering certain accommodations (MCAS Nondisclosure Acknowledgment required) listed on page 99 of the PAM.
  - Accommodations A2, A3.1, A3.2, A3.3, A5, A6.1, A8, A10.1, A10.2, A11, A12, A13, A14, A15
  - Special access accommodations SAA1.2, SAA2, SAA3.1, SAA3.2, SAA6
  - English learner accommodations EL3.2, EL4.1, EL4.2
- Assisting a student with the computer interface during testing
- Reading a word or phrase aloud on Mathematics, Science, or Civics tests – Universal Accessibility Feature 11 (UF11)
  - See page 95 of the PAM for the description of UF11

Handling and Storage of Secure Materials

- Store all secure materials in a secure central location.
  - locked when tests are not being administered
  - restricted access
- Maintain the chain of custody of materials during test administration.
  - Internal tracking forms
  - Schools can develop their own tracking forms, as long as they adhere to the requirements described on pages 16–17 of the PAM.
  - Independent counts of secure materials
  - Do not leave materials unattended.

A Secure Testing Environment – Out of the Room

- Students must be supervised when out of the testing room.
  - e.g., using the restroom, visiting the nurse, moving to a test completion room or supervised lunch
- A few options
  - hallway monitors
  - monitors stationed at restrooms with lines of sight to testing rooms
  - staff who escort students to and from the restroom
- Optional scripts in Test Administrator's Manuals (TAMs)
  - the transition to a test completion room
  - a supervised lunch break
  - students visiting the restroom

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A Secure Testing Environment – In the Room

- Cover or remove prohibited classroom displays.
- No unauthorized visitors in testing rooms
  - parents, media, non-testing students
  - teachers not assigned to the room as test administrators
- Testing rooms may be entered by
  - technology staff for troubleshooting
  - school administrators (including the testing coordinator)
  - district personnel
  - DESE observers
- When possible, use two test administrators in the room.

Secure Room Set-up for Computer-Based Testing

- Students must not be able to view any screen but their own.
  - Set up rooms in advance to test out different seating arrangements (e.g., spreading desks out, staggering desks, turning desks in different directions).
  - Consider physical barriers (partitions, privacy screens, cardboard taped to the side of monitors).
  - Have an administrator walk around at the start of testing and check all the rooms.

Prohibited Materials

- Make sure students understand they are not allowed to have
  - cell phones and other electronic devices (e.g., wireless ear buds, smartwatches)
  - calculators on noncalculator tests and sessions
  - notes or reference material beyond what they're given, such as additional reference sheets, graphic organizers, multiplication grids (exceptions for certain accommodations)
  - smart glasses
- A poster showing examples of prohibited materials is available for download and printing.

Examples of Collecting Cell Phones

Thanks to Swampscott High School

Thanks to Lowell High School

Pouch example

Poll Question

How do you ensure students don't have access to cell phones during testing? *(Select all that apply.)*

A.   Students put phones in backpacks and put backpacks to the side/back of the room.

B.   Phones are collected and kept at the front of the room with the test administrator.

C.   Phones are put in lockers and not allowed in the testing room.

D.   Students are not allowed to have phones at school.

E.   Student phones are locked away during the school day (e.g., in storage cases or magnetically sealed pouches).

F.   Other

Training Test Administrators and Other Personnel

- All individuals involved in MCAS administration must participate in a school-provided training session that covers
  - MCAS test security requirements (Part I of the PAM)
  - MCAS test administration protocols (Part III of the PAM)
  - School-specific procedures and logistics
- Trainings should be live and synchronous (although they can be virtual).
- Sample slides for training test administrators will be posted soon.

Training Test Administrators and Other Personnel – Documentation

- Test administrators must sign forms to acknowledge the following:
  - participation in training
  - receipt of TAMs
    - combined sample form
- Test administrators who will administer certain accommodations to students with disabilities or ELs must sign an MCAS Nondisclosure Acknowledgment
  - See page 22 of the CBT TAM, page 20 of the PBT TAM, or page 99 of the PAM for the list of accommodations this requirement applies to (also listed on slide 57).

Test Administrator Responsibilities

- Test administrators must
  - Maintain the chain of custody of secure materials.
  - Make sure students have the correct materials for each session.
  - Follow instructions in the TAMs and read scripts verbatim.
  - Circulate throughout the room to prevent cheating and the use of prohibited materials – active proctoring.
  - Focus their full attention on the testing room.
  - Refrain from coaching students or influencing their responses in any way.

What is Coaching?

- Providing hints or clues
  - "Break down the problem using the steps we covered in class last week." "What's the acronym for order of operations?" "Consider it from the main character's perspective." "Don't forget to use specific examples in your essay."
- Indicating in any way that a student has answered a question incorrectly:
  - "You should look at that one again."
  - "Check your work" (to a specific student on a specific question)
- Defining or spelling words
- Explaining, simplifying, or paraphrasing any part of the test
- Suggesting that a student write more
- Influencing a student's response through gestures, facial expressions, nods, body language, or changes in voice inflection

What is Permitted?

- Assisting students with technology-related problems
  - helping a student sign in to the MCAS Student Kiosk (this is the only situation in which a test administrator may type directly into a student's test)
  - pointing to a tool button if a student is unable to find it
  - explaining to a student how to enter a result in the equation editor
  - explaining how to navigate to the review screen
- Re-reading part of the TAM script to students
  - E.g., as students finish, TAs can re-read the script about checking their work.
- Encouraging students:
  - "Just do your best." "Just give your best effort." "Do the best you can." "Just answer it as well as you can."

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Test Security Requirements for Students

- Students' results may be invalidated if they engage in any of the following activities:
  - duplicating any portion of secure test content
  - accessing prohibited materials such as cell phones or other electronic devices
  - communicating with other students (e.g., talking, whispering, writing notes)
  - looking at any other student's computer screen or answer booklet
  - asking for or receiving help from anyone
  - providing help to another student
  - consulting notes, books, or instructional materials during testing
- See sample form for students and a sample letter to send to parents (recommended for grades 6 and up)

Poll Question

What should you do *first* if a testing irregularity happens at your school?

A. Call DESE's Office of Student Assessment Services.

B. Call the MCAS Service Center.

C. Contact the student's parents/guardians.

D. Email an irregularity report to DESE.

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Steps to Take after a Security Incident or Irregularity

- Investigate the incident.
  - Talk to the test administrator(s) involved.
  - Talk to any students involved.
  - Determine whether the incident occurred *during* testing or *after* the student had completed testing.
  - Collect documents (e.g., notes, extra reference sheets).
  - If reporting a read-aloud or text-to-speech violation, determine how much of the test was read.
  - If reporting an incident involving a calculator or prohibited math tool (e.g., a multiplication chart), determine which items were solved with the tool.
- Call DESE at 781-338-3625.
- Submit a report if instructed to.
- Take any local action that is appropriate.

Poll Question

Which are the four most commonly reported testing irregularities? *(Select all that apply.)*

A. Accessing cell phones

B. Wearing wireless ear buds

C. Students without accommodation A9 using a supplemental reference sheet

D. Students accessing prohibited reference materials (e.g., multiplication charts, classwork, homework)

E. Students copying answers from each other

F. Test administrators coaching students

G. Students passing notes

Questions and Answers

Use the "Q&A" feature to ask questions.
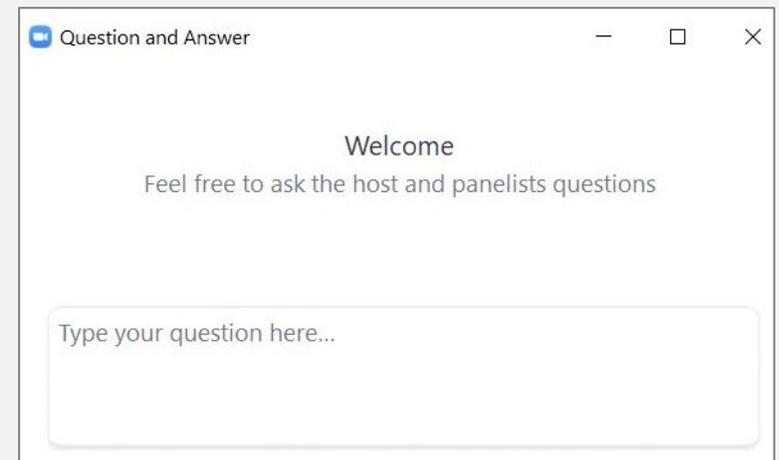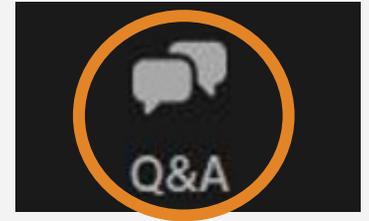
5. Accessibility and Accommodations

Resources for Accessibility and Accommodations

Category	Resources
Test administration manuals	• Appendix C of the PAM • Appendices B, C, and D of the CBT TAM • Appendices A–F of the PBT TAM
Other guidance materials	• Accessibility and Accommodations Manual, including excerpts and other resources • Procedures During Testing for Students Who Use a Cell Phone or Smartwatch to Monitor Medical Information • Guide to the MCAS Portal, Section E of Part III: Form-Dependent Accommodations
Previous trainings and modules	Recordings and slides in the MCAS Resource Center on the Training page • January 15: Overview of Student Registration • January 22: MCAS Accessibility and Accommodations

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Participation of Students with Disabilities and EL Students

- **Students with disabilities**
  - Participate according to IEP or 504 plan
  - **Paper-based tests** are available as an accommodation for students with disabilities who are unable to use a computer for testing.
- **English learners (ELs)** are required to participate in MCAS or MCAS-Alt in all subjects required for their grade.
  - **Exception**: First-year ELs have option to participate in ELA testing for diagnostic purposes only.
    - "First-year EL" is a student whose name does not appear in March 2025 SIMS.
  - **Paper-based tests** available as an accommodation for first-year ELs unfamiliar with technology
  - Bilingual word-to-word dictionaries available for current ELs and students who were ever EL
  - Spanish/English tests available for all grades and subjects except ELA
- See Appendix C of the PAM for more information.

Test Preparation

- **Students** should:
  - Become familiar with features and basic functionality of MCAS Student Kiosk.
  - **Review student tutorial and take online practice tests** prior to test administration.

- **Schools** should:
  - **Plan for testing students with accommodations.**
  - Schedule testing locations, test administrators, and testing time.
  - Set up specialized computers/Assistive Technology (AT) after reviewing IEPs, 504 plans, and local EL accommodations forms.
  - Plan to monitor accommodations.

Prohibitions for Accommodations

Test administrators may NOT:

- Provide accommodations not listed in
  - a student's IEP or 504 plan
  - Appendix C of the PAM, without prior DESE approval
- Provide a student with a modified version of a test or a test for a different grade.
- Coach or assist a student with their responses
  - E.g., "Write more" or "Go back and review"
  - Provide clues/assistance/definitions

Students' results may be invalidated for these situations:

- Using an English-language dictionary for ELA
- Reading aloud the ELA test to a student who does not have this Special Access accommodation in their IEP
- Giving a calculator on noncalculator session of the Mathematics test to a student who does not have this Special Access accommodation in their IEP
- Test administrator coaching or assisting a student

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Questions and Answers
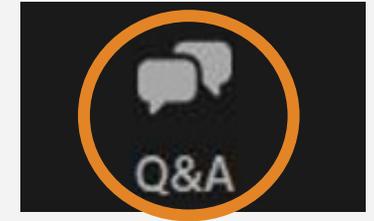
Use the "Q&A" feature to ask questions.
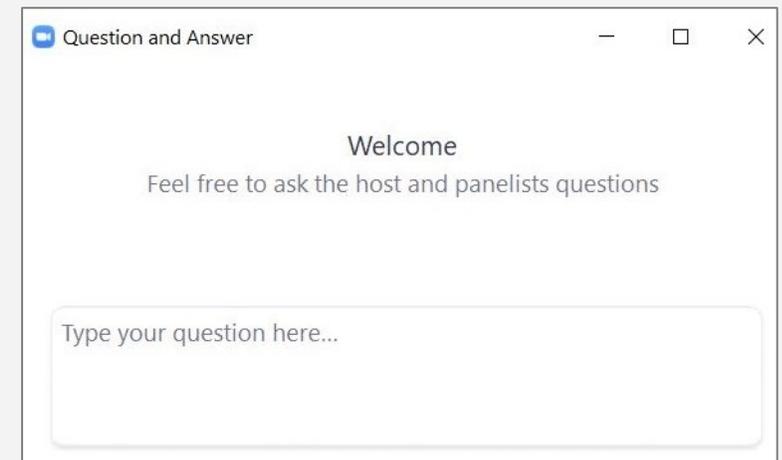
6. A District's Perspective:
Sharing Notes on How Worcester Public Schools Approached the New Test Administration Process

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Worcester Public Schools
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Team Structure

District Test Coordinator	District Tech Coordinator
• *Points of contact at elementary/middle schools* • *Assessment Coordinators at high schools*	*Tech contacts at schools*
• Provides training • Makes info available • Communicates relevant info • Troubleshoots & supports administration • Monitors/site visits	• Updates to devices • Site surveys Communicates with school PoC to make sure devices are updated • Connects on testing day to troubleshoot devices & testing • Ensures our devices can run the test throughout the year - to minimize pushing out updates (primarily Chromebooks but some MacBooks)

WPS Comprehensive Assessment & Survey System
2024-2025

Assessment Name	Grade	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
MTSS Screeners/Diagnostics												
Early Screening Inventory (ESI)	K	8/26 - 9/6										
STAR	1 - 9 (Math); 2 - 9 (Reading)	8/26 - 9/20				12/2- 12/20					5/19 - 6/13	
DIBELS	K - 6	8/26 - 9/20					1/13- 1/31				5/19 - 6/13	
Surveys												
WPS Culture & Climate/SEL Survey	4 - 12, teachers & parents							2/10 - 3/14				
WPS Culture & Climate Pulse Checks	4 - 12			10/7 - 10/11		12/2- 12/6					5/27 - 6/6	
Senior Survey	12									4/28 - 5/30		
State Accountability & Summative Assessments												
ACCESS/ACCESS ALT	K - 12						1/6 - 2/14					
Seal of Biliteracy	12							2/3 - 2/28	3/10 - 3/28			
MCAS	3 - 8 & 10				*Below				*SEE MCAS SCHEDULE BELOW			
MCAS Alt	3 - 10								3/28			
PSAT	11; 10 optional			10/23*								
Advanced Placement Exams (AP)	9 - 12										TBD	
SAT (optional)	*optional*	*8/24*		*10/5*	*11/2*	*12/7*			*3/8*		*5/3*	*6/7*

*MCAS SCHEDULE:	November Retests		February Bio/Phys	March Retests		Spring Grs 3 - 8				Spring Gr 10		Spring Grs 9 - 11
	ELA	Math	Biology/Physics	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	Sci (5 & 8)	Civics (8)	ELA	Math	Bio/Intro Physics
	11/6 & 11/7	11/12 & 11/13	2/4 & 2/5	3/6 & 3/7	3/11 & 3/12	3/24 - 4/18	4/28 - 5/23	4/28 - 5/23	4/28 - 6/6	3/25 - 3/26	5/20 - 5/21	6/4 & 6/5

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Communication

- Weekly bulletins

- Office of Research and Accountability (ORA) Hub

ORA Resource Hub

Office of Research & Accountability (ORA) Information

Meet the ORA Team

Bulletins

District Testing Calendar

Assessments & Surveys

ACCESS Testing

Common Assessments

Culture & Climate/SEL Surveys

DIBELS/Early Literacy Screening

MCAS Testing

PSAT

STAR /Renaissance Testing

Using Data to Drive Change

Data Literacy

School Growth Plans

Privacy Rights

Office of Research and Accountability
September 26, 2025 Bulletin

Contact ORA at 508-799-3592

ORA Resources:
Resource Hub | District Testing Calendar | Common Assessment Calendar | SDPA status
Data Literacy Guide | Custom Data Viz Guide | Navigating CDV for Teachers | CASS Administration Guide

-Announcements-

All levels
➢ Official (embargoed) MCAS data is now available in the DESE Secure Portal and Edwin. The official (embargoed) accountability data will be available in the DESE Secure Portal in the accountability app on Friday, September 26. The embargo will lift on Monday at 11:30. Just a reminder that DESE has released a slide deck for the **SY25** Accountability System: Massachusetts' District and School Accountability System (Presentation).

-Important Dates-

District Testing Calendar

9/26	K-6	DIBELS BOY window closes
9/29	All	Official state, district, and school-level MCAS, MCAS Alt, and accountability results released to the public at 11:30am
9/30	All	Printed Individual Student Reports delivered to the district
9/30	All	Electronic MCAS ISRs available on MCAS Portal

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Test Admin Support

- With the new platform/portal and some new processes, needed to organize the information in a more accessible way

- Google doc with links was embedded in the Resource Hub

- Tried to sequence the when/what by time

2025 MCAS Administration Tasks & Timeline - quick links to sections in timeline order

WHEN?	WHAT?	HOW?	Resources
Starting March 6 and throughout the testing window (4 weeks before testing)	Update Student Registration and Student Transfers	If adding students manually: 1. Select **Administration**. 2. Select **Students**. 3. Select the **Add Student** button or locate the student to be edited and select **Edit**. 4. Add/edit student information as needed. 5. If the student has accommodations, select the **Accommodations** tab to enter the accommodations by test code. Note that students with accommodations for multiple tests will need the accommodations entered for multiple test codes.	• Tasks in the MCAS Portal Before Testing (slides 13-17) • Student Registration Guide • Student Registration Data Definitions • Student Registration Template (only for bulk upload use) • Guide to Enrollment Transfers in the MCAS Portal

Test Admin Support

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7. Additional Resources, Support, and Next Steps

Additional Resources

Resource	Description
ELA | **Mathematics** | **Science** | **Civics**	Test designs
Civics topic assignment	Grade 8 Civics topic assignment and resources for schools

Upcoming Training Sessions

Session	Date	Intended Audience	Recommended Read-Ahead Materials
Technology Coordinator Training	Monday, February 2, 9:30–11:00 a.m.	Technology Coordinators	MCAS Student Kiosk Technology Guide
Office Hours for Accessibility and Accommodations	Friday, February 6, 9:30–10:30 a.m. Note new date.	Principals and school test coordinators, district test coordinators, special education supervisors	Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2025-26 Test Administrations
Overview of the Spanish/English Tests	Tuesday, February 10, 9:30–11:00 a.m.	Principals and school test coordinators, district test coordinators, EL directors, dual-language bilingual education directors	Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2025–26 Test Administrations

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Upcoming <u>Training Sessions</u> (cont'd)

Session	Date	Intended Audience	Recommended Read-Ahead Materials
Tasks in the MCAS Portal Before Testing **All** levels of experience	Wednesday, March 4 at 9:30–11:00 a.m.	Principals and STCs, DTCs	Guide to the MCAS Portal
Tasks in the MCAS Portal During and After Testing **All** levels of experience	Thursday, March 12 at 9:30–11:00 a.m.	Principals and STCs, DTCs	Guide to the MCAS Portal
Office Hours — MCAS Portal Tasks	Thursday, March 19 at 9:30–10:30 a.m.	Principals and STCs, DTCs	Guide to the MCAS Portal

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Next Steps

- **Today:** Complete the evaluation form.
  - Responses are associated with the name and email address used to log in.
  - Email your input to mcas@mass.gov if you have problems accessing or completing the form.
- **Within one week:**
  - Receive an email with the Q&A from this session
  - Recording will be available

Email and Phone Support

MCAS Service Center

- Questions on logistics and technology
  - **Web:** https://mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/
  - **Email:** mcas@cognia.org
  - **Phone:** 800-737-5103
  - **TTY:** 888-222-1671
  - Live chat is available at the link on the bottom of the page at the MCAS Resource Center

DESE Student Assessment Services

- Policy questions (e.g., student participation, accommodations)
  - **Web:** www.doe.mass.edu/mcas
  - **Email:** mcas@mass.gov
  - **Phone:** 781-338-3625
  - **TTY:** 800-439-2370

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8. Protocols for PBT
- Accommodations A1 and EL1

Booklets for Spring 2026

Grades/Subjects	Type of booklets	# of booklets and description
Grades 3–8 tests	Combined test & answer booklets	One booklet per subject (both sessions for each subject in a single booklet)
Grade 10 ELA and Mathematics, Biology and Introductory Physics	Combined test & answer booklets	One booklet per session (two booklets total)
Spanish/English editions (grades 3–8 and 10 Mathematics, grades 5 and 8 STE, grade 8 Civics, high school Biology and Introductory Physics)	Separate test booklets and answer booklets	One test booklet for each session, and one answer booklet for each session (four booklets total)

- Large-print booklets are also available for students using accommodation A2.
- Test & answer booklets are secure materials.

Receive Test Materials and Prepare for Distribution

- Account for secure materials using ID #s on packing slips, and document the counts on internal tracking forms and Materials Summary.
  - DESE recommends having two people present to count materials upon receipt.
- Affix Student ID Labels to answer booklets before testing
  - Labels based on SIMS/SIF as well as Student Registration updates
  - Can open packages of answer booklets up to two days prior to apply labels
  - Can open packages of test & answer booklets one day prior to apply labels, and then seal in envelopes until the day of testing. Document the count on the envelopes.
  - See PAM page 83, step 5.

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Order Materials for Newly Enrolled Students

- A small overage is shipped to schools; check your shipment to determine if you have extra materials.

- Order additional materials if the overage doesn't cover your testing needs

- Materials are shipped for receipt on the following business day if the order is received before 12:00 p.m. (two business days otherwise).

- Remember to update Student Registration in the MCAS Portal.

Additional Preparations for PBT

- Additional resources for preparing students
  - [Released PBT questions]
  - [Gridded response guidelines for Mathematics]
- PBT edition of the student questionnaire
- Tools available for students taking Mathematics and STE
  - Lists on pages 78–80 of the PAM

Steps During and After Testing

- After each test session, verify that all materials have been returned to you.
  - Independently count materials after each test administrator counts their materials.
- Double-check central storage area.
  - In the bottom of a bin and in between file folders
- Find original shipping cartons to return materials.
- See the PAM for packing instructions and lists of materials for school files, to recycle/discard, and to securely destroy.

Important Reminders for Packing PBT Materials

- Review "Special Instructions" included with braille and large-print materials to avoid problems with scoring.

- Review tables in the PAM on pages 86 and 87 to determine whether to assign booklets for students, and instructions on student information on booklet covers.

- *If necessary,* return the following materials in the Special Handling Envelope:
  - All large-print booklets, along with corresponding standard booklets with transcribed work
  - Typed responses, printed and slipped inside standard booklets (see pages 118–120 of the PAM for the header information for each page).

- *If necessary,* return booklets that should not be scored in the Void Envelope.
  - Fill in "void booklet" circle on outside back cover (follow transcription instructions if needed).

- Return all other used and unused booklets (except for braille) in the Return Envelope marked with the corresponding subject.

- All materials will be shipped back to the contractor in their original packing cartons.

The Return Shipment

- Complete the Materials Summary and retain it for school files.
  - Reconcile quantities of secure materials received vs. returned.
- Maintain security of materials while preparing for pickup.
  - Use correct UPS labels.
  - Do not take materials to UPS or remove from building.
  - Do not leave materials unattended.
- Prescheduled automatic pickups
  - A UPS driver will automatically come to the school on the pickup deadline date for each administration. Schedule earlier pickup if ready.
    - Grades 3–8 ELA: **April 28**; Grades 3–8 Math/STE: **May 27;** Grade 8 Civics: **June 9**
    - Grade 10 ELA: **April 7**
    - Grade 10 Mathematics: **May 29**
    - High School Science: **June 11**

THANK YOU

The Office of Student Assessment Services

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