

MCAS Portal Tasks: Office Hours

The Office of Student Assessment Services

March 19, 2026

Presenters

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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.
 - Type your questions anytime, but we may not answer them in real time as some questions may be covered during the presentation.
 - Use the thumbs-up icon to “upvote” someone else’s question.
 - Email student-specific questions to mcas@mass.gov instead of asking here.
- This session is being recorded and will be available in about a week in the [MCAS Resource Center](#), along with the slides.
- Closed captioning has been enabled for participants who need it.
- 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.

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. Resources
2. Frequently Asked Questions
3. Q&A and Additional Demonstrations
4. Support and Next Steps

1. Resources

Resources on Using the MCAS Portal

Resource	Location
MCAS Resource Center	mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org
MCAS Portal User Guides <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guide to the MCAS Portal• Guide to Conducting a Practice Test through the MCAS Training Site	https://mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/portal/
MCAS Portal Modules	https://mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/training-modules/
Recordings of previous training sessions	https://mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/training-webinars/

Resources for Test Administrators

Resource	Location
Slide template for training test administrators	https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testadmin/training/slides.pptx
Overview of the MCAS Portal for Test Administrators module	https://mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/training-modules/

Technology Resources

Resource	Location
<p>Technology Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MCAS Student Kiosk Technology Guide	<p>https://mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/technology-setup/</p>
<p>Previously recorded webinars</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MCAS Technology Coordinator Training• ChromeOS Kiosk Installation for Technology Coordinators• Overview of MCAS Administration Tasks for Technology Coordinators	<p>https://mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/training-webinars/</p>

Additional Resources on the DESE Website

Resource	Location
Test Administration Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manuals• Sample materials	www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testadmin/
Statewide Testing Schedule	www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/cal.html
Accessibility and Accommodations Manual	www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/accessibility/default.html
Student Assessment Updates (Biweekly email with important updates about the MCAS program)	www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/updates.html If you do not already receive this email, subscribe using this link: http://eepurl.com/ghSOhH

2. Frequently Asked Questions

New for 2025–26

- Progress view is available on the Test Scheduling page to monitor student progress during testing.
- Session access codes are now referred to as access codes.
- Schools can now print student logins in bulk.
- Schools may export a new Export Accommodations report to review accommodations prior to testing.
- Only test coordinators and technology coordinators are able to add test report codes and session report codes to student tests.
- Course-level and grade-level classes: Grades 3–8 students **must be assigned to grade-level classes** and high school students **must be assigned to course-level classes**.
 - Additional information was covered in the March 4 Tasks in the MCAS Portal Before Testing training webinar, available on the [Training Webinars page](#) of the MCAS Resource Center.
- Refer to the [Updates to the MCAS Student Kiosk and MCAS Portal for 2025–26](#) for additional information.

Practice Tests in the MCAS Training Site

Schools may choose to conduct a practice test through the MCAS Training Site to give students and staff an opportunity to prepare for MCAS computer-based testing by simulating test day processes and procedures.

Example Test on Training Site	Embedded Accommodations
2026 Grade 8 Math Practice Test_Training Site	none
2026 Grade 3 Math Practice Test Accommodated_TS	Accommodated practice test: Text-to-speech, Speech-to-text, Word prediction, Mouse Pointer
2026 Grade 5 Math Practice Test SR_Training Site	Screen reader practice test: Compatible Assistive Technology, Screen Reader
HS Biology Practice Test ASL_Training Site	ASL
Spanish/English Grade 8 Math Practice Test_Training Site	Spanish/English

Note: In some cases “Training Site” is abbreviated as “TS”.

How do I ensure leading zeros are not dropped in the student registration file?

If using Excel to create your file, convert all the cells in the file text format to ensure leading zeros will not be dropped when populating the columns and rows by following the directions below:

1. Highlight the entire sheet by clicking on the arrow in the upper left corner of the spreadsheet between the columns and rows.
2. Right click and select **Format Cells**.
3. Select the **Text** option from the Category selector in the Format Cells popup window.
4. Click **OK**.

What are classes in the MCAS Portal?

- A “class” is a group of students in the MCAS Portal who will take the same test together.
 - Up to 250 students allowed in a class in the MCAS Portal.
- Each class is subject specific.
- For the following accommodations, students are required to be assigned to a separate class specifically designated for that accommodation:
 - Human Read Aloud
 - Human Signer
 - Spanish/English
- Classes can be created during or anytime after student registration. DESE recommends creating classes approximately two weeks before testing to minimize changes needed.

How do I create classes?

- There are three ways to create classes in the MCAS Portal.

Option to create classes	When would you use this option?
Option 1: Manually create classes one at a time in the MCAS Portal user interface	Recommended when creating four or fewer classes or when working with a small number of students
Option 2: Export the Student Registration file, enter the class names in column K of the file, and reupload the file.	Recommended when creating five or more classes or when working with a large number of students
Option 3: Create and upload a class upload file.	Recommended when creating five or more classes or when working with a large number of students

- For additional information on creating, editing, and deleting classes, see the Guide to the MCAS Portal, located on the [MCAS Portal page](#) of the MCAS Resource Center.
 - Part V: Creating and Managing Classes for Grades 3–8
 - Appendix A: Creating and Managing Classes for High School Tests

When can I schedule tests?

- Schools will need to “schedule” classes for tests in order to assign test forms and create student logins.
 - Student logins cannot be printed until after tests are scheduled.
- Test coordinators will need to schedule tests approximately one week prior to test administration.
- The [Statewide Testing Schedule](#) lists the dates that test scheduling should be completed for each administration.

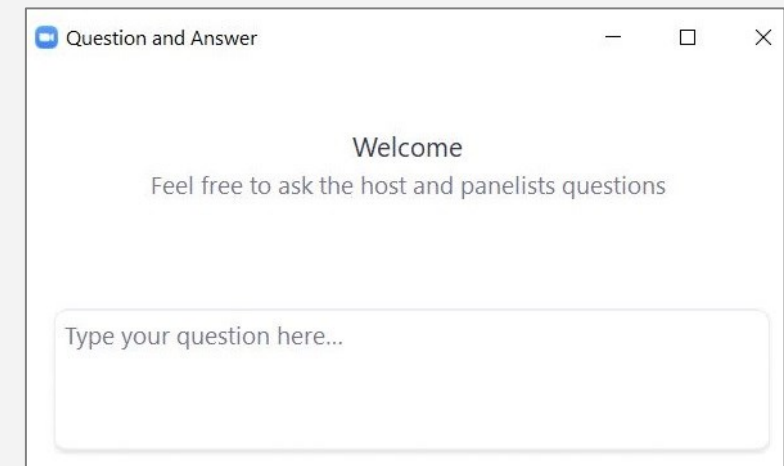
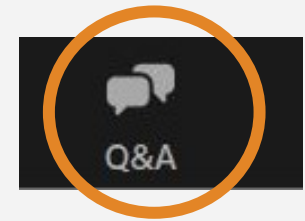
Should we redo Site Readiness if we update student devices?

- Site readiness is a task completed by technology coordinators to confirm that the school's technology has been set up correctly and that testing devices meet the minimum requirements and have been properly configured.
- If technology is updated after conducting site readiness, technology coordinators should conduct site readiness again.

3. Q&A and Additional Demonstrations

Questions & Answers

Use the “Q&A” feature
to ask questions.



4. Support and Next Steps

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


THANK YOU

The Office of Student Assessment Services

 781-338-3625

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