

MCAS Early Release Data

2026 Reporting

The Office of Student Assessment Services

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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.
 - 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.

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. Overview of Early Release MCAS Data
2. Using Item Analysis Templates
3. Discrepancy Reporting with Preliminary Results
4. Resources & Support

1. Overview of Early Release MCAS Data

Early Release MCAS Data

- Include data files (.CSV), student rosters (PDF), and released essay responses
- May include discrepancies that can be resolved (e.g., student demographics, identifications) or may be otherwise incomplete
- Should only be used for instructional planning and reporting data discrepancies

During the embargo period, results may only be shared with staff within your school or district. Do not share results outside your organization.

MCAS Data Release Timeline (Embargoed Data)

V1 Data by Subject Spring

- Only reports computer-based testing (CBT)
- Only reports scores for selected response (SR) items
- Only includes raw score subtotals



V2 Data by Subject Summer

- CBT and paper-based testing (PBT)
- Includes scores for all items including SR, constructed response (CR), and essays
- Includes scaled scores and preliminary achievement levels



Preliminary MCAS Data Mid-August

- Student results for all MCAS tests are reported together
- Includes scaled scores and achievement levels that factor in student test status
- File used for reporting data discrepancies



Official MCAS Data September

- Final data that is used to create public reporting of MCAS data
- Incorporates changes in test status and achievement levels due to data discrepancy reports
- **Still embargoed until the official release of data**

MCAS Public Release Ends Embargo

- MCAS public release aligns with the September Board of Education meeting, typically the last Tuesday of September.
- Until MCAS public release, all MCAS data are embargoed.
- Embargoed MCAS data should only be used for instructional planning and reporting data discrepancies.
- Do not share embargoed data with anyone outside of staff at your school or district.

Data Locations

MCAS Portal:

- V1 and V2 .CSVs
- Item Result Templates
- PDF Rosters
- Early Release Essay Reports

DropBox Central:

- Item Result Templates
- Item Score Summaries
- Preliminary MCAS .CSV files

Data in the MCAS Portal: Overview

Early Release Files

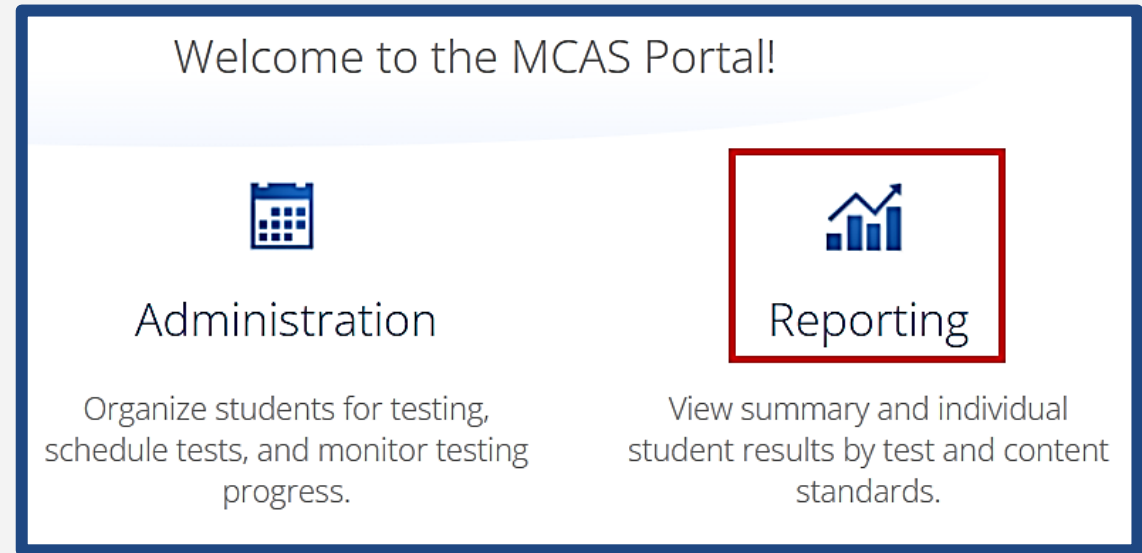
- .CSV files
- PDF rosters (school level)
- Early release essay reports
- Separated by school and district
- Staggered release by grade span and MCAS subject

Version Information

- V1: Only raw score data for CBT test takers, does not include CR or essays
- V2: Scaled scores and preliminary achievement levels for all MCAS test takers

Accessing Data in the MCAS Portal

1. Navigate to the [MCAS Portal](#).
2. Click on the **Reporting** icon.
3. Make selections to download the desired report.



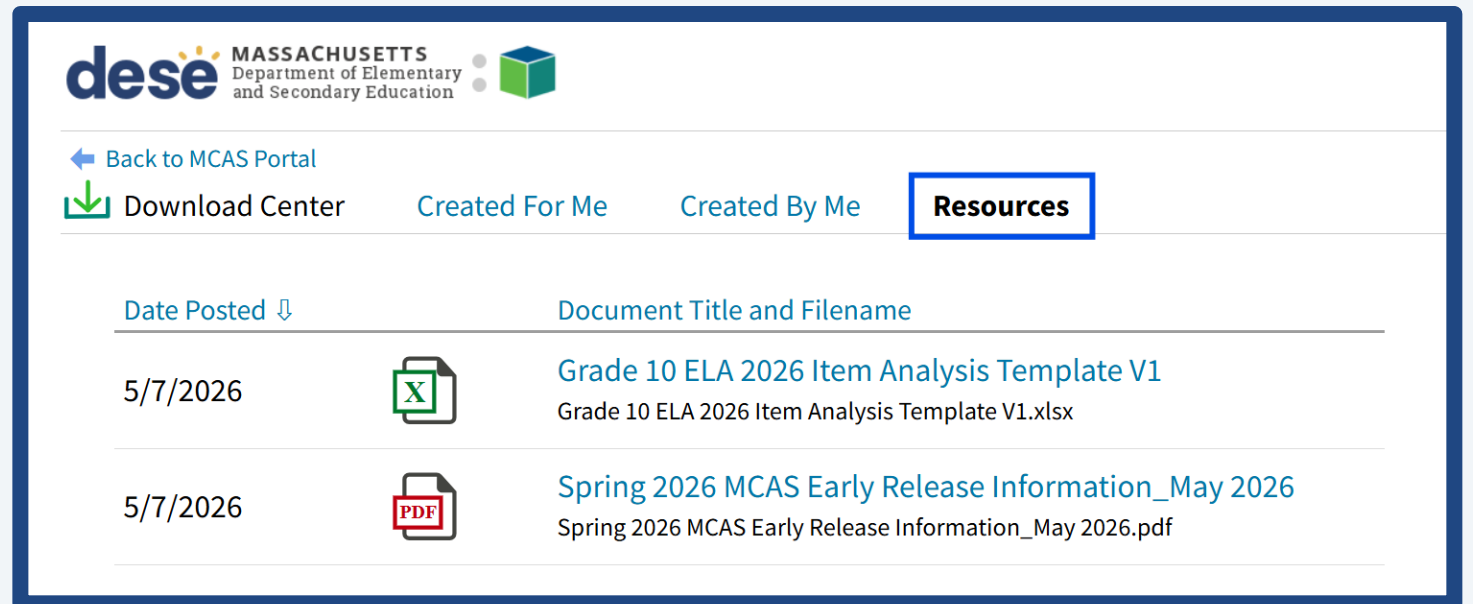
Selections for Report Download

- **Program:** MCAS
- **Report:** Early Release Data Files or Early Release Rosters
- **Year:** 2025-2026
- **Admin:** Spring
- **Grade:** Select grade
- **Subject:** Select subject
- **Organization:** Select your school or district



Resources in the MCAS Portal

- Navigate to the MCAS Portal.
- Click **Reporting**.
- Choose the **Resources** tab to find relevant files.

DESE provides both the item template and guide to MCAS early release.



The screenshot shows the DESE MCAS Portal interface. At the top, the DESE logo and "MASSACHUSETTS Department of Elementary and Secondary Education" are displayed. Below the logo, there is a navigation bar with a "Back to MCAS Portal" link and three tabs: "Download Center", "Created For Me", and "Created By Me". The "Resources" tab is selected and highlighted with a blue border. Below the navigation bar, there is a table with two columns: "Date Posted" and "Document Title and Filename". The table contains two rows of data.

Date Posted ↓		Document Title and Filename
5/7/2026		Grade 10 ELA 2026 Item Analysis Template V1 Grade 10 ELA 2026 Item Analysis Template V1.xlsx
5/7/2026		Spring 2026 MCAS Early Release Information_May 2026 Spring 2026 MCAS Early Release Information_May 2026.pdf

Demonstration: MCAS Portal Data

- Review how to download .CSV data, PDF rosters, and released essay reports.
- Review how to find resources in the MCAS Portal.



Q&A

Check-In #1

2. Using Item Analysis Templates

Item Level Data in DropBox Central

Early Release Files

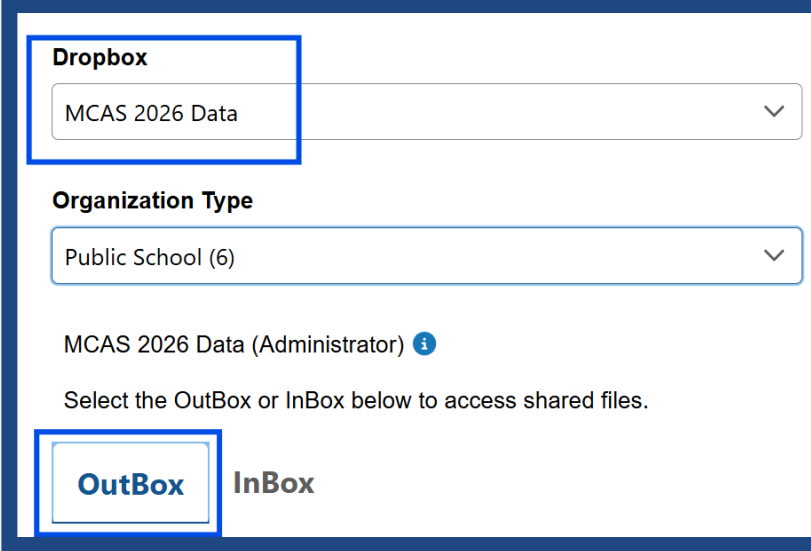
- Item result templates
- Item score summaries
- Separated by school and district
- Staggered release by grade span and MCAS subject

Version Information

- V1: Only CBT results for selected response (SR) items
- V2: Results for all items for CBT and PBT MCAS test takers

Accessing Dropbox Central Data

1. Navigate to DESE's [Security Portal](#).
2. Click on **Dropbox Central**.
3. Make selections to download the desired report.



The screenshot shows a web interface for accessing Dropbox Central data. It features two dropdown menus: 'Dropbox' with 'MCAS 2026 Data' selected, and 'Organization Type' with 'Public School (6)' selected. Below these is a text label 'MCAS 2026 Data (Administrator)' with an information icon, followed by the instruction 'Select the OutBox or InBox below to access shared files.' At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'OutBox' (highlighted with a blue border) and 'InBox'.

Selections for Report Download

- **Dropbox:** MCAS 2026 Data
- **OutBox**

Please check all pages of the outbox for the desired data.

For assistance accessing Dropbox, please reach out to your [directory administrator](#).

Item Analysis Template Sheets

Sheet	Description
Item Level Data (by grade)	Used to view differences between item averages by school, district, and state
Reporting Category Data	Used to view differences between category point averages by school, district, and state
Reporting Categories 2026	Provides information on reporting categories by grade span and subject
File Layout 2026	Provides the file layout for early release .CSV files available in MCAS Portal
Resources	Provides links to released item information and scoring rubrics for essays

Demonstration: Item Analysis Template

- Review layout of a Grades 3-8 ELA V1 item analysis template.
- Identify columns and sheets where schools will paste item and reporting category averages for school and district.

New for 2026: Item Aggregation Files

- DESE is now providing item averages for schools and districts, pre-populated to copy and paste into item templates.

Column	Definition
sprp_dis	District code
sprp_sch	School code
Type	Filter and select either “Item” or “Reporting Category”
Level	Filter and select either “District” or “School”
Item	Item number or reporting category label
*N_Blank	Number of students with no response; not included in average points
*N_Included	Number of students that answered item
*AvgPoints	Average number of points earned on selected item or reporting category

*Each grade has its own columns for item statistics.

Demonstration: Using Average Aggregation Files

- Create a filter for data. Filter data by type (reporting category or item) and level (school or district).
- Copy data and put into appropriate spaces in worksheets.
- Investigate trends in data.
 - Overall, how are students in my school comparing to the students across the state? To students in our district?
 - Are there particular items where students are performing better or worse than the state or district averages? What are the reporting categories and standards associated with these items?

Investigating Trends in Average Data

- Use School-State Diff. columns to look at differences in averages between the school and the state.
- Negative differences in percent possible points indicates that your school did not perform as well as the state average.
- Positive differences in percent possible points indicates that your school performed better than the state average.
- Use the line graph on Item Level Data sheet to compare performance between school, district, and state on items.



Q&A

Check-In #2

3. Discrepancy Reporting

Use V1 and V2 Data to Identify Data Discrepancies

- Immediately report missing tests via the MCAS Service Center.
- Report any student name changes or student demographic errors to your district SIMS contact for resolution prior to end-of-year (June) SIMS reporting. You can find your district SIMS contact on [People Search](#).
- Save discrepancies related to student participation or test accommodations for the data discrepancy window.

Note: Records in the MCAS Portal cannot be updated.

Discrepancy Reporting Example V1

Student Count: 482																																					
Student Name	SASID	Test Mode	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 CV	9 ID	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22 CV	22 ID	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	Total Points	Void	Not Tested Reason
		O	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	-	-	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	-	-	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	2	29	•	•
		O	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	-	-	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	2	1	-	-	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	•	•
		O	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	-	-	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	-	-	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	26	•	•
		O	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	-	-	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	2	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	34	•	•	
		O	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	-	-	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	-	-	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	22	•	•	
		O	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	2	-	-	0	1	1	1	1	0	2	1	25	•	•	

Test Mode:	Not Tested Reason:	- = Item Has Not Yet Been Scored	Blank = No Answer
O = Online	M = Medical Absence	✓ = Voided Test Results	
P = Paper	T = Technical Issue		
		CV = Convention Score	
		ID = Idea Development Score	

Use Preliminary MCAS .CSV File to Identify Data Discrepancies

Discrepancy reporting period (Early August)

- Access [DropBox Central](#); if you need access, confirm with your [directory administrator](#).
 - Preliminary MCAS .CSV file
 - Password for Data Discrepancy Tool
- Log in to [MCAS Service Center Data Discrepancy Tool](#).

Using the Data Discrepancy Tool

Report data discrepancies related to:

- Student SASID
- Special Access Accommodations
- Participation Status due to: Medically Documented Absence (MED), First-Year EL Status (NTL), Student Transfers between Districts (TRN)
- Duplicates

Refer to the Data Discrepancy User Guide for more information.



Q&A

Check-In #3

4. Resources & Support

Helpful Links

Resource

[MCAS Resource Center](#)

[MCAS Portal, Portal Guide, User Guide](#)

[Recordings of Previous Trainings](#)

[Released Item Information and Student Work](#)

[Student Assessment Updates](#)

[Subscribe to Student Assessment Update](#)

[Discrepancy Reporting](#)

Email and Phone Support

MCAS Service Center

- Questions on logistics and using the discrepancy reporting tool
 - **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
 - **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



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