

MCAS-Alt Update:

For Educators and Administrators that
are Familiar with the MCAS-Alt
Fall 2024

1. Welcome

Presenters

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dese



EDUCATIONAL VISION

All students

- Are known and valued

Learning experiences

- Are relevant, real-world and interactive

Individualized supports

- Enable students to excel at grade level and beyond

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.
 - Email student-specific questions to mcas@mass.gov instead of asking here.
- This session is being recorded and will be available with closed captioning on the [DESE YouTube site](#) within a few weeks.

2. Updates and Reminders for the 2024–2025 School Year

MCAS - Alt Virtual Training Sessions

Educators and administrators are welcome and encouraged to attend any trainings listed below:

- **Introduction to MCAS-Alt: Core Concepts**
 - October 8 or October 21
- **ELA Writing**
 - October 9 or October 22
- **Civics (grade 8 only)**
 - October 10 or October 23
- **Science and Tech/Eng (STE) (grades 5, 8, and high school)**
 - October 10 or October 23

Administrators and Supervisors are encouraged to attend:

- **Administrators Overview for MCAS-Alt**
 - October 9 or October 22

Dates to Remember:

- School administrators must **order MCAS-Alt materials:**
 - **January 2–17, 2025**
- Binders and submission **materials received** in schools:
 - **Week of February 24, 2025**
 - Administrators must open the shipment and review its contents
 - Fill out the PCPA part 1
 - Order additional materials if needed
- **MCAS-Alt** binders must be **shipped** by: **5 p.m., Friday, March 28, 2025**
- Preliminary results: **MCAS-Alt Feedback Forms posted in mid-June**

New and Important Tasks for the 2024–2025 School Year

- Civics Alternate Assessment in Grade 8 Only
- Alternate Assessment Participation Criteria Required:
 - Only Students that meet the eligibility definition for students with the [Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities should participate in the MCAS-Alt](#)
- Students should not participate in the MCAS-Alt in only one subject area.
 - A student with skills closer to grade-level in math, but below grade-level in ELA should participate in the standard MCAS tests.
- [Alternate Assessment Participation Tool](#) is a required document to be maintained by schools ([SE 5](#)).



Important Information and Tasks

- Results for MCAS Appeal were mailed to schools in July 2024.
 - Check with the school's administrators/principals to review appeal decisions.
- Educators must register (i.e., create a new account) each year in the [MCAS-Alt Forms and Graphs](#)
- Use the Forms/Graphs program to spiral back in Mathematics
- Updated manuals and materials are now available:
 - [Educator's Manual for the MCAS-Alt](#)
 - [Resource Guides \(Alternate Academic Achievement Standards\)](#)
- Collecting evidence and work samples for Science may require educators to begin administering the MCAS-Alt early in the school year.

3. Steps and Strategies to Accurately Administer the MCAS-Alt

Checking for Completeness before Submission

COMPLETENESS QUESTIONS

SKILLS SURVEY	Is there a completed skills survey for each strand?	No	Yes
 Answer the following questions about the DATA CHART			
D1	Is the student's name, % accuracy, and % independence listed on all data charts?	No	Yes
D2	Is the entry point or access skill selected from the current resource guide ?	No	Yes
D3	Is the first data point on the data chart below 80 percent accuracy and/or independence?	No	Yes
D4	Does the data chart have at least 8 different valid dates ? (0% accuracy and 0% independence is not a valid data point)	No	Yes
D5	Do at least 8 brief descriptions address the skill identified in the measurable outcome?	No	Yes
D6	Do at least 8 brief descriptions on the data chart explain what the student was asked to do (skill assessed) and how they addressed the skill (instructional approach, materials)?	No	Yes
D7	If multiple skills are included in the measurable outcome (e.g., "addition and subtraction"), do at least 8 brief descriptions address all of the skills in each activity?	No	Yes
D8	Is the skill addressed during a standards-based activity ?	No	Yes
 Answer the following questions about the PRIMARY EVIDENCE			
E1	Is the student's name, valid date, % accuracy, and % independence listed on at least two pieces of primary evidence or on a Work Description label?	No	Yes
E2	Is the percent of accuracy and independence mathematically possible , based on the number of tasks/questions?	No	Yes
E3	Do at least two pieces of primary evidence directly address the measurable outcome?	No	Yes
E4	If multiple skills are included in the measurable outcome (e.g., "addition and subtraction"), do at least two pieces of primary evidence assess all of the skills in each piece?	No	Yes
E5	If a teacher-documented work sample or photograph is included as primary evidence, does it provide sufficient information to determine what the student did and how the student addressed the measurable outcome?	No	Yes



Answer the following questions about
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS | WRITING & READING

W1	Are there 3 final writing samples with corresponding pre-scored writing rubrics ? <i>(Reminder: inclusion of bathroom routines will not be scored)</i>	No	Yes
W2	Are the student's name, valid date, and % independence listed for each final writing sample?	No	Yes
W3	Are 3 distinct final writing samples submitted on different assignments or topics?	No	Yes
W4	<p>Does the writing sample consist only of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> list of single words/pictures/symbols, fill-in-the-blank, matching, true/false, circling correct responses, selecting multiple-choice response(s), OR text provided by the teacher, with no evidence of original text expressed by the student. <p>If yes to any of the above, rubric scores should not contain scores of 3 or 4 in <i>Demonstration of Skills and Concepts</i>.</p>	No	Yes
R1	Do you reference the text titles in at least 8 brief descriptions on the data chart? (Note: provide a sample of online or teacher-made text)	No	Yes
R2	Do at least 8 activities on the data chart clearly depict only literary or informational text ?	No	Yes
R3	Do at least 2 pieces of primary evidence include titles or sample of the texts ?	No	Yes
R4	Do the activities on at least 2 pieces of primary evidence assess only literary or informational text ?	No	Yes



Answer the following questions about
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ENGINEERING

SKILLS SURVEY	Does the STE Skills Survey include at least one response for each of the 8 practices ?	No	Yes
S1	Are at least 3 STE Summary Sheets submitted with evidence attached ?	No	Yes
S2	Are at least 3 STE Summary Sheets based on the same core idea?	No	Yes
S3	Are 3 different science practices documented within the 3 STE Summary Sheets ?	No	Yes
S4	Do the 3 STE Summary Sheets document the percentage of accuracy and independence ?	No	Yes
S6	Grades 5 & 8 Only: Are there 3 different disciplines submitted?	No	Yes
S7	High School Biology and Introductory Physics Only: Are 3 different core ideas (one core idea per strand) submitted within a single discipline?	No	Yes



Answer the following questions about
CIVICS

SKILLS SURVEY	Does the Civics Skills Survey include at least one response for each of the 3 Core Ideas (A, B, and C) ?	No	Yes
C1	Are at least 3 Civics Summary Sheets submitted with student's name, valid date, and evidence attached ?	No	Yes
C2	Are 3 different core ideas (A, B, and C) documented within the 3 Civics Summary Sheets?	No	Yes
C3	Do at least 3 pieces of evidence document the entry point/access skill listed on each Civics Summary Sheet?	No	Yes
C4	Do the 3 Civics Summary Sheets document the rubric score (1-4) for the skill selected and the provided evidence?	No	Yes
C5	Do the 3 Civics Summary Sheets document the percentage of accuracy and independence for the submitted evidence?	No	Yes

Use Available Resources

- In Forms and Graphs (from the Table of Contents) available resources include:
 - **Mathematics Glossary:** updated to assist educators with unfamiliar math concepts frequently found in the resource guide.
 - **STE topics and Instructional Material** related to each core idea.
 - Plus, high-quality curriculum units related to the core idea are available at different levels
- The [National Center on Accessible Educational Materials](#) for Learning at CAST provides technical assistance, coaching, and resources to increase the availability and use of accessible educational materials, including texts and technologies for learners with disabilities.

Suggestions for completing STE in Grades 5, 8 and High School

- Plan to begin with a complete science unit. Even if the student cannot complete the whole unit, materials can include sufficient work to develop work samples.
- Review the student work to ensure the evidence is aligned to the entry point.
- Consider collaborating with STE content specialist in your school/district.
- Plan to attend the in-person/virtual winter and spring MCAS-Alt Review Sessions (date available later this fall) for support.

STE Earth and Space Core Idea, Related topics, and high-quality units Example

TOPICS

- **Core Idea: Earth and Human Activity**
 - Natural resources
 - Renewable and non-renewable resources (energy)
 - Examples of ways humans reduce their impact on the Earth’s resources and environment (e.g., composting, recycling)
 - Preparations for severe weather
 - Climate Change/Global warming
 - Reducing severe weather impact
- **High-Quality Related units:**
 - [SOLID Start “Ever-Changing Environments” \(KG\)](#)
 - [Engineering Toys \(gr. 2\)](#)
 - [NGSS Storylines “Where does our clean water come from and where does it go after we make it dirty?” \(gr. 5\)](#)
 - [OpenSciEd “Earth’s Resources & Human Impact”\(gr. 6 -8\)](#)

Linked to Units

ELA Writing Reminder: Pre-Score the Rubric

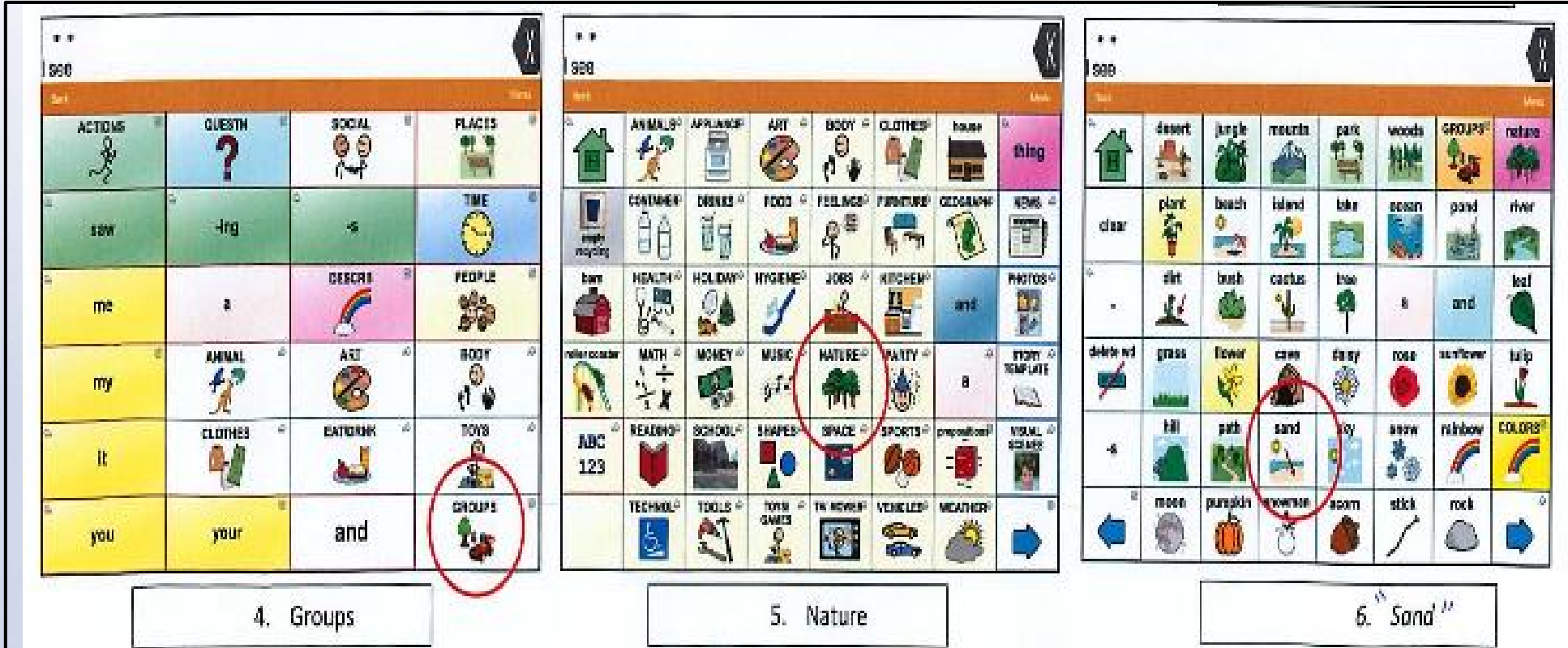
Student: Emily Honza

Date of Completion: 2/1/22

		M	1	2	3	4
Level of Complexity			Writing sample not submitted or unmatched to requirement.	Student addressed Writing through "access skills."	Student addressed Writing through "entry points."	Student addressed Writing at "grade-level."
Demonstration of Skills and Concepts	Expression of Ideas and Content		No main idea (informative), point of view (opinion), event sequence (narrative), or focus (poetry); or was unclear or off-topic; or used single word, picture, or symbol to express ideas; or all text provided by teacher	Writing sample related to assignment only minimally; included no or only one detail or description; or used picture sequence to express ideas; or used no figurative language or poetry form (poetry)	Main idea (informative), point of view (opinion), or event sequence (narrative) was evident; limited use of facts, details, and/or descriptions; sometimes repetitive and/or off-topic; limited use of figurative language (poetry);	Main idea (informative), point of view (opinion), or event sequence (narrative) was clearly expressed; three or more accurate and relevant facts, details, or descriptions included; used vivid imagery and figurative language appropriately (poetry)
	Knowledge of Conventions	Writing sample not submitted; or contained insufficient information to determine a score; or written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood	Little or no original text; or used pictures or isolated words; or could not be understood due to errors in grammar and/or usage	General meaning could be understood, though use of grammar was limited and/or contained errors or run-on sentences; or lacked poetry form (poetry)	Complete sentences with some errors; grammar was effective; correct noun-verb agreement; some evidence of poetry form (poetry)	Meaning was clear, with rare or no errors in grammar and overall usage; poetry form used appropriately (poetry)
	Text Structure		Used single words, pictures, symbols without text; or all text provided by teacher	Sentence fragments (phrases) or one complete sentence used to express ideas; produced two related lines (poetry)	At least two complete sentences were used to express ideas; produced up to four related lines (poetry)	A paragraph of at least three related, well-constructed sentences was used to express ideas; more than four related lines (poetry)
	Use of Vocabulary		Vocabulary was unrelated to assignment; or all text was provided by teacher	Vocabulary was related to assignment, but word choice was limited and/or sometimes inappropriate	Vocabulary was functional and relevant; used basic common words, with some descriptive language	Vocabulary was clear and precise; used descriptive language, modifiers, connecting words and/or phrases
Independence 100%		Writing sample not submitted; or contained insufficient information to determine a score; or written in a language other than English; or could not be read or understood	Student required extensive, almost continuous prompts to complete writing sample (0-25% independent)	Student required frequent prompts to complete writing assignment (26-50% independent)	Student required some prompts to complete writing assignment (51-75% independent)	Student required no, or very few, prompts to complete writing assignment (76-100% independent)

Provide Supporting Documentation (optional)

Evidence may show the context of the assessment activity, but the evidence is not considered a final product.



ELA-Writing (iPad app)
The evidence shows a sample of a vocabulary board used by the student for writing samples.

Mathematics Domain Progression (Pre-K to HS)

Complete the *Mathematics Skills Survey* for your student's grade *and* select the most complex entry point that challenges your student.

Progression from Pre-K through Grade 8										
Domains	Grade Level									
	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>Counting and Cardinality</i>										
<i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i>					*	*				
<i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i>							*			
<i>Number and Operations—Fractions</i>						*	*			
<i>The Number System</i>								*		
<i>Ratios and Proportional Relationships</i>									*	
<i>Expressions and Equations</i>										*
<i>Measurement and Data</i>					*					
<i>Geometry</i>									*	*
<i>Statistics and Probability</i>								*		
Progression for High School Conceptual Categories									High School (choice of three)	
Domains									Conceptual Categories	
<i>Number and Operations Base Ten</i>				<i>The Number System</i>					<i>Number and Quantity</i>	
<i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i>				<i>Expressions and Equations</i>					<i>Algebra</i>	
<i>Number and Operations Fractions</i>				<i>Ratios and Proportional Relationships</i>			<i>Functions</i>		<i>Functions</i>	
<i>Geometry</i>									<i>Geometry</i>	
<i>Measurement and Data</i>				<i>Statistics and Probability</i>					<i>Statistics and Probability</i>	

If spiraling to a lower grade level in a different domain *always* start at the most challenging level.

Forms and Graphs online application will only allow access to acceptable domains.

Email and Phone Support

MCAS-Alt Service Center

- Questions on Forms and Graphs, Ordering materials
- **Email:** mcas@cognia.org
- **Phone:** 866-834-8880

DESE Student Assessment Services

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