

Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2018–2019 MCAS Tests/Retest

**Including Participation Requirements for Students
with Disabilities and English Learners**



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Purpose of This Manual

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is providing you with the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2018–2019 MCAS Tests/Retests*. These next-generation accessibility and accommodations policies will apply to all students taking the MCAS tests and retests, including those in grades 10 and beyond, beginning with the Fall 2018 MCAS retests.

Massachusetts will continue to administer computer-based MCAS tests in 2019, with a paper-based accommodation for testing students with disabilities who are unable to use a computer, as well as for English learners who are new to the country and are unfamiliar with technology.

Educators will need to become familiar with the MCAS accessibility and accommodations policies, since they provide guidance on the use of individualized supports for student participation in MCAS. Test coordinators and administrators should also review this manual to determine those accessibility features and accommodations that must be documented for each student in the Student Registration/Personal Needs Profile (SR/PNP), the procedure used by schools to register students for MCAS, to document the use of specific accommodations, and to receive the necessary accommodated test editions.

This manual provides guidance and information about:

- MCAS participation requirements for students with disabilities, students who are English learners (ELs), and ELs with disabilities; and which students with disabilities should be considered for an alternate assessment; and
- the availability, selection, and use of
 - *universal accessibility features*, which provide tools and supports for *all* students;
 - *designated accessibility features* intended for *all* students, but which must be authorized by the principal; and
 - *test accommodations* for students with disabilities and students who are ELs.

Schools may request guidance from the Department throughout the year as they plan for the use of test accommodations and other supports for the students who need them. Please contact Student Assessment Services at mcas@doe.mass.edu or 781-338-3625 with any questions.

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I. Overview of MCAS Accessibility and Accommodations

A. Introduction

All students, including students with disabilities and ELs, will be required to participate in all MCAS assessments that are scheduled for students in their grade, including

- students enrolled in public schools
- students enrolled in charter schools
- students enrolled in innovation schools, including virtual schools
- students enrolled in educational collaboratives
- students enrolled in approved and unapproved private special education schools and programs within and outside Massachusetts
- students receiving educational services in institutional settings
- students in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF)
- students in the custody of the Department of Youth Services (DYS)

Students must participate in grade-level tests that correspond with the grade in which they are reported to the Department’s Student Information Management System (SIMS).

Selection of accessibility features and accommodations should proceed according to whichever test format (computer or paper) will be used by the student. The assessment options indicated on the following pages are based upon (a) generally accepted practices and procedures used for statewide assessments; (b) “legacy” MCAS accommodations policies; and (c) the recommendations of Massachusetts stakeholders who were members of the [MCAS Accessibility and Accommodations Work Group](#).

The application of universal design principles to the new MCAS assessments, in conjunction with the accessibility and accommodations policies described in this manual, are intended to reduce barriers to participation in the MCAS assessments for *all* students. Many computer-based accessibility features are unique to online testing, while others can be transferred to the paper-based testing experience for students who are unable to take tests on a computer. Increased flexibility in test administration procedures has been incorporated as a result of input and requests from local administrators for greater autonomy in determining the testing conditions within their schools.

To assist schools in the provision and tracking of accessibility features and accommodations during testing, the Department recommends that test coordinators develop a table or spreadsheet prior to test administration that lists **where**, **when**, and **with whom** students will be tested to ensure that each student receives the accessibility features and/or accommodations to which he or she is entitled.

This manual combines information that was previously available in three Department publications that are no longer available:

- *Requirements for the Participation of Students with Disabilities in MCAS*,
- *Requirements for the Participation of ELs in ACCESS for ELLs and MCAS*, and
- *Requirements for the Participation of Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners in the MCAS High School Tests*

B. What's New and Notable?

- It is expected that virtually all students in grades 3–8 and 10 will take computer-based tests, in accordance with the timeline proposed by the Commissioner to test virtually all students on computers by Spring 2019.
- **In spring 2019, next-generation computer-based MCAS tests will be administered to students in grade 10, for the first time, in English language arts (ELA) and Mathematics.** Accommodated test forms will be offered for computer-based MCAS tests, including text-to-speech, screen reader, and compatible assistive technology editions. Accommodated test forms will be offered for students taking paper-based tests, including large-print, Braille, ASL video (grade 10 mathematics only), and Kurzweil (retests and high school STE tests). Paper-based MCAS tests will be available as an accommodation for students with disabilities who are unable to take the computer-based test, and ELs who are new to the U.S. or who are unfamiliar with technology.
- Important decisions must be made for each student, particularly those in high school participating in next-generation MCAS for the first time, prior to testing, including:
 - Does a student with a disability or an EL require a paper-based, rather than a computer-based test? If so, in which subject tests?
 - If a student will take a paper-based test, this must be listed as an accommodation in the student's IEP or 504 plan.
 - If a student will take a computer-based test, accommodations revisions must be listed in the IEP or 504 plan (e.g., text-to-speech versus a human read-aloud). Refer to Appendix A to review a "crosswalk" of legacy and next-generation accommodations.
 - English learners (ELs) in high school will have access to several **EL accommodations** not previously available on legacy MCAS tests (see Section VI). These must be documented in writing. (see the sample form in Appendix B.)
 - All high school students will be allowed to use the Universal Accessibility Features listed on pp. 3–5.
 - Principals will have the discretion to provide the Designated Accessibility Features listed on p. 5 to each student, including testing in a small group, individually, or in a separate setting. (Note: These may be listed optionally in the IEP or 504 plan of each student to ensure they are provided.)
 - Individualized ELA graphic organizers, supplemental mathematics reference sheets and checklists, and customized STE reference sheets will be permitted only on legacy high school tests (STE) and retests (ELA and mathematics), but must be submitted to the Department for prior approval (See p. 18).
- High school Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) legacy tests will be administered in spring 2019 in a **paper-based format**. Legacy ELA and Mathematics retests given in November 2018 and March 2019 will also be exclusively paper-based. Please note that the accessibility and accommodations policies described in this manual for paper-based testing will apply to these legacy tests and retests.
- The Department no longer permits the use of individualized graphic organizers and supplemental reference sheets for next-generation ELA and mathematics tests. Students with this accommodation may only use the Department's **pre-approved supplemental mathematics reference sheets or ELA graphic organizers**.

- The MCAS transition to Unified English Braille (UEB) from English Braille American Edition (EBAE) and Nemeth Code will continue for Spring 2019, when all MCAS tests in grades 3–8 will be administered in UEB. All high school tests will continue to be administered in EBAE with Nemeth Code until spring 2020 when they will transition to the UEB format.

Accessibility features and accommodations for MCAS tests are listed in the following categories:

- **Universal Accessibility Features (UF):** Many supports are now available to *all* students that were previously considered accommodations, either on the computer-based tests or on their paper-based equivalent. Universal Accessibility Features may be used by any student (see pp. 3–4).
- **Designated Accessibility Features (DF):** Flexible test administration procedures may be used with *any* student, at the discretion of the principal (or designee). These include changes in the location of testing rooms, group size, seating of students, and scheduling of test administrations (see p. 4).
- **Accommodations (A):** Specific supports available only to students with disabilities and English learners. Team members and educators responsible for developing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 plans must make decisions regarding which accommodations to provide, and must list these in the plan for each student (see pp. 15–20). We encourage districts to list accommodations for EL students using the sample form entitled Documentation of MCAS Accommodations for an EL Student (in Appendix B), which must be kept on file at the school.
- **Special Access Accommodations (SAs):** Formerly called *nonstandard accommodations*, these accommodations will be offered to students who meet certain guidelines and criteria (see pp. 20–24).

The following must be provided to *all* students, including students with disabilities and ELs:

- Untimed test sessions
- Blank scratch paper (including blank, lined, or graph paper)
- Assistance, as needed, from a test administrator in using the computer-based testing platform

Additional testing policies will be described in the *MCAS Principal’s Administration Manual (PAM)*, which will be available this winter.

Students should become familiar with the features and basic functionality of the computer-based testing platform (TestNav) by viewing the [student tutorial](#) and taking [online practice tests](#) prior to test administration.

II. Accessibility Features for All Students

A. Universal Accessibility Features (UFs)

Universal Accessibility features are tools and supports that are available to *all* students on the MCAS tests that are either built into the MCAS computer-based test platform or provided by a test administrator on either the computer- or paper-based tests. Although the majority of universal accessibility features will be available on the day of the test to *any* student who wishes to use them, some *must* be **requested in advance** in the Student Registration/ Personal Needs Profile (SR/PNP), the student registration system in PearsonAccess^{next} (PAN). The “*(SR/PNP)*” designation in Table 1 below refers to a feature that must be documented and/or requested in the SR/PNP prior to the start of testing.

Table 1. Universal Accessibility Features Available to All Students

#	Computer-Based Testing	Paper-Based Testing
UF1	Highlighter tool	Highlighter Used in test booklets, not answer booklets, by students taking high school STE tests and legacy retests; colored pencils may be used by students taking next-generation paper-based tests. See <i>Principal's Administration Manual</i> for details.
UF2 <i>(SR/PNP)</i>	Alternative background and font color; The student can select a color combination for text and background. 	Colored overlays or tinted lens(es)
UF3	Magnifier or Zoom tool (Magnifier tool enlarges part of the screen; Zoom tool enlarges or reduces entire screen by pressing Ctrl + or Ctrl -)	Magnification tool/device or low-vision aid
UF4	Line reader tool (Masks text so only part of the text can be viewed at one time)	Tracking device , such as a straight edge or similar tool
UF5 <i>(SR/PNP)</i>	Answer masking (Student selects which answer choices will be shown on the screen)	Mask text or answer(s) using a blank card or cutout
UF6	Answer eliminator (Student marks an "X" through each answer option he or she believes is incorrect)	Use a pencil to eliminate answer choices in test booklet (not answer bubbles)
UF7	Item flag/bookmark	Use a blank place marker to mark a question for later review
UF8	Audio aids (e.g., amplification device, noise canceling headphones, or white noise machine. Note: a smartphone may not be used)	Audio aids (e.g., amplification device, noise canceling headphones, or white noise machine, provided a smart phone is not used)
UF9	Notepad for notes or calculations	Scratch paper (required for all students)
UF10	Test administrator reads aloud (or signs , in the case of a student who is Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing) selected words on the Mathematics and/or Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) tests, as requested by the student. The student will point to the word or phrase that he or she needs read aloud or signed. Test	

#	Computer-Based Testing	Paper-Based Testing
	administrator quietly reads aloud or signs the selected word to the student. Students using this feature may be tested alongside other students in groups of any size.	
UF11	Test administrator redirects student’s attention to the test without coaching or assisting the student to answer any questions (e.g., test administrator reminds student to stay focused; it is not permissible to say, “Add more to your response” or “Make sure to answer all questions.”)	
UF12	Test administrator reads aloud, repeats, or clarifies <i>general test administration directions</i> (from the Test Administration Manual scripts) to student, as needed.	

B. Designated Accessibility Features (DFs)

Although most students will be tested in their regular classrooms according to the guidelines and schedule intended for all students, principals have the flexibility to test *any* student, including non-disabled and non-EL students, using the designated accessibility features described in Table 2, as long as all requirements for testing conditions, test security, and staffing are met.

It is advisable, although not required, to include designated accessibility features in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan of a student with a disability who requires them.

Table 2.
Designated Accessibility Features available to any student, at the principal’s discretion

#	Designated Accessibility Feature
DF1	Small group test administration (May include up to a total of 10 students.)
DF2	Individual (one-to-one) test administration (Student must be tested in a separate setting.)
DF3	Frequent brief supervised breaks
DF4	Separate or alternate test location
DF5	Seating in a specific area of the testing room, including the use of a study carrel
DF6	Adaptive or specialized furniture (seating, desk, or lighting)
DF7	Noise buffer or noise-canceling earmuffs/headphones (Music or other recordings may not be played on headphones worn during testing.)
DF8	Familiar test administrator
DF9	Student reads test aloud to self. Student must be tested in a separate setting, unless a low-volume device such as a “Whisperphone” is used.
DF10	Specific time of day
DF11	“Stop Testing” policy: If the student does not appear to be responding to test questions after a period of 15–20 minutes, the test administrator may ask if the student is finished. If so, the test administrator may collect the student’s test materials and the student can either sit quietly or be excused from the test setting. (Note: The student should be given the opportunity to attempt each test session).

III. MCAS Participation Requirements for Students with Disabilities

A. Background

The information in this manual is intended to guide decision-making by Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams and 504 plan coordinators as to *how* a student with a disability will participate in MCAS. Students with disabilities are required to participate in all MCAS assessments scheduled for students in their grade. Students with significant disabilities who are unable to take the standard tests, even with accommodations, must take the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt).

B. Definition of a Student with a Disability

For the purpose of MCAS participation, a student with a disability is defined as a student with an approved Individualized Education Program (IEP) provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71B; or a plan provided under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (i.e., a “504 plan”).

C. Participation Requirements for Students with Disabilities

State and federal education laws mandate that *all* students with disabilities who are educated with Massachusetts public funds participate in annual statewide assessments, including students enrolled in public schools, educational collaboratives, and approved and unapproved private special education schools, and students in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and students in the custody of the Department of Youth Services (DYS).

Students with disabilities must participate in grade-level tests that correspond with the grade in which they are reported to the Department’s Student Information Management System (SIMS).

Only a student's IEP team can make decisions about which test accommodations are appropriate for the student and whether the student should take a standard or alternate assessment. Assessment decisions for students with disabilities are made on an annual basis in each content area for each student and must be listed in the IEP. If the student has a 504 plan, rather than an IEP, then the 504 plan must also include this information. The principal is responsible for ensuring that each student is assessed using the test format and accommodations listed in the student’s IEP or 504 plan.

English Learners (EL) with Disabilities

EL students with disabilities must participate in all MCAS assessments required for students in their grade, regardless of the number of years they have been enrolled in U.S. schools, with one exception: EL students who **first enrolled in a U.S. school after March 1, 2018**, are *not required* to take the spring 2019 MCAS ELA tests, although schools have the *option* to assess first-year EL students in ELA.

EL students with disabilities are entitled to receive test accommodations and to participate in the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt), as determined by their IEP team or 504 plan. See additional information on the participation of EL students in MCAS beginning on page 25.

Students Diagnosed with Concussions

The Department has issued [guidelines](#), including MCAS testing policies, for students who are returning to school after being diagnosed with a concussion. Please refer to this information before making decisions about MCAS testing for a student who has had a concussion.

D. Decision-Making Guidelines for MCAS Participation

This section provides guidelines for IEP team members and staff who develop 504 plans to determine how each student with a disability will participate in MCAS.

The student’s IEP team or 504 plan coordinator should address the questions below and consider options 1, 2, and 3 in the chart that follows:

- Can the student demonstrate knowledge and skills (fully or partially) on the **standard MCAS test under routine conditions**?
- Can the student demonstrate knowledge and skills (fully or partially) on the **standard MCAS test with accommodations**? If so, which accommodations are necessary for the student to participate?
- If no to the above questions, the student should take the **alternate assessment** (MCAS-Alt).
(**Note: Alternate assessments** are intended only for students with significant disabilities who are unable to take standard MCAS tests, even with accommodations. Students should not be identified for alternate assessments on the basis of a particular disability, placement in a specific classroom or program, previous low achievement, or EL status.)

The student’s IEP team or 504 plan coordinator must make a separate decision for each subject scheduled for assessment. A student may take the standard test in one subject and the alternate assessment in another. These decisions may be revised each time the team convenes.

Characteristics of Student’s Instructional Program and Local Assessment	Recommended Participation in MCAS
<p>OPTION 1</p> <p><i>If the student is</i></p> <p>a) generally able to demonstrate knowledge and skills on a computer- or paper-based test, either with or without test accommodations,</p> <p>and is</p> <p>b) working on learning standards at or near grade-level expectations,</p> <p>or is</p> <p>c) working on learning standards that have been modified and are somewhat below grade-level expectations due to the nature of the student's disability,</p>	<p><i>Then</i></p> <p>the student should take the computer- or paper-based MCAS test, either with or without accommodations.</p>

**Characteristics of Student’s
Instructional Program and Local Assessment**

**Recommended Participation
in MCAS**

OPTION 2

If the student is

- a) **generally unable** to demonstrate knowledge and skills on a computer- or paper-based test, even with accommodations,

and is

- b) working on learning standards that have been **substantially modified** due to the nature and severity of his or her disability,

and is

- c) receiving **intensive, individualized instruction** in order to acquire, generalize, and demonstrate knowledge and skills,

Then

the student should take the **MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt)** in this subject.

**Characteristics of Student’s
Instructional Program and Local Assessment**

**Recommended Participation in
MCAS**

OPTION 3

If the student is

- a) working on learning standards **at, near, or somewhat below grade-level expectations**

and is

- b) **sometimes able** to take a computer- or paper-based test, either without or with one or more test accommodation(s)

but

- c) has a **complex and significant disability*** that does not allow the student to fully demonstrate knowledge and skills on a computer- or paper-based test of this duration,

* Examples of complex and significant disabilities for which the student may require an alternate assessment are provided in the following section.

Then

the student should take the computer- or paper-based **MCAS test**, if possible, with necessary accommodations.

However

the team may recommend the **MCAS-Alt** “grade-level” or “competency” portfolio when the severity and complexity of the disability prevent the student from demonstrating knowledge and skills on the computer- or paper-based MCAS test, even with the use of accommodations.

E. Complex and Significant Disabilities for Which a Student May Require an Alternate Assessment (Option 3)

While the majority of students who take alternate assessments have significant intellectual disabilities, participation in the MCAS-Alt is not limited to those students. When the nature and complexity of a student’s disability present significant barriers or challenges to standardized computer- or paper-based testing, even with the use of accommodations, and even when the student may be working at or near grade-level expectations, the student’s IEP team or 504 plan coordinator may determine that the student should participate in MCAS-Alt in one or more subjects.

In addition to the criteria for participating in alternate assessments outlined in Options 2 and 3 above, the following examples are provided to expand the team’s understanding of the appropriate use of alternate assessments in unique circumstances.

An alternate assessment may be administered, for example, to each of the following students:

- a student with a significant emotional, behavioral, or other disability, who is unable to maintain sufficient concentration to participate in standard MCAS testing, even with accommodations
- a student with a significant health-related disability, neurological disorder, or other complex disability, who cannot meet the demands of a prolonged test administration
- a student with a significant motor, communication, or other disability, who requires more time than is reasonable or available for testing, even with the allowance of extended time (i.e., the student is unable to complete a test session in a single school day)

F. “Grade-Level” and “Competency” Portfolios

Students with significant disabilities like those described above who are unable to demonstrate knowledge and skills on the standard MCAS tests, even with accommodations, but who are working **at or close to grade-level expectations**, should be considered for the “grade-level” (grades 3–8) or “competency” (high school) MCAS-Alt portfolio. More information on “grade-level” and “competency” MCAS-Alt portfolios is available in the [Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt](#).

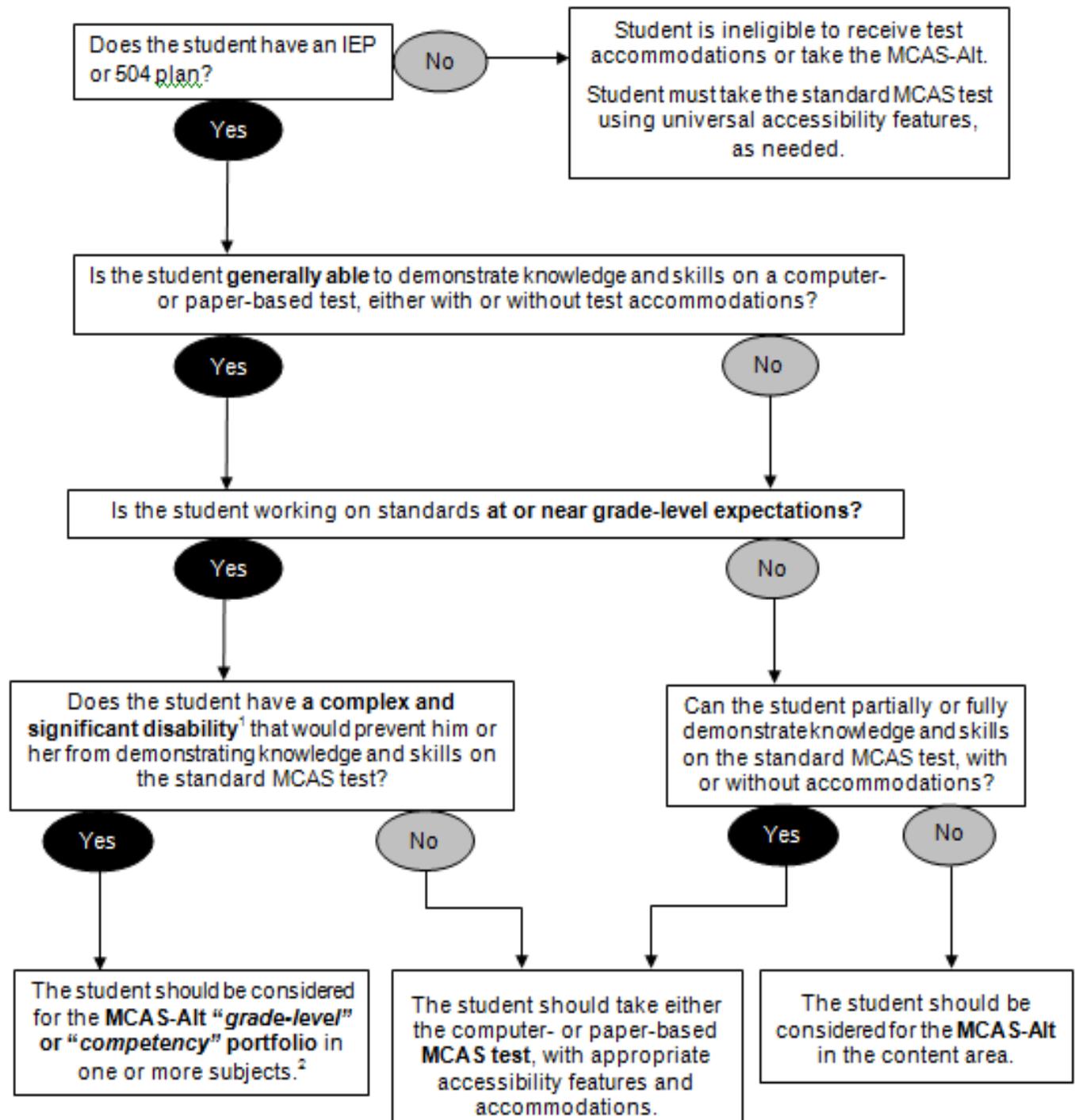
G. Further Guidance on Designating Students for the MCAS-Alt

IEP teams should **not** assume that a student should take an alternate assessment solely because he or she:

- Is frequently absent from school;
- has not received instruction in the general curriculum;
- has a particular disability (e.g., all students with intellectual disabilities should not automatically be designated for the MCAS-Alt);
- is placed in a program or classroom where it is expected that students will take the MCAS-Alt;
- has taken an alternate assessment in the past (since this is an annual decision);
- has previously failed the MCAS test;
- is an English learner;
- is from a low-income family or is a child in foster care;
- requires assistive technology or an augmentative communication system that has not been provided;
- attends a school in which the IEP team may have been influenced to designate the student for an alternate assessment in order to receive disproportionate credit for the school’s accountability rating.

H. Decision-Making Tool for MCAS Participation by Students with Disabilities

The decision chart shown below may be used by IEP teams and 504 plan coordinators to make annual decisions regarding appropriate student participation in MCAS *for each content area* being assessed.



¹ An explanation and examples of “complex and significant disabilities” can be found on page 8 of this manual.

² See the [Educator’s Manual for MCAS-Alt](#) for details and the submission requirements of “grade-level” and “competency” portfolios.

IV. MCAS Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

A. Background and Purpose

The information in this section is intended to guide decision-making regarding the selection, use, and evaluation of accommodations for MCAS testing. As required by [34 CFR 300.160](#), the state is providing districts with these guidelines for the provision of appropriate accommodations on the state assessment, and stipulating that IEP teams and 504 plan coordinators take care to identify and select only those accommodations for each assessment that are needed by the student and do not invalidate the score. IEP teams should be trained annually on these guidelines. Please read the following information carefully.

B. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

1. Purpose of Test Accommodations

A test accommodation is a change in the way a test is administered or the way in which a student responds to test questions. Test accommodations are intended to accomplish the following:

- offset the effects of the student’s disability and remove barriers to participation in the assessment;
- provide the necessary conditions for a student to demonstrate knowledge and skills effectively on statewide assessments;
- provide the opportunity to report the test results of students who require accommodations;
- provide comparable test results to those of students who did not receive accommodations; and
- yield results that do not affect the validity or reliability of the interpretation of scores for their intended purposes.

Based on the information and guidance found on the following pages, the IEP or 504 plan for each student with a disability must be revised as needed, either during routinely scheduled meetings prior to testing or through the amendment process. The principal is responsible for ensuring that each student is provided with the test accommodations listed in his or her IEP or 504 plan. It is also advisable (though not required) to list the *designated accessibility features* (see Table 2) in the plans of students to ensure these will be provided.

Use of test accommodations should never replace appropriate and rigorous instruction based on grade-level standards in the subject being tested.

2. Eligibility for Test Accommodations

ELIGIBLE: students with disabilities served by an IEP or 504 plan

The right of a student with a disability to receive allowable accommodations on MCAS tests is protected by both federal and state laws. The student’s IEP or 504 plan must specify precisely which MCAS accommodation(s) he or she will receive, and the IEP must be approved in writing by the parent/guardian (or student over 18) before an accommodation may be given. Similarly, a student’s 504 plan must already be in place or under development; in cases in which a 504 plan is under development, the school personnel responsible for writing the plan must have already met and agreed upon the necessary MCAS accommodation(s) before a student may be provided them.

NOT ELIGIBLE: students without documented disabilities and students with documented disabilities who are not served by an IEP or 504 plan

A student who does not have a documented disability and is not served by either an IEP or 504 plan is not eligible to receive accommodations on MCAS tests, regardless of whether the student already receives instructional support or accommodations.

3. General Requirements for Use of Test Accommodations

The use of accommodations is based on the individual needs of a student with a disability and may only be provided when all of the following conditions have been met:

- a) The student **has a disability** that is documented in an IEP or 504 plan and **requires the use of one or more accommodations** to participate in MCAS testing.

AND

- b) The accommodation is listed in this manual (or if not, prior written approval has been obtained from the Department); the **accommodation is listed** in the student's IEP under "State- and District-Wide Assessment;" and the **IEP has been signed** by the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to the date of test administration; or is listed as an MCAS accommodation in a 504 plan developed for the student.

AND

- c) The student **uses the accommodation routinely** (with rare exceptions) during classroom instruction and assessment in the subject, both before and after the MCAS test is administered, and the student is comfortable and familiar with its use. Use of an accommodation during routine instruction does not *necessarily* qualify a student to receive the same accommodation during MCAS testing; for example, the student must meet additional criteria to receive a **special access accommodation** on an MCAS test.

AND

- d) If a **special access accommodation** will be provided, the student meets all of the criteria to receive the accommodation, as shown in Table 5.

IEP teams must reconvene at least annually and determine which accommodations will be needed for state- and district-wide assessments.

Accommodations may **not**

- alter, explain, simplify, paraphrase, or eliminate any test question, reading passage, writing prompt, or multiple-choice answer option;
- provide verbal or nonverbal clues or suggestions that hint at or give away the correct response to the student;
- contradict test administration requirements or result in a violation of test security; for example:
 - test questions may not be modified, reordered, or reformatted in any way for any student;
 - paper-based tests may not be photocopied, photographed, scanned, altered, or duplicated;
 - screen shots of computer-based tests may not be taken or reproduced;

- English-language dictionaries are allowed **only** for legacy ELA Composition retest sessions. English-language dictionaries are **not** permitted for any student on the ELA, Mathematics, or STE MCAS tests; legacy Mathematics tests; or legacy ELA Reading Comprehension tests.

If the above conditions have been met, and the accommodation is listed in the IEP or 504 plan, the accommodation(s) **must be provided** to the student during MCAS testing. If an accommodation is provided that does not meet the conditions stated above, the student’s test score may be **invalidated**.

In the event a student was provided a test accommodation that was not listed in his or her IEP or 504 plan, or if a student was not provided a test accommodation listed in his or her plan, the school should immediately contact the Department at 781-338-3625 or by email at mcas@doe.mass.edu. If a student was provided an accommodation that was not in his or her IEP or 504 plan, all or part of the student’s score may be invalidated.

4. Updating IEPs and 504 Plans

IEPs and 504 plans should be updated for all students with disabilities for the spring 2019 MCAS test administration (and November 2018 and March 2019 retests, as needed) to reflect the policies and accommodations described in this manual. Proper notation of accommodations in students’ IEPs and 504 plans will ensure that students receive all the necessary supports to which they are entitled. Although not a requirement, the Department also recommends the inclusion of Designated Accessibility Features in the plans of students to guarantee their provision during testing.

Virtually all students are expected to take the next-generation MCAS tests using the computer-based testing platform (TestNav) and be given an opportunity to view the [tutorial](#) and take [online practice tests](#) prior to test administration. IEP and 504 coordinators should carefully consider whether a student requires a paper-based test as an accommodation and if so, list this in the student’s IEP or 504 plan prior to test administration.

Most legacy MCAS accommodations are equivalent to accommodations offered on the next-generation tests, as shown in Appendix A. IEPs and 504 plans should be updated at each student’s routinely scheduled IEP or 504 annual review meeting, as appropriate, to reflect the new accommodations terminology described in this manual.

5. If a Student Refuses an Accommodation

If a student refuses to use an accommodation listed in his or her plan, the school should document in writing that the student refused the accommodation and keep this documentation on file at the school. The student should be told that the accommodation will remain available should they need it during testing. The student should *not* be asked to sign an agreement acknowledging that they have refused an accommodation, nor waiving their right to receive an accommodation. A sample form (optional) for documenting a student’s refusal of an accommodation is available in Appendix C.

If a student refuses an accommodation, and the IEP team agrees that the listed accommodation is no longer needed by the student, the accommodation should be removed from the plan at the next scheduled meeting (or listed in the plan “as requested by the student”). Written approval must be obtained from the parent/guardian (or student, if over 18 years of age) on the new or amended plan.

Similarly, 504 plans must reflect only those accommodations that are required by the student, as determined by one or more educators familiar with the student. Consent by the parent/guardian is *not* required for a new or amended 504 plan, although the parent/guardian must be notified of the changes.

6. Unique Accommodations Requests

If a student with a disability or an English learner requires an accommodation (e.g., an assistive technology device) that is not listed in Tables 1–6, the school may request approval for use of the unique accommodation, provided the accommodation does **not** accomplish any of the following:

- fundamentally change the test or the construct being measured by the test,
OR
- assist the student to obtain the answers to test questions,
OR
- violate test security requirements.

The school may request approval (via email or fax) for use of the unique accommodation by submitting the request to mcas@doe.mass.edu or by fax at 781-338-3630 at least two weeks prior to testing. If approved by the Department, the accommodation must also be listed in the IEP or 504 plan of a student with a disability.

7. Process for Selecting and Evaluating MCAS Accessibility Features and Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Accommodations are intended to offset the effects of a disability to allow a student to participate effectively in MCAS testing. When selecting testing accommodations, educators should consider the following:

- **Determine the learning challenges** the student is experiencing.
 - Look at the student’s classroom performance, not just the nature or type of disability.
- **Brainstorm the use of various accommodations and universal and designated accessibility features** with IEP team members and other adults familiar with the student.
 - What supports were used successfully with students who have similar learning profiles?
- **Try out the accessibility features and accommodation(s)** in different instructional and assessment setting and make adjustments as needed.
 - Be sure the student is comfortable using the accessibility feature or accommodation and becomes familiar with its use.
- **Evaluate whether the accessibility feature or accommodation addresses the student’s need.**
 - If not, revise the plan to provide accommodation(s) and supports accordingly.
- **If the accessibility feature or accommodation addresses the challenge,**
 - determine whether the accessibility feature or accommodation is allowed for MCAS testing in the subject (see Tables 1–5 elsewhere in this manual); and
 - develop or amend the IEP or 504 plan accordingly, listing each accommodation (required) or feature (optional) for the specific MCAS test(s).

8. Description of MCAS Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Tables 3–5 list the MCAS accommodations available to students with disabilities on the computer-based test, and where available, the comparable accommodation on the *paper-based* test. **Note:** the paper-based accommodations described below also apply to legacy MCAS tests. The accommodations are grouped into the following categories:

- **Test Presentation:** allowable changes to the format in which the test is presented (Table 3);
- **Response:** allowable changes to the procedures, supports, or devices used to facilitate a student’s response to test questions (Table 4); and
- **Special Access:** accommodations intended for a small number of students to offset the effects of a disability that would otherwise severely limit or prevent their participation in the assessment, and that may impact the interpretation of the test results (Table 5).

Note: Accommodations listed with the “(SR/PNP)” designation in the tables below must be identified in the Student Registration/Personal Needs Profile for each student in PearsonAccess^{next}.

Table 3. Test Presentation Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Test Presentation Accommodations		
#	Computer-Based Test	Paper-Based Test
A1 (SR/PNP)	Paper-based edition of the MCAS test may be administered as an accommodation to a student who is unable to use a computer or take the computer-based test due to a disability. For grades 3–8 and 10 ELA and Mathematics only. (See additional guidance for Updating IEPs and 504 Plans on p. 13.)	N/A
A2 (SR/PNP)	N/A (see UF4 on page 3 for information on screen magnification)	<p>Large print edition (approximately 18-point font size on 11x17-inch paper)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All responses in the large print answer booklet must be transcribed verbatim from the large-print answer booklet to the student’s standard answer booklet, and returned according to instructions in the PAM, so the student can receive credit for his or her work. • Large print special instructions will accompany the large print test. • Students may, but are not required to use the large-print answer booklet to respond to test questions, so IEPs and 504 plans should indicate whether student taking the large-print test also requires a large-print answer booklet. Students who do not require the large-print answer booklet may record their answers in a standard answer booklet.
A3.1 (SR/PNP)	A3.1 – Screen reader for a student who is	A3.2 – Braille edition (hard copy) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All answers must be either scribed or

Test Presentation Accommodations		
#	Computer-Based Test	Paper-Based Test
and A3.2 (SR/PNP)	<p>blind or visually impaired</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the student will use a screen reader, a separate hard-copy Braille edition test with the appropriate Braille graphics must also be provided to the student. All answers must be entered onscreen, either by the student or test administrator. 	<p>transcribed verbatim into the student's answer booklet, and returned according to instructions in the PAM, so the student can receive credit for his or her work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Braille special instructions will accompany the Braille test. See Appendix D for a schedule of the MCAS transition to Unified English Braille (UEB).
A4.1 (SR/PNP) and A4.2 (SR/PNP)	<p>A4.1 – Text-to-speech (TTS) digital text read aloud on the computer-based MCAS Mathematics and/or grades 5 and 8 Science and Technology/Engineering tests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a TTS-enabled version of the computer-based test is used with headphones, the student may be tested in a typical-size group. If not using headphones, students must be tested individually in a separate setting. Students should view the tutorial and take an online TTS practice test prior to testing. If the student is unable to use the TTS feature, but has this accommodation listed in his or her plan, a human reader may be substituted. TTS for ELA is a <i>special access</i> accommodation (SA 1.1). See Table 5 for guidelines and criteria to receive this accommodation. 	<p>A4.2 – Kurzweil 3000 electronic text reader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kurzweil 3000 is no longer available as a test format for next-generation ELA and Mathematics tests in grades 3–8 and 10. <i>Only</i> available for high school STE tests and legacy ELA Composition and Mathematics retests Kurzweil 3000 format for the legacy ELA Reading Comprehension retest is a <i>special access</i> accommodation (SA 1.1). See Table 5 for guidelines and criteria to receive this accommodation. Kurzweil 3000 tests are in read-only format. Responses must be recorded in the student's answer booklet. Kurzweil 3000 special instructions will be sent to the school with the test.
A5 (SR/PNP)	<p>Human read-aloud for the Mathematics and Science and Technology/Engineering computer- or paper-based tests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The test must be read word-for-word, exactly as it appears. The test administrator may not provide assistance to the student regarding the meanings of words, intent of any test item, or responses to test items. The test administrator should read with emphasis only when indicated by bold or italicized text. Test administrators who review the test will be asked to sign non-disclosure agreements. The test must be administered in a separate setting, either individually or to a small group of 2–5 students (or up to 10 students for the legacy ELA Composition retest), all of whom are being provided the human read-aloud accommodation. Reading aloud the ELA tests or legacy ELA Reading Comprehension retest is a <i>special access</i> accommodation. See Table 5 for guidelines and criteria to receive this accommodation. 	

Test Presentation Accommodations		
#	Computer-Based Test	Paper-Based Test
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For students who require text read aloud, IEP teams should consider whether TTS is preferable to a human reader (or vice versa) and list this in each student’s IEP or 504 plan. <p>Note: Reading aloud selected words to any student on the Mathematics and/or STE test(s) is a Universal Accessibility Feature. See Table 1.</p>	
A6 (SR/PNP)	<p>Human signer for the Mathematics, Science and Technology/Engineering tests, and test questions (but not reading passages) for ELA, for a student who is Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The test must be signed exactly as it appears. The signer may not provide assistance to the student regarding the meaning of words, intent of any test item, or responding to test questions. The signer may finger-spell key words in addition to providing the sign for a term, in cases where a signed term may be unfamiliar to the student. The signer should read with emphasis only when indicated by bold or italicized text. The test must be administered in a separate setting, either individually or to a small group of 2–5 students, all of whom are receiving the human signer accommodation. <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under secure conditions supervised by the principal, interpreters may review the test materials once they become available, either online or delivered to the school, for the purpose of preparing to sign the test. Test materials may not be removed from the school or accessed online outside of the school. Test administrators and interpreters who review the test prior to testing will be asked to sign non-disclosure agreements. If preferred, selected words, phrases, or sections of the Mathematics and/or Science and Technology/Engineering test(s) may be signed to the student, as requested, rather than signing the entire test. Signing the ELA reading and legacy ELA Reading Comprehension retest passages is a <i>special access</i> accommodation. See Table 5 for guidelines and criteria to receive this accommodation. 	
A7	Human signer for <u>test directions only</u> for a student who is Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing	
A8	Track test items (i.e., helping the student to move from one test question to the next)	

Table 4. Response Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Response Accommodations		
#	Computer-Based Test	Paper-Based Test

Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2018–2019 MCAS Tests/Retest
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Response Accommodations

Use a Department approved graphic organizer, checklist, or supplemental reference sheet for ELA and/or Mathematics tests, and/or Science and Technology/Engineering tests

Only approved versions made available by the Department may be used as an accommodation on ELA and Mathematics tests.

Notes:

- Approved graphic organizers and supplemental reference sheets are available on the [Department's website](#). These have been developed for use on next-generation MCAS tests based on: the most current versions of the curriculum framework standards measured by the tests; the MCAS test design; expectations for how student essays and text-based responses will be scored; and previously approved versions and proposed changes submitted by schools.
- Graphic organizers *without* any text may also be used without Department approval by a student with a disability who has this accommodation listed in his or her plan.
- A student may use no more than **three** different approved graphic organizers or two supplemental reference sheets per test session.
- For **Science and Technology/Engineering** tests (grades 5 and 8 and high school), a student may use the [sample reference sheets](#) or submit a customized reference sheet to the Department for approval (see Appendix E).

English Language Arts and Mathematics retests

- Students may continue to use individualized ELA graphic organizers, supplemental mathematics reference sheets and checklists, and customized STE reference sheets provided they have been submitted and approved by the Department prior to testing.
- All customized organizers, checklists, and reference sheets submitted for approval must be accompanied by a completed cover sheet (see Appendix E).
- Individualized mathematics reference sheets approved prior to the 2017–2018 school year must be resubmitted for use on the 2018–2019 retests and STE tests.

Notes on the use of organizers and reference sheets for ELA retests:

- The student may use no more than **three** different graphic organizers per test session.
- Graphic organizers and checklists may *not* include definitions, specific examples, or sentence starters.

Notes on the use of individualized reference sheets for Mathematics retests:

- The reference sheet must:
 - be developed in response to the student's specific learning needs;
 - be no more than 3 pages in length; and
 - conform to the [Approval Guide for Individualized Mathematics Reference Sheets](#).

- Individualized graphic organizer/reference sheet submission deadlines:

A9
(SR/PNP)

Response Accommodations																					
		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Test Administration Date</th> <th>MCAS Test</th> <th>Materials Submission Deadline</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>November 2018</td> <td>ELA and Mathematics (Retest)</td> <td>October 5, 2018</td> </tr> <tr> <td>February 2019</td> <td>High School Biology</td> <td>January 11, 2019</td> </tr> <tr> <td>March 2019</td> <td>ELA and Mathematics (Retest)</td> <td>February 1, 2019</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April 2019</td> <td>Grades 5 and 8 STE</td> <td>March 1, 2019</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 2019</td> <td>High School STE</td> <td>April 26, 2019</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Test Administration Date	MCAS Test	Materials Submission Deadline	November 2018	ELA and Mathematics (Retest)	October 5, 2018	February 2019	High School Biology	January 11, 2019	March 2019	ELA and Mathematics (Retest)	February 1, 2019	April 2019	Grades 5 and 8 STE	March 1, 2019	June 2019	High School STE	April 26, 2019	
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A10.1 (SR/PNP) and A10.2 (SR/PNP)	<p>Scribe responses for the Mathematics, Science and Technology/Engineering tests and/or legacy ELA Reading <i>Comprehension</i> retest using either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a human scribe (A10.1) who will record the student’s responses verbatim, either onscreen (computer-based test) or in the student’s answer booklet (paper-based test), as dictated by the student <i>at the time of testing</i>. The student must be tested in a separate setting. Test administrators and interpreters who review the test will be asked to sign non-disclosure agreements. OR speech-to-text (A10.2); an external speech recognition program that converts spoken to written language (other than a smartphone) used under the direct supervision of a test administrator to generate responses. If the speech-to-text device is not compatible with the next-generation computer-based test, then the test administrator must transcribe the student’s responses verbatim (either onscreen or in student’s answer booklet) <i>anytime prior to the end of the testing window</i>. The student must be tested in a separate setting. <p>If the student is unable to use his or her hand or arm at the time of testing due to a recent fracture, injury, or recovery from surgery, the scribe accommodation must be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> listed in a 504 plan or an approved IEP (approval by the Department is not required); OR in cases where a 504 plan is under development, the staff responsible for writing the plan must already have met and agreed upon the need for the scribe accommodation before providing to a student. 																				
A11	N/A	<p>Responses recorded by student in test booklet or on special paper, rather than in the answer booklet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses must be transcribed by a test administrator into the student’s answer booklet. If the student transcribes his or her own responses, then transcription must occur <i>during the test session</i> and be completed on the day in which the test session began. <p>Note: This accommodation is provided to students taking legacy tests. Next-Generation tests will use a combined test-and-answer booklet.</p>																			

Response Accommodations		
A12 <i>(SR/PNP)</i>	N/A	<p>Typed responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcription of typed responses into the answer booklet is NOT necessary. • Responses must be printed out, one question response per page, and inserted in the student’s answer booklet with all required information on each page (see the Principal’s Administration Manual). • After printing out, responses must be deleted from word processor or device.
A13	<p>Student records responses on an external recording device (other than a smartphone) for purposes of playing back recorded segment(s). Student may use text-to-speech software or audio recording device. Responses must be deleted from the device once transcription into student answer booklet is completed.</p>	
A14	<p>Responses signed onto video (for a student who is Deaf or Hard-of Hearing), then transcribed by the student onscreen or into the answer booklet during playback. The video must be deleted after transcription.</p>	
A15	<p>Monitor placement of responses in the appropriate area onscreen or in the answer booklet by the test administrator</p>	
A16	<p>Refreshable Braille Display/Braille note-taker (specific external device used in conjunction with screen reader. A hard-copy edition of the Braille test should also be ordered.)</p>	<p>Braille note-taker (specific external device used in conjunction with hard-copy Braille test)</p> <p>Note: Braille notes should be returned with the school’s nonscorable shipment.</p>
A17	<p>Braille writer (specific external device used in conjunction with screen reader and hard-copy Braille test)</p>	<p>Braille writer (specific external device used in conjunction with the hard-copy Braille test). A printout of each question response may be printed out and inserted in the student’s answer booklet, with all required information on each page (see the Principal’s Administration Manual).</p>

A note regarding the transcription of student responses: The process of transcribing a student’s responses onscreen or into his or her answer booklet by a test administrator (e.g., from the large print answer booklet) may occur at any time during the testing window, and must be monitored and supervised by the principal, test coordinator, or another test administrator.

9. *Special Access Accommodations for Students with Disabilities*

Special access (formerly called “nonstandard”) accommodations are intended for use by a *very small number of students* who would not otherwise be able to access the test because a disability severely limits or prevents them from performing the skill in question. Teams must exercise caution when considering whether a student requires a special access accommodation, since these accommodations may alter part of what the test is designed to measure. Teams must carefully review the guidelines and criteria described for each special access accommodation listed in Table 5.

Test results for students who took the test using special access accommodations must be interpreted with caution by parents and schools who should not infer that the student has expertise in the skill being accommodated. A notation will accompany the results of students who used a *special access* accommodation.

The Department will review each district’s rate of use of special access accommodations. To ensure that IEP teams and 504 plan coordinators carefully review and apply appropriate criteria for use of special access accommodations, districts must do the following:

- train members of IEP teams and 504 plan coordinators on the use of accommodations, including *special access* accommodations;
- review all guidelines with staff for special access accommodations listed in Table 5; and
- revise the IEPs and 504 plans of students with disabilities as needed.

Although test accommodations should generally be consistent with accommodations used for instruction, **the use of a *special access* accommodation during instruction does not automatically qualify a student to receive the same accommodation on an MCAS test**, unless the student meets the guidelines and criteria described on the following pages.

IEP and 504 teams are encouraged to make consistent, appropriate, and defensible decisions regarding the use of *special access* accommodations for each student, based on locally administered diagnostic assessments, and to amend the IEPs and 504 plans of students who have been previously designated, but do not meet the criteria listed in Table 5.

Table 5. *Special Access Accommodations* for Students with Disabilities

Special Access Accommodations	
#	Computer- and Paper-Based Tests
SA1.1 <i>(SR/PNP)</i> and SA1.2 <i>(SR/PNP)</i> and SA1.3 <i>(SR/PNP)</i>	<p>Text-to-speech (SA1.1) or Human read-aloud (SA1.2) for next-generation ELA tests; or Kurzweil 3000 (SA1.3) electronic text reader or Human read-aloud (SA1.2) for the legacy ELA Reading Comprehension retest, including oral presentation of test questions, response options, and passages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text-to-speech may be used either with or without headphones; • a human reader may either read aloud 1) the computer-based test logged in to a nearby computer or sitting next to the student; or 2) the paper-based test. <p>This accommodation is intended for a small number of students with disabilities that severely limit or prevent them from reading, as documented in locally administered diagnostic evaluations.</p> <p>The student must meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be virtually unable to read, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so (i.e., the student is at the very beginning stages of learning to read, and not simply reading below grade level), as determined by locally administered diagnostic evaluations; and • receive ongoing intervention to learn the skill; and • use this accommodation routinely (except during instruction in learning to read). <p>The human read aloud (SA1.2) may also be provided to a student who is blind or has a visual impairment and uses a screen reader and/or has not yet learned (or is unable to use) Braille on</p>

Special Access Accommodations	
#	Computer- and Paper-Based Tests
	<p>the tests and retests listed above. If the student will use a screen reader, a separate hard copy Braille test edition will be sent to the school to allow the student to access the appropriate Braille graphics (see accommodation A3.1).</p> <p>The student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may be tested in a typical-sized group if using text-to-speech with headphones; • must be tested individually, in a separate setting, if text-to-speech will be used <i>without</i> headphones; and • may be tested in a group of up to five students if a human read aloud will be used.
SA2 (SR/PNP)	<p>Human Signer for next-generation ELA tests or legacy ELA Reading Comprehension retest, including reading passages, questions, and answer options, for a student who is Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing</p> <p>This accommodation is intended for students who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing, and who are severely limited or prevented from reading, as documented in locally administered diagnostic evaluations.</p> <p>The student must meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be virtually unable to read, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so (i.e., the student is at the very beginning stages of learning to read, and not simply reading below grade level), due to a documented disability and/or history of early and prolonged lack of exposure to and use of language; and • uses this accommodation routinely, except during reading instruction; and • receives ongoing intervention to learn the skill. <p>The student must be tested in a group of no more than five students, unless approval is obtained from the Department to increase the group size in rare circumstances.</p>
SA3.1 (SR/PNP) and SA3.2 (SR/PNP)	<p>Scribe responses on the ELA test or ELA Composition retest, using either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a human scribe (SA3.1) who records the student’s responses verbatim during testing OR • speech-to-text (SA3.2), a speech recognition program that converts spoken language to written text, used under the direct supervision of a test administrator to generate responses to test questions. The test administrator must transcribe the student’s responses verbatim (either onscreen or in the student’s answer booklet) at any time <i>prior to the end of the testing window</i>. <p>This accommodation is intended for a student who either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. has a language-processing (or other) disability and requires the dictation of virtually all written responses to a scribe or an electronic speech-to-text conversion device to generate responses. OR 2. who is unable to use his or her hand or arm at the time of testing due to a fracture, severe injury, or recovery from surgery. In this case, the accommodation must either be <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. listed in a 504 plan or an approved IEP (no additional approval by the Department is required); OR b. in cases where a 504 plan is under development, school personnel responsible for writing the plan must have already met and agreed upon the necessary MCAS accommodation(s) before a student may be provided the accommodation(s).

Special Access Accommodations	
#	Computer- and Paper-Based Tests
	<p>Clarification on the role of a scribe for the ELA test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The test must be administered individually in a separate setting. • The scribe may enter student responses either onscreen (computer-based test) or in the student’s answer booklet (paper-based test) at the time of testing. Test administrators who review the test will be asked to sign non-disclosure agreements. • The scribe must write exactly what the student dictates. The scribe may not edit or alter the student’s dictation in any way. When scribing, the scribe may assume that each sentence begins with an upper-case letter and ends with a period. All other capitalization, punctuation, and paragraph breaks are the responsibility of the student. • After the student has finished dictating his or her response(s), the scribe must ask the student to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review the draft and make any necessary edits, including capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and paragraph breaks. ○ The student may make edits independently or may direct the scribe to make the edits. ○ The scribe must not assist the student in making decisions during the editing process.
SA4 (SR/PNP)	<p>Calculation device or other mathematics tool (e.g., addition/subtraction or multiplication/division tables; or manipulatives) on the <i>non-calculator session</i> of the Mathematics test or retest</p> <p>This accommodation is intended for a small number of students with documented disabilities that severely limit or prevent them from performing basic calculations without a calculation device or other mathematics tool, as documented in locally administered diagnostic evaluations, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so.</p> <p>The student must meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be virtually unable to calculate (i.e., unable to perform single-digit addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division without a calculation device or other mathematics tool); and • uses the calculation device or tool during routine instruction in mathematics; and • receives ongoing intervention to learn the skill. <p>The student’s IEP or 504 plan must specify which calculation device or tool will be used (e.g., calculator or multiplication table).</p> <p>Manipulatives and other mathematics tools (excluding calculators and arithmetic tables) must be approved by the Department prior to their use on MCAS tests. Please contact Student Assessment Services at 781-338-3625 or mcas@doe.mass.edu to request approval.</p>

Special Access Accommodations	
#	Computer- and Paper-Based Tests
SA5 <i>(SR/PNP)</i>	<p>Spell-checker for the ELA test or ELA Composition retest, including an external spell-checking device for the paper-based test; or in conjunction with the typed response accommodation for the paper-based test</p> <p>This accommodation is intended for a small number of students with disabilities that severely limit or prevent them from spelling correctly, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so.</p> <p>The student must meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be virtually unable to spell simple words (i.e., at the beginning stages of learning how to spell), as documented by locally-administered diagnostic evaluations; and • produces understandable written work only when provided this accommodation, which the student uses during routine instruction; and • receives ongoing intervention to learn the skill. <p>The student may <i>not</i> use grammar check or access the internet during the test.</p>
SA6 <i>(SR/PNP)</i>	<p>Word prediction for the ELA test and ELA Composition retest, using an external device, application, or software compatible with the TestNav computer-based test platform. Word prediction provides student with a bank of frequently or recently used words after the student keyboards the first few letters of a word.</p> <p>A list of assistive technology devices compatibility with TestNav is described in the Guidelines for Using Assistive Technology as an MCAS Test Accommodation</p> <p>This accommodation is intended for a small number of students who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. have disabilities that severely limit or prevent them from recalling and processing language to write or keyboard responses; AND 2. can access written expression only through the use of word prediction software, application, or device that they use routinely to generate written responses. <p>A test administrator should facilitate the transfer of information from the external device, application, or software to the answer booklet or onscreen. Written responses must either be transcribed by the student at the time of testing or be transcribed by an adult prior to the end of the testing window. Test administrators who review the test will be asked to sign non-disclosure agreements.</p> <p>During testing, internet access must be turned off/restricted; and functions that <i>automatically</i> select words for the student must be turned off.</p>

V. MCAS Participation Requirements for Students Who Are English Learners (ELs)

EL students must participate in all MCAS tests scheduled for their grades, regardless of the language program and services they are receiving or the amount of time they have been in the United States.

The one **exception** applies to first-year EL students who enrolled in U.S. schools **after March 1, 2018** and who were not reported in the March 2018 SIMS report, for whom ELA testing is *optional*. ELA testing is also optional for EL students from Puerto Rico who are in their first year of enrollment in a Massachusetts school. Note that this policy is also applicable for students in grade 10. Schools should refer to the [Graduation Requirements for Displaced Puerto Rico High School Students](#) who may wish to obtain a diploma from Puerto Rico.

Schools may elect to administer the MCAS ELA tests to first-year ELs, and *must* administer the ACCESS for ELLs test to first-year and all other EL students. Students who enter a U.S. school for the first time *after* ACCESS for ELLs testing is completed are not required to participate in ELA testing. **First-year EL students must participate in MCAS Mathematics and Science and Technology/Engineering tests**, although results will be reported for diagnostic purposes only and students' results will not be included in school and district summary results or in state accountability reporting. For first-year ELs who participate in ELA testing, results will be provided at the school level and will be used for Competency Determination purposes for grade 10 students.

EL Participation Requirements for Spring 2019 MCAS Tests

	Content Area Test		
	ELA	Mathematics	Science and Tech/Eng
First-Year EL Students ¹	<i>Optional</i> ²	Required	Required
All Other Students	Required	Required	Required

¹ Results for first-year EL students are **not** included in MCAS school and district summary results.

² Optional, provided that the student has participated in ACCESS for ELs testing.

Questions regarding the **identification screening, placement, and reclassification of EL students** should be directed to the Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement at 781-338-3584 or via email at el@doe.mass.edu. For additional details, refer to the [Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement, and Reclassification of English Learners](#).

Foreign Exchange Students

Foreign exchange students who are coded as #11 under "Reason for Enrollment" in SIMS in grades 3–8 and 10 are required to participate in the MCAS tests specified for the grade in which they are reported. These students are also required to participate in ACCESS for ELLs testing if they are reported in SIMS as English learners.

VI. MCAS Accessibility and Accommodations for EL Students

In addition to the accessibility features listed elsewhere in this manual that are available to English learners, several accommodations are also available to ELs, as described in Table 6. Table 7 describes the relative suitability of each accommodation for students at beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of English proficiency.

A. Individuals Involved in Selecting Accessibility Features and Accommodations for EL Students

Decisions about which universal and designated accessibility features, and which accommodations, are appropriate for an EL student should be made by a group of educators familiar with the student. The decisions of the decision-making team must be documented using either the sample form for **Documentation of MCAS Accommodations for an EL Student** provided in Appendix B, or using a similar, locally designed form.

Individuals involved in the decision-making process may include any of the following:

- the student him- or herself
- the student’s English as a Second Language (ESL) educator
- school administrator (principal/assistant principal)
- general educator (content area teacher)
- special educator (if appropriate)
- parent or guardian

Decision-making teams are encouraged to determine appropriate accessibility features and accommodations for EL students as early as possible in the school year to ensure that the student is familiar with their use. The student should not be introduced to an accessibility feature or accommodation on the day of the assessment. Accessibility features and accommodations are intended to remove barriers and allow EL students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills more effectively.

B. Guidelines for Selecting and Evaluating Accessibility Features and Accommodations for EL Students

Because a student’s level of English language proficiency is transitional and the student’s linguistic needs will differ from one year to the next, universal and designated accessibility features and accommodations should be examined and revised annually as the EL student makes progress toward attaining English proficiency.

1. Decision-Making Procedures

The following procedures may be used to make appropriate decisions regarding the selection of accessibility features and accommodations for EL students:

1. After examining the range of supports allowed on MCAS tests that may help the EL student access the curriculum and take assessments more effectively, the student’s classroom teacher should ask him- or herself the following:

- *Has a particular feature and/or accommodation been used successfully in the past to assist students in similar situations and at similar English proficiency levels?*
2. After trying out the selected supports during routine instruction to determine whether they meet the student’s needs, the teacher should ask him- or herself the following questions:
 - *Does the feature and/or accommodation help the student overcome the barrier posed by his or her developing English language proficiency?*
 - *Is the student comfortable using the feature or accommodation?*
 3. The teacher should observe the student in the classroom (or if possible, across different classrooms and school settings) using the feature or accommodation and inform members of the decision-making team which features or accommodations seem most appropriate and effective.

Based on the feature(s) and/or accommodations listed in this manual and used successfully in the classroom, the teacher can select the appropriate features and/or accommodations for use on the MCAS tests.

4. The teacher should document the final decisions, either on the sample form provided in Appendix B, or using a similar, locally developed form, and maintain this information in the student’s file.

2. Involving Students in Selecting and Using Accommodations

The more an EL student is involved in the accommodation selection process, the more likely the accommodations are to be accepted and used by the student. As students’ English proficiency increases, and especially as students reach adolescence and the desire to be more independent increases, students will help determine when the support is no longer useful. Students are likely to increase their self-advocacy abilities over time and ensure that the selected supports are provided during testing. Teachers and other adults should play a role in assisting students to advocate on their own behalf regarding their need for and use of accessibility features and accommodations.

It is important to introduce the use of selected features and accommodations as early as possible in the school year to familiarize students with their use and determine their effectiveness. Accommodations should never be provided for the first time on a statewide assessment.

C. Accommodations for Students Who Are English Learners (ELs)

In addition to universal features and designated features available to all students, the accommodations listed in Table 6 are available to all ELs, either with or without disabilities, on MCAS tests.

Note that *some* EL accommodations must be **requested in advance** in the Student Registration/Personal Needs Profile (SR/PNP) in PearsonAccess^{next}. The names of accommodations and the process for their selection are identical to accommodations for students with disabilities, although the EL accommodations have a unique code (e.g., EL1.).

Table 6. Accommodations for Students Who Are ELs

#	Accommodations for EL Students
EL1 (SR/PNP)	<p>Paper-based editions of the next-generation Mathematics or Science and Technology/Engineering tests may be administered to a first-year EL student (i.e., a student in his or her first calendar year of enrollment in a U.S. school) with a low level of English proficiency or an EL who has little or no familiarity with technology.</p> <p>(Note: Administering the ELA test to a first-year EL student is <i>optional</i>)</p>
EL2	<p><u>Approved Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionary and Glossary</u> (English/Native language)</p> <p>(Note: this accommodation is also available to former ELs)</p>
EL3.1 (SR/PNP) and EL3.2 (SR/PNP) and EL3.3 (SR/PNP)	<p>Text-to-speech (TTS) (EL3.1) for next-generation computer-based Mathematics and/or grades 5 and 8 Science and Technology/Engineering tests (STE); or Human read-aloud (EL 3.2) for next-generation computer-based or paper-based Mathematics and/or Science and Technology/Engineering tests or legacy Mathematics or ELA <i>Composition</i> retests; or Kurzweil 3000 (EL3.3) for legacy paper-based Mathematics retests ELA <i>Composition</i> retests and/or STE tests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If administering the paper-based test with a human reader, the test must be read word for word in English, exactly as written. The test administrator may not provide assistance to the student regarding the translation or meaning of words. The test administrator should read with emphasis only when indicated by bold or italicized text. • If a human reader is used, the test must be administered in a separate setting either individually or to a group of 2–5 students all of whom are receiving the human reader accommodation. • If the TTS-enabled English-only edition of the computer-based test is read aloud to a student using headphones, students may be tested in a typical-size group. If not using headphones, then student must be tested in a separate setting. <p>Note: Reading aloud selected words on the Mathematics and/or Science and Technology/Engineering tests is a universal accessibility feature (UF10). See Table 1.</p>
EL4.1 (SR/PNP) and EL4.2 (SR/PNP)	<p>Scribe for the Mathematics and/or STE tests or legacy ELA <i>Reading Comprehension</i> retest, including either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a human scribe, who records student’s responses verbatim <i>at the time of testing</i> (EL4.1); or • student dictates responses using speech-to-text, an external communication device, with subsequent transcription by an adult, either onscreen or in the student’s answer booklet (EL4.2).
EL5	<p>Test administrator reads aloud/repeats/clarifies general administration directions (from the Test Administration Manual scripts) in English</p>
EL6	<p>Test administrator reads aloud/repeats/clarifies general administration directions (from the Test Administration Manual scripts) in student’s native language (if native language speaker is available)</p>
EL7	<p>English/Spanish version of the Grade 10 Mathematics test or retest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English/Spanish tests are available in computer- and paper-based formats; legacy retests are paper-based only. Paper-based tests are side-by-side; computer-based tests are Spanish text above English text). • Intended only for an EL student that has been in the U.S. for less than 3-years • Student may respond in either Spanish or English. (Note: For all other MCAS test versions, students must respond in English.)

Table 7 provides guidance regarding the suitability of EL accommodations based on the English language proficiency (ELP) level of the student.

Table 7. Guidance on Selecting Accommodations for English Learners

KEY for Table 7:	
●	Highly recommended for use by English learners at this ELP level
⊙	Recommended for use by English learners at this ELP level
○	May not be appropriate for students at this ELP level

#	Accommodation	Most Likely to Benefit English Language Learners at the Following		
		Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced
EL1	Paper-based editions of the next-generation tests may be administered to a first-year EL student (i.e., a student in his or her first calendar year of enrollment in a U.S. school) with a low level of English proficiency or has no familiarity with technology.	⊙	○	○
EL2	Approved bilingual word-to-word dictionary and glossary (English/Native Language)	○	●	●
EL3.1 and EL3.2	Text-to-speech for the next-generation CBT Mathematics or Science Technology/Engineering (STE) tests (in English <i>only</i>); OR Human read-aloud for Mathematics, STE, or legacy ELA Composition retest	●	⊙	○
EL4.1 and EL4.2	Human scribe or speech-to-text for Mathematics or Science and Technology/ Engineering Responses OR legacy ELA Reading Comprehension retest	●	⊙	○
EL5	Test administrator reads aloud/repeats/clarifies general administration <u>directions</u> in English	●	⊙	○
EL6	Test administrator reads aloud/repeats/clarifies general administration <u>directions</u> in student’s native language	●	⊙	○
EL7	English/Spanish version of the Grade 10 Mathematics test or retest	●	⊙	○

APPENDIX A

Comparison of Legacy and Next-Generation MCAS Accommodations and Accessibility Features

The following table provides a comparison between the next-generation (current) and legacy (previous) MCAS accessibility features and accommodations, including the numerical designation of each. **Universal Accessibility Features** (labeled UF) are available to *all* students; **Designated Accessibility Features** (labeled DF) are available to *all* students at the discretion of the principal or designee; and **Accommodations** and **Special Access Accommodations** (labeled SA) are available only to students with disabilities (labeled A or SA) and English learners (labeled EL). The next-generation MCAS tests are administered in both computer- *and* paper-based formats, while legacy MCAS tests are administered only on paper, limiting the availability of a small number of accessibility features and accommodations on the paper-based tests.

#	Legacy MCAS Accommodations	#	Next-Gen MCAS Accessibility Features and Accommodations
1	Frequent Breaks	DF3	Frequent supervised breaks
2	Time of Day	DF10	Specific time of day
3	Small Group	DF1	Small group test administration
4	Separate Setting	DF4	Separate or alternate test location
5	Individual	DF2	Individual (one-to-one) test administration
6	Specified Area	DF5	Seating in a specific area of the testing room
7	Familiar Test Administrator	DF8	Familiar test administrator
8	Noise Buffers	DF7	Noise buffer or noise cancelling headphones
9	Magnification or Overlays	UF2, UF3	Colored overlays or tinted lens(es); Magnification tool
10	Test Directions	UF12, EL5, EL6	Reads aloud, repeats, or clarifies general administration directions or student's native language
11	Large Print	A2	Large print edition
12	Braille	A3.1, A3.2	Braille edition, Screen-reader
13	Place Marker	UF7	Use a blank place marker to mark a question for return later, Item flag/bookmark
14	Track Test Items	A8	Track test items (move from one test question to the next)
14	Test Administrator Redirects Student's Attention to the Test	UF11	Test administrator redirects student's attention to the test
15	Amplification	UF8	Audio aids
16	Test Administrator Reads Aloud ELA Composition, Mathematics, or STE tests	A5, EL3.2	Human read-aloud for the Mathematics and/or grades 5 and 8 STE tests
17	Test Administrator Signs the	A6	Human signer for the Mathematics, STE, and

#	Legacy MCAS Accommodations	#	Next-Gen MCAS Accessibility Features and Accommodations
	Mathematics, STE, or ELA Composition tests		test questions only for ELA or legacy ELA Composition retest
18	Kurzweil 3000 for the ELA Composition, Mathematics, or STE	A4.1, A4.2, EL3.3	Text-to-speech for computer-based Mathematics tests or grades 5 and 8 STE tests; OR Kurzweil 3000 for legacy Mathematics retest, ELA Composition retest, and high school STE tests
19	Test Administrator Scribes the ELA Reading Comprehension, Mathematics, or STE test(s); or Speech-to-Text	A10.1; EL4.1 A10.2; EL4.2	Scribe responses for the Mathematics, STE tests, or ELA Reading Comprehension retest only; OR Speech-to-text
20	Organizer, Checklist, Reference Sheet, or Abacus	A9	Use a Department pre-approved graphic organizer, checklist, or supplemental reference sheet on next-generation ELA and Mathematics tests; OR Use a customized STE or Mathematics reference sheet, or individualized ELA graphic organizer for legacy retests
21	Student Signs or Reads Test Aloud	DF9	Student reads test aloud to self
22	Monitor Placement of Responses	A15	Test administrator monitors placement of responses
23	Typed Responses	A12	Typed or word-processed responses
24	Answers Recorded in Test Booklet	A11	Responses recorded in test booklet
25	Other Standard Accommodation	N/A	Unique accommodations request (email DESE for approval)
26	Test Administrator Reads Aloud ELA Reading Comprehension Test	SA1.2	Human read-aloud for next-generation ELA test or human read-aloud for legacy ELA Reading Comprehension retest
27	Test Administrator Signs the ELA Reading Comprehension Test	SA2	Human signer for the ELA reading passages or legacy ELA Reading Comprehension retest
28	Electronic Text Reader (Kurzweil 3000) for the ELA Reading Comprehension Test	SA1.1	Text-to-speech for next-generation computer-based grades ELA tests
29	Test Administrator Scribes the ELA Composition	SA3.1	Scribe responses on the next-generation ELA tests or legacy ELA Composition retest
30	Calculation Devices	SA4	Calculation device or mathematics tool
31	Spell- or Grammar-Checking; or Word Prediction for ELA Composition	SA5 SA6	Spell-checker for the ELA test or legacy ELA Composition retest Word prediction for the ELA test or legacy

#	Legacy MCAS Accommodations	#	Next-Gen MCAS Accessibility Features and Accommodations
			ELA Composition retest
32	Other Nonstandard Accommodation	N/A	Unique accommodation request (email DESE for approval)
N/A	Approved Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionary and Glossary	EL2	Approved Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionary and Glossary
N/A	Grade 10 <i>only</i> English/Spanish Mathematics test	EL7	Grade 10 <i>only</i> English/Spanish Mathematics test

APPENDIX B

Sample Form

Documentation of MCAS Accommodations for an EL Student

Use this form or a locally developed form to document the selection of **MCAS accessibility features and accommodations** for each EL student. Available accessibility features and accommodations are listed in the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2018–2019 MCAS Tests/Retests*. This form or the locally developed form should be completed within 60 days of the start of school year or student’s date of enrollment and must be **updated annually**. If the EL is a student with a disability, accommodations decisions for EL students with disabilities must also be documented in the student’s IEP or 504 plan.

Student Name: _____ **School Year:** _____

Grade: _____ **SASID:** _____

School: _____ **District:** _____

Name of staff and others who determined the test accommodations and features for the student:

Teacher(s) _____

Others (including student and/or parent) _____

If the **parent** and/or **student** were not part of the decision-making process, then they should be notified of the features and accommodations the student will receive on the tests.

Directions: Indicate below the **accessibility features and accommodations** that will be provided to the student on MCAS tests.

Accessibility Feature or Accommodation Needed by the EL Student for Testing	Notes/Comments
(Continue on additional pages as needed.)	

APPENDIX C
Sample Form (Optional)

Student Accommodation Refusal

If a student refuses an accommodation listed in his or her IEP or 504 plan, the school should document in writing that the student refused the accommodation, and the accommodation must be offered and remain available to the student during testing.

This form can be completed and placed in the student's file, and a copy sent to the parent. IEP teams, 504 plan coordinators, and educators making MCAS accommodations decisions for ELs should consider this information when making future accommodations decisions for the student. Use of this form is encouraged, but not required.

Student Name: _____	Date: _____
Grade: _____	SASID: _____
School: _____	
District: _____	
MCAS Test: _____	
Test Administrator: _____	
Accommodation(s) refused by student _____	

Reason for refusal: _____	

Comments: _____	

Keep this form on file at the school.
Do not submit this form with your school's test materials.

APPENDIX D

Timeline for the Transition of MCAS tests to Unified English Braille (UEB)

The state's transition to Unified English Braille (UEB) from English Braille American Edition (EBAE) and Nemeth Code will occur according to the calendar shown below. UEB symbol sheets will be provided with Braille MCAS test materials.

School Year:	2018–2019 (Testing in Spring 2019)	2019–2020 (Testing in Spring 2020) and beyond
Braille format for MCAS tests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UEB for all grade 3–8 tests;• EBAE with Nemeth Code for high school tests	UEB for all grades and tests

APPENDIX E

Submitting Customized Materials for Approval for MCAS Science and Technology/Engineering Tests and ELA and Mathematics Retests				
<p>Instructions: This cover sheet must accompany all requests for approval to use customized materials for accommodation A9 (formerly Accommodation 20). Customized material may <i>only</i> be used on MCAS STE tests grades 5, 8, and high school and legacy math and ELA retests. Please complete and submit this form to the Department’s Student Assessment Services Unit by email to mcas@doe.mass.edu or fax to 781-338-3630.</p> <p>Please submit a separate cover sheet for each content area (English Language Arts, Mathematics, or Science and Technology/ Engineering).</p> <p>Materials submitted after the deadline(s) shown below may not be reviewed before the testing window begins. Responses will be sent approximately ten school days after a request is received. Please contact the Student Assessment Services Unit at 781-338-3625 with any questions. Retain documentation on file for three years.</p>				
Contact Information				
Name:	Date:			
School Name:	District Name:			
Telephone Number:	Fax Number:			
Email:	Resubmittal (Check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Accommodation A9 Customized Materials Submitted				
<i>Place a check mark next to each material being submitted for approval.</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/> Legacy ELA Graphic Organizer		<input type="checkbox"/> Legacy Math Reference Sheet		
<input type="checkbox"/> Legacy STE or Other Checklist		<input type="checkbox"/> STE Reference Sheet		
MCAS TEST ADMINISTRATION				
<i>Place a check mark next to each test administration for which the material will be used. (Submission deadline in parentheses)</i>				
November retests (10/5/2018)		February Biology (1/11/2019)		
March retests (2/1/2019)		Grades 5 and 8 STE (3/1/2019)		
High School STE (4/26/2019)				
Principal or Designee Statement				
<p>The principal or designee of the school must sign below to acknowledge the following: I have reviewed the Department’s policy for administering customized materials for accommodation A9 (formerly Accommodation 20).</p>				
Name: _____ Signature (or Electronic Signature):				Date: _____
Approval/Denial of Request – For Department Use Only				
Database number:	Date Received	Date of Response	<input type="checkbox"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Fax
Approved	Approved with Changes	Denied	Date Reviewed	