



Make MCAS Count

Quick Guide for Lynn Classical High School Families 2015-2016

WHAT are the MCAS tests?

The MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) tests are part of the State's education reform strategy. They test students' knowledge in Reading, English/Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science/Technology/ Engineering. The questions are a mixture of multiple choice and open-ended (written) answers.

The tests were developed in alignment with the State's Curriculum Frameworks, which were also the basis for our district and school course curricula and objectives.

WHO will take the MCAS?

Students in **grade 10** and 11th graders who have never taken the MCAS will take the ELA and MATH MCAS. **All 9th GRADERS** will take the science MCAS in biology this year.

Students in Grades 11 and 12 (& 10th graders who stayed back) who have not yet passed the Grade 10 test in ELA & MATH will take **retests**. Grade 10, 11, and 12 students who have not yet passed the Biology MCAS will take a science MCAS this year.

WHEN will the tests be given?

The schedule for the ELA, math, and science MCAS for the 201-2016 school year is as follows:

- November 4—6, 2015: ELA RETEST for Grade 11 and 12 students who have not yet passed the Grade 10 test
- November 9—10, 2015: MATH RETEST for Grade 11 and 12 students who have not yet passed the Grade 10 test
- February 1—2, 2016: Biology MCAS for students in Grades 10, 11 or 12 who have not yet passes a science MCAS
- March 2—4, 2016: ELA RETEST for students who have not yet passed the Grade 10 test after November 2014 retest
- March 7—8, 2016: MATH RETEST for students who have not yet passed the Grade 10 test after November 2014 retest
- March 22, 23, 24, 2016: ELA MCAS for **ALL 10th graders** and 11th graders who have never taken the ELA MCAS

- May 17—18, 2016: Mathematics MCAS for **ALL 10th graders** and 11th graders who have never taken the math MCAS
- June 1 – 2, 2016: Science MCAS for ALL Grades 9 and 10 students enrolled in Biology, for 11th and 12th graders who have not yet passed a science MCAS.
 - *Students may take the June science MCAS in biology, chemistry, or physics depending on course enrollment*

Some students with disabilities will participate in the MCAS Alternate Assessment that will be submitted by their school on April 2, 2016.

WHY are these tests important?

- ◆ **Evaluation:** MCAS results help us measure how much your child is learning and identify areas where extra help is needed. We use results to inform instruction and ensure our courses are aligned with the state standards.
- ◆ **Graduation:** In addition to local graduation requirements, students must pass (score of 220 or higher—on a 200-280 scale) the ELA, mathematics, and science MCAS and complete an **Educational Proficiency Plan** in math and English if the score was less than 240 (minimum proficient score) in order to earn a high school diploma.
 - ◆ For additional information on EPPs, contact your child's guidance counselor
 - ◆ Students who do not pass the MCAS in Grade 10 will receive additional supports and be retested in Grade 11 and 12 (if necessary).

NOTE: If a student has taken the Grade 10 MCAS previously (at least three times for ELA/math or once for Science) or the MCAS Alternate Assessment at least twice, has attended extra help sessions and meets other course and attendance criteria, he/she may be eligible to have an MCAS appeal filed on his/her behalf by the Superintendent.

Scholarships: John and Abigail Adams Scholarship provides a tuition waiver for up to 8 semesters of undergraduate education at a Massachusetts state college or university. The scholarship covers tuition only. Massachusetts public high school students become eligible for the scholarship when they:

- score at the *Advanced* performance level on one of the three high school MCAS tests in ELA, Mathematics, or STE (Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics, or Technology/Engineering); **AND**
- score at the *Proficient* level or higher on the other two high school MCAS tests; **AND**
- have combined scores from the three tests that place them in the top 25 percent of students in the graduating class in their district.

For additional information on the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship go to:
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/adams.html>

HOW can I help my child do well?

- ◆ Make sure your child attends school every day.
- ◆ Emphasize that these tests are important and preparing for them by attending extra help sessions after school will help them to be successful
- ◆ Ask questions about what your child is studying
- ◆ Contact your child's teachers with any questions or concerns
- ◆ For MCAS days: Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep, eats a healthy breakfast, and arrives to school on time. Be positive! Don't let your child get discouraged.

WHERE can I get more information?

- ◆ The best sources of information are your child's teachers, guidance counselors and principal.
 - ◆ 781-477-7404
 - ◆ Data and Assessment Specialist ext. 2282
 - ◆ www.lynnclassical.org
- ◆ The State has an MCAS "help line" number: **1-866-MCAS-220** (1-866-622-7220) and a web site www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/ to answer questions.
- ◆ The following LPS offices also will be helpful:

Central Administration:	781-477-7220
English Language Learners:	ext. 3141
Special Education Department:	781-268-3000

ATTENTION PARENTS: This document contains important information about your child's education. For a translated copy, please call 781-477-7404 ext. 2282

ATENCION PADRES: Este documento contiene informacion importante acerca de la educacion de su hijo/a. Para una copia traducida llame al 781-477-7404

If your child is learning English as a second language...

- ◆ All English Language Learner (ELL) students are required to take the ACCESS Assessment in addition to the MCAS to measure their proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking English. ACCESS for ELLs will be administered once annually in January-February, beginning in January 2016. ACCESS for ELLs tests are based on the WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) English Language Development standards
- ◆ ELL students must participate in *all* MCAS tests scheduled for their grades regardless of the program and services they are receiving or the amount of time they have been in the United States. The only exception applies to first-year ELL students who enrolled in U.S. schools **after March 1, 2015**. Schools have the option of administering ELA tests to first-year ELL students. First-year ELL students *must* participate in MCAS math and science tests for diagnostic purposes. Their results are not included in school and district summary results, or in state and federal accountability reporting
- ◆ Any ELL student, including students who have been identified as ELL in the past, may use an authorized bilingual word-to-word dictionary and/or glossary on the MCAS tests.
- ◆ Spanish-speaking ELL students in Grades 10-12 who have been in school in the continental U.S. for fewer than three years have the option to participate in the MCAS Spanish/English Mathematics Grade 10 and Mathematics Retest if they can read and write at or near grade level in Spanish.

If your child is in Special Education...

- ◆ Contact your child's liaison or the Special Education Department Head, Christine Lyman (ext.2235) for specific information about your child's testing accommodations.

More detailed information about testing requirements and procedures for ELL and Special Education students is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/.

Massachusetts Dept. of Education

**MCAS Hotline:
1-866-MCAS-220**

