

Next-Generation MCAS Information for Families 2016-2017

This spring, Massachusetts students will take part in Next-Generation MCAS testing. We hope you find the information below helpful.

The Purposes of Next-Generation MCAS Testing:

- To assess all public school students in Massachusetts
- To measure student performance based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (which are the basis of the Hingham Public Schools curriculum)
- To report performance of individual students, schools, and districts

Participation:

- All public school students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10 are tested, including students with disabilities and students with limited proficiency in English

2016-2017 elementary students take the following subject tests:

- Grade 3: ELA and Math
- Grade 4: ELA and Math
- Grade 5: ELA, Math, and Science and Technology/Engineering

Test Design:

There are several changes to note within the Next-Generation MCAS test design. Please follow this link to find a comprehensive view of what we should expect on this year's tests:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/tdd/>

How will we use your child's test results?

- To differentiate instruction in the classroom
- As additional information at Instructional Support Intervention Team (ISIT) meetings
- For consideration for Math Plus; also, fifth grade results are used two school years later as part of seventh grade Hingham Middle School placement.

How will we use the school's results?

- For curriculum planning
- For instructional planning
- For subgroup analysis: Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners/Former English Language Learners, Low Income, High Needs (which includes Students with Disabilities, Low Income Students, and English Language Learner/former English Language Learner students), and by race

How are the results reported?

- Parent/Guardian Reports (that are sent home in the fall of the following school year)
- School Report Card

What are the performance levels that students can achieve?

- Grades 3-8: Advanced, Proficient, Needs Improvement, and Warning
- MCAS Alternative Assessments: Progressing, Emerging, and Awareness

How can we support our children so they can show us what they know and what we need to teach them?

- Have regular discussions with your child's teacher to see what you can do at home to support your child's work in school.
- Make sure your child gets enough rest, eats properly, and arrives at school on time each day.
- Discuss with your child subjects that need improvement. Talk about whether he or she thinks there has been improvement. If the answer is no, find out why.
- Model learning in your home. The challenge of learning new things is lifelong. (The multiplication tables could be as challenging to our children as a new computer program might be to us.)
- Ask your child about homework that is due tomorrow and next week, and ask him/her to explain the completed assignment.
- Ask your child to explain what he or she is studying. These conversations help you to follow your child's progress and help your child to remember what he or she has learned.
- If your child has a disability, ask his or her teacher how MCAS fits into your child's IEP or 504 plan.
- Read to or with your child every night. End the time together asking the five W questions: who, what, when, where, and why.
- Use games and practice exercises to build math and MCAS test-taking skills.
- Keep a journal at home. Have your child use the same strategies he or she uses in writing at school, at home. Not sure what they are? Ask the teacher.
- Keep a notebook of your child's work each year. When some challenging math or literacy skills are being taught, review the successful assignments from prior months or years. The use of a notebook in this way helps to build success, and it shows the progress being made.