



Next Generation

MCAS Testing



What is the Next Generation MCAS Test?

- Updated version of the nearly 20-year-old MCAS assessment
- Focuses on students' critical thinking abilities, application of knowledge, and ability to make connections between reading and writing
- Gives a clearer signal of readiness for the next grade level or college and career
- Designed to be given on a computer (paper versions remain available)
- First given in spring 2017 in grades 3-8 in English language arts & math
- Will eventually replace all older ("legacy") MCAS tests in grades 3-10

The Need for a New MCAS

The MCAS was not designed to measure readiness for success in college or a career after high school. In fact, more than a third of the state's public school graduates who attend Massachusetts's public colleges or universities are placed in remedial courses. The remedial rate is closer to 70 percent for two-year colleges. These courses often consume a student's financial aid, are not credit-bearing, and do not count toward graduation. Too often, these students do not graduate college on time or at all.

Today, we have a better understanding about learning progressions in mathematics, text complexity and the interplay of reading and writing, and the academic expectations of higher-education institutions and employers. Now that we have upgraded our learning expectations over the years through revisions to our learning standards and content standards, it is time to upgrade our assessments for the next generation of students.

Computer Based Testing

Spring 2017:

- 60% of all grades 3-8 students took the test on computers; >93% in grades 4 and 8

Phasing in computer-based testing by grade level:

- Spring 2017: Grades 4 and 8 English language arts (ELA) and math
- Spring 2018: Grades 4-5 and 7-8 in ELA and math and grades 5 and 8 in science and tech/eng
- Spring 2019: All tests in grades 3-8, grade 10 ELA and math

MCAS Achievement Levels

Advanced

Students at this level demonstrate a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of rigorous subject matter, and provide sophisticated solutions to complex problems.

Proficient

Students at this level demonstrate a solid understanding of challenging subject matter and solve a wide variety of problems.

Needs Improvement

Students at this level demonstrate a partial understanding of subject matter and solve some simple problems.

Warning

Students at this level demonstrate a minimal understanding of subject matter and do not solve simple problems.

Exceeding Expectations

A student who performed at this level exceeded grade-level expectations by demonstrating mastery of the subject matter.

Meeting Expectations

A student who performed at this level met grade-level expectations and is academically on track to succeed in the current grade in this subject.

Partially Meeting Expectations

A student who performed at this level partially met grade-level expectations in this subject. **The school, in consultation with the student's parent/guardian, should consider whether the student needs additional academic assistance to succeed in this subject.**

Not Meeting Expectations

A student who performed at this level did not meet grade-level expectations in this subject. **The school, in consultation with the student's parent/guardian, should determine the coordinated academic assistance and/or additional instruction the student needs to succeed in this subject**

Parent/Guardian Report

Name: Doe, Jonathan H.
SASID: 1234567890

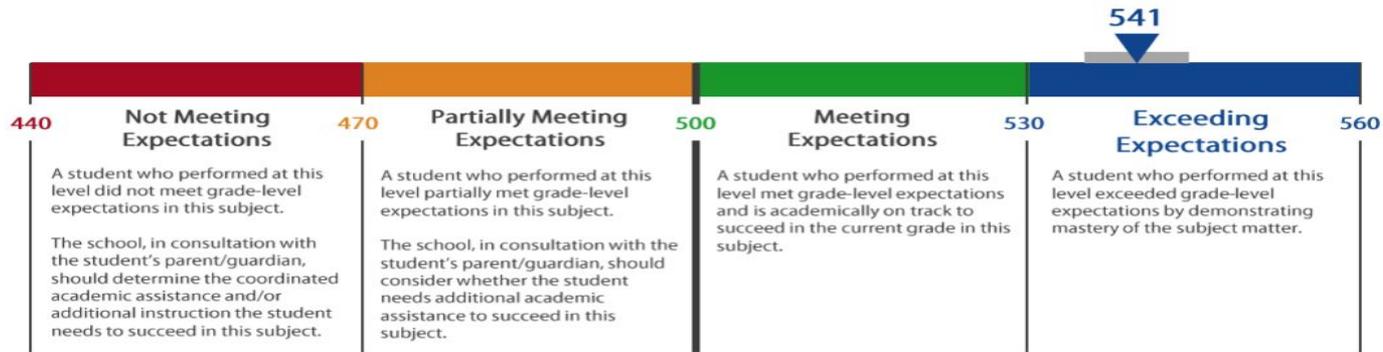
Grade 8
Spring 2017

Mathematics Results

Computer-based test

Your Child's Achievement Level: **Exceeding Expectations**

Your Child's Score: **541**



In the figure above, the triangle indicates your child's score on the test. The gray bar shows the range of likely scores your child would receive if he or she took the test multiple times.

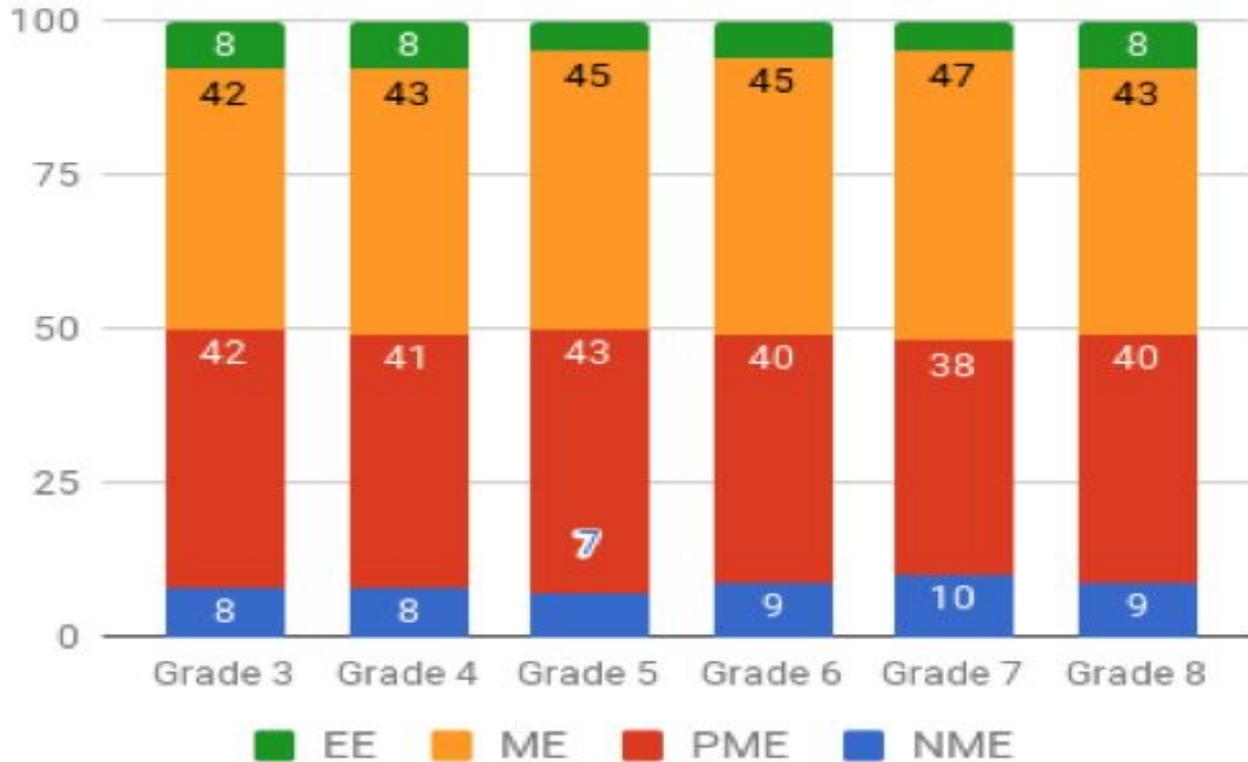
How your child performed compared to the school, district, and state

Your Child's Score	Average Score		
	School	District	State
541	485	502	515

Interpreting the Results

- In general, the new standards for Meeting Expectations are **more rigorous** than the standards for reaching the Proficient level on the legacy MCAS.
- **The results do NOT mean that students learned more or less; the next-generation MCAS measures in a different way**
- **2017 is the baseline year** — the first year of a new assessment — and we expect scores to change over time, as occurred when the legacy MCAS debuted in 1998.
- **Massachusetts educators** set these standards, and they raised them in order to make sure our students will be college- and career- ready.
- Scores can identify areas where students need academic support, but scores can also reflect **non-academic barriers to learning**.

Understanding Scores



Additional Information

- Slides courtesy of DESE
- [MCAS FAQs](#)