

Patrick E. Sullivan Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
781-383-6111

Michael MacMillan  
Director of Business and Finance  
781-383-6108



Leslie A. Scollins, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent  
781-383-4120

Mary E. Buchanan  
Director of Student Services  
781-383-6104

## Cohasset Public Schools

Administration Office • 143 Pond Street • Cohasset, MA 02025  
www.cohassetk12.org • Facsimile: 781-383-6507

October 11, 2019

Dear Families,

Enclosed, please find your child's spring 2019 MCAS report. These MCAS scores include results from the next-generation MCAS tests, which were given in English language arts and mathematics to students in grades 3-8 and high school in spring 2019. Additionally, scores are provided for the legacy MCAS assessments that were administered in science to grades 5, 8, and high school. This is the third year of next-generation MCAS. Due to the relatively new testing format and scoring, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has identified some important information for parents and students to understand the context of the results. Last year the state introduced a new accountability system for all schools and districts, which is a complex measure of how schools and districts are improving. This information is available and can be accessed from the links provided.

### **MCAS Results**

The next-generation MCAS and its score reports are different from the old (legacy) MCAS, both in terms of format and in the information they contain. On the next-generation MCAS, the four scoring categories are Exceeding Expectations, Meeting Expectations, Partially Meeting Expectations, and Not Meeting Expectations. The new categories emphasize readiness for the next grade level.

The state results for the 2019 next-generation MCAS in grades 3- high school were similar to those from 2018 in that approximately 50 percent of the students who took the test (state-wide) scored Meeting Expectations or above. The achievement categories were established in 2017 by a comprehensive group of Massachusetts educators in collaboration with DESE and are designed to reflect what students need to know to be successful in the next grade.

When reviewing student scores, students, families and educators should keep in mind that:

- In general, the standards for Meeting Expectations are more rigorous than the standards for reaching the Proficient level on the legacy MCAS.
- Next-generation MCAS scores should not be compared to legacy MCAS scores.
- The approximately 50 percent of grades 3- high school students who scored in the Meeting or Exceeding Expectations categories is not the result of a grading curve; it is where the scores fell according to the standards that educators established. The educators who set the scoring standards in 2017 valued both readiness for the next grade level and consistent expectations across grades.

The legacy MCAS assessments that were administered in science to grades 5, 8, and high school provide data in the manner that has been reported in the past. These MCAS assessments will be administered using the updated next-generation version by the spring of 2020, at which time all MCAS assessments will reflect the next-generation design and expectations.

Massachusetts has the best public school system in the country, and giving students a clearer signal of their readiness for the next grade level is an important part of that. To learn more about the next-generation MCAS and your child's score, go to:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/parents/>, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/results.html>,

### **Accountability and Assistance Levels**

The state introduced a new accountability system in 2018 which is designed to measure how a school or district is doing. This system is more comprehensive than the previous system and complies with the 2015 federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley noted that the state will do a thoughtful review of the results and monitor how well the new system is providing useful information to districts, schools, parents and the public.

The accountability system designates schools and districts as Meeting or Partially Meeting targets and either requiring or not requiring assistance or intervention. In addition to MCAS data, the system considers:

- Student achievement
- Student growth
- High school completion
- English proficiency
- Chronic absenteeism, and
- Advanced coursework

Accountability data will be included in school and district profiles and included on redesigned school and district report cards that will be available in December. To learn more about the new accountability system, go to: <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/>, and <http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/lists-tools.html>.

We encourage you to continue supporting your son/daughter at home. Read to or with your child daily, ask questions about what they are learning in school and provide reinforcement, and spark their imagination. The Cohasset Public Schools is proud to collaborate with you to provide a great education for your child, and we appreciate your continued support in this effort.

Sincerely,

Leslie Scollins, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent  
Cohasset Public Schools